BRIEF ON

GLOBAL EDUCATION & MINORITY SERVING INSTITUTIONS IN US HIGHER EDUCATION

Preparing the 21st Century Global Leaders at MSIs

Edited by Pamela Roy, PhD
# Table of Contents

## Landscape Scan of Global Education & MSIs
- Minority-Serving Institutions and Global Engagement: An Overview
  - Page 4
- The Education Abroad Experience at Minority Serving Institutions & HBCUs
  - Page 13

## Models & Perspectives
- Africa in the American Mind: The Invention of Space in Study Abroad
  - Page 17
- Developing Institutional and International Partnerships for Undergraduate Global Learning Experiences at HBCUs and Other MSIs: A Social Work Program’s Journey
  - Page 23

## Case Studies
- Access to and Advocacy for Mobility at a Minority-Serving Institution
  - California State University, Fullerton
  - Page 29
- Innovations for Enhancing the Institutional Capacity of Minority-Serving Institutions: Integrating Global Education Efforts into the Campus Climate
  - Bethune-Cookman University
  - Page 33
- Creating a Sustainable Global Learning Model for Minority-Serving Institutions
  - Bowie State University
  - Page 35

## Resources & Networks
- Using Virtual Exchange to Foster Global Learning Experiences at HBCUs and Other MSIs
  - Page 39
- Enhancing Historically Black Colleges and Universities’ Ability to Produce Global Citizens: A Call to Action
  - Page 43

## Authors’ Biographies
- Page 48
MINORITY-SERVING INSTITUTIONS AND GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT: AN OVERVIEW

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The benefits of global educational opportunities are numerous and ought to be enjoyed by any and all students who are interested in pursuing them; while the need for increased access to global education is widely accepted, there is much room for growth. The primary benefits of global learning include the opportunity to enhance global awareness, career opportunities, and academic learning; to learn a foreign language; to develop specific skills (e.g., leadership, communication, team-building); and to experience personal growth, such as self-confidence, self-awareness, independence, and adaptability (IIE, 2014; NAFSA, 2017; NAFSA, 2017b). In the past fifteen years, some scholars have researched the positive effects of study abroad participation on minority students (such as Lee & Green, 2016; Willis, 2015). According to the most recent Open Doors Report, 27% of study abroad participants in the 2014-2015 academic year were minority students (Institute of International Education, 2016). Though this represents an increase in participation from a decade ago (up from 17% in 2004-2005), it is a modest one.

International educators and, more broadly, institutions of higher education must create an even more inclusive and accessible environment, one that strives for diversity both on campus and in education abroad programs. As US higher education undergoes dramatic shifts in the demographic composition of the student body, this changing landscape will require that institutional leadership, administrators, and faculty broaden their approach so as to best serve all students; offices of international education and education abroad must be at the forefront of strategic planning for and the implementation of inclusive excellence in global education.

Global Engagement at Minority-Serving Institutions

Minority-Serving Institutions (MSIs) serve as a “critical point of entry to college for many who were excluded from higher education” (Gasman, Nguyen, & Conrad, 2015, p. 120). In total, there are approximately 500 MSIs within the United States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the US Virgin Islands (Ledesma, 2014; Gasman et al., 2015). MSIs include Historically Black College and Universities (HBCUs), Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs), Tribal College and Universities (TCUs), and Asian American, Native American, and Pacific Islander-Serving Institutions (AANAPISIs) (Gasman et al., 2015; Shealy & Moore, 2016). Various forces have shaped MSIs, including legislation by the federal government, religious interests, philanthropists, lobbying groups, and, more recently, by changes in the demographics of the population of the United States (Gasman, et al., 2015).
It is always challenging for higher education institutions, whether they are MSIs or not, to internationalize or to continue expanding their global reach. MSIs are “vital in educating students of color” in the United States: in 2011, nearly 30% of undergraduate students earned bachelor’s degrees at MSIs and predominantly minority institutions” (John & Stage, 2014, pp. 65 & 73). Brux and Fry (2010) highlight six major categories of obstacles impeding multicultural students from studying abroad: finances; family concerns and attitudes; fear of racism and discrimination and lack of faculty support (the 4 Fs of studying abroad, which were first conceived by Ganz); other factors include historical patterns, expectations, and attitudes; and institutional factors, such as lack of relevant study abroad programs, as well as scheduling difficulties (Trujillo, 2017). Jackson (2005) reports that students of color can suffer from “‘not for people like me’ syndrome” due to “media influences and historical exclusion” from global education (as cited in Sweeney, 2013, p. 3). For MSIs and non-MSIs alike, this very real phenomenon often translates to recruitment challenges to increase study abroad participation. However, now more than ever, MSIs must engage more deeply in the global education space (see Table 1).

**Table 1: A Quick Glance at MSIs and Global Education**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of MSI</th>
<th>SA Participation</th>
<th>Key Stats</th>
</tr>
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| **HBCUs**   | 58% of HBCUs offer study abroad participation | • 1st HBCU founded in the late 19th century  
• Currently there are ~100 HBCUs  
• 5.6% of students who participate in study abroad, nationwide (all institutions) are black  
• See Peterson et al. (2018) in this brief |
| **HSIs**    | Data unavailable  | • Established in the late 20th century due to demographic shifts and increase of Latino/a/x population in the US  
• Currently there are 254 HSIs, but there may be upwards of 400 HSIs based on classification  
• HSIs must be nonprofit and have at least 25% Hispanic enrollment among its undergraduate population, and the institution must demonstrate that at least half of these students are low-income and first-generation  
• 8.8% of students who participate in study abroad, nationwide (all institutions) are Hispanic |
| **TCUs**    | Data unavailable  | • 1st TCU established in 1960s as a result of the American Indian Movement with the aim of providing culturally-based education to Native Americans, unlike the assimilation education forced upon this group for centuries by colonists  
• Currently there are 33+ TCUs in 13 states, most are located on reservations and are 2-year institutions  
• Enroll close to 20% of all Native American college students  
• 0.5% of students who participate in study abroad, nationwide (all institutions) are American Indian or Alaska Native  
• For most American Indian students, especially those enrolled at TCUs, most opportunities to study abroad are infrequent and generally not available through sustained programs within their institutions |
A Framework for Global Engagement & Campus Internationalization

Marilyn Jackson, interim director of the Office of International Programs at San Francisco State University, a Hispanic-Serving Institution, suggests that MSIs should approach global education efforts in the following manner: “There is not one method, one magic bullet, one ‘build it and they will come’ solution. It takes hard work, combined with strong partnerships and countless day-to-day interactions, to help increase diversity in education abroad” (as cited in Hulstrand, 2016, p. 56).

Comprehensive internationalization, as defined by CIGE, is a strategic, coordinated process that seeks to align and integrate policies, programs, and initiatives to position colleges and universities as more globally-oriented and internationally-connected institutions. The CIGE Model for Comprehensive Internationalization (see Diagram 1) offers MSIs an opportunity to think about their global learning efforts strategically and comprehensively.

Sources: Calhoon, et al., 2003; John & Stage, 2014; Casman et al., 2015; Davis, 2014; Shealy & Moore, 2016; Méndez, Bonner & Méndez-Negrete, 2015; Institute of International Education (2016)

### AANAPISIs

- Created in 2008 by the US federal government
- Currently there are 115 AANAPISIs, enrolling students from 48-plus ethnic groups who speak a combined total of nearly 300 different languages
- A minimum of 10% of degree-seeking students must be low-income for institution to have AANAPISI designation
- 7% of students who participate in study abroad, nationwide (all institutions) are AANAPISI

Sources: Calhoon, et al., 2003; John & Stage, 2014; Casman et al., 2015; Davis, 2014; Shealy & Moore, 2016; Méndez, Bonner & Méndez-Negrete, 2015; Institute of International Education (2016)
This *Brief on Global Education & Minority Serving Institutions in US Higher Education* (edited by Roy, 2018) offers numerous case studies and exemplars of MSIs deeply engaged with global education efforts, such as Bethune-Cookman University (see Davis, 2018); Bowie State University (see Shannon-Ramsey & Stevenson, 2018; Algood, Green & Shannon-Ramsey, 2018; and Stevenson & Shannon-Ramsey, 2018); and California State University, Fullerton (see Knutson Miller & Hobson, 2018); as well as organizations committed to providing MSIs with resources, tools, and networks to advance their global agendas, including the White House Initiative on HBCUs (see McMahan & Fergusson, 2018). The institutions mentioned herein represent a small sample of the hundreds of MSIs in the global education space; they are not meant to constitute an exhaustive list. For example, Howard University and Tennessee State University, though not discussed in this brief, are widely recognized for their achievements in global education. Other institutions who are making concerted and recognized efforts in the areas of global education and campus internationalization include Tuskegee University, Dillard University, Lincoln University, North Carolina A & T, Savannah State University and Virginia State University (Davis, 2014).

We will now spotlight three other MSIs (Florida International University (HSI), Spelman College (HBCU), and Windward Community College (AANAPISI) to highlight how their global initiatives, particularly in the past five years, have led to: a) deepened institutional commitments towards global learning, b) changes in staffing, structures, and policies to better support campus internationalization, c) institution-wide curricular changes and new co-curricular activities that promote global learning, d) strengthened partnerships and collaborations, both nationally and internationally, e) increased student mobility (in- and outbound), and f) expanded faculty policies and practices, such as incentives for faculty to engage globally and rewards to recognize, honor, and celebrate faculty contributions to campus internationalization. Senior leadership from Spelman College, Florida International University, and Windward Community College recently participated in a panel at the third annual Diversity Abroad Minority-Serving Institution Global Education Summit¹ on their institution’s global engagement efforts. The examples that follow offer MSIs with a set of innovative ideas to support or enhance global education.

¹ The authors would like to acknowledge Dr. Hilary Landorf, Director of the Office of Global Learning Initiative at Florida International University, Dr. ‘Dimeji Togunde, Associate Provost for Global Education at Spelman College, and Charles Sasaki, Dean of Academic Affairs at the University of Hawaii - Windward Community College for their insights and perspectives on global learning initiatives and internationalization efforts at their respective campuses.

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**Strategic planning involving key stakeholders articulating an institution’s commitment to internationalization includes providing a roadmap for implementation, as well as formal assessment mechanisms and explicit goals for holding the institution accountable for accomplishing them (ACE, 2018).**

**Articulated Institutional Commitment Led to Institution-Wide Global Learning Curriculum for All Students**

Florida International University (FIU), a public institution of higher education with more than 50,000 students, is the largest Hispanic Serving Institution in the continental United States and the largest producer of Hispanic scientific and engineering degrees in the US (FIU, 2016a; FIU, n.d.). FIU’s articulated institutional commitment to global learning is evidenced in the institution’s vision, mission, and values. Global learning at FIU is defined...
as the process of diverse people collaboratively analyzing and addressing complex problems that transcend borders (Landorf & Doscher, 2015).

Student learning is a critical element of internationalization and globally-focused student learning outcomes, in particular articulate specific knowledge and skills to be addressed in courses and programs (ACE, 2018). FIU’s Quality Enhancement Plan requires that all undergraduate students take two global learning courses and participate in integrated co-curricular activities (Landorf, 2018) with the aim of: global awareness (knowledge of the interrelatedness of local, global, international and intercultural issues, trends and systems), global perspective (ability to construct a multi-perspective analysis of local, global, international and intercultural problems), and global engagement (willingness to engage in local, global, international, and intercultural problem solving). To date, faculty and staff at FIU have created over 190 global learning courses, and 142,000 students have benefitted from Global Learning-designated courses between the years of 2010-2015 (FIU, 2018). The institution is widely recognized as a leader in global education (i.e., Fulbright Top Producing Institutions [2015-2016], Andrew Heiskell Award from IIE for internationalizing the campus through the Global Learning for Global Citizenship Initiative [2016], and more). FIU was also designated as an Ashoka Changemaker Campus-- such universities represent higher education globally, model campus-wide excellence in social innovation and changemaking, and are committed to transforming the field of higher education. Only 37 colleges and universities across seven countries are recognized as Changemaker Campuses (FIU, 2016).

Spelman College is a leader among MSIs and HBCUs in terms of study abroad participation and global engagement. Spelman was the only HBCU to break into the top 40 on IIE’s 2014-2015 list of baccalaureate colleges with the highest study abroad numbers (Spelman College, 2017b). Spelman won NAFSA’s 2017 Senator Paul Simon Spotlight Award in the engagement category for their Going Global initiative (Arthur, 2017) and Diversity Abroad’s 2018 Excellence in Diversity & Inclusion in International Education award for Organizational Excellence. Spelman’s approach to successful internationalization includes linking the institutional mission to “engage students with many cultures of the world” to the strategic plans for 2010 to 2017 and 2017 to 2022, as well developing infrastructure to support global initiatives through the establishment of the Gordon Zeto Center for Global Education, led by the Associate Provost for Global Education (Togunde, 2018).

The Center internationalizes “through curricular and co-curricular program enhancement; increased recruitment of international students and visiting scholars; promotion of study abroad and faculty/staff-led study travel programs for students; international service learning; and support for faculty global engagement” (Spelman College, 2017). Margery Ganz (1991), the long-standing director of the study abroad office, details some of the reasons for Spelman’s success in global education: dedicated support from the upper administration, talking with students and parents early to encourage

"Student learning is a critical element of internationalization and globally-focused student learning outcomes, in particular articulate specific knowledge and skills to be addressed in courses and programs (ACE, 2018)."
advanced planning, allowing most financial aid to apply to study abroad programs, using minority students to recruit new participants, having frank conversations with students about race, and working closely with the program administrators to ensure that Spelman students’ needs are attended to. Spelman has introduced new curricular innovations in education abroad which have included a) a mandatory, one-credit, pre-departure study-travel seminar for all global travel programs, b) weekly and monthly blogs and journals for all study abroad participants, and c) required reflective essays and round-table discussions for all study abroad students (Togunde, 2018).

Making Advancements in Global Education through Partnerships & Revised Faculty Incentives

Windward Community College, an open enrollment institution has 2,500 undergraduate students and is part of the University of Hawai’i 10-campus system of higher education. It is primarily STEM- and liberal arts-focused with strengths in the areas of Hawaiian studies, natural sciences, fine arts, veterinary technology, and vocational training. The demographic composition of the student body is particularly diverse with 85% students of color and 52% indigenous Hawaiian students (Sasaki, 2018). The institution’s mission and core values are key drivers of the new campus internationalization program as they promote equity and access, principally for a small, regional community college with foci on domestic diversity and systematizing social justice efforts to internationalize (Sasaki, 2018). The core values of Windward Community College are:

- Ka lama kū o ka na`auao (Creating meaningful curricular and diverse learning experiences)
- A `ohe hana nui ke `aluk iā (Working collaboratively and inclusively)
- He pūnāwai kahe wale ke aloha (Serving and supporting with aloha)
- Kūlia I ka nu`u (Striving for excellence)
- He ali`l ka `āina, he kauā ke kanaka (Caring for Hawai`i and the planet)

Faculty and academic staff were placed at the center of the institution’s internationalization program, and incentivized faculty leadership in particular was critical to advancing the global agenda (Sasaki, 2018). This included considerations for tenure and promotion, funded travel, and opportunities for faculty to teach globally-focused special topics (Sasaki). These special topics were organized around how study abroad connects to student heritage and culture in relation to the Hawai’ian context (e.g., Pacific studies in New Zealand, and sustainable tourism in Costa Rica); these courses were low-cost, short-term, non-immersive, and credit-bearing courses (Sasaki). The institution has also leveraged key partnerships, including with the US Department of State, to advance their internationalization efforts and were awarded a capacity building grant for study abroad by Partners of the Americas.

The involvement of top leaders and appropriate administrative and reporting structures form an essential framework for implementing internationalization. The faculty or staff member primarily responsible for internationalization reports to the president and senior leadership is committed to internationalization and is engaged in the process from the beginning (ACE, 2018).
**MSIs and Global Education: A Future Outlook**

MSIs have a deep capacity to leverage their strengths in order to grow their visibility and presence in global higher education. MSIs are well positioned to do so since they tend to, generally speaking, have a supportive environment, great leadership, broad base of alumni networks, and many role models for students, to name a few (John & Stage, 2014). Additionally, the higher education community and various stakeholders can continue to collaborate with MSIs to deepen their global engagement and internationalization initiatives. Partnering with organizations such as Diversity Abroad, IES Abroad, ISEP, the State Department, the Department of Education, the White House Initiative on HBCUs, Partners of the Americas, and philanthropic foundations, as well as MSI-related organizations such as the United Negro College Fund (UNCF), the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU) and others, has yielded and can continue to yield positive results when it comes to diversifying study abroad and providing support and funding to both institutions and students.

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THE EDUCATION ABROAD EXPERIENCE AT MINORITY SERVING INSTITUTIONS & HBCUs

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Understanding the Challenge

The underrepresentation of minorities among the 313,415 U.S. students who studied abroad during 2014-2015 (Open Doors 2016) is an issue of concern to minority-serving institutions, especially given the unique challenges faced by these institutions in promoting education abroad and providing both financial and human resources needed to support increase study abroad participation among students.

Specifically, HBCUs were founded during post-slavery segregation when most postsecondary institutions were not open to young people of color. These institutions of higher education include (1) Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs); (2) Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs); (3) Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs) and (4) Asian American and Pacific Islander Serving Institutions (AAPISIs). Historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs) were officially designated by Congress in the Title III of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as “any historically black college or university that was established prior to 1964 and whose principal mission was and is, the education of Black Americans.” Half of all Hispanic college and university students (50 percent) attended a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSIs)-which Hispanics represent 25 percent or more of the full-time-equivalent undergraduate enrollment.

HBCUs have a critical role in preparing students as global citizens, even in the face of the challenges. Founded in response to an environment of legal segregation, HBCUs provided access to higher education to marginalized populations, contributing substantially to the success and increased educational opportunities pursued by Blacks. For most of America’s history, African Americans seeking a college education could only get it from an HBCU. In 2015, almost 10% of Black students attended one of the 102 accredited HBCUs located in 19 states, the District of Columbia, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Despite the rich history and common mission of all HBCUs, not all are the same and differ even in institution type. For instance, 87% of HBCUs are four-year institutions, 51% are public, 17% are land grant institutions, 10% are research institutions, 23% are master’s universities, 48% are baccalaureate universities, 4% are seminaries and 2% are
medical schools. Together HBCUs enroll over 300,000 students. According to recent data from the Network Journal, among African Americans, 40% members of Congress, 12.5% of CEO's, 40% of Engineers, 50% of Professor at Non-HBCUs, 50% of Lawyers, and 80% of Judges represent HBCU graduates.

Cultivating a Culture That Values Study Abroad

Asking students who attend MSIs/HBCUs to study abroad can be challenging due to the nature of their undergraduate experience. Student identities are key and critical when they attend minority serving institutions since they have actively sought out and applied to be a part of a community who will challenge and support them in their personal, professional, and academic endeavors. To ask a student to then leave that community for a few weeks, semester, or year seems like a daunting task. For first generation students, the college experience is already uncharted territory. In addition, some students support their families, and to ask them to leave that support system for a new culture, country, and language is a large ordeal since attending college brings its own cultural experience in navigating higher education.

Administrators at the campuses work with students to ensure academic success and preparation for the work force while still providing opportunities for students to grow personally and professionally as students learn how to articulate their experiences given the intersectionality of race, class, and gender. However, study abroad center staff can mentor and guide students on their international, transformative journey. Returning study abroad students and faculty leaders of programs abroad can help spread the word about the added value that cultural immersion abroad brings to one's academic experience. Study abroad can be an opportunity for students to go abroad as heritage seekers, where they hope to reconnect with family or a part of their ancestry. At HBCUs promoting study abroad should also include raising awareness about the historical global connections of many African American civic leaders, creative and performing artists, scholars, religious and lay persons, and an array of other African Americans who lived, worked, traveled, studied and networked with their counterparts abroad. Helping students to understand that being a global citizen is not new to the black experience may help foster a campus culture where going abroad is recognized as something all Americans can do.

Clearing the Funding Hurdle

Many minority serving institutions are under resourced financially and rely heavily on student tuition and fees. Because their students are more likely to come from lower income families, meeting students’ demands for financial assistance is often a challenge. This demand, however, may be even more pronounced at HBCUs, according to Ezzell and Schexnider (2010), given their history of operating with very “modest funding” (p.3). In addition to this, endowments at HBCUs tend to be smaller than those of many other institutions. According to the National Association of College and University Business Officers and Commonfund Institute, “In 2015, the top 10 HBCU endowments ranged from $34 million to $660 million, while the top 10 non-HBCU endowments ranged from $10 billion to $36 billion” (Saunders, Williams, & Smith 2016). HBCUs are also less likely to depend on alumni giving as a resource stream, as most students graduate from HBCUs with a debt of at least $40,000 (Jennings, 2013).

For minority-serving institutions, it is important to create a framework for the expenses surrounding study abroad experiences. Part of the advising and promotion process should include articulating to students what the cost of programming includes (tuition, housing, health insurance, etc.). This will help them conceptualize that these are expenses they are already incurring—just often bundled into one. This can be supported by providing a side-by-side cost comparison of on-campus
study versus study abroad. Having a designated financial aid office liaison to whom students can be directly referred allows the student to make informed decisions regarding the applicability of their financial aid awards to the program(s) abroad they are considering or have selected.

Helping students understand how to leverage financial aid is only part of the conversation about funding study abroad. Education abroad advising should also include guiding students in how to be strategic about decisions to study abroad. One strategy is planning to take advantage of funding sources, particularly those targeting underrepresented groups. Helping students compile a list of scholarship application deadlines is the first step in increasing the number of applications from these students. Students should know which scholarship programs have one application deadline (ex. Fund for Education Abroad) and which have more than one (ex. Gilman). Another strategy is deciding when to study abroad. Opting for a four-week program rather than a two-week program may increase one’s eligibility for scholarships and be more affordable. Further, where one travels might be a consideration, given that some scholarships may fund travel to certain countries or regions (ex. American Councils, Japan Bridging Foundation, Freeman-Asia, and others). Finally, students often enjoy sharing their own fund-raising strategies with one another. Thus, while MSIs and HBCUs may have limited support for their students, helping students to become savvier about external resources can increase the possibility of garnering these funds.

However, study abroad offices should not only provide students with a list of relevant funding opportunities, but institutions need to be proactive in supporting students in applying for these awards. Offering workshops or activities focused not just on the free money out there, but providing students with best practices for writing personal statements or coordinating reflection activities which help students understand how their unique background contributes to study abroad should be included. It is also recommended that when discussing competitive and major awards, the advising focus is on the qualifications students possess and the benefits of receiving such an award, not merely highlighting how prestigious it is—as some students may see the award as something for only the elite.

**Partnering to Change the Landscape**

We have already learned that educating and grooming that next generation takes a village. Education abroad at MSIs is no different. Partnerships with both domestic and international institutions and organizations are ways to increase opportunities and reduce costs. Memberships in study abroad consortia or other collective efforts are a way to leverage limited human and financial resources. These may be affiliations with program providers that offer substantial program discounts, participation in alliances that form international agreements on behalf of all the members (ex. HBCU-China
Scholarship Network) or negotiated agreements that facilitate less costly direct enrollment in partner universities.

MSIs can also tap into available community resources that support internationalization. Local institutions can partner to develop shared internationally related programming that helps internationalize campus programming. These activities can be partnering with local institutions to share costs for speakers on international topics or taking advantage of visiting international scholars hosted by area universities (ex. Fulbright Occasional Scholar program). Additionally, in many communities, there are internationally-related organizations, agencies, and businesses which can also provide educational opportunities to advance the global competence of students, faculty, and staff at minimal or no cost to the institution. The efforts help students to see that studying abroad is part of a larger cross-cultural picture connected to their global learning.

Preparing Students for Successful Global Engagement

Preparing students for cross-cultural encounters while abroad is as necessary as assisting students in finding the resources to get there. Being able to see oneself through the lens of others as well as engaging in meaningful reflection about one’s own identity as an American of color is critical to students’ time abroad. One’s own campus may have a multicultural center, international faculty from the target country, or other faculty and staff who can help prepare students for the varied ways they may be perceived—both positively and negatively—while abroad. How does one respond to being stared at in China? African American students traveling to African countries might hope to connect culturally with African students; however, they may instead be regarded initially as Americans first—Americans with wealth. In that situation, since the students were there for about a month, they were not discouraged by the perceptions of the African students and were able to engage in discourse about what it means to be Black in America and South Africa. The cross-cultural staff could help the students process their experience and offer any type of support to gain the most out of their time abroad.

Similar experiences could happen to Latin and Asian students who study abroad in Latin American or Asian countries such as Mexico, Chile, Vietnam, or China, where students are first seen as Americans and then their racial/ethnic identity. To prepare for these types of experiences students need to be open-minded and be ready to leave their home community for a length of time. Most students who go to reconnect with their history tend to be resilient and are ready to study abroad and live abroad. They have a goal in mind for their own personal, professional, and academic development so their drive to learn and understand facilitates their acclimation into a new country.

REFERENCES


AFRICA IN THE AMERICAN MIND:
THE INVENTION OF SPACE IN
STUDY ABROAD

Dr. Michael Woolf, Deputy President for Strategic Development, CAPA: The Global Education Network

Introduction: Beyond Tarzan

I am aware of the recklessness of my title. It contains the suspect generalization that there is something identifiable as “the American mind.” It also suggests that Africa is, in some manner, an invention: a constructed notion in the context of international education. These propositions are arguably asking for trouble especially coming from someone whose credentials to make such statements hardly inspire confidence.

I am a Londoner who was raised in an environment in which America was an exotic idea. We knew it existed. After World War II some fortunate relatives actually made it to the fabled land, but Africa was a place almost beyond our urchin imaginations. If we envisioned it at all, it was through the lens of colonial figures such as Tarzan: a “noble savage” with an English sensibility.

We were dimly aware that Africa was a real place as we had seen it in dog-eared atlases. Now and again, bits of Africa would be in the news as places inexplicably (we thought) seeking independence from the British Empire. For most of us, though, Africa was a blank space that we filled with fantasies. Africa, when we imagined it, was never a real place with cities, economies, borders, and political systems. It was an idea.

It was only as I limped towards the illusion of adulthood that Africa entered my consciousness in any kind of concrete shape. I became aware of the struggles for self-determination, learned of the towering presence of figures such as Nkrumah, Nyerere, Kenyatta, Senghor (who was both a poet and a politician), and Mandela. I acquired some kind of political consciousness and protested against the moral quagmire of apartheid in South Africa. In particular, I studied the tragic intimacy between Africa and America forged by the hideous history of slavery.

Africa became most real to me when I entered the field of international education. I became involved in projects in Tunisia, Morocco and Egypt, and managed programs for American students in South Africa, created study abroad opportunities in Kenya, and fell in love with Ghana. I became a fairly frequent visitor and, as a consequence, understood that Africa was actually a set of separate and diverse nations with borders, politics, languages, identities and histories. I also became aware that the continent contained massive diversity. There was little to connect Morocco and Kenya, for example, or Tunisia and Botswana.
I also learned that colonial powers (particularly my homeland) had artificially invented the boundaries and borders. In 1890, the British Prime Minister, Lord Salisbury described this process in what is often called “the scramble for Africa”:

We have been engaged in drawing lines upon maps where no white man’s foot has ever trod; we have been giving away mountains and rivers and lakes to each other, only hindered by the small impediment that we never knew where the mountains and rivers and lakes were. (McCorquodale, and Pangalangan, p. 867) 1

I also rediscovered that there was indeed another “Africa”: a single undifferentiated space that has little connection with the political and geographical constructs invented by the colonial powers. Africa as an idea, rather than separate nation-states, permeates the rhetoric of study abroad. For good or ill, when we promote study in Africa to American undergraduates it is rarely in terms of engagement with individual countries; instead, we draw heavily upon a set of associations and myths that reach deeply into the American mind. In the streets of East London, when we pretended to be Tarzan, we were inventing a space we called Africa, a simplistic distortion of reality forged in the adolescent imagination. In the rhetoric of study abroad we draw upon another, more complex and challenging set of assumptions, to recreate Africa into an alternative, but similarly constructed, vision: a notion that resonates with a wound that is unhealed, a history that is unresolved. No truth and reconciliation process has liberated America from the legacy of slavery.

Dreamed Landscapes: Africa and Europe

In the context of study abroad, Africa is, of course, a set of distinctive locations offering widely different educational possibilities. It is simultaneously a single potent space. In that respect, the idea of “Africa” resonates with the idea of “Europe” in study abroad. Both exist beyond geography as concepts shaped by historical and mythical associations; they exist as constructions of the mind.

Europe is a collection of frequently fragile nations. It is also an uneasy alliance made after World War II to minimize the danger of yet another cataclysmic conflict in the region. However, in the rhetoric of study abroad, Europe is simultaneously represented as a single space characterized through a synthesis of high-art, sophistication, complex social structures, historical depth and so on. It is not a set of nations but a concept. This is

1 Robert McCorquodale and Pangalangan, Raoul, “Pushing Back the Limitations of Territorial Boundaries,” European Journal of International Law, 12, 5, 2001, pp. 867–888
the notion of Europe that runs deep in American consciousness: the space envisaged by writers as diverse as Washington Irving, Henry James, Mark Twain and Henry Miller. It is a site of secular pilgrimage.

Africa also exists at many levels: a concept invented largely by colonial authorities (not unlike the way in which the Orient is an invention of the West); it is an array of countries that may have little in common. It is also a profoundly symbolic space for all Americans, what James Baldwin characterized as “the fearful conundrum of Africa.”

For African-American students, the idea of Africa may have particular historical and emotional significance as well as reflecting a special affinity embedded, for example, in the notion of a dual identity. That is manifest in a transition of naming from Negro (defined by race), to Black (defined by color), to African American (defined by historical relationship). Thus, when we speak of “Africa” as a destination for study abroad (rather than promoting study in separate countries) we are going beyond specific political and national distinctions towards a place permeated by myth. Myth is not used in this context to imply an illusion but rather to suggest a landscape of profound and embedded meaning.

Clearly, Europe and Africa have a significance that goes beyond geography. “Europe” represents a perceived absence in American social and creative life; “Africa” raises profound questions of identity and history that reach into the heart of the American psyche. For African-American students it connects with the idea of a lost home: a heritage that restores continuity and pride of origin.

Dreamed Landscapes: Africa and Zion

America’s relationship with the idea of Africa is paradoxical, complex and painful; it offers a special place in African-American identity. It represents a collective memory of violent expulsion from home. It is a dreamed landscape and remains an elusive concept in the real worlds we inhabit. This is a core perception expressed in Maya Angelou’s memoir of her return to Ghana, All God’s Children Need Traveling Shoes:

“We had come home, and if home was not what we had expected, never mind, our need for belonging allowed us to ignore the obvious and to create real places or even illusory places, befitting our imagination.”

In this respect, it parallels the notion of Zion for diaspora Jews: a metaphor for space in which persecuted minorities belong without the need to justify, defend or hide identity for fear of hostility from the world outside.

The connection with the myth of Zion and Jewish experience runs through the history of slavery, as noted by James Baldwin and Maya Angelou, and is reflected in the lyrics of traditional Negro spirituals. Baldwin, for example, identifies a synergy between biblical sources and the suffering of slaves:

“The languages of the suffering Christ and the suffering Jew are wedded with the image of the suffering slave, and they are one; the people that walked in darkness have seen a great light.”

Explicit connections are found in lyrics of spirituals as exemplified by “Go Down Moses”: “Go down Moses/ Way down in Egypt land/Tell old Pharaoh to/ Let my people go.”

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Maya Angelou, with greater skepticism, summarizes the relationship between biblical origins and the desire for location that contains an implicit recognition of aspiration beyond possibility:

Our people had always longed for home. For centuries we had sung about a place not built with hands, where the streets were paved with gold, and were washed with honey and milk. There the saints would march around wearing white robes and jeweled crowns. There at last, we would study war no more and, more important, no one would wage war against us again. The old black deacons, ushers, mothers of the church, and junior choirs only partially meant heaven as that desired destination. In the yearning, heaven and Africa were inextricably combined.\(^5\)

Africa is an alternative space to the troubled histories of the United States: Billie Holiday’s “Strange Fruit,” Jim Crow, inequality, persecution. Africa is history, myth, poetry, music, art, origin, and community consciousness. Like Auschwitz-Birkenau in the psyche of the Jews, these histories permeate the consciousness: an ache that does not end; a pain that will not be cured. There is, however, a fracture between dreamed landscapes and realities of place. Israel is not Zion. The American dream of Africa may be based upon unreal expectations.

Maya Angelou suggests that the notion of return is a futile aspiration:

I doubted if I, or any black from the diaspora, could really return to Africa. We wore skeletons of old despair like necklaces…\(^6\)

The history of slavery does not unite African Americans with Africans. The return to Africa as home is likely to be frustrated by political and social realities. Exploration of home is, in this context, likely to be achieved by imagination rather than through travel: a journey into the creative self rather than into space. Duke Ellington’s suite “Black, Brown, and Beige” offers a narrative of early African-American experience in a musical form. Alex Hayley’s Roots uses imaginative recreation as a mode of return. There are many other powerful examples of artists creating reconnection through acts of imagination; excursions into the soul rather than into contemporary Africa.

The Ache for Home: African-American Students in Africa

The idea of Africa as a mythic homeland offers powerful learning opportunities for African-American students precisely because of the gap between expectation and reality. In that context, Maya Angelou’s text ought to be required reading for all students before they study in Africa.

Her memoir describes a sojourn in Ghana: a rich environment in which to contrast the myths and realities of slavery (the subject of CAPA: The Global Network summer seminar)\(^7\). A relevant learning agenda might also explore the challenges that arise from Ghana’s status as a nation-state facing issues that beset the Global South. It is a leaning laboratory in which to study the building of national identity, the coexistence of aspiration towards modernity and the retention of traditions, etc.

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\(^5\) Maya Angelou, p. 20.

\(^6\) Maya Angelou, p. 84.

\(^7\) For information on CAPA’s work in general, please visit: [www.capa.org](http://www.capa.org). Specific information on the Ghana program may be found at: [https://www.capa.org/global-seminar-accra](https://www.capa.org/global-seminar-accra)
Study abroad in Africa invites us to review our programs’ learning objectives and presentations. There is also an imperative to encourage participants, African-American students and their peers, to reflect upon the impact of Africa on their sense of identity, and the place of Africa in the global context.

**You Can’t Go Home Again**

He never had the sense of home so much as when he felt that he was going there. It was only when he got there that his homelessness began.

—Thomas Wolfe

These questions are critical:

1. To what degree and in what ways do African-American students identify with Africa? Exploration of this question encourages an ethos of introspection and reflection that will help clarify and modify expectations. It will also inform pre-departure advising, on site-experience, and post-program reflection.

2. To what degree does Africa identify with African-American students? In some contexts, African-American students are not treated as distinct from the American peer group. They are also probably separated from their African peers by relative prosperity and behavioral patterns. An expectation of exceptional empathy is likely to lead to disappointment, as is the assumption that there is a common consciousness of shared history.

3. The collocation of African and American, and the consequent implications for trans-national history and identity, needs thoughtful analysis. Is there a shared sense of a common origin? How does the collocation shape personal identities?

4. As international educators, we also need to be aware of which Africa we are promoting. There is a case for focusing on either or both versions: the mythic construct or the particularities of nation. In any case, we need to recognize the distinction and make the emphasis an explicit part of the academic program.

5. To what degree is Africa romanticized or idealized? Conversely, what negative images shape perceptions of Africa? These questions relate to our own embedded assumptions as well as to external representations that may reflect political and popular prejudices. Demystifying Africa is a core academic responsibility.
Finally, Maya Angelou raises an issue that, simultaneously, relates to African-American experience in Africa and a universal element in the human condition. She talks about “the ache for home”. The idea of home is a critical aspect of how we define ourselves and we all share, at one time or another, the pain of separation. We have all lost our home, whether we call that place childhood, history, community, Eden, Zion or, indeed, Africa:

*The story of the black Americans trying to return home is the central story. It is central in that all human beings look for home. It is given to us.*

**Addendum: Additional Readings**

It is perhaps indicative of the complexity of this topic that the best readings are not, I feel, to be found in the literature of international education but in autobiographies, essays, creative writing, and song. An obvious source is Alex Haley’s *Roots* (1976). However, Hayley enacts rather than problematizes the idea of re-connection with Africa. The sections on Kenya in Barack Obama’s *Dreams from My Father* are moving and eloquent expressions of the ambiguity of return. Norman Mailer’s *The Fight* (1975) is an important contribution to the literature of African-American engagement with Africa (as well as being a classic of sport literature). The Ali-Foreman bout in Zaire is relevant to this discussion on many levels. Readings in Malcolm X, Ralph Ellison, and the speeches of Muhammad Ali and Martin Luther King are obvious and essential. W. E. B. Du Bois’s *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903) is similarly an essential text. Less obviously, but of no less significance, are the works of those writers who are part of what is commonly called The Harlem Renaissance including Jean Toomer, Langston Hughes, Nella Larsen, Chester Himes, and Zora Neale Hurston. From the 1920s until the 1930s a body of work emerged that offers profoundly rich insights into encounters with racism and the struggle for identity. A sadly neglected example may be found in the poems of Countee Cullen which are worth reading not only as representations of the time but for their emotional intensity.

Billie Holiday’s “Strange Fruit” (written by Abel Meeropol and first performed in 1939) breaks your heart and is the most profound expression of historical anguish that has ever been voiced. Billie Holiday also expressed a view that reaches into the core of a discussion that is difficult in both the heart and the mind: “You can be up to your boobies in white satin, with gardenias in your hair and no sugar cane for miles, but you can still be working on a plantation.” (From *Lady Sings the Blues*, 1956 autobiography, co-authored with William Dufty).

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* Maya Angelou, Interview with Russell Harris, Zelo, Fall 1986, pp. 86-87.
There are many challenges that come with developing global learning experiences for students at many universities throughout the United States. Many programs within Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and other Minority-Serving Institutions (MSIs) have an even more difficult time. These universities tend not to have the infrastructure to sustain momentum for individualized internationalization strategies. As such, developing partnerships with other institutions can play a vital role in assisting undergraduate students at HBCUs and other MSIs with developing learning experiences within the global context (Marmolejo, 2012).

In 2013, faculty within Bowie State University’s (BSU) undergraduate social work program began exploring institutional and international partnerships that would assist with developing sustainable global learning experiences for students. We consulted for weeks, using the Eight Stages for Developing Institutional International Partnerships, to create the model that is currently in use. We believe we have developed a sustainable model for programs at HBCUs and other MSIs, no matter the discipline, to become involved in creating partnerships to help achieve the goal of providing ongoing international learning opportunities for students. Since 2014, 30 BSU students have studied in Cuba, Germany, Japan, and South Africa through short-term global learning visits, while 35 students participated in a virtual exchange program.

A Framework – Eight Stages for Developing Institutional International Partnerships

Institutional partnerships and relationships are essential to maintaining a global learning program. Such partnerships bring together a team of members with varied strengths and skills across institutions, departments, and cultures (Morse & McNamara, 2006). These teams can be local, national, or international. Using Clare Banks’ Eight Stages for Developing Institutional International Partnerships, we will demonstrate how these stages have provided a framework for creating opportunities for several of our students to participate in global learning over the past three years. The eight stages include: assessment, developing a strategy, identifying potential partners, holding face to face meetings, signing an initial MOU or MOA, engaging initial collaboration, periodic assessment, and partnership expansion (Banks, 2013).
Stage 01

Assessment – Gathering the necessary existing data to make an informed decision.

As faculty within an undergraduate program at BSU, we spent the first three months investigating which other undergraduate programs on campus were engaged in organizing global learning opportunities for students. Since BSU does not have an International Studies/Study Abroad Office, we scheduled meetings with faculty from various departments to learn more about ongoing opportunities. It was also important to learn whether programs were ongoing or sporadic. These meetings generated ideas for possible ways we could create a sustainable global learning program that focused on short-term learning visits abroad. Based on information gathered, we began the initial stages of developing a mission and goals for the newly formed Global Learning Visits Program (GLVP).

Stage 02

Developing a Strategy – Identifying priority regions, disciplines, and home institutional interest.

Faculty within the social work program at BSU organized regular meetings to determine how the GLVP would be structured, how often proposed travel would be, and how the mission and goals of the GLVP would correspond with the mission and goals of the social work program. In addition, we began exploring potential partners on campus who might have been interested in collaborating to develop strategies to help create opportunities for undergraduate students. As a social work program, we felt we could offer opportunities for students to learn more about social work in a global environment. As such, we began interacting with faculty who taught within behavioral sciences disciplines, as those disciplines are closely related to social work. While ongoing meetings were very productive, such partnerships never emerged.

Stage 03

Identifying Potential Partners – Planning a fact-finding trip, doing research, identifying faculty ties.

Alternatively, faculty within the BSU social work program began identifying contacts they had made over recent years during international travel. It is important to remember that colleagues we meet during various conferences, workshops, and international travel can serve as potential partners as programs begin developing international opportunities for students. We often overlook faculty within our own disciplines with whom we may partner. As such, we first identified one of our adjunct faculty, who is director of the TRiO ACHIEVE Program at Salisbury University (SU), to serve as a potential partner. The director has a keen interest in assisting students in their TRiO program with global learning opportunities as well. As a professional with a similar academic background, it was a perfect match. So, the initial partnership between BSU’s social work program and SU’s TRiO ACHIEVE Program was born.

During our initial planning meetings, it was decided that providing students with an international opportunity to travel that was in close proximity to the United States borders would be ideal. Relying on the connections that were made between social work faculty and TRiO staff during a previous trip to Havana, Cuba, it was decided that Cuba would be the initial destination identified for students. As a result, BSU’s first global learning visit took place for seven days to Havana, Cuba in 2014. A complete travel itinerary was provided to students prior to departing for Cuba.
The initial excursion to Cuba was also a result of partnering with Estevez Travel in Tampa, Florida. This partnership was formed after a chance meeting between the chair of BSU’s social work program and the director of Proyecto Espiral, a community-organizing program, during a previous trip to Cuba in 2013. The relationship was further developed via various Skype and email exchanges, and the relationship has been sustainable ever since, as multiple students from both universities have traveled to Cuba since 2014. While in Cuba, students learned more about Proyecto Espiral and other grassroots organizations, and how their various programs support children, adults, and the elderly. Students also interacted with social workers, physicians, nurses, and other public health workers to learn more about health and social welfare services. The goal was to assist students with developing greater understanding of the Cuban social, economic, and health systems.

Also in 2013, the department chair visited Johannesburg, South Africa and was introduced to a director of a non-profit organization that worked with orphans of HIV and AIDS in a residential facility. After several months of Skype, telephone, and email exchanges, a partnership was developed, and South Africa was added to our GLVP in 2014. This trip included social work students from BSU and SU’s TRiO program. Students were able to assist with teaching independent living skills to older adolescents who were aging out of the orphanage. They also provided support and program activities to younger children. In addition, students learned about child welfare services and outreach programs designed to support vulnerable populations. They participated in trainings focused on providing home-based care for residents and campaigns to reduce stigma and promote accessibility to appropriate health care for children.

A subsequent partnership with the School of Social Work (SSW) at Southern Illinois University – Carbondale (SIU) emerged as a result of a partnership developed among BSU’s social work program chair, SU’s TRiO director, and the director of the study abroad program to Germany in the SSW at SIU. Twice a year, SIU’s SSW sponsors a short-term study abroad program to Munich, Germany for students across the country, regardless of their academic major. After several face-to-face, Skype, and email exchanges, Germany was added to our GLVP, and students from BSU’s social work program and SU’s TRiO participated in the inaugural program in 2015. During their nine days in Munich, students learned about human rights principles and how they relate to social policies and practices within Germany and other parts of Europe. A complete syllabus was developed by SIU and provided to each student prior to departing for Germany.

Also in 2015, relationships emerged that would expand our GLVP to include Japan. The director of SU’s TRiO Program established a relationship with faculty in the Graduate School of Medicine’s School of Public Health at the University of Tokyo. As result, BSU added Japan to its GLVP, and the first cohort of students from BSU and SU traveled to Japan in March 2016. While in Tokyo, Yokohama, and Kyoto, students learned ways in which different communities approach health and social services and the mechanisms in place by which they address these problems. Students engaged with public health graduate students to discuss common goals related to health and the welfare of communities. A complete travel itinerary was provided to students prior to departing for Japan.
Holding Face to Face Meetings – Gain an understanding of institutional priorities, challenges, and opportunities.

As mentioned in the previous stage, holding face-to-face and Skype meetings was very important to ensuring the success of the GLVP. Another way in which we maintained working relationships between our GLVP partners was by establishing a Global Learning Visits Advisory Council (GLVAC). The purpose of the GLVAC is to maintain positive working relationships with existing partners from SU, as well as those in Cuba, Germany, Japan, and South Africa, whereby ideas for further development of the GLVP can be explored. As partners, these individuals are able to provide feedback regarding methods to strengthen the GLVP’s mission, goals, and expected outcomes. They also serve to guide the program in developing creating ways to assist students with funding their travel.

Signing an Initial MOU or MOA – Articulating concrete activities, identifying who is involved, and determining desired outcomes.

BSU’s social work program and SU’s TRiO program established an MOU in 2014. Through this MOU, it was established that each of the four aforementioned learning visits would be done in consultation and collaboration with each other and would include students from both programs. Subsequent MOUs were developed with each representative from visits to Cuba, Germany, Japan, and South Africa. Within these MOUs, we established shared desired outcomes and expectations. In addition, each visit is reviewed and sanctioned by BSU’s General Counsel’s Office.

Engaging in Initial Collaboration – Executing the activities mentioned in MOU/MOA.

Once BSU’s social work program and SU’s TRiO program had finalized their MOUs, then began the work of executing agreed upon terms. Through ongoing dialogue and discussions, mutual ways to executing a plan of action that met both programs’ goals and objectives were finalized. We were able to improve our procedures and policies for traveling with students by sharing our application materials, legal travel forms, fundraising methods, and travel orientation meetings. After each trip, we compare feedback and work collectively to address issues or concerns. This type of collaboration set a standard for our partnership that allows us to treat our MOU as an evolving contract. As the needs of each program changes, we are able to revisit the MOU and amend as needed.

We built collaborative working relationships with our partners in the host countries we visited. We discussed what a financial commitment would entail, the expectations of each partner, and how we could build on the strengths of each partnership. In addition, we had to determine which partner would take the lead in ongoing communication and negotiations in host countries so that the point of contact would be consistent regarding all shared information.
Periodic Assessment – Ensuring that both parties continue to benefit from the partnership and improving/modifying where necessary. Where too difficult or unsatisfactory, the partnership may have to be terminated.

Success is evaluated in multiple ways. Through the efforts of the GLVAC, measurable outcomes were established to see if we were meeting our goals after each trip. Students are presented a survey used to evaluate what they learned and how the trip might be improved moving forward. In addition, representatives from each host country are also asked to assess what worked and how things might be improved. In addition, each representative partner provides surveys to each student to request feedback. This is very useful for helping to maximize student learning and to amend learning visits when necessary.

For example, after our initial trip to South Africa in 2014, and based on student surveys and feedback from the host agency, we concluded that the agency was not the best fit for our students. As a result, we successfully partnered with another service agency in the area and continue to maintain that partnership.

Partnership Expansion – Growing partnership activities to include more disciplines, people, and activities.

In 2015, after the social work program chair and SU’s TRiO director attended a seminar titled “Virtual Exchange: International Education for All,” sponsored by the US Department of Education, a new idea was born. BSU partnered with the Soliya Connect Program, an international NGO that uses technology to connect students from around the world, to pilot a virtual exchange program we call Virtual Connection with a small cohort of students in 2016. Understanding that many students are not able to or interested in travel abroad but desire to interact cross-culturally, we felt this would be a creative mechanism by which to expand our program. Virtual Connection was integrated into the curriculum in order to allow students the opportunity to engage in facilitated and substantive dialogue while helping them build meaningful relationships across cultural, religious, and ideological boundaries. This web-conferencing application allows students to speak face-to-face in groups of 8-10 global peers, as well as an online facilitator, and communicate within the same online group to ensure a multilateral learning experience. During the eight-week program, students are challenged by their peers to actively participate in and facilitate learning through the use of experiences, social process, and interactions. The first semester of the program went very well in 2016. The department went from a cohort of four students to a cohort of 16 students during the following semester. In an effort to expand the partnership, Soliya incorporated the feedback of our students into their program planning and developed a condensed four-week program to meet their needs. BSU is the first HBCU to partner with the Soliya Connect Program.

Other expansions include developing creative ways to fund student travel and lodging. The GLVP established a scholarship fund to support student travel, and the chair started a scholarship fund as well. In addition, three of the students who traveled applied and received the Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship, which funded their entire trips to South Africa. Also, faculty in the department applied for and received a grant from the Council on Social Work Education’s Katherine A. Kendall Institute for International Social Work. Also, several students established GoFundMe accounts to raise funds for travel.
Helpful Tips Before You Begin

Using the previous eight stages may assist programs with developing sustainable global learning opportunities for students. A few helpful tips before you begin are: 1) Identify and maintain contacts with colleagues you meet at conferences. These may ultimately become potential partners; 2) Learn more about faculty international travel experiences in your department. You may be pleasantly surprised to learn you have faculty who have global learning interests; 3) Develop and maintain relationships with faculty and staff from other HBCUs and other MSIs to explore potential interests.

Creating global learning opportunities for undergraduate students at HBCUs and other MSIs remains an important yet challenging endeavor. Through developing partnerships among these institutions, as well as international partners, faculty can provide invaluable experiences for students to engage in learning in the international context.

A few helpful tips to developing institutional and international partnerships for undergraduate global experiences at MSIs: 1) Identify and maintain contacts with colleagues you meet at conferences. These may ultimately become potential partners; 2) Learn more about faculty international travel experiences in your department. You may be pleasantly surprised to learn you have faculty who have global learning interests; 3) Develop and maintain relationships with faculty and staff from other HBCUs and other MSIs to explore potential interests.

Dr. Stevenson served as department chair of social work at BSU when the GLVP was created.

REFERENCES


ACCESS TO AND ADVOCACY FOR MOBILITY AT A MINORITY-SERVING INSTITUTION – CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, FULLERTON

Dr. Kari Knutson Miller, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, California State University, Fullerton

Jack Hobson, Sr. Director, Global Titans Center, University Extended Education and International Programs & Global Engagement, California State University, Fullerton

California State University, Fullerton is a comprehensive university accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges. In the fall of 2016, the University enrolled over 40,000 students in 109 degree programs. Cal State Fullerton is designated as a Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI), Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander (AANAPI) eligible, and generally recognized for its diverse student body.

Per its mission statement, Cal State Fullerton identifies as a “comprehensive, regional university with a global outlook.” The 2013-2018 strategic plan emphasizes promoting a “curricular and co-curricular environment that prepares students for participation in a global society” as well as programs and experiences that “advance students’ recognition of roles they play in an interdependent global community.” Additionally, the strategic plan calls for an increase in the percentage of students who participate in High-Impact Practices, including study abroad, as such practices are associated with engagement, retention, and increased graduation rates.

Systematic and coordinated outreach with institutions of higher education in Latin America and Asia is emphasized given the university’s HSI designation and AANAPI eligibility. Institutional commitments further emphasize the participation of first-generation and culturally diverse students in study abroad.

Actions associated with institutional commitment to increasing study abroad participation included the launch of the International Programs & Global Engagement (IPGE) unit to enhance support for university initiatives. Specifically, this launch included the reorganization and IPGE branding of offices including International Admissions & Outreach, Study Abroad, University Semester Abroad, American Language Program, and International Student Services.

Additionally, the institution registered as a Generation Study Abroad Commitment Partner. To significantly increase the numbers of students who study abroad, the institution pledged to: increase opportunities for participation in study abroad through bilateral exchange partner agreements; build campus partnerships that increase curricular and co-curricular study abroad opportunities; provide training and support for colleagues interested in facilitating study abroad programs; enhance student advisement to effectively promote participation in the context of degree, personal, and professional development goals; provide information
including funding and scholarship opportunities; and more effectively track and record student participation in study abroad.

A third initiative implemented to support increased mobility goals included the announcement of a President’s Strategic Fund (PSF) to support study abroad opportunities. The PSF provided faculty stipends for the development and delivery of 10 new study abroad/away programs in January/spring 2016. The fund further provided scholarships to students with demonstrated financial need and no previous study abroad/away experience. The PSF was extended in subsequent years with IPGE providing funding for faculty stipends and the PSF continuing to support student scholarships.

IPGE collaborations with partners across colleges and divisions were considered core to achieving international goals at Cal State Fullerton. IPGE supported faculty and staff engagement, for example, through a series of workshops in partnership with the institution’s Faculty Development Center; faculty invitations to participate in outbound delegations promoting international collaborations; and reinforcement of college-based systems promoting international mobility and global learning outcomes. Review criteria included and continue to consider curricular justification, anticipated student outcomes, accessibility, scalability, sustainability, and cost.

Strategic outreach and external partnership development were also essential to achieving internationalization and mobility goals. In this context, Cal State Fullerton supported mobility projects associated with previously initiated institutional partnerships in Vietnam, for example, and engaged in development of new partnerships including that with Mexican institutions of higher education. Mexico-based outreach was aligned with partnership goals articulated in a California-Mexico Memorandum of Understanding as well as the possibilities of building capacity and scale in study abroad.

Cal State Fullerton’s approach may be best described as student centered, faculty and staff engaged, intentional, access conscious, flexible and adaptable, and resource and location strategic. Further, it received support from the senior leadership of the campus and provided diverse models for study abroad participation. Related actions and initiatives resulted in a 97% increase in study abroad participation over a three-year period as displayed in Table 1.

### Table 1: Cal State Fullerton Study Abroad Trends

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>% Increase Over Baseline (2012-2013)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012-2013</td>
<td>357</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013-2014</td>
<td>428</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014-2015</td>
<td>478</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015-2016</td>
<td>703</td>
<td>97%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Cal State Fullerton’s commitment to diversity is specifically noted given study abroad trends reported in the 2015 Open Doors Report on International Education and Exchange. Open Doors noted that minority students are underrepresented in study abroad given population demographics. In 2013-2014, 26% of students studying abroad were racial and ethnic minority students, compared to an estimated population percentage of 42%. Moreover, Cal State Fullerton data is aligned with institutional goals and counters national trends as shown in Table 2.

### Table 2: Cal State Fullerton Study Abroad by Race/Ethnicity (2015-2016)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race/Ethnicity</th>
<th>Study Abroad Population</th>
<th>Student Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>41.2%</td>
<td>37.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian/Pacific Islander</td>
<td>14.7%</td>
<td>20.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>26.1%</td>
<td>23.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
<td>4.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiracial/Multiethnic</td>
<td>6.0%</td>
<td>4.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Further, study abroad percentages at Cal State Fullerton approached population percentages with respect to parent education and Pell status as displayed in Table 3.

### Table 3: Cal State Fullerton Study Abroad by Generation/Pell Eligibility (2015-2016)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Generation/Pell Eligibility</th>
<th>Study Abroad Population</th>
<th>Student Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st Gen</td>
<td>28.2%</td>
<td>30.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-1st Gen</td>
<td>71.8%</td>
<td>69.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pell</td>
<td>46.6%</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Pell</td>
<td>53.4%</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cal State Fullerton’s strategic plan articulated goals and strategies aligned with its global vision, including increased student participation in study abroad. Student mobility efforts were facilitated by the IPGE launch and other capacity-building efforts. These efforts were supported by institutional leadership, cross-divisional relationships, faculty and staff engagement, and diverse revenue sources. Previously initiated institutional relationships were strengthened and strategic outreach to institutions in Mexico initiated. Participation of students diverse in race, ethnicity, generational status, and Pell eligibility in study abroad at Cal State Fullerton exceeds national percentages and is associated with previously mentioned factors as well as consideration of student perspectives and alignment of programs with personal and degree objectives. Further, programs provided ranged from very short-term (approximately one week) to one year...
in duration. Data for 2015-2016 indicated that 79% of Cal State Fullerton study abroad students selected to participate in short-term programs of various types including faculty/staff-led (64%), field-research (8%), and direct-enroll/third-party (7%). Students reported such programs provided balance in terms of alignment with academic goals/credit and consideration of personal commitments to family and work responsibilities, for instance, while approaching but not exceeding their abilities to self-fund a portion of program expenses.

A final factor to be mentioned in association with Cal State Fullerton student participation in study abroad is beliefs and attitudes. Campus leaders, faculty, staff, and global alumni increasingly express belief that study abroad is possible and should even be an expected component of a Cal State Fullerton academic experience. We anticipate that our Titans will continue to aspire to and reach higher.

Colleagues at Minority Serving Institutions may consider the following top ten tips for increased access to and advocacy for mobility programs:

1. Align mobility goals with university priorities and strategic plan goals
2. Engage in strategic partnership development
3. Consider heritage connections, proximity, aspirational interest, and financial implications in partnership development and program locations
4. Develop a program portfolio with diverse opportunities including short-term programs
5. Within short-term program options, include academic credit-bearing, co-curricular, research-based, and hybrid (i.e. research-based with academic credit) models
6. Coordinate planning and advocacy such that students have at least a two-year view of program options and opportunity to facilitate academic, financial, and personal planning
7. Support faculty engagement in study abroad program development and leadership
8. Commit to, provide seed funding for, and support program development and initial student participation
9. Communicate opportunity and expectation that students will have a study abroad experience of some type while enrolled
10. Thoughtfully consider the intersection of multiple factors influencing access to and advocacy for participation of diverse students in study abroad including lead time in program development; program type, length, location, and price; and engagement of key individuals in efforts to promote participation
Bethune-Cookman University (B-CU) is located in Daytona Beach, Florida and is a historically black institution founded by Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune in 1904. Bethune-Cookman University has approximately 4,000 students, 36 undergraduate programs, and seven graduate programs. The World Bank states that there are approximately 7.2 billion people in the world. Only 4% of those people live within U.S. borders; consequently, 96% of the people in the world live outside the United States. Therefore, it is imperative that Bethune-Cookman students become familiar with and proficient in world cultures in order to become global leaders. Towards that end, B-CU study abroad must be more than a “feel or do good” opportunity; rather, study abroad must extend beyond surface-level feelings of “I am appreciative of my country,” commonly experienced by individuals who participate in church-focused, mission outreach trips. Study abroad must impact the student’s worldview and their problem solving abilities. It is a disservice to students if the only thing they experience is an “emotional compass” to rate their study abroad experience.

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At Bethune-Cookman University, we strive to ensure that students receive a three-dimensional experience throughout the study abroad program cycle. This includes: 1) a measurable increase to their technical/cognitive knowledge; 2) opportunities to explore social connections; and, indeed, 3) an emotionally-enhanced experience abroad. From a knowledge perspective, what did the student learn by being abroad that he/she could not have learned in the U.S.? What technical information was the student presented with by traveling abroad? For language-focused programs, the answer to this question is very clear and precise. Ultimately, the university desires to prepare students to better navigate the global marketplace because of their experience abroad, strengthening their skills and expertise as emerging global leaders.
Bethune-Cookman University has a comprehensive Internationalization Initiative which has seven main portals: Study Abroad, International Visitor’s Center (IVC), Faculty Abroad, International Internships, International On-line Students, International State-side, and Partnerships/Memberships. For the purposes of this paper, I will elaborate on the IVC.

The International Visitor’s Center and the “internationalizing of our physical environment will facilitate our students becoming aware of how important it is for them to be involved in global initiatives”. By having an IVC, it will enable students to know that B-CU is committed to introducing them to the global marketplace. B-CU will use student volunteers to host the IVC along with staff members. B-CU’s International Visitor’s Center will partner with the local Chamber of Commerce, Rotary Club International, Lions Clubs International, and Sister Cities International. The IVC will also serve as site of gathering for B-CU students to interact with international visitors to Bethune-Cookman University, Daytona Beach, or the State of Florida, writ large.

A central partnership in this model is Bethune-Cookman University’s partnership with the United Nations. This is particularly poignant to the history of the institution because the founder of B-CU, Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune, served as a special consultant (under then Secretary of State Stettinius) to the conference in San Francisco that formalized the United Nations. The United Nations Charter was signed on June 26, 1945. Dr. Bethune sent excerpts from the UN Charter’s preamble, the soul of the charter, to her friends and associates in Washington, D.C. Dr. Bethune stated that, “To put real life and meaning into these phrases so that they will not be just more words, this is our job. This is the hope of minority groups the world over” (Holt, 1964). Keeping with its legacy, Bethune-Cookman University believes that part of its responsibility to the nations of the world is to give meaning to the words of the Charter of the United Nations.

Students are a central part of this internationalization initiative. As such, B-CU’s Office of Student Affairs and the Office of the Provost will explore the idea to sponsor a contest to seek ideas from students to design the IVC and leverage the expertise from the College of Business Management and Entrepreneurship to create a strategy to market and brand the Internationalization Initiative both to the campus and to other external stakeholders.

The Office of Student Affairs has already begun to identify study abroad programs that focus on service. This aligns perfectly with the vision of Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune’s motto: “Enter to Learn and Depart to Serve.” On the academic front, B-CU has deans and department chairs who promote the concept of study abroad as a co-curricular activity through which students may become global leaders. Bethune-Cookman University already has a history of international involvement starting with the founder, Dr. Bethune. However, at this point in the history of the University, the goal is to move the University from being “just involved” in the international arena to the point where internationalization becomes the new norm for the University.
CREATING A SUSTAINABLE GLOBAL LEARNING MODEL FOR MINORITY-SERVING INSTITUTIONS – BOWIE STATE UNIVERSITY

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Introduction

Students of color from undergraduate programs are not represented in great numbers in the rapidly expanding arena of international education. Using the basic learning styles of Experiential Learning Theory, this brief will highlight the components needed to initiate and sustain a global learning program for students at Minority-Serving Institutions (MSIs), specifically HBCUs. The brief will also explore the challenges faced when developing a global learning model, collaboration and partnerships to enhance program sustainability, and best practices to increase study abroad opportunities for students of color.

Background

There is a growing demand for graduates to be capable of cross-border communication and active engagement with global issues. Many minority students have only a passing knowledge of other cultures based on direct contact, while their counterparts become immersed in other languages and cultures through study abroad programs (Davis, 2014). African American students are involved at lower levels than other attendees at universities (Penn & Tanner, 2009). This has been attributed to, as documented in prior research, an absence of inducements and supports, a student’s selected area of study, rates of attrition, and low levels of socio-economic wealth (Penn & Tanner, 2009). In addition, other factors include a lack of opportunities in academic majors such as arts and letters, fear of travel to unfamiliar locales, anxiety about encountering prejudice, and fear of failing to master the language of the host culture (Hembroff & Rusz, 1993). According to the Institute of International Education (2014), the percentage of African American university students who studied abroad in the 2012-2013 academic year was 5.3%, compared to 76.3% of Whites and 7.6% of Hispanics. Some of the best practices being used to address the low proportion of minority participation involve curriculum integration, financial assistance, short-term travel, creating international partnerships, and combating the misperceptions of study abroad (Schulze, 2016).
The increase in globalization and intercultural competence has contributed to the need to expand international learning experiences for students of color, particularly those majoring in social work. In many areas of life—encompassing the cultural, environmental, demographic, economic, and social welfare fields—globalization is evident. The fact that one in five domiciles in America is a family of international origin requires learning from a global focus for all social workers (Gabel & Heal, 2012). International Service-Learning (ISL) is a pedagogical activity that focuses on mixing student learning with involvement from a community focus on foreign countries and the growth of a more just society (Bamber & Pike, 2013).

**Global Learning Program in Bowie State University’s Department of Social Work**

In the absence of limited funding and an office dedicated to international travel abroad, the Global Learning Program in the Bowie State University (BSU) Department of Social Work was initiated during the 2013-2014 academic year. As a result of this effort, three innovative programs were implemented to offer students global learning experiences.

The first initiative consisted of three volunteer faculty responsible for coordinating travel for students in the countries of Cuba, Germany, and South Africa for global learning experiences. Since that time, 30 students have participated in Global Learning Visits to these countries and to Japan. While the numbers are still small, students who participated in the Global Learning Visits indicated that such experiences affected their growth and development, leading to a new cultural perspective of the world. They expressed that they became open to the possibility of international social work practices abroad. By funding this project, greater numbers of students in BSU’s Department of Social Work will have an opportunity to increase their sensitivity to cultural differences and learn more about international social work, thereby increasing their interest in traveling and studying abroad.

The second global learning initiative was based on a $10,000 grant from the Council on Social Work Education, the accrediting body for the field of social work. This three-part learning module introduced students in the Bachelor of Social

**Experiential Learning Theory (ELT)**

Experiential Learning Theory (ELT) is an ideal fit and informs our efforts in research and practice to implement a global learning program. The theory provides a foundation for a holistic approach to a Global Learning Visits Program (GLVP) that gives students a way to fully absorb and integrate their experiences (Wynveen, Kyle & Tarrant, 2012). The GLVP uses the learning styles of the ELT to create phases of the study abroad model that include transforming experiences, reflection, thinking, and action. These phases allow students to learn via the style that best fits their personality and past experiences (Sternberg & Li-fang Zhang, 2014).
Work (BSW) program to international social work practice and the issues and concerns associated with social work delivery in various parts of the world. Specifically, students explored the human condition in Cuba, Germany, and South Africa using a computer program, Real Lives 2010, through which the creation of an avatar allows one to follow the life, including sociological issues, of an individual from the selected country. Factors such as geopolitical and historical influences, social welfare, culture, poverty, and preventable diseases such as HIV and AIDS were explored. Additionally, students explored the impact these factors have on the delivery of social services in these countries and compared similar issues found in the United States. The module was implemented as an extension of the Human Behavior in the Social Environment (SOWK 301) and Social Work Methods I (SOWK 400) courses over two academic terms (2015-2016 and 2016-2017).

Thirdly, the Soliya Connect Program was a similar effort to enhance students’ exposure to global learning. The Connect Program allows students to participate in real-time discussions once a week for two hours via Soliya’s customized video-conferencing application. Each week, students discuss topics that address global and social challenges, values and social norms, and identity, culture, and stereotypes. Students meet with peers around the world and share their opinions and hear the ideas of others on critical issues. Throughout the Connect Program, students are given the opportunity to work closely with two to three members of their group and explore an issue that exists in their communities. Students are required to write some joint recommendation paper outlining ways to address the chosen issue. Students also write an individual reflection paper on the issue they explored and the process of working with their group. Faculty have found that this global learning modality has increased students’ interest in traveling abroad. To date, several Soliya participants have traveled on the department’s global learning trips sponsored by the department.

**Best Practices**

In a short, four-year span, the GVLP has added a rich cultural experience to student learning in the undergraduate social work program at Bowie State University. Several best practices have been gleaned from the GVL program thus far. The most significant practices include but are not limited to: (1) effective collaborations with neighboring institutions; (2) creation of multiple funding streams; (3) use of creative fundraising, e.g., GoFundMe pages online; and (4) use of virtual global learning experiences to increase student awareness and interest in travel abroad. Although there has been a measure of success with the implementation of these best practices, they are most effective when there is buy-in from major stakeholders, including faculty, students, parents, and community partners.

**Summary**

The global learning model at the Bowie State University Department of Social Work incorporates the tenets of Experiential Learning Theory in that students realize a transforming experience, engage in reflection about the process, and take on a new level of thinking and actions based on their experiences after traveling abroad or simulating global travel through online engagement. The Social Work Department’s innovative global travel program has been very impactful in enhancing international learning experiences for BSU students; because of student participation in the program, there is a strong connection of international education to the curriculum and real-world experiences. The students have been able to obtain course credit for their participation and integrate the experiences gained in their field practicums. In addition, students have gained an enhanced understanding of diversity, increased cultural competence, and other learning opportunities that will benefit them in preparation for graduate programs and for employment in a global society.
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Developing globally competent and competitive students is a growing phenomenon for many Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and other Minority-Serving Institutions (MSIs). The call to action for many of these institutions to implement programs designed to prepare students for global learning and awareness has lagged behind in many instances. Many HBCUs and MSIs face multiple barriers in providing increased international educational opportunities for students. Despite understanding that increased educational international exchange holds great potential as a mechanism for enhancing intercultural understanding and promoting international development, few have invested the time or resources in international programing (Glass, Wongtrirat & Buss, 2015). Like most institutions, HBCUs and other MSIs experience barriers related to financial and time restrictions that sometimes prevent physical travel from being an option. Bowie State University’s (BSU) undergraduate social work program implemented a virtual exchange model to provide students with global interaction in a virtual setting as an alternative to physical travel.

Global Learning Visits Program

BSU’s social work program’s Global Learning Visits Program (GLVP) began in 2014. Its established mission is to promote lifelong learning for undergraduate social work students through international travel and virtual connections. Students are chosen to travel to Cuba, Germany, Japan, and South Africa. Our learning visits range from one to three weeks in duration, and at least one chaperone accompanies students on each visit. Students are afforded opportunities to explore social service agencies, schools and universities, health and mental health care facilities, and participate in human rights projects to learn ways in which each country approaches these concerns. They attend lectures on the geopolitical issues that influence the human condition in the country they are visiting and are able to learn about the nuances of the local culture. Students also volunteer in the country they are visiting to increase social responsibility. Understanding that not all students are able to or interested in travel, the virtual connection model was implemented in 2016.
Assessment and Expansion

In 2015, the BSU’s social work program had several successful global learning visits. We began looking for new and innovative ways to advance their GLVP. The social work program sought to incorporate global learning opportunities for students who were unable to travel. During a symposium hosted by the US Department of Education, the social work faculty members engaged with a group of innovative thinkers who provided ways to improve access to international education. The co-founder of the Soliya Connect Program facilitated a workshop titled “Virtual Exchange: International Education for All.” During this presentation, they explained how virtual exchange is an alternative for students who are unable to physically travel, and how it would provide these students with global learning experiences. The presentation also reviewed ways students could learn to improve communication skills and begin the process of transcending culturally imposed boundaries. Social work faculty members were interested in learning how the program could also help students practice building interconnections among people and the environment. Inspired by the presentation, and understanding that each student may not travel abroad, we explored implementing the Soliya Connect Program, named it the Virtual Connection, and sought to incorporate it as an online component of our GLVP.

The Soliya Connect Program

Education exchanges and global learning programs are great ways to prepare students to deal effectively with difference and to communicate and collaborate across cultures. Soliya is an international NGO that uses technology to connect students from around the world. The Connect Program provides students with opportunities to engage with one another through virtual exchanges. In February 2016, our program partnered with Soliya to provide virtual exchange learning opportunities for BSU students. Four of the students became members of the inaugural group. The small group quickly grew, and by the second semester, 16 students participated. Through Virtual Connection (VC), students interacted weekly (for eight weeks) with students from various universities around the world to address a range of topics in a structured environment.

Theoretical Framework – Social Constructivism

Creating virtual learning online can be important to the success of students seeking to further their interest in intercultural and international education. BSU views social constructivism as the theoretical framework for the online international engagement component of the GLVP. Understanding that every conversation between two or more people provides opportunities for online learners to develop meaning through dialogue and debate with other learners, the social work program decided to create an online environment that focused on student attitudes and behavior related to differences they perceive between their own culture and others. The social constructivism theory takes into account that social worlds develop out of individual’s interactions with their culture and society (Woo, 2007). The social interaction creates meaning from the student’s current and prior knowledge, thus deepening their understanding and extending knowledge. Under the social constructivism theory, students are actively involved in constructing knowledge of a topic using communication and social interactions with peers (Conole, Dyke, Oliver, & Seale, 2004).

Virtual Connection

BSU’s social work program uses the Soliya Connect Program model to introduce VC. It builds on the social constructivism theory to develop a learning community online that integrates communication and allows students to gain new knowledge, or expand upon existing knowledge, through the exchange of ideas and information.
Each student that participates in the VC is provided an orientation and an outline of the topics and expectations for participation. Students engage in different social, political, and economic issues currently facing the world. The students’ learning does not stop after their virtual exchanges. They are encouraged to incorporate their online discussions into their course work and use the gained knowledge to improve their critical thinking skills. Each student is required to present on their experiences with international engagement online. Faculty have input on the students’ assessment and are encouraged to assist with recruiting students who have limited interest in physical travel but are interested in interacting on a global level. The VC coordinator is provided weekly updates of the students’ progress by the online facilitator. At the end of the eight weeks, students submit a reflective paper to address communication and their perspectives on cultural differences.

BSU is the first HBCU to participate in the Soliya Connect Program. HBCUs and MSIs who may be struggling with or attempting to find creative ways to advance global learning for students should explore partnering with the Soliya Connect Program. A few helpful tips for implementing virtual exchange opportunities for students include: 1) research opportunities within the US Department of Education and the US Department of State regarding online opportunities for international engagement; 2) schedule a teleconference with a representative from the Soliya Connect Program to discuss first steps for implementing a virtual exchange program within your program or institution; 3) partner with other HBCUs and other MSIs to share the responsibility of starting a virtual exchange program.

Virtual learning may be an important but overlooked mechanism by which HBCUs and other MSIs can provide students with international learning opportunities that go beyond physical travel. For those institutions that currently have study abroad/global learning programs, implementing a virtual exchange component will serve to enhance what currently exists. For institutions that do not have a global learning program, virtual exchange can serve as the beginning and also an alternative to traditional approaches to global learning.

Helpful Tips for Implementing Virtual Exchange Opportunities

Virtual Connection is an online exchange that helps introduce students to global learning and sparks their interest in continued learning after the virtual exchange has ended. Each of the 35 students who have participated in VC since 2014 have reported being more confident effectively communicating with their peers from varied backgrounds, as well as interacting regarding global issues through problem-solving and enhanced intercultural skills.

Virtual learning may be an important but overlooked mechanism by which HBCUs and other MSIs can provide students with international learning opportunities that go beyond physical travel. For those institutions that currently have study abroad/global learning programs, implementing a virtual exchange component will serve to enhance what currently exists. For institutions that do not have a global learning program, virtual exchange can serve as the beginning and also an alternative to traditional approaches to global learning.
Dr. Stevenson served as department chair of social work at BSU when the GLVP was created.

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ENHANCING HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES’ ABILITY TO PRODUCE GLOBAL CITIZENS: A CALL TO ACTION

Dr. Arthur McMahan, Senior Associate Director, White House Initiative on HBCUs
Tammi Fergusson, Senior Program Analyst, White House Initiative on HBCUs

According to Dr. Allan E. Goodman, the president of the Institute of International Education, “studying abroad is one of the best ways to prepare to enter and succeed in the interconnected, globalized workforce, yet 90 percent of American college students do not study or intern outside of the United States. We owe it to the next generation of Americans to find ways to make it more accessible to a wider range of students.”

There are currently no HBCUs listed in the 2013-2014 Open Doors review of top degree-granting institutions by total number of study abroad students. While this fact may be concerning, it also serves as a wakeup call for all Minority Serving Institutions that there is work to do if we intend to take full advantage of the international opportunities provided by governmental, corporate and private entities.

HBCUs are underrepresented among the higher education institutions that send students to study abroad. However, there is a tremendous amount of energy and momentum among HBCUs in relation to international opportunities and experiential learning. For example, Tennessee State University has intensified their efforts to increase the number of international students, visiting scholars, and internships abroad, as well as fellowships and employment opportunities for students and faculty. As the 2016 Heiskell Award Winner for Internationalizing HBCUs, Dr. Jewell Winn, Senior International Officer at Tennessee State University said:

In 2012, campus leadership created the Office of Diversity and International Affairs (DIA) to provide cultural collaborative initiatives that support TSU’s strategic goals in producing global leaders. The results have shown the new initiative to be a rapid and astonishing success. In three years, TSU’s international efforts grew to hosting 900 international students, helping 121 students take part in study abroad experiences, enabling 12 faculty members leading study abroad experiences with support from four staff members, entering into MOU’s with 26 universities abroad, and signing a commitment with IIE’s Generation Study Abroad initiative. DIA executed 20 cultural learning and diversity opportunities for over 5,400 student participants—who represent 60% of the 2014 student population of about 9,000 students. New international student enrollment increased by 156% from fall 2014 to fall 2015. DIA staff support of international student clubs resulted in three international student groups receiving inaugural Student Government Association awards for New Student Organization of the Year and Best Cultural Programming, as well as the Diversity Award (as cited in the 2016 Open Doors Report, International Educational Exchange).
In addition to developing new study abroad programs, HBCUs can further internationalize their campuses by: 1) recruiting international students, 2) securing resources such as grants to support international students and staff and 3) creating infrastructures that support global opportunities such as programs in international aid and development, agriculture and foreign languages.

The surge in interest and activity among HBCUs coincides with a renewed effort by the White House Initiative on Historically Black Colleges and Universities (WHIHBUCU) and the reestablishment of the International Affairs Working Group (IAWG). The mission of the IAWG is to provide a platform for federal partners and HBCUs to collaborate and share resources and information that will improve the internationalization of institutions, faculty and students. The group has three primary focus areas: 1) supporting HBCU’s efforts to internationalize their campuses and infrastructures, 2) providing international opportunities for faculty and staff at HBCUs, and 3) internationalizing students through experiential learning opportunities abroad. The working group has several federal partners and stakeholder investment in supporting HBCUs reach their missions to internationalize their campuses, including the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Peace Corps, State Department, Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG) and the Department of Education as well as external partners, such as the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR) and the American Council on Education (ACE).

While HBCU students participate in international study or internships at a lower rate than students at Predominantly White Institutions, we believe that with the efforts of individual HBCUs and the IAWG within the WHIHBUCU, we can improve the numbers.

The IAWG strategy includes regular meetings with HBCU International Affairs staff/administrators and representatives from federal partners. These meetings will allow for information sharing, event planning and one-on-one networking. The group will also co-sponsor or—at a minimum—support the specific agency events conducted by partner institutions and organizations.

Former President Barack Obama challenged all of us to improve the prospect of our graduates becoming “global citizens.” President Obama and former Secretary of Education Duncan issued this joint statement regarding global citizens:

> We must work together to give all of our students an outstanding education, which includes learning about our global partners – their cultures, histories, languages, values, and viewpoints. We must focus on integrating international perspectives into our classrooms. It is through education and exchange that we become better collaborators, competitors and compassionate neighbors in this global society (Duncan, International Education Week, November 14-18, 2011).

The mission is clear - together HBCUs and federal partners can work together in order to improve the international experiences of the HBCU community and supporting students in their quests to be global citizens!
AUTHORS’ BIOGRAPHIES

Carl Algood is Associate Professor, Social Work, Bowie State University, with a Ph.D. from the Howard University School of Social Work, a Master of Social Work degree from New York University and Bachelor of Art in History from Winston Salem State University. His research focuses on how African American families are impacted while raising a child with disability. Dr. Algood has published articles in refereed journals in areas of disabilities and kinship care and has presented at local and national and international conferences. Dr. Algood has over twenty years’ experience in direct social work practice, and as an administrator of an agency serving persons with disabilities. He has experience in global learning and has accompanied students and faculty to a global learning visit to Havana, Cuba. He has also participated in faculty development seminars in Rio de Janeiro, Sao Paolo, and Bahia, Brazil as part of the Council on International Education Exchange. Also, he was a scholar in the European Union Country’s - Race Ethnicity and Migrations Studies (REMS) program in Utrecht, the Netherlands.

Laura Blanton is the Language Training Coordinator at the British Embassy in Mexico City. Prior to joining the Foreign Office, she was a university study abroad coordinator and advisor, working primarily with non-traditional students. Watching these students expand their worldview by engaging internationally and cross-culturally has been one of the most rewarding aspects of her career. As an undergraduate, Laura studied abroad in Argentina and in Spain. She subsequently worked for several years at her alma mater as a peer advisor (for outbound students) and as an intern with the American Semester Program & Exchanges (for inbound students). She is also a freelance copy editor whose clients have included Michigan State University, the MasterCard Foundation, Diversity Abroad, 3Play Media, and the Consultancy for Global Higher Education. Laura completed her master’s degree in Adult & Higher Education at the University of Southern Maine, with coursework focusing on education abroad and a capstone paper on adult language-learning.

Barbara Davis is the Director of Study Abroad and Professor in the School of Religion at Bethune-Cookman University. Dr. Davis has over twenty-five years of senior leadership experience in the area of Christian Ministry and Discipleship Ministry. Dr. Davis has served as a member of the Board of Directors of the Foundation Board for Bowie State University; Founder and Chairperson of the Interfaith Council of the United States for Sierra Leone; former Maryland State Coordinator for Sister Cities International; past president of the Prince George’s County Maryland Senegal Sister Cities; and Vice President of the Prince George’s County Committee on Academic Achievement.
Tammi Fergusson is the Program Analyst for the White House Initiative on Historically Black Colleges and Universities. She is responsible for working directly with the federal agency representatives and liaisons, instituted through Executive Order 13532, to strengthen the capacity of HBCUs through increased participation in appropriate federal programs and initiatives. Prior to her assignment at the WHIHBCUs, Ms. Fergusson served as the Education Program Specialist for several programs administered through the Department of Education including Race to the Top, Early Learning Challenge, and the Improved Reentry Education grant program. Ms. Fergusson graduated from Howard University with a Master of Science degree in Infant, Child, and Adolescent Development in Education, and from the University of Maryland, College Park, with a Bachelor of Science degree in Family Studies.

Nkenge Friday is a diversity and inclusion educator and strategist with a comprehensive background leading student and campus engagement, community-wide diversity and inclusion operations, leadership development and cross-functional teams, all in pursuit of inclusive excellence. Dr. Friday has held roles that have included Director of Student Affairs, Assistant Director of Academic Advising, Program Manager, ESL/English teacher, and Assistant Director of Education. Dr. Friday received her BA from Tougaloo College, MA from the University of Oklahoma and her Doctorate of Education from Nova Southeastern University in Higher Education Leadership. Her passion for providing educational opportunities to underserved populations, including international options, has led her professional career and personal passions for over 10 years. It has allowed her to travel to over 40 countries. Dr. Friday currently serves as the Associate Dean of Students and Director of Diversity and Inclusion for Marietta College, located in Marietta, Ohio.

Makeba Green is Department Chair & Associate Professor, Social Work, Bowie State University. A lover of HBCU education, Dr. Green received her Ph.D. from the School of Social Work at Clark Atlanta University, (Atlanta, GA), Master of Social Work from Howard University (Washington, D.C.) and a Bachelor of Social Work from Bowie State University (Bowie, MD). A seasoned pedagogue, researcher, and clinician, Dr. Green has taught courses across the curriculum for 13 years, directed the undergraduate field placement program and provided case management to families with children at risk of out-of-home placement. With a sincere dedication to Social Work and best practices in mental health, Dr. Green consistently provided direct service to the female addiction population. Notably, Dr. Green’s research in addiction among the African American population continues to evolve, as her most recent work explores the impact drug use/abuse has on undergraduate students attending HBCUs.
Jack Hobson completed both his BA in French and MA in Global Affairs at the University of Oklahoma. His research interests include democratization and state stability and political development within Francophone Africa. Hobson has served as an international education professional for the past 18 years at the University of Oklahoma, Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles and California State University, Fullerton. Currently he serves as the Sr. Director of the Global Titans Center on the CSUF campus directing both the Offices of Study Abroad and International Student Services. During his tenure at CSUF, Hobson has collaborated with key campus constituencies to grow the study abroad numbers by 97% in three years resulting in receiving IIE’s “Seal of Excellence” in the Generation Study Abroad initiative. Hobson has also been very active in several professional organizations most recently serving as Region XII Chair of NAFSA.

Kari Knutson Miller serves as provost and vice president for Academic Affairs for California State University, Fullerton. As the University’s chief academic officer, she provides leadership for division student success initiatives and the planning and management of all academic and instructional resources that support teaching, scholarship and research. She previously served as the Associate Vice President for International Programs & Global Engagement and Chair of the Department of Child and Adolescent Studies. Dr. Knutson Miller has also spearheaded efforts to strengthen the institution’s position as a regional university with a global outlook. Her accomplishments include launching the IPGE unit, joining the Generation Study Abroad pledge to increase student participation in study abroad, and articulating the institution’s global strategies. She has also supported Cal State Fullerton’s strategic plan through energetic engagement in efforts to promote student success and increase students’ participation in high-impact practices including study abroad, study away, Arboretum-based internships, and more. She earned a B.S. and M.S. from the University of Wisconsin, Madison, and a Ph.D. in Educational Psychology from Arizona State University.

Arthur McMahan is the Senior Associate Director for the White House Initiative for Historically Black Colleges and Universities. He most recently served as Director of VA Anti-Harassment Program, Deputy Dean of Veterans Affairs Learning University at Department of Veterans Affairs and as Director Educational Services and Strategic Planning at the U.S. Army Management Staff College (AMSC), Fort Belvoir, Virginia. His expertise and experience includes strategic planning, institutional research, and performance management. He is a Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award Examiner (2007), and has served on the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command Accreditation Team. Dr. McMahan, a retired Army Officer, has written and presented on Strategic Planning, the Balanced Scorecard, change management, and diversity. He holds a B.A. from the University of South Carolina, an M.S. from the University of Nebraska-Omaha, and a Ph.D. from the Virginia Commonwealth University.
Robert Peterson is an Assistant Professor and serves as one of the Associate Directors of the MPAGE II Brazil, Cuba, Ecuador and Ghana Study Abroad Programs in the Department of Sociology at Morehouse College. In addition to teaching, Dr. Peterson has gained executive and programmatic experience by serving as a Program Manager for a Ford Foundation Funded Faces of Manhood Initiative and recently received the Diversity Abroad Graduate & New Professionals Fellowship from the Diversity Abroad Network serving in the inaugural cohort. His research and teaching interests include: the intersectionality of Race, Class, & Gender; The Sociology of Health; HIV/AIDS; Sexual Violence; African American Men & Health Outcomes; & International Curriculum Development with Education Abroad. Dr. Peterson received his B.A. in Sociology from Morehouse College in Atlanta, Georgia and received his M.A. and Ph.D. in Medical Sociology from Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, Ohio.

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Michael Woolf is Deputy President for Strategic Development, CAPA The Global Education Network. He has spent much of his career in an international context. Prior to working in mainstream international education, he taught American Literature at the universities of Hull, Middlesex, Padova, and Venice, and worked as a researcher-writer for BBC radio. Michael has held leadership roles with FIE, CIEE, and Syracuse University. Dr. Woolf has also consulted for New York University, Brethren Colleges Abroad, Warwick University, and is an adviser to the President of Tamagawa University in Tokyo. He serves on a number of boards and committees including the Curriculum Committee of the Forum on Education Abroad, the Editorial Boards of Frontiers and the Journal of Studies in International Education, EAIE’s Knowledge Development Task Force, and Braun Stiftung für Internationalen Austausch. Michael was also a member of the Board of Directors of the Forum on Education Abroad from 2006 to 2012. Michael holds a PhD in American Studies, an MA in Literature, and a BA in History and Politics.