

Securing America's Future: Global Education for a Global Age



REPORT OF THE STRATEGIC TASK FORCE ON EDUCATION ABROAD

NAFSA

Association of
International Educators

Securing America's Future: Global Education for a Global Age



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A Message from The Honorable Paul Simon Honorary Co-Chair, Strategic Task Force on Education Abroad

The nation learned on September 11, 2001, that we must become much more sensitive to the rest of the world. We are 4 percent of the Earth's population, yet we are the military and economic giant. We slowly have come to understand that in administrations of both political parties there have been awkward and stumbling moments, caused not by ill intent, but by a lack of understanding both by leaders and the public.

How can we change that?

In 2009 we will celebrate the bicentennial of Abraham Lincoln's birth, the president known primarily for freeing the slaves. But Lincoln also showed sensitivity to international matters and signed the controversial Morrill Act, the Land Grant College Act, which his predecessor James Buchanan had vetoed. It gave higher education a huge boost and can accurately be described as the GI Bill of the 19th century.

In the 2002–03 academic year, we had 584,000 international students on our campuses—great for them and for us. Unfortunately, only slightly more than 1 percent of our students ever study abroad for a summer or a semester—and two-thirds of them study in Western Europe. Yet 95 percent of the world's population growth in the next 50 years will occur outside of Western Europe.

We need a Lincoln Fellowship available for 500,000 college students, at a stipend not to exceed \$7,000 a year, to study abroad for at least a summer or a semester with priority given to developing nations. In 10 years, we would have 5 million Americans who had studied abroad—making us more understanding of the rest of the world and less likely to commit international blunders, and creating a base of public opinion that would encourage responsible action rather than popular but unwise actions. The payoff to the nation in international trade alone would more than compensate for the cost.

That cost would be \$3.5 billion a year—a great deal of money, but only one-seventh of 1 percent of the federal budget. President Bush's request for an additional \$87 billion for Iraq and Afghanistan, which I support, would pay for the Lincoln Fellowships for 25 years. The question is not whether we can do it, but whether these fellowships should be one of our priorities. The evidence is overwhelming that they should be.

The first step is creating a commission to fill in the details and report back to Congress and the administration. I believe that will happen. I have indications of support from key Republicans and Democrats.

Ultimate passage of the legislation will not be easy. Nor was passage of the Morrill Act or the GI Bill, which emerged from the House-Senate conference in 1944 by one vote.

A nation cannot drift into greatness. We must dream and we must be willing to make small sacrifices to achieve those dreams. If I want to improve my home, I must sacrifice a little. If we want to improve our nation and the world, we must be willing to sacrifice a little. This major national initiative and the recommendations of the Strategic Task Force on Education Abroad can lift our vision and responsiveness to the rest of the world.

Those who read these lines need to do more than nod in agreement. This is a battle for understanding that you must help wage.

Paul Simon

Former U.S. Senator



A Message from The Honorable Richard W. Riley Honorary Co-Chair, Strategic Task Force on Education Abroad

One of my missions as Secretary of Education was to work with President Clinton to develop an official policy of the United States to promote international education for our citizens. As a Rhodes Scholar himself, the president always recognized the importance of international education for our country.

Working with Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, we succeeded in that mission. President Clinton's April 19, 2000, executive memorandum on international education policy—the first of its kind—remains in effect to this day. Subsequently, the term “educational diplomacy” was coined by me in reference to the use of education initiatives to pursue our country's diplomatic interests with the rest of the world.

Pursuant to President Clinton's directive, the Departments of Education and State instituted International Education Week in November 2000. I am delighted to see that President Bush has proclaimed International Education Week each subsequent year and that, under his administration's leadership, the observance continues to be a major national event.

This confirms my belief that American support for international education is bipartisan. Democrats and Republicans alike recognize that our nation's future hinges significantly on the international competence of our citizens and that, in this day and age, to be fully educated is to be educated *internationally*.

Since I left government service, my association with NAFSA as distinguished senior fellow has enabled me to continue to pursue my commitment to international education. In that capacity, I am pleased to have had the opportunity to serve, along with Senator Paul Simon, as honorary co-chair of NAFSA's Strategic Task Force on Education Abroad. Although my title is “honorary,” I have in fact been an active participant in the deliberations of the task force. I fully share and support its conclusions and, in particular, its strong sense of urgency. I also associate myself fully with the provocative recommendations of my distinguished co-chair, Senator Simon, as expressed in his own preface to this report. It is absolutely imperative that American students study abroad all over the world, in all fields, in high-quality programs, and in far greater numbers than today.

It has been a pleasure to work with the leading educators who contributed to this timely report. It is particularly appropriate that it is being released during the fourth annual International Education Week. I urge our nation's leaders and citizens to give careful attention to the task force recommendations.

Richard W. Riley

Former Secretary of Education



Executive Summary

The challenges of the new millennium are unquestionably global in nature. This reality imposes a new and urgent demand on Americans, one this country has been all too quick to ignore: international knowledge and skills are imperative for the future security and competitiveness of the United States. The rhetoric of a decade attests to the widespread recognition of this fundamental truth, yet concrete steps to fulfill this need have been few. Strong leadership and a coherent policy are still lacking, and the cost of inaction grows ever greater.

To address this serious deficit in global competence, the report of NAFSA's Strategic Task Force on Education Abroad proposes a national effort to promote study abroad. We strongly believe that the events of September 11, 2001, constituted a wake-up call—a warning that America's ignorance of the world is now a national liability. Americans in vastly greater numbers must devote a substantive portion of their education to gaining an understanding of other countries, regions, languages, and cultures, through direct personal experience.

We use the term “national effort,” rather than “federal program,” advisedly. Although the federal role is crucial, the states, the private sector, higher education institutions, and state and regional accrediting bodies must all step up to the plate and do their part to promote study abroad. Here is what must be done:

- ◇ The president and Congress must articulate this urgent national priority, provide a legislative framework and resources appropriate to the urgency of the problem, and remove regulatory barriers to study abroad.
- ◇ Governors and state legislatures must make international education an integral part of their strategic planning for enhancing state economic development and competitiveness.
- ◇ College and university presidents must implement strategies to encourage study abroad on a school-wide basis. They must involve the faculty, ease curricular rigidities, counter financial disincentives, and create new study abroad models and diverse study abroad options that recognize the changed demographics of U.S. higher education today and make study abroad accessible to the broadest possible spectrum of students.
- ◇ The private sector must do more to encourage and assist schools in producing the globally competent workforce it requires.
- ◇ Professional licensing and accrediting agencies must build global competence into the curricular standards that they set for professional schools.

It is the hope of the task force that this report will stimulate a long-overdue dialogue among these parties and lead to a national effort to ensure that far greater numbers of American students pursue part of their higher education abroad.

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Task force members were asked to serve as individuals, not as representatives of their institutions. Institutional affiliations are given for identification purposes, but the institutions should not be construed as endorsing this report or any of its recommendations. Although all of the content of this report is derived from task force discussions, and the report is a consensus document, no task force member necessarily endorses every statement in it. Overall responsibility for the report is NAFSA's alone.



I. The Challenge We Face

“America’s leadership and national security rest on our commitment to educate and prepare our youth for active engagement in the international community.”

— President George W. Bush

On September 11, 2001, an international threat of which Americans were largely ignorant did more serious damage to the homeland than any foreign power had managed to inflict since the attack on Pearl Harbor. No one who lived through that terrible day will soon forget the anguished, confused questions that we all had to process: Where did this come from? How could anyone want to do this to us? We all recall the tickers rolling across the bottom of our television screens asking speakers of Arabic, Farsi, and Pashto to come forward. It was a very painful and public admission of how little we knew about the Arab and Muslim worlds.

It is not just the Middle East of which we are ignorant. As a nation we suffer from a pervasive lack of knowledge about the world. There have been periods, indeed entire eras, in our history where Americans have relished their isolation from the world. Some have made speaking only English a point of national pride instead of a disgrace. Never mind that the schools of most countries, rich or poor, teach at least two languages to their children. In the most prosperous nation on the planet, with the most extensive system of higher education, we are notoriously inept at imparting languages to our youth.

We desperately need to understand other countries and other cultures—friend and foe alike. We are unnecessarily putting ourselves at risk because of our stubborn monolingualism and ignorance of the world.

Most colleges—like our educational system generally—have taken relatively few steps to remedy this shortcoming. It is the rare campus where anyone other than a language major is required to achieve proficiency in a second language—and the ranks of language majors are dwindling. Beginner’s language courses may be crowded, but enrollments beyond that are sparse. Is it any wonder that the U.S. State Department and our intelligence and security agencies are chronically short of analysts and diplomats with critical language skills?

Studying abroad is required of even fewer students in our institutions of higher education, despite an increasing need to understand our neighbors around the globe.

It is now cliché to talk about how small the world has become, and to note how the globalization of communications and commerce affects everyday life. But it is true. Our colleges and universities must respond to this reality by better equipping students to live and work in the interconnected world of the twenty-first century. We desperately need to understand other countries and other cultures—friend and foe alike.

We are unnecessarily putting ourselves at risk because of our stubborn monolingualism and ignorance of the world. As strong as our country and economy are, we cannot remain prosperous and secure if we do not understand the words and actions of our international neighbors. We need soldiers, diplomats, and business executives who speak Arabic, just as we need speakers of French, Spanish, Chinese, Swahili, Russian, Korean, Farsi, Hindi, and dozens of other languages. To successfully navigate the new millennium, we will need leaders who are able to understand global crises not only from an American vantage point, but also from those of our allies and our adversaries.

That is why, in 2000 and again in 2003, NAFSA and its colleague association, the Alliance for International Educational and Cultural Exchange, issued a white paper proposing an international education policy for the United States. The white paper stated:

If American students are to be able to function effectively in the world into which they will graduate, it must become the routine—not the exception—for them to study abroad in high-quality programs. For that to happen, the United States requires a policy to promote global learning, which recognizes that providing Americans with opportunities to acquire the skills, attitudes, and perceptions that allow them to be globally and cross-culturally competent is central to U.S. security and economic interests in the twenty-first century.

We strongly endorse—and pledge ourselves to work to enact and implement—the recommendations of the task force’s honorary co-chair, former U.S. Senator Paul Simon, for a federally funded “Abraham Lincoln Study Abroad Fellowship Program,” as outlined in the preface to this report.

Accordingly, the two organizations said, an international education policy should:

- ◇ Set an objective that 20 percent of American students receiving college degrees will have studied abroad for credit by 2010, and 50 percent by 2040.
- ◇ Promote ethnic, socioeconomic, and gender diversity in study abroad.
- ◇ Promote the diversification of the study abroad experience, including: increased study in nontraditional locations outside the United Kingdom and the rest of western Europe; increased study of major world languages—such as Arabic, Chinese, Japanese, Portuguese, and Russian—that are less commonly learned by Americans; and increased study abroad in under-represented subjects such as mathematical and physical sciences and business.
- ◇ Promote the integration of study abroad into the higher education curriculum, and increase opportunities for international internships and service learning.

It is the mission of this task force to articulate such a policy. The pages that follow are a call to action. But we intend this report to be more than just another exhortation. It is a political and educational roadmap of how to get there—informed both by the experiences of many higher education institutions that have been successful in surmounting the obstacles to study abroad, and by an understanding of how bold, coherent national leadership can leverage progress at the level of the state, the institution, and the firm.¹ In particular, we strongly endorse—and pledge ourselves to work to enact and implement—the recommendations of the task force’s honorary co-chair, former U.S. Senator Paul Simon, for a federally funded “Abraham Lincoln Study Abroad Fellowship Program,” as outlined in the preface to this report.

¹Although the report focuses on undergraduate higher education, the task force strongly believes that students should have greater exposure to international materials, languages, and cultures early in their academic careers, and that study abroad is effective both before college and in graduate school and beyond.



II. A Sputnik Moment

It is instructive to hark back to another challenge the country faced: the Soviet launch of Sputnik, the first man-made satellite, into orbit on October 4, 1957. In the throes of the Cold War, few in the United States believed our ideological foe capable of that feat of technology. The beeping, polished steel sphere, visible at dusk to the naked eye, was a blow to American pride and confidence in the superiority of capitalism and free markets over communism and the dictates of the state. Historian Daniel Boorstin later observed, “Never before had so small and so harmless an object created such consternation.”

In charting a course in this post-September 11 world, we should reexamine this country’s response to Sputnik. After several embarrassing failures on the launch pad, the United States put a grapefruit-sized satellite into orbit a few months later. Following closely on the heels of this success, Congress created the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, and colleges and universities responded by methodically producing more scientists and engineers. There were 8,611 doctorates awarded in all fields in 1957. That number doubled by 1966, and nearly doubled again by 1973. In September 1958, President Eisenhower signed the landmark National Defense Education Act (NDEA), providing an infusion of federal money to improve teaching of math, science, and foreign languages. NDEA launched the federal student loan program that to this day remains the largest source of aid for college. The NDEA also created Title VI area studies programs on dozens of campuses that train most of the country’s experts in the languages, history, and politics of the most turbulent regions of the world. Not since the GI Bill, or the Morrill Act before it, had the federal government invested such resources in the education of our citizens.

We are now in another Sputnik moment. ...It is time to launch a major national effort to ensure that every U.S. college student graduates with both an understanding of at least one foreign area and facility in at least one foreign language. For that to happen, as the NAFSA/Alliance white paper stated, study abroad must become the norm, not the exception, at higher education institutions in the United States.

The Soviets then launched the era of manned space flight on April 12, 1961. One month later, President John F. Kennedy stirred the nation with an address to Congress that set the goal “of landing a man on the moon and returning him safely to the earth” before the decade was out. Kennedy added, “In a very real sense, it will not be one man going to the moon...it will be an entire nation. For all of us must work to put him there.” In the summer of 1969, Kennedy’s dream became a reality.

We are now in another Sputnik moment. We can remain as ignorant of the outside world as we were on September 11, or do the work necessary to overcome this handicap. That grim morning took us by surprise, in part, because we had closed our eyes and ears to the world around us. We could not hear or understand what our enemies were saying. We need to reverse this dangerous course by adequately preparing our youth to understand and deal with the problems of today’s world. This effort will take years and the support of the nation, not unlike America’s effort to become preeminent in space.

It is time to launch a major national effort to ensure that every U.S. college student graduates with both an understanding of at least one foreign area and facility in at least one foreign language. For that to happen, as the NAFSA/Alliance white paper stated, study abroad must become the norm, not the exception, at higher education institutions in the United States.



III. Why Study Abroad?

“In an age of globalization, the United States cannot ignore problems in distant regions... We learned on September 11 that events in poor countries half way around the world can do us great harm.”

— Joseph Nye, former U.S. assistant secretary of defense

Americans need enhanced international skills and knowledge to guarantee our national security and economic competitiveness. An educational opportunity outside the United States can be among the most valuable tools for preparing a student to participate effectively in an increasingly interconnected international community that demands cross-cultural skills and knowledge.

We understood the fundamental importance of international education at the conclusion of World War II, when presidents and Members of Congress set in place the underpinnings of what became our principal educational gateway to the world, beginning with the Fulbright Program in 1946. Nearly 100,000 Americans have studied under the Fulbright aegis in other lands. Alumni of the program include Nobel and Pulitzer Prize winners, governors and senators, Supreme Court justices, ambassadors and artists, CEOs, and numerous professors and scientists. The roster includes economists Milton Friedman and Joseph Stiglitz, opera singer Renee Fleming and actor John Lithgow, poets Rita Dove and Maya Angelou, journalist and jazz critic Nat Hentoff, Intel Corporation CEO Craig Barrett, and DNA co-discoverer James Watson. Senator Fulbright, who was himself a Rhodes Scholar, summarized the importance of these exchanges:

Man’s struggle to be rational about himself, about his relationship to his own society, and to other peoples and nations involves a constant search for understanding among peoples and cultures—a search that can only be effective when learning is pursued on a worldwide basis.

Daniel Patrick Moynihan was in the third class of Fulbright Scholars, studying at the London School of Economics in 1950 before returning home to pursue an extraordinary career as scholar, author, bureaucrat, diplomat, and senator. Moynihan once observed:

I only wish that there were more Fulbright opportunities so that others would have the enlightening experience that I enjoyed. The great problems of the world require careful study, but not solely cloistered in one’s own nation... Our young must go abroad to study, see, taste, touch, feel.

Like the Rhodes and Marshall scholarships, the Fulbright is for recent college graduates who have already achieved academic distinction. These programs have merited their sterling reputations, and they deserve our strongest support. But study abroad is not and should not be just for Rhodes Scholars. Its value is too great to be restricted to a student elite. These opportunities can and should be available to every American college student. That is our vision and our challenge.

Breaking the Language Barrier

Inexplicably, many Americans justify our monolingualism with the fact that the rest of the world is learning English. But it is to our disadvantage that we are able to conduct foreign relations and international commerce in only one tongue, while the rest of the international community continually builds upon its proficiency in multiple languages. The General Accounting Office reported to Congress in January 2002 that a shortage of qualified translators was plaguing the U.S. Army, the Department of State, the Department of Commerce’s Foreign Commercial Service, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Shortfalls “have

adversely affected agency operations and hindered U.S. military, law enforcement, intelligence, counterterrorism, and diplomatic efforts. Many shortages were in hard-to-learn languages from the Middle East and Asia.” Our adversaries around the world may well speak English in addition to their mother tongues, but we can be sure that they will not be planning attacks against American interests in the one language we are capable of deciphering.

It is very common for students in Europe to speak a second language, or even a third, often having begun their language training in grade school. Yet a bilingual nonimmigrant American student remains an anomaly. And we often fail to encourage heritage speakers to build upon their language skills. Most of the 150,000 U.S. students who study abroad head to English-speaking countries, or take special courses taught in English in Spain, France, Russia, Japan, China, or elsewhere. More than 90 percent spend a semester or less overseas. Unfortunately, language immersion for American students is the exception, not the rule.

The current worldwide popularity of English—and of American culture—is no argument for Americans’ resistance to and recalcitrance at learning other languages. Our security and economic prosperity will depend upon the ability of future generations to understand others around the globe. Immersion in another language through study abroad is one of the best ways to gain proficiency in another language. Last year, in a congressional hearing on critical skills for national security held by the Senate Governmental Affairs Committee, the benefits of study abroad on language learning were touted by government officials and language experts alike. Susan Westin, managing director of international affairs and trade at the General Accounting Office, noted that in her experience, GAO applicants with fluency in another language had studied abroad. Dr. Ray T. Clifford, chancellor of the Defense Language Institute, stated that “the way to learn a foreign language is to go overseas.”

An educational opportunity outside the United States can be among the most valuable tools for preparing a student to participate effectively in an increasingly interconnected international community that demands cross-cultural skills and knowledge.

Understanding Others...

The benefits of study abroad are hardly limited to language gains. President George W. Bush and Secretary of State Colin Powell have repeatedly spoken of the value of Americans’ studying in other countries. The President spoke out forcefully on this topic soon after September 11:

By studying foreign cultures and languages and living abroad, we gain a better understanding of the many similarities that we share and learn to respect our differences. The relationships that are formed between individuals from different countries as part of international education programs and exchanges can also foster goodwill that develops into vibrant, mutually beneficial partnerships among nations.

Not long after NAFSA and the Alliance first called for a national policy to promote international education, President Bill Clinton—himself a former Rhodes Scholar—instructed federal agency heads to promote study abroad and “the exchange of teachers, scholars, and citizens at all levels of society.”

Many colleges and universities are heeding the call to promote study abroad on their own campuses. Two-thirds of the students at Dickinson College in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, study overseas before they graduate. Dean of Students Joyce Bylander said these students return with an increased capacity for tolerating the “dissonance and discomfort” that accompanies life in an unfamiliar setting. “That is such a critical life skill: to be in discomfort and still be able to function. The more they learn that skill, the more places they’ll be able to go in the world,” said Bylander.

This is not only in the students’ interest, but also in America’s interest. Collectively, the same skills and talents that bolster an individual resume can make the country more secure and economically competitive. The United States can no longer afford to be passive about study abroad. We need to aggressively promote it to each rising generation.

And we need to remove the roadblocks that stand in their way.

Other countries have long recognized the need to clear these roadblocks. The European community created a network called Erasmus in 1987 to encourage college students to venture out to study in other countries across Europe. Today Erasmus serves nearly 60,000 exchange students at universities in two dozen countries. It minimizes the hassles of moving from one campus to the next and of articulating different courses and credits. The network still receives extensive support from the European Union as well as from hundreds of universities, colleges, and businesses involved in these exchanges, all toward the end of “creating the conditions for better understanding of each other’s cultures and national habits between students of different nationalities.”

...Understanding Ourselves

However, lest anyone think that study abroad solely entails learning about other cultures, we should stress that it is also about understanding our own culture and values. In their struggle to learn among other people in distant places, students learn about themselves in ways that simply cannot be replicated in the comforting and familiar confines of an American campus. For many young Americans, encounters with a host family or classmates in a foreign university force them to consider for the first time what it means to be an American. They are surprised to find that ordinary citizens of the country they are visiting will grill them on American policies and politics, and force them to defend beliefs they may always have taken for granted. This is an education that no civics class back home can duplicate. Study abroad brings an increased appreciation for one’s own culture and traditions, as well as a more sympathetic understanding of the views and norms of others. Elaine Sergeyev, 21, a Dickinson Spanish major who emigrated from Latvia as a child, said, “You feel more American being abroad. I got a more solid definition of America by looking from the outside into it.”

Americans need to be able to understand how others see the world now more than ever, for personal growth, for prosperity, for security. Yet, while no one would gainsay the power and importance of the relationships that American students build when they study abroad, our actions do not always match our rhetoric on this score. As far back as 1966, Congress passed an International Education Act meant to expand federal support for international and area studies programs on campuses and to underwrite more educational exchanges. But lawmakers never funded the act, which fell victim to the political and budgetary backlash from the Vietnam War. Funding for Title VI area studies and language programs languished at 1960s levels, although Congress quickly boosted funding and the Department of Education opened new strategic language centers after September 11.

Study abroad is not and should not be just for Rhodes Scholars. Its value is too great to be restricted to a student elite. These opportunities can and should be available to every American college student. That is our vision and our challenge.

In 1991, under the leadership of Senator David Boren, Congress established the National Security Education Program (NSEP). NSEP is focused on equipping Americans with an understanding of less commonly taught languages and cultures, thereby developing a cadre of professionals with expertise in foreign areas imperative for our national security. Upon completion, award recipients are required to seek employment with a federal agency involved in national security affairs or, failing that, in higher education in an area related to their NSEP-funded study. Yet the survival of this small but highly valuable program is perennially threatened in Congress.

Congress also created in 2001 the Benjamin Gilman International Scholarship Program, which provides grants up to \$5,000 to help several hundred financially needy American students study abroad each year. Unfortunately, funding inadequacies have forced the program to turn away thousands of qualified and eager applicants. For fiscal year 2004, the prospects for continued funding were unclear as this report went to press.

Recent events and the globalization of the world economy now have given a new impetus to making good on the rhetoric about the importance of international studies and study abroad. Students preparing to enter the workforce have a clear interest in obtaining international skills and knowledge that can make them more marketable and more productive once they land a job. More importantly, America has a vested interest in having a more informed and globally competent citizenry.



IV. Encouraging More Americans to Study Abroad

“Travel is fatal to prejudice, bigotry and narrow-mindedness—all foes to real understanding. Likewise, tolerance or broad, wholesome charitable views of men and things cannot be acquired by vegetating in our little corner of the earth all one’s lifetime.”

— Mark Twain

The number of U.S. students studying abroad has doubled in less than a decade and tripled over the past 15 years. A record 160,920 students took classes overseas for academic credit in 2001–2002. Yet, despite these impressive gains, the reality is that only a minuscule fraction of college students ever winds up in a classroom outside the United States. Much to the chagrin of many educators, these low participation rates occur despite surveys indicating year after year that 20 percent or more of a quarter-million incoming freshmen surveyed intended to study abroad during their academic career.

Although the official figures leave out Americans who go abroad on their own to take classes independently without their home institution’s involvement or approval, students who study abroad amount to barely more than 1 percent of the 8 million full-time and 5 million part-time undergraduates attending the 3,400 accredited U.S. colleges and universities. Anyway you look at it, the number is infinitesimal.

At the same time, the junior year abroad appears to be largely a thing of the past. More than 90 percent of the Americans who study abroad go for a semester or less. Some go for just a few weeks. Almost half the Americans who study abroad go to Britain, Italy, Spain, or France.

Let us be perfectly clear: there is nothing wrong with heading to England to study abroad, or to other countries in western Europe. As Samuel Johnson told James Boswell, “When a man is tired of London, he is tired of life.” We are not tired of London. But we applaud the trend for Americans to become more adventurous about where they study abroad, and we encourage colleges and universities to prepare more students to head off the beaten track.

Encouragingly, polls by the Pew Charitable Trusts show that Americans understand the implications of globalization and the necessity for their children to be educated internationally. There is considerable evidence, including recent surveys by the American Council on Education, that college-bound students—supported by their parents—want and expect to study abroad in far greater numbers than they actually do. Some select colleges partly on the basis of study abroad opportunities. It seems clear that higher education customers are at least receptive to—if not eager for—leadership, guidance, and a facilitative environment that would help them internationalize their education. What, then, needs to happen to make use of this fertile ground?

We believe that campuses and other study abroad program providers should make every effort to keep study abroad as affordable, accessible, and enticing as possible, especially for those who now consider it beyond their reach. We must go beyond the models and incentives that applied to a time when study abroad was the province of elite, liberal arts colleges. Higher education will never be truly democratized until all students can access the opportunity to build necessary skills through study abroad.

U.S. Study Abroad: A Snapshot

Top Destinations		Number of Students	
United Kingdom		30,143	
Spain		17,176	
Italy		17,169	
France		12,274	

Gender		Percentage	
Female		64.9	
Male		35.1	

Race/Ethnicity		Percentage	
Caucasian		82.9	
Hispanic-American		5.8	
Asian-American		5.4	
African-American		3.5	
Multiracial		2.0	
Native American		0.4	

Academic Level		Percentage	
Junior		40.7	
Senior		20.4	
Sophomore		13.6	
Bachelor's, Unspecified		11.0	
Master's		4.7	
Graduate, Unspecified		3.3	
Freshman		3.2	
Associate		1.5	
Other		0.8	
Doctoral		0.7	

Participation		Number of Students	
Total		160,920	

Duration of Program		Percentage	
One Semester		39.0	
Summer Term		34.4	
Academic Year		7.8	
Fewer Than 8 Weeks		7.3	
January Term		6.0	
One Quarter		3.9	
Other		0.6	
Calendar Year		0.5	
Two Quarters		0.5	

Field of Study		Percentage	
Social Sciences		21.9	
Business & Management		17.6	
Humanities		13.8	
Fine or Applied Arts		8.5	
Foreign Languages		8.5	
Physical Sciences		7.6	
Other		5.2	
Education		3.9	
Undeclared		3.8	
Health Sciences		3.0	
Engineering		2.9	
Math & Computer Sciences		2.2	
Agriculture		1.1	

The Institute of International Education's Open Doors 2003 Report

Barriers to Be Overcome

The fault, as Cassius tells Brutus in Act I of *Julius Caesar*, is not in our stars, but in ourselves. College policies, albeit often unconsciously, discourage study abroad more than they encourage it. Colleges must take a hard look at the possible institutional barriers that stand in the way of study abroad, which may include: a lack of leadership on the part of senior campus officials, faculty indifference, rigidities in the curriculum, anachronistic rules, ineffective enrollment management, program designs that are inaccessible for nontraditional students, and a lack of predeparture preparation and reentry assistance.

Furthermore, colleges and universities need to emphasize to their students and faculty the importance of study abroad. Internationalizing learning is a mission that every college and university—two- and four-year institutions alike—should undertake. While many colleges make a nod in this direction, too few make it happen. Indeed, colleges often unwittingly erect roadblocks that discourage students from pursuing education abroad. Instead of actively building on student enthusiasm, they unconsciously stifle it.

1. Motivations for Faculty

While colleges and individual departments must decide whether to grant credit for courses and work done overseas, most faculty keep their distance. They make sure that the work done abroad is minimally acceptable, but they do not see it as their responsibility to ensure that study abroad is carefully articulated with the offerings on campus. Colleges often provide too few incentives for faculty to work closely with students on planning, supervising, and assessing the study abroad experience. Apart from faculty-led study tours over summer or winter break, few colleges dispatch their own

faculty to teach courses overseas. Travel has its charms, but as anyone who has been inside an airport knows, it can also be stressful, fraught with delays, and disruptive of a normal work schedule. For an art history or archaeology professor, showing slides of the Uffizi Gallery in Florence or the ancient ruins of Mycenae, Greece, is not as powerful as leading students to those sites, but it consumes a lot less time and fewer resources. Moreover, junior faculty may be reluctant to take on assignments that cut into the time available for writing and research, activities that colleges do reward with tenure and promotion.

2. Curricular Barriers

The popular image is that college is a grand banquet with a groaning board of tempting nourishments that students pile on their plates as it strikes their fancy. The reality is that most curricula are crammed with requirements that leave students little leeway, especially if they are on a path toward a licensed profession such as architecture, engineering, teaching, or medicine. Study abroad may fit naturally into the schedule of a language or area studies major, but curricular demands may preclude others from leaving campus for a semester, let alone two, unless they are willing to stretch their undergraduate education into a fifth year.

3. Financial Disincentives

Financial constraints, either real or imagined, often discourage students from studying abroad, although it sometimes costs less to spend a semester on the other side of the world—including air travel—than it does to stay in the dorms, eat in the cafeteria, and attend classes at home. Compounding this problem is the fact that many students work part-time or longer to help pay their bills, and those who study abroad usually must forego those paychecks. Some study abroad programs—both campus-based and provided by a third-party—seem inordinately and unnecessarily expensive. Study abroad programming should include options that lower financial barriers to students whose circumstances do not permit higher costs or loss of income, including scholarships and fee waivers, shorter-term study abroad options, and overseas work opportunities.

4. Addressing the Needs of Nontraditional Students

According to data from the National Center for Education Statistics, seventy-five percent of undergraduate students in the United States today are “nontraditional,” meaning they have one or more of the following characteristics: did not graduate from high school; did not enroll in an institution of higher education directly after high school; are attending

Engaging Faculty

“You can’t have curriculum integration without faculty support,” says Chunsheng Zhang, Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs/International Studies at St. Cloud State University, where using tenured and tenure-track faculty in their study abroad programs is the rule, not the exception. By combining active faculty involvement in teaching portions of the University’s 14 semester-long study abroad programs, St. Cloud State is able to address the curricular requirements of its students’ majors in eight countries abroad. For more than 25 years, St. Cloud State has used this approach, and Zhang notes it represents a significant institutional commitment in resources. About 20 faculty members are reassigned to teach courses in the university’s programs in Alnwick, England; Olomouc, the Czech Republic; Ingolstadt, Germany; Concepcion, Chile; and San Roman, Costa Rica. Their programs have four guiding principles, according to Zhang: the study abroad program “must be curriculum-based, address student demands, capitalize on faculty expertise—both academic and cultural, and have impact by design.”

Global E3

Making study abroad accessible for undergraduate students in professions like engineering remains a challenge, but innovative models do exist on individual campuses and through specialized consortial arrangements. The Global Engineering Education Exchange (Global E3), launched initially with National Science Foundation funding and now supported by fees and corporate sponsorship, provides a mechanism for engineering students to go abroad for a semester, summer, or school year and maintain academic progress at their U.S. institution. Though the numbers of U.S. students are modest—87 students participated in 2002–2003—the Global E3 network provides a structure to validate student course work in advance of the overseas study, identifies a network of overseas institutions, and encourages student participation in post-program internships abroad. The consortium of engineering schools also utilizes a tuition swap and an array of scholarship resources.

part-time; are working full-time; or are financially independent, married, or have dependents. To include this broad swath of the student population, indeed the new majority of students, programs must be designed to accommodate their unique needs. Students who are first-generation college students or who are from low-income families need a way to have a first experience abroad. They need a way to be able to go abroad for a week or two and to have a positive experience to build upon. Asking these students to go for an extended period as their first experience is too large a leap. Unlike their middle or upper income peers, who have often already had extensive personal or family travel experience, many nontraditional students have never left their own neighborhoods.

We underscore the importance of making study abroad a reality for all college students, not just the white and the wealthy. The United States is failing to show the world the diversity of its population. Study abroad can be a truly eye-opening experience for Americans of all races who discover that people elsewhere categorize them more by national origin than by ethnicity. Elaine Opher, retired postal service secretary who studied abroad in London on a summer program offered by the Community College of Philadelphia, said some white classmates were shocked “to experience prejudice against Americans.” She added that study abroad “is an eye-opener, period.” In addition, while a majority of undergraduates is still in the traditional 18 to 23 age group, a significant number is older, and many have both family and work obligations. We strongly urge colleges to promote ethnic, socioeconomic, and gender diversity in study abroad.

5. Diversifying Participants, Locales, and Languages

We also need to look beyond the usual suspects—the language majors and the rest of those in the humanities. We don’t teach science and math only to those who plan to become scientists or mathematicians. Likewise, international education should be an integral part of education for all students in the United States. Colleges that understand the importance of study abroad find ways to convince engineers and math and science majors, not just language or foreign affairs majors, to do coursework overseas. For instance, forty percent of recent graduating classes at the University of Notre Dame studied abroad; a majority of the 1,188 class of 2002 graduates who studied abroad were business, science, math, engineering, law, and architecture majors. A third of Worcester Polytechnic Institute’s aspiring engineers perform academic work abroad, many in small teams under a WPI professor’s tutelage that tackle real problems in Venice, Bangkok, Melbourne, and other distant locales. One-fifth of the seniors who cross the stage at Georgia Tech each spring have studied abroad.

Opportunities for Nontraditional Students

When a student is older, married, financially needy, and in a highly structured academic program, study abroad can seem to be an unattainable option. But programs that satisfy academic requirements and meet students’ personal circumstances are being developed. The University of Minnesota has created just such a program for its food science and nutrition majors in Ecuador. The low-cost, three-week program is ideal for students interested in health care, epidemiology, biology, anthropology, public policy, and social services to explore health care issues common to a large number of nations in the developing world. It is also directly relevant to Minnesota’s food science and nutrition majors because they interact with individuals in Quito with key socio-economic and cultural circumstances that mirror those of urban Minnesotans with whom these students will interact as professionals after they graduate.

Utilizing Consortia

Consortial study abroad programs, as well as independent providers of study abroad programming, can be extremely effective partners for higher education institutions because they can facilitate access, diversity, and affordability for both the institutions and their students. One such example is the International Student Exchange Program (ISEP), which has linkages and programs that reach into 35 countries. Serving more than 115 U.S. colleges and universities since its founding in 1979, ISEP is well known for its opportunities for students who do not typically participate in education abroad: minority students, older students, nontraditional majors, and students with limited financial resources.



V. Our Recommendations for Change

Our fundamental message is twofold: (1) study abroad needs to become an integral part of college students' education, and (2) a national effort is required to make that happen. The federal government must set a direction and provide leadership and funding. The states must incorporate measures to promote study abroad into their economic development planning, just as they do with foreign trade. The purveyors of education themselves—the colleges and universities—must dedicate appropriate counterpart resources and adopt the institutional reforms necessary to provide a more facilitative environment for study abroad. Accrediting agencies and state licensing and certification boards must ensure that requirements do not unnecessarily hinder study abroad. The private sector, as the ultimate beneficiary of the international skills produced through study abroad, also has an important role to play.

Our fundamental message is twofold: (1) study abroad needs to become an integral part of college students' education, and (2) a national effort is required to make that happen.

The Role of the President and Congress

Leadership at the level of the President and Congress is particularly crucial. Without such leadership, the notion of a national strategy for international education is oxymoronic. It is at that level that national priorities are articulated, and that incentives and standards are set to promote those priorities. The United States needs to embrace study abroad in a way it never has done before. Our students need to hear the message loudly from the President and other leaders that study abroad is in the national interest. Absent this leadership, this sea change in colleges' priorities will not happen.

History has demonstrated that we renew and strengthen America with bold initiatives: the GI Bill, the Marshall Plan, the NDEA, and the Morrill Act, signed by President Abraham Lincoln to create our great land grant universities.

Such a bold initiative is needed now. A study abroad fellowship program, akin to crucial past government investments in higher education such as those referenced above, would ensure that significantly more students go abroad to gain greater international expertise in a wider variety of regions.

Specifically, we call upon the President and the Congress to:

- ◇ Establish a bipartisan commission to examine the establishment of such a fellowship program, to report its findings within one year of its creation.
- ◇ Articulate a national policy on international education that includes strong support for study abroad.
- ◇ Convene a national forum of federal, state, educational, and business leaders to discuss and adopt this national strategy.
- ◇ Look for creative ways to use existing federal grant and loan programs to encourage study abroad, possibly by canceling loans, lowering interest rates, or delaying repayment for those who pursue study abroad in certain languages and areas.
- ◇ Fully fund and build upon the Gilman Scholarship Program, which provides study abroad grants to financially disadvantaged students, to ensure that the lack of financial means is not a barrier to study abroad.

- ◇ Ensure that programs such as Gilman, seeking to target low-income and first-generation students, are tailored to address the unique needs of these student populations, including overseas credit-bearing study for periods of time less than a traditional academic term or summer session and financial support that serves as a real replacement for forgone income.
- ◇ Strengthen the NSEP Boren Scholarships and Fellowships program to enhance its long-term viability and to put it on a firm financial footing.
- ◇ Increase support for study abroad under Title VI of the Higher Education Act by permitting the use of funds for study abroad by undergraduate students under sections 602 and 604, as proposed by the Coalition for International Education.
- ◇ Make it easier to use Pell Grants and other federal financial assistance for study abroad.
- ◇ Allow campuses to use a portion of the college work-study funds they administer for students who are studying abroad.

The Role of Governors and State Legislatures

State leaders, too, have a vital role to play. State legislatures and boards of regents govern state higher education policy. Governors and legislators already recognize that their states' economic growth and prosperity are tied to internationalization. State universities operate some of the largest and most successful study abroad programs. Eleven of the 15 U.S. universities that sent more than 1,200 students to study abroad in 2001–2002 were flagship public institutions, according to *Open Doors*.

We urge all governors to add their strong voices to this chorus in support of study abroad. Internationally competent citizens will hold the key to the economic competitiveness of our states. Articulating a strong state policy on international education will send a message not only to students and parents, but also to state colleges and their faculties that study abroad is an important part of the mission of state institutions of higher education.

We encourage governors and state lawmakers to:

- ◇ Adopt state policies of support for international education.
- ◇ Look for ways to increase financial support for students who study abroad, possibly in partnership with leading state industries. One model is the Regents Study Abroad Scholarships in Georgia, referenced below.
- ◇ Make state aid portable, so that students can use this support during time spent studying overseas.
- ◇ Create innovative funding sources, such as the Texas international education fee, which has also been adopted by other states.²

Leading Study Abroad Institutions in the United States

Rank	Institution	Number of Study Abroad Students
1	New York University	1,872
2	Michigan State University	1,819
3	University of Texas at Austin	1,591
4	University of Pennsylvania	1,461
5	Georgetown University	1,412
6	University of Wisconsin–Madison	1,340
7	Boston University	1,330
8	University of Arizona	1,326
9	Penn State University	1,270
10	University of Georgia	1,268
11	University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill	1,266
12	Indiana University at Bloomington	1,245
13	University of Minnesota–Twin Cities	1,219
14	University of Illinois at Urbana–Champaign	1,216
15	University of Southern California	1,211

²After a lobbying campaign by study abroad alumni on the University of Texas at Austin campus, the Texas legislature gave state colleges and universities permission in 1991 to begin charging students a fee of \$1 per semester to support study abroad scholarships. Every campus eventually adopted the fees, which now are \$2 or \$3 per semester.

The Role of College and University Presidents

Every college and university in the United States, from the smallest community college to the largest research university, should encourage its students to study abroad and find ways to make it possible, especially for those who now seldom get the chance. The barriers we have highlighted in this report are surmountable. Indeed, many have been surmounted by schools that made it a priority to do so.

Although a serious institutional commitment to study abroad will require some financial investment, and having a large number of students in other countries can complicate life for a campus registrar as well as the bursar, this is not primarily a problem that requires large new institutional resources. Instead, it will take determination and the will to overcome the obstacles to study abroad that now exist on many campuses.

As Peter McPherson, president of Michigan State University—the standard bearer for state colleges and universities when it comes to promoting study abroad—has said:

We have absolutely made an institutional commitment to make study abroad available to all students, in all of our undergraduate programs, at a cost no greater than what they would pay by remaining on campus for a semester. This is a major institutional undertaking, particularly for one of our size and mission complexity, but we believe that it is essential if we are to graduate educated students.

We encourage college and university presidents to:

- ◇ Integrate study abroad into as many different degree programs as possible. Study abroad should be a requirement in some majors, such as foreign language and area studies. But it should be an option in every major.
- ◇ Get the faculty involved in designing and teaching in study abroad programs. Faculty should participate in program planning, course design, and site selection, and then help fit the program into the curriculum and serve as advisers to the program.
- ◇ Make it easier for students to study abroad without losing time on the track to graduation. This requires careful selection and articulation of courses taken overseas. It is particularly necessary for students in fields such as engineering and business, where tight curricular requirements and sequencing leave little flexibility.
- ◇ Create programs that accommodate nontraditional students. Shorter stay programs at lower cost are an effective option. Offered early enough in a student's career, they may also encourage the student to undertake further study abroad later.³

Many institutions already do masterful jobs of breaking down the barriers and encouraging students to study abroad. Hundreds of other colleges and universities can learn from their examples. We share a few of these success stories below, originally highlighted in NAFSA's *Internationalizing the Campus 2003, Profiles of Success at Colleges and Universities* report:

Truman State University

Study abroad opportunities are often associated with premier public flagship institutions and elite private colleges. The success of overseas study programs at other types of institutions, however, often goes unnoticed. Truman State University, a state master's degree-granting institution in Missouri, is the only public institution among the top 20 study abroad sending institutions of its type (by percentage of the student body), according to IIE's Open Doors. About a quarter of each undergraduate class participates in study abroad, most on semester or summer term programs. A key to Truman's success, according to Patrick Lecaque, director of the university's Center for International Education Abroad, is the use of a combination of Truman-conducted programs and those of several consortia.

³Please see the Appendix on page 18 for the full list of recommendations for college and university presidents.

Community College of Philadelphia—Expanding Horizons

We have a special mission and a special responsibility. We are the largest single point of access for minorities in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. If you look at the economic slice of those students we serve, unless we give them these kinds of opportunities, they won't have them. They simply won't have them.

—Stephen M. Curtis, president of Community College of Philadelphia

A decade ago, pushed by its faculty, the Community College of Philadelphia rewrote its mission statement to embrace the goal of giving students “increased awareness and appreciation of a diverse world where all are interdependent.”

Today the college teaches Chinese and Japanese language classes as well as French, Spanish, Arabic, and Italian. It offers a range of humanities courses that expose students to the art, literature, religion, and politics of Asia, Europe, Africa, and other parts of the world. Liberal arts students can pursue an associate degree with an international studies emphasis that includes two years of foreign language. Currently, more than 50 students are majoring in international studies.

Community also offers its own study abroad programs, including trips to London and to Merida, Mexico. Edward Forman, the English professor who leads Community's trips to London, said, “Our students haven't been many places before. It's very valuable for them. They gain confidence and more sophistication in dealing with people and ideas.”

Worcester Polytechnic Institute—Engineering Global Understanding

For those who think engineering majors are too busy to study abroad, consider Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI) and its signature Global Perspective Programs. Each year WPI sends 300 science and engineering students overseas to work in teams under a professor's guidance on real-world problems. Among U.S. institutions that award Ph.D.s, only Dartmouth sends a larger proportion of students to study abroad.

Thirty of WPI's 210 faculty members pack up and head out with students for two months each year. Nearly half the faculty have done it at least once.

WPI pays the passport fee for its students to help nudge them out the door. It also provides extra help to those on financial aid so that the cost factor does not discourage them from doing their projects abroad.

Since students must do an off-campus project anyway, said Natalie Mello, director of global operations, “why not do it in London or Bangkok or Venice or Costa Rica or Puerto Rico or Namibia...? That's the key to our being able to send so many students to study abroad.”

Mello added that the first question that industry recruiters nowadays ask WPI seniors is not “What was your project” but “Where was your project?”

Duke University—A University-Wide Commitment to Study Abroad

It is through the window of international exchanges...that students can compare themselves with others, examine the extent to which they are culture bound, and explore the insights of those from other cultures who see the world through different lenses. Such insights can help them recognize that who they are..., while a product in part of the world they know, is as much a product of our interdependence with other regions and cultures about which they know almost nothing. This recognition is an important prerequisite to accepting membership in and responsibility for citizenship in the global community.

—An excerpt from Duke's 2001 strategic planning report

Duke has done on a broad scale what many institutions with fewer resources are attempting on a smaller canvas. What is remarkable about the growth of Duke's commitment to international education is how it has taken hold across a sprawling institution with graduate and professional schools long accustomed to charting their own destiny. What Duke's president, trustees, and deans have done shows how change can be effectively managed even in a complex academic environment where authority is intentionally diffuse and decentralized.

After a faculty call for action to internationalize the Duke student body and curriculum, the trustees adopted a strategic plan in 1994 that not only declared Duke's determination to globalize but committed resources to make it happen. They created a new senior position, vice provost for academic affairs and international education, and put up a substantial amount of money to support international activities on campus.

When Duke’s trustees revised the university’s strategic plan in 2001, they made a commitment to make it possible for all undergraduates to study abroad “regardless of economic circumstance.” They also urged that more be done to encourage science and engineering majors to study abroad, and that libraries devote more space to international collections.

Students can choose from 14 Duke-administered study abroad programs, or from more than 100 programs administered elsewhere. They also have the option of enrolling as visiting students at 30 universities across Australia, the United Kingdom, New Zealand, South Africa, and Mexico. The university’s effort is already paying off. The percentage of its undergraduates studying abroad has climbed from 33 to 47 percent.

Private Sector Involvement

Sending more young Americans to study abroad is also in the interest of the private sector, which is dependent upon an internationally competent workforce that speaks the languages of its customers. Yet corporate America has failed to live up to its responsibilities for providing both the incentives and the resources for colleges and universities to produce graduates with the international skills that it requires. Corporations must step up to the plate with respect to (1) promoting curricular reforms, (2) providing study abroad resources, and (3) offering internships abroad.

1) Many corporate CEOs are eloquent on their need for managers with international skills. All too often, however, this priority is not reflected in the recruitment practices of their human resource departments, which tend to send messages that cause students to devalue study abroad in favor of completing a full curriculum of required courses at home. If corporate America were to send a strong message that it values international experience and skills, students and schools would get that message instantly, and study abroad would begin to flourish throughout higher education.

2) The Coca-Cola Foundation, recognizing the importance of international skill development through study abroad, teamed with the American Institute for Foreign Study and the University System of Georgia to create the Regents Study Abroad Scholarships. Such partnerships are not as common as they should be. We urge other private sector entities to pursue similar partnerships to ensure their workforce is internationally competitive for years to come.

3) Multinational corporations are uniquely positioned to provide students with an invaluable experience: an internship abroad. Furthermore, if paid, such internships would provide indispensable resources to help students support their study abroad experience. Far more experiences of this kind must be provided than are currently available.

The Role of Accreditation, Licensing, and Certification

In American higher education, curriculum design in professional schools—for example, schools of nursing, education, business, and architecture—is set, in part, in response to requirements and standards outlined by accrediting agencies and by state certification and licensing bodies. Such requirements are usually stated in terms of competencies to be mastered at graduation. Often competencies or standards are translated by academic departments into specific course requirements that students need to satisfy before graduation, especially if a licensing exam is to be completed shortly thereafter.

We urge that accreditation, licensing, and certifying bodies require a global competency of all graduating students or students sitting for licensing exams. Such a competency could best be fulfilled by a robust study abroad program. In several sectors—notably in business, and to a lesser extent architecture—this type of requirement has become a regular part of an undergraduate’s program because the accrediting bodies have included provisions for these skills, resulting in curricula that are flexible enough to permit an education abroad experience.

An example of what is envisioned is instructive. A nursing student working to qualify for a global competency in the cultural context of health care might expect to fulfill training for this requirement through a study abroad program that provides a practicum abroad. Such an academic experience would prepare the student for working with an urban immigrant patient population, not only by providing practical training in nursing, but also by combining such training with language teaching and cultural awareness.

We urge these professional bodies to work with faculty to articulate how study abroad could be included despite strict curricular requirements.



VI. Conclusion

The propositions that Americans need to know more about the world and that, therefore, more Americans must pursue part of their education abroad are not really open to challenge—and, indeed, they have not really been challenged. What is notable about discussions of study abroad since the dawn of the global age is not that there has been a debate about it, but rather that there hasn't been. Few seriously contest that study abroad is important. The problem has been getting political, higher education, and business leaders to pay serious attention to the matter—to give it more than lip service.

The time for lip service ended on September 11, 2001. Since that day, our nation has pursued a series of national security imperatives with single-minded intensity. Study abroad must be counted among them.

The task force believes that the time for lip service ended on September 11, 2001. Since that day, our nation has pursued a series of national security imperatives with single-minded intensity. Study abroad must be counted among them. The United States must now embrace the discipline needed to overcome our ignorance of other lands and languages. We must ensure that our students graduate with the tools necessary to understand the perils and opportunities that present themselves in the world beyond our borders. This is the great challenge facing America at the beginning of the new millennium: to give its citizens a thorough understanding of the world and its crosscurrents, to help them see what others value and believe.

By itself, study abroad will not ensure that our citizens will become internationally literate. But we can ensure that they won't if we do not provide our students with more study-abroad opportunities. Through bold steps, such as those recommended in this report, we must make it routine in this country—as it is in most others—to pursue part of one's higher education abroad.



Acknowledgments

NAFSA

Association of
International Educators

NAFSA: Association of International Educators has championed the cause of international education and exchange for more than 50 years, supporting the belief that students with international experience and a global perspective are crucial to the survival of the modern world. Committed to building the skills, knowledge, and professional competencies of its members, NAFSA strengthens international education's biggest asset — the professionals who make educational exchange possible. Today, NAFSA has more than 8,700 members from all 50 states and 80 countries. Our members share a belief that international education advances learning and scholarship, builds respect among different peoples, and enhances constructive leadership in a global community.

The Strategic Task Force on Education Abroad convened in Washington, D.C., for two meetings over the course of the past year.

NAFSA and the task force would like to thank Christopher Connell, former assistant chief of the Associated Press Washington Bureau, for his assistance in crafting the text of the report.

Additional copies of the report can be obtained by visiting www.nafsa.org/securingamericasfuture.

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Appendix

We urge college and university presidents to:

- ◇ Integrate study abroad into many different degree programs. Study abroad should be a requirement in some majors, such as language and area studies. But it should be an option in every major.
- ◇ Get the faculty involved in designing and teaching in study abroad programs. Ask faculty to help design new programs. Faculty should participate in program planning, course design, and site selection, and then help fit the program into the curriculum and serve as advisers to the program.
- ◇ Create reentry seminars and other programs that require students to report on their study abroad experience and find ways to incorporate the knowledge and experience gained into studies back on the main campus.
- ◇ Make it easier for students to study abroad without losing time on the track to graduation. This requires careful selection and articulation of courses taken overseas. It is particularly necessary for students in fields such as engineering and business, where tight curricular requirements and sequencing leave little flexibility.
- ◇ Use distance learning to introduce students to new cultures and uncommon languages, and to untether them from the campus by letting them take required courses online from abroad.
- ◇ Purge anachronistic rules that inhibit study abroad unnecessarily, such as inflexible on-campus residency requirements, and charging full room and board while students are abroad.
- ◇ Use study abroad as a recruitment tool, as many colleges already are doing.
- ◇ Create programs that accommodate nontraditional students. Shorter stay programs at lower cost are an effective option. Offered early enough in a student's career, they may also encourage the student to undertake further study abroad later.
- ◇ Introduce newer models for education abroad programming, including overseas study as underclassmen, utilizing consortia and non-campus-based providers, and offering service-oriented programs abroad.
- ◇ Proactively recruit students from high school with advanced language training and prior overseas study experience, a process that over time will both encourage and raise student expectations about participating (often again) in study abroad as undergraduates.
- ◇ Design and market study abroad programs with low-income and first-generation college students in mind to ensure that they have an equal opportunity to participate. Provide appropriate financial incentives to make participation a realistic educational option.



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