

Chapter 1

Introduction

Priya Ananth and Seok Jeng Jane Lim

*Twenty years from now you will be more disappointed,
by the things you didn't do than by the ones you did do.
So, throw off your bowlines.
Sail away from the safe harbor.
Catch the trade winds in your sails.
Explore. Dream. Discover.
--Jackson H. Brown--*

This quote by Jackson H. Brown, and commonly attributed to Mark Twain (Quote #571, n.d.), is likely to garner a nod from almost everyone, but especially from those who are engaged in studying abroad—students, faculty leaders, faculty scholars, education abroad administrators, and anyone with an interest in this area. Following the initial disruption of the COVID-19 pandemic, we are embarking on a new phase of rebound and recovery in the field of education abroad. As various study abroad programs in higher education begin a global restart, Jackson Brown's words remind us to not be afraid of taking risks or stepping outside of our comfort zone, but rather to once again boldly express our curiosity to explore and discover the world beyond the known.

This is the right time for study abroad faculty leaders to pause, reflect on, and rethink how they design and implement effective curricula, activities, tasks, and assignments to foster not only content knowledge but also students' critical intercultural and global competency skills and attitudes. This edited volume focuses on short-term, faculty-led study abroad programs in a variety of disciplines and describes the intercultural engagement nurtured by experienced faculty leaders in every aspect of their study abroad course curriculum. For the purposes of this study, the term "short-term, faculty-led study abroad program" is defined as two-to-eight weeks in duration and led by one or more faculty leaders from the home institution.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

At the national level, the number of U.S. students studying abroad for academic credit has consistently increased in the last 30 years with few exceptions. According to the data collected in the Open Doors Report published by the Institute for International Education (IIE), the number of students studying abroad increased from 70,272 in 1989-90 to 347,099 in 2018-19 (Open Doors, 2022a). These increases were recorded across all durations of study abroad programs, namely long, mid-length, and short-term. In the past three years, however, these numbers have demonstrated a dramatic decrease due to travel restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Beginning in March 2020, study abroad participation came to a halt due to the pandemic. The Open Doors Report showed a seismic 53% decline in 2019-20 over the previous year. Also, in 2020-21, the percentage of students who traveled abroad declined by 91% over the previous year. To understand these figures in perspective, in the last 30 years, the only other year showing a drop in student participation was 2008-09 by a mere 0.8% over the previous year (Open Doors, 2022a). The year 2008-09 saw the Great Recession when the global economic downturn had a

direct negative impact on students traveling abroad. Despite the complex challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, the U.S. institutions of higher education have indicated resilience and cautious optimism as the in-person study abroad programs have begun to rebound since summer 2022 (Soler et al., 2022).

According to the Spring 2022 Snapshot on International Education Exchange survey published by IIE (Martel & Baer, 2022), in summer 2022, 58% of the responding institutions were offering in-person study abroad programs, and an additional 31% were offering hybrid programs. The percentage of in-person study abroad programs was reported to increase to 65% in fall 2022 and 64% in spring 2023. Additionally, 83% of the institutions noted an increase in study abroad numbers in 2022-23 compared to the previous year, thus signaling a definite rebound in traditional study abroad programs (Martel & Baer, 2022). While these aggregate percentages provide a general direction regarding national trending in study abroad participation (that is, upwards or downwards), a close-up view of participation by program types based on their duration can offer deeper insight into the rebounding phenomenon. In order to expedite this rebounding effect, this content becomes useful to study abroad faculty leaders and administrators in determining an efficient use of their limited time and finite resources. Toward this objective, a review of the data points for program types based on duration published in the 2022 Open Doors Report becomes relevant. According to this report, 14,549 students from the U.S. studied abroad for academic credit in the post-COVID lockdown year 2020-21. Especially noteworthy is that during that year 64% of the participants opted for short-term programs, as compared with 28% for mid-length (one or one and a half semesters) and only 8% for long-term (academic or calendar year) programs (Open Doors, 2022b). A direct comparison of these data

points for the last three years is illustrated in Table 1.1 followed by a graphical representation in Figure 1.1.

Table 1.1. Study Abroad Participation in the U.S. 2018-2021

Category	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021
Total participants on study abroad from U.S. for academic credits	347,099	162,633	14,549
Short-term programs [any semester: eight weeks or less]	65%	16.8%	64%
Short-term programs [summer: two-to-eight weeks]	29.6%	0.6%	40.3%
Mid-length programs [one to one-and-a-half semesters]	33%	32%	28%
Long-term programs [academic or calendar year]	2%	3.7%	8%

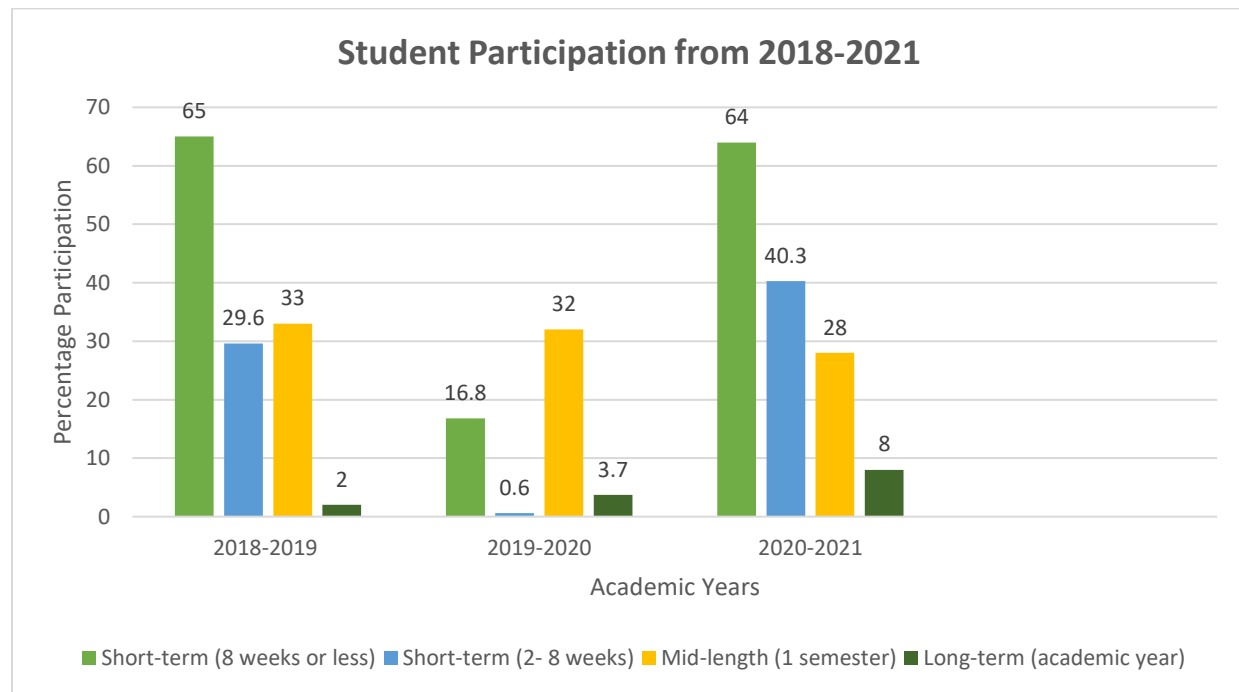


Figure 1.1: Percentage of Student Participation in U.S. Study Abroad 2018-2021

As is evident from the percentage participation in Figure 1.1, even though the total number of participants in study abroad programs in 2020-21 dropped by 91% over the previous year when COVID was at its peak, the percentage of participation, especially in the short-term programs, is comparable with pre-COVID lockdown data in 2018-19. Looking specifically at the percentages for the two-to-eight weeks summer short-term programs, which overlap with most of the faculty-led type of programs, the percentage of participation of 40.3% was higher in 2020-21 than even the pre-COVID lockdown year of 29.6%. These numbers suggest that despite the decline in study abroad participation during 2019-20, universities and colleges in the U.S. are working proactively toward a strong rebound for in-person study abroad programs. A positive momentum is particularly indicated in the two-to-eight weeks short-term summer programs category. According to the Spring 2022 Snapshot on International Education Exchange survey (Martel & Baer, 2022), approximately 90% of the surveyed institutions are offering faculty-led programs in 2022-23, 85% have options for study abroad through third-party providers, and 81% are providing direct exchange programs (Martel & Baer, 2022). Clearly, this is an exciting time for leading and administering short-term, faculty-led programs, making this volume a timely resource for all stakeholders involved with such programs.

With a focus on the design and implementation of short-term, faculty-led study abroad programs and with special emphasis on the integration of intercultural competencies (described later) into the course curricula, the chapter contributions in this book will be useful to both new and experienced study abroad program leaders and administrators to create new programs or reinvigorate existing programs with fresh ideas.

PURPOSE

The broad objective of this edited volume is to offer creative ways of integrating elements of intercultural competence into class activities, tasks, and assignments in short-term, faculty-led study abroad programs. Short-term study abroad programs cannot be mere substitutes for on-campus courses conducted overseas. Rather, through careful planning and delivery, short-term study abroad courses can effectively facilitate the development of students' intercultural competencies. The intercultural competencies, categorized in the areas of knowledge, skills, and attitudes, include characteristics and soft skills such as awareness of self and other cultures, creative thinking, problem-solving, empathy, tolerance towards ambiguity, and withholding judgment. By purposefully embedding these characteristics and soft skills in their course activities, faculty leaders can better assist their students in deepening intercultural and global competencies. These competencies can prepare the students for a changing global work environment and help them manage a more diverse workforce at home.

The purpose of this edited volume is three-fold. The first purpose is to present practice-based models of university courses from multiple disciplines and display a connection between course content and intercultural competencies in the specific context of short-term, faculty-led study abroad programs. The second purpose is to familiarize the readers with learning theories and conceptual models of intercultural competence that have guided the design and delivery of faculty-led study abroad programs in recent years. The final purpose of this volume is to open pathways to spark new ideas and pave the way for future innovations in pedagogies and practices that enhance meaningful intercultural engagement in all types of study abroad programs in higher education.

OVERVIEW OF THE BOOK

Panorama of Study Abroad Programs

Among the 15 faculty leaders who contributed to this volume, we have covered six of the eight academic colleges across our university, Middle Tennessee State University (MTSU). These six colleges include the College of Basic and Applied Sciences, College of Behavioral and Health Sciences, College of Business, College of Education, College of Liberal Arts, and the College of Media and Entertainment (as seen in Figure 1.2). This volume serves as a collective resource for faculty across a range of disciplines. The College of Liberal Arts had the highest participation as compared with other colleges. To further internationalize the MTSU campus, these data indicate opportunities for other colleges to integrate study abroad within their existing program.

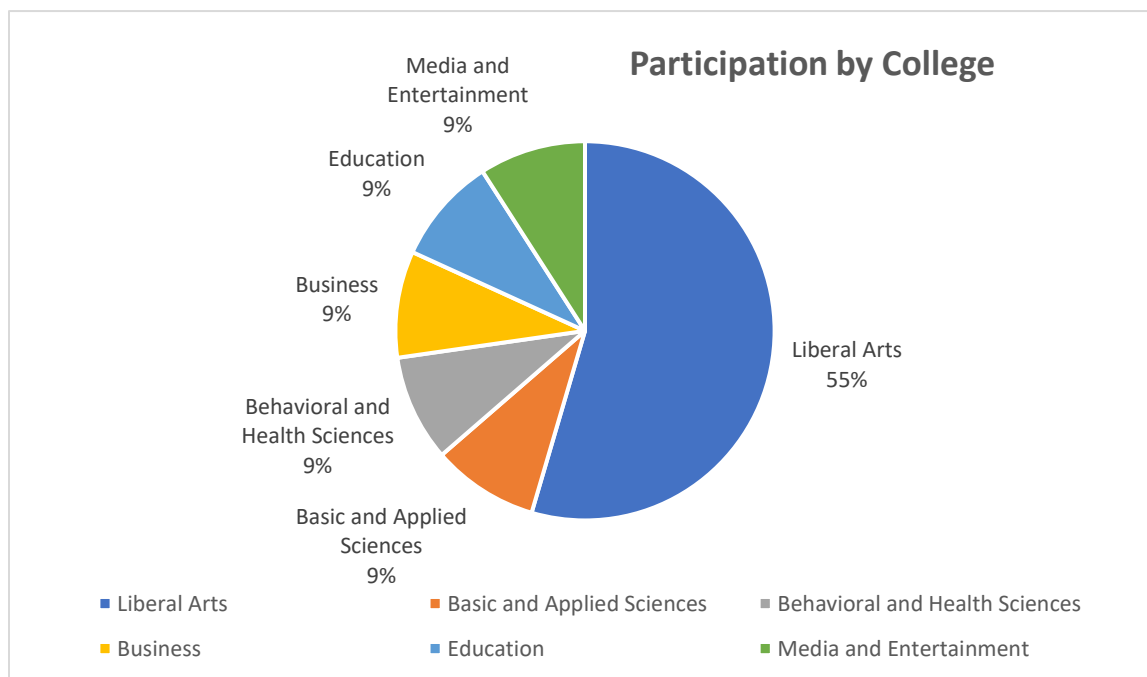


Figure 1.2: Participation by College: Percentage of the book's 11 study abroad case studies by academic college.

Faculty members who led the study abroad experiences described in this volume consist of veteran leaders with 20-plus years of experience as well as novice leaders. Program destinations include Asia (China, Japan, Singapore); Europe (Austria, France, United Kingdom, Scotland); Latin America (Cuba); and South America (Argentina). The participation rates by region represented in this book (see Figure 1.3) remain consistent with the 2020-21 NAFSA study abroad trends, where most study abroad occurs in Europe followed by Asia (NAFSA, n.d.)

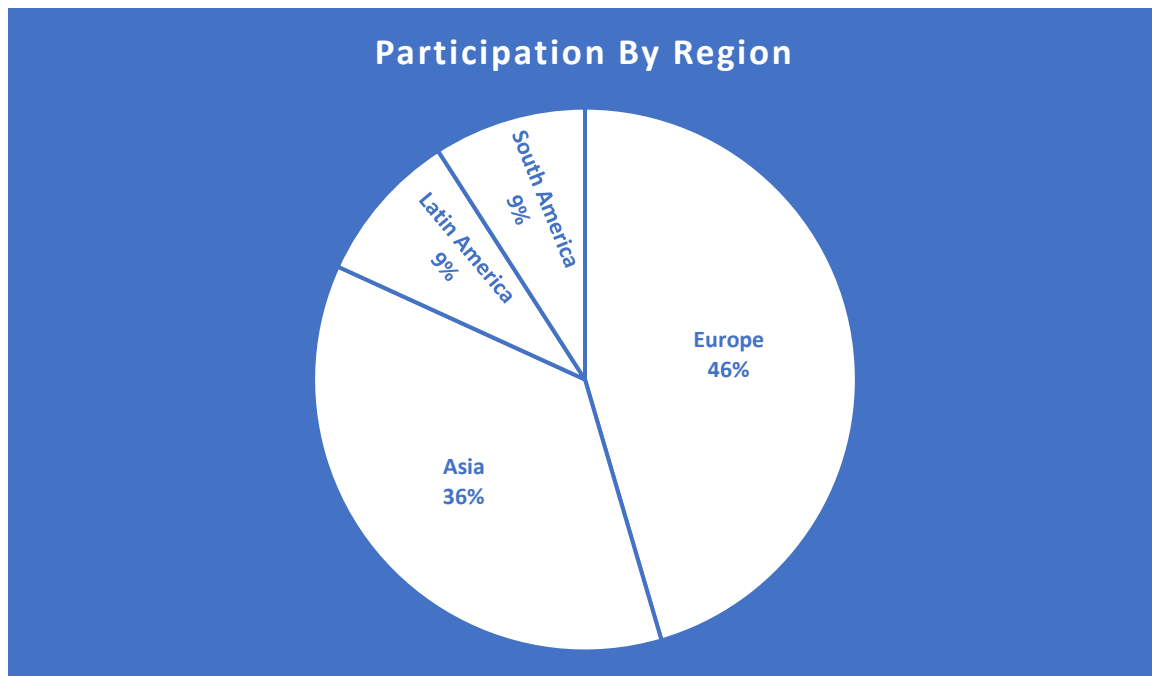


Figure 1.3: Participation by Region: Percentage of the book's 11 study abroad case studies by region of destination.

Delivery models include a mix of those teaching entirely in the country abroad (e.g., Chapter 5) and others with a blended model of in-country and overseas instruction (e.g., Chapter 12). Some of the programs are comprised of stand-alone courses within a single discipline (e.g., Chapter 4), while others identify as interdisciplinary with cross-listed courses

(e.g., Chapter 7). Cross-listing a program to multiple disciplines increases the student participation rate and suggests a positive impact in terms of marketing the program.

The duration of travel for short-term, faculty-led programs usually ranges from one-week to a month. Summer is when most study abroad programs occur. Participation numbers for each program range from four to 18 students. The length of the study abroad program determines the costs. For this current discussion, most study abroad programs represented a three-week time frame. Figure 1.4 shows the duration of the study abroad programs that are included in this volume.

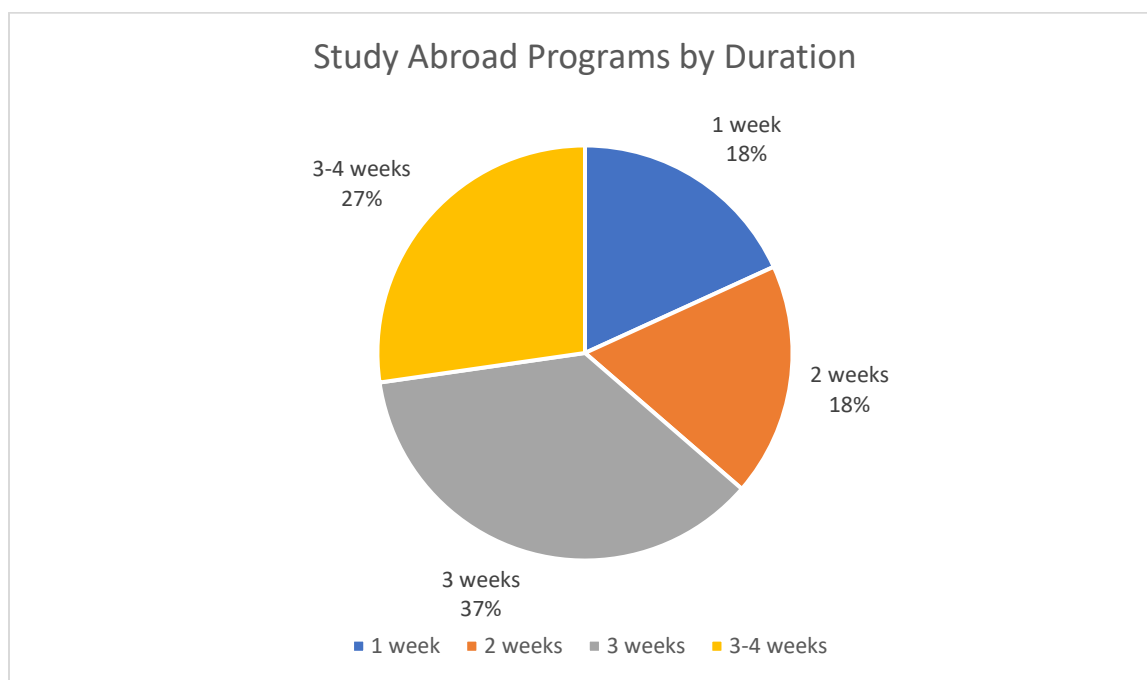


Figure 1.4: Duration of study abroad programs represented in this book.

Overview of Chapters

This book is arranged into three sections. Section I consists of three chapters including the introduction, administrative perspective, and theoretical framework for faculty-led study abroad programs. Chapter 1 (this chapter) by Priya Ananth and Seok Jeng Jane Lim provides an introduction and an overview of the book. Chapter 2 by Rehab (Rubie) Ghazal and Robert Summers offers an administrative perspective on the education abroad programs at Middle Tennessee State University with a focus on faculty support as well as on the importance of developing intercultural competence in students and faculty. In Chapter 3, Jason Lee Pettigrew and Priya Ananth lay out some of the influential conceptual models of intercultural competence as well as learning theories and pedagogical approaches that have guided study abroad facilitators in designing and implementing effective programs in recent years.

Section II showcases 11 contributions from 12 faculty leaders across six colleges (Chapters 4-14). Faculty leaders share details regarding their programs including course objectives, curriculum design, assessment procedures, and student feedback. Regardless of the academic discipline, each of the 11 chapters in this section demonstrates how intercultural competencies were strategically incorporated into the activities, tasks, and assignments of the study abroad curricula. Individual chapters adhere to a case study template detailing a unique aspect of the program, the course information, logistics, theoretical foundations, program itinerary, class activities, intercultural competencies, evaluations, and feedback and reflections from both students and faculty leaders.

In Chapter 4, Seok Jeng Jane Lim and Karen Nourse Reed, representing the College of Education, describe a two-week study abroad program in Lim's native country, Singapore. The

curriculum focuses on administering Early Childhood Programs. The content examines early childhood settings and public preschool issues and provides an understanding of the state regulations, standards, and overall framework that impact early care and education in Singapore. A vital component of the program is the inclusion and assessment of intercultural and global competency skills at various points of the curriculum and the post-program data analysis of the competencies acquired by the students. This chapter also demonstrates collaboration between faculty members other than those leading a program.

Chapters 5-10 constitute contributions from faculty leaders in the College of Liberal Arts. In Chapter 5, Priya Ananth introduces ways to design a short-term, faculty-led study abroad program in Japan that purposefully integrates intercultural competencies in a course on traditional and modern Japanese culture. Sample activities, tasks, and assignments illustrate how intercultural competencies are flexibly woven into the curriculum. Student reflections describe gains in their intercultural competencies at the end of the program.

In Chapter 6, Mako Nozu from the University of South Florida shares her three-week summer program *USF Japan: Culture, History, and Society* offered by her home institution. Designed to facilitate successful knowledge of Japan, this course is open to anyone from any discipline and background. The purpose of the course is to nurture the participants' multicultural awareness by traveling across Japan and experiencing a variety of hands-on activities that adeptly incorporate intercultural competencies in knowledge, skills, and attitudes.

In Chapter 7, James Chaney describes his two-week study abroad program that explores contemporary Cuba and its geography. Using a thirteen-day study abroad program in Cuba as a case study, this chapter demonstrates how a short-term program designed around service

learning, place-based education, and active learning activities can enhance the development of students' critical thinking, intercultural competence, and communication skill set. This course is cross listed with Global Studies and Political Science to encourage more recruitment and satisfy credit fulfillment.

In Chapter 8, Nancy Sloan Goldberg introduces her *MTSU Summer in Normandy* program. For 14 years, this program enabled more than 160 students studying French, both majors and non-majors, to expand their linguistic and cultural competencies through experiential learning. Education opportunities include classroom activities and visits to local cultural sites as well as a homestay with French families. The students used their enhanced linguistic and intercultural competency skills to construct deeper connections and understandings of the people they interacted with and the sites they visited, including service-learning experiences.

In Chapter 9, Stacey Graham describes *MTSU in Scotland*, a three-week study abroad program that provides an immersive experience building students' understanding of historic preservation while fostering intercultural competencies. Through hands-on preservation experiences, particularly through Edinburgh World Heritage and the City of Edinburgh Council, students attain both discipline-specific knowledge as well as intercultural competency skills. This discussion offers unique insights as it was conducted both before and after the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown.

In Chapter 10, Joseph E. Morgan describes his short-term study abroad program in music history conducted in Vienna, Austria. This educational experience describes an ideal synthesis of experiential, integrative, collaborative, and reflective approaches to education while aligning the

course objectives with key intercultural competencies in order to grow students' understanding and development of new frames of reference.

In Chapter 11, Tony V. Johnston from the College of Basic and Applied Sciences introduces his program *International Agriculture* in Argentina. This chapter highlights the use of food as an opportunity for learning when teaching abroad and discusses ways in which food can be utilized as a powerful tool to develop intercultural competencies. The program has been replicated in different locations and countries.

In Chapter 12, Sesan Kim Sokoya from the College of Business presents his three-week study abroad program to China with content regarding international management and globalization. The model for the program is one week on campus followed by two weeks in China. The comparative management issues facing multinational corporations (MNCs) are included in this program, with special emphasis on the Chinese environment. The course and associated extra and co-curricular activities are designed to sensitize students to the differences in the environments in which MNCs operate as well as to enhance the intercultural competencies of the participating students.

In Chapter 13, Lee Miller Wade from the College of Behavioral and Health Sciences introduces the criminal justice system in London through a one-week study abroad program. This program provides three lectures on campus before departing for the intensive one-week program. The purpose of the London, England Criminal Justice Study Abroad program is to broaden students' understanding of the criminal justice system. This program integrates intercultural competency skills into the course activities and exposes students to the policing, courts, and corrections systems in Britain while providing comparisons with the U.S. system.

In Chapter 14, Christine C. Eschenfelder from the College of Media and Entertainment details a study abroad course describing the 75th Anniversary of D-Day in France from a journalist's perspective. Journalism students experienced newsgathering abroad and developed life skills in other countries. The chapter details a narrative with learning outcomes related to the intercultural competency goals of the course. This chapter also provides a weblink to original media content, a 20-minute documentary produced by the students called "Never Forgotten."

In Section III, Seok Jeng Jane Lim and Priya Ananth discuss the conclusions and provide closing thoughts on intercultural competencies across disciplines. They describe the nine categories of the most prevalent class activities, tasks, and assignments faculty leaders implemented to facilitate intercultural competencies in the preceding 11 chapters. Furthermore, these editors offer practical recommendations to encourage faculty leaders of short-term study abroad programs to promote enhanced intercultural engagement in their courses for the benefit of their students.

Note: A glossary of terms and definitions used in this book is provided in Appendix 1.1 at the end of this chapter.

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APPENDIX 1.1

Glossary of Terms and Definitions

Activities refer to the in-class or out-of-class engagements that students are expected to complete individually or as a group. These engagements are directly tied to the academic course content—for example, in-class discussions, teaching a mini-lesson, and site visits.

Assignment refers to assigned work either at home or in-class for testing and evaluation—for example, group research projects, class presentations, and video projects.

Attitudes include empathy, curiosity, discovery, risk-taking, withholding judgment, open-mindedness, tolerance for ambiguity, stepping outside the comfort zone, resilience, patience, respect, flexibility, and adaptability.

Education abroad accounts for service learning, internships, research experiences, and other non-classroom-based activities that take students to other countries and contribute to their learning and development (Helms et al., 2017, p. 3).

Faculty-led study abroad programs are typically short-term programs that are led by one or more faculty leaders from the home institutions.

Formative assessment is the process of providing feedback to students during the learning process. These are often low-stakes activities that allow the instructor to check student work and provide feedback. An instructor writing comments and suggestions on a draft version of a paper is an example of formative assessment (Weimer, 2013).

Intercultural competence refers to a set of cognitive, affective, and behavioral skills and characteristics that support effective and appropriate interaction in a variety of cultural contexts (Bennett, 2008). The following intercultural competency characteristics in knowledge, skills, and attitudes will be used in each chapter. These items have been adapted from Deardorff (2012).

Intercultural curriculum is broadly defined as a structure or framework through which educators intentionally facilitate intercultural learning (Harvey, 2017).

Intercultural learning refers to the teaching and learning methods, activities, and processes that facilitate the development of intercultural competence in a study abroad context (Laux, 2019).

Knowledge refers to cultural self-awareness/understanding, understanding others' worldviews, culture-specific knowledge, and academic content knowledge.

Short-term study abroad refers to study abroad programs, eight-weeks or less, occurring during the academic year as well as all types of summer programs (fewer than two-weeks, two-to-eight weeks, more than eight-weeks) (Open Doors, 2022b).

Skills include creative thinking, problem-solving, leadership, articulation, teamwork, technology skills, listening, observation, interpretation, analysis, evaluation, relation, and communication skills.

Student engagement describes the ways in which students take part in the learning process and the development of their own knowledge. An increase in student engagement is thought to be linked to an increase in student learning. Student engagement is often tied to active learning techniques and student motivation (Ashwin & McVitty, 2015).

Summative assessment is the process of measuring a student's learning at the conclusion of a course (or a portion of the course). Summative assessments are typically associated with grades and can take the form of quizzes, exams, or papers.

Tasks refer to engagements that are not directly tied to the academic course content but need to be completed to accomplish the program's overall goals. For example, using public transportation, going to the grocery store, and using the ATM machine.