



**Association of International Education Administrators**  
*Leaders in International Higher Education*

**AIEA Survey Results**

**Roger Brindley, University of South Florida**

**February 2013**

Dear AIEA colleagues, I recently shared the prompt below and asked for comments. There were seven such suggestions involving both higher education institutions and educational service providers. Those responses are shared in the spirit of collegiality below.

**Your Advice of Encouraging Students to Study Abroad**

***Prompt***

*Dear AIEA colleagues,*

*At the University of South Florida (USF) we are looking for initiatives that will accelerate our study abroad/international travel numbers among domestic students. We have had some success of late with double digit increases over the past few years but we have much to do and would like to increase the pace of this trend.*

*As a large public university we do have contextual challenges such as a very broad range of over 225 undergraduate and graduate majors, many of which have distinctive expectations for course sequence and student experiences. Then there is a substantial Pell-grant population, a considerable number of first generation in college students, and a diverse student profile. We believe this campus culture requires we earnestly find successful ways for increasing accessibility to more international opportunities for our students!*

*We would welcome advice from any AIEA members irrespective of institutional profile about the ways in which you have had success "scaling up" your study abroad/international experiences for students. I am very interested in responses from "large publics" but would be pleased to compile all your answers into one document and share with the listserv at the end of the month after the annual meeting. I suspect USF is not alone in trying to think outside the box on this issue.*

*Thank you for your collective wisdom.*

***Answers***

1) I saw your post on the AIEA listserv and thought that you might want to know about a workshop being held at the Forum on Education Abroad Conference related to first generation students and study abroad:

**First Generation College Students: Re-Thinking Engagement Strategies and Creating an Action Plan**

*Michelle Tolan (Butler University), Karyn Sweeney (University of Denver), Heather Browne (Colorado College), Heather Barclay Hamir (University of Texas at Austin), Margaret Storm McCullers (University of Texas at Austin)*

This workshop will consider first generation college students through a review of literature and data; discuss best practices for recruiting and supporting "first gens," analyze how we advise them; incorporate student stories from study abroad alumni; identify common campus/community stakeholders; challenge what these students might seek in study abroad; and culminate in the development of participant action plans.

More information on the Conference can be found here: <http://www.forumea.org/Chicago2013.cfm>

Brian Whalen, Ph.D.

President and CEO

**The Forum on Education Abroad**

[whalenb@dickinson.edu](mailto:whalenb@dickinson.edu)

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2) In answer to your question, we have had tremendous success "scaling up" our study abroad/international experiences for students by outsourcing carefully and selectively to travel service providers (WorldStrides) and risk management firms (ISOS) over the years. Outsourcing may have a negative connotation. However, it has been a great strategy for us and our students. In an attempt to describe what we have done (with 40% less staff), I can give you the context, the multifaceted rationale, and some examples, as follows and based on a presentation I gave recently:

**A) Context**

- The **2008 Great Recession/Global Financial Crisis (GFC)** had a very serious and direct impact on Higher Education Institutions.
  - Endowments went down (e.g., 24% at Duke for 2008-2009).
  - Public funding for operations and/or research decreased.
  - Budget shortfalls were identified (\$125 million at Duke).
  - Administrative staffing levels decreased.

- Salaries for business faculty continued to increase.
- While many institutions have recovered since then, the “**muscle memory**” is still active and 2008 budgets are high water marks.
- Meanwhile, **student demand** for international experiential opportunities has increased by 58% within the Partnership in International Management (PIM) network of 60 leading business schools (in 35 countries) since 2008.

## **B) Rationale**

Legal - Legal obligation to spread risk and liabilities with partners like WorldStrides, United Health, and ISOS.

Strategic - Strategic approach (team vs. individual) to add resources and outsource when appropriate.

Economic / Financial - Economic/financial requirement to stay in business due to GFC and manage growing demand from students and employers.

Operational / Capabilities-related - Exchange partners to run academic programs and increase mobility: 120 Duke MBAs in more than 20 countries (twice the 2004 level).

## **C) Examples of Strategic Partnerships at Fuqua:**

- CDC / ISOS / State Dept. to manage medical and safety risks.
- 40 Exchange partners to deliver academic content (120 MBAs/year).
- Marriott / Sheraton for EMBA international residencies.
- Oracle / PeopleSoft to run operations.
- WorldStrides to deliver study tours globally (180 MBAs/year).
- WorldStrides to deliver consulting practica globally (80 MBAs/year).

Since many of your undergraduate students will (hopefully) pursue their studies and try to obtain a Master’s degree, the above information might give them some food for thought as to what awaits them and what they might be able to do earlier than their competition (MBAs in this case).

Study abroad is a must and I know that you’re convinced of it. However, what you might not know is that we see many of our MBAs playing catch up and trying to understand the world because they did not go on study abroad earlier in life. They failed to challenge themselves and get out of their comfort zone early. Sometimes, they miss opportunities due to their lack of

creativity and other benefits derived from going on study abroad during their most formative years.

Lastly and as you may know, Thunderbird has published some [interesting research](#) on the benefits of a [global mindset and global leadership](#), a much needed skill in all fields. The Thunderbird GMI assessment tool is used by many universities. Based on my experience, I think that it is never too early for a student to develop his/her global mindset. I hope that you'll be able to scale your programs so that more USF students take advantage of it.

Bertrand Guillotin, MBA  
Director, International Programs Office - Daytime MBA  
**Duke University: The Fuqua School of Business**  
Chairman of the Strategic Advisory Board, P.I.M. Network

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**3)** Greetings from **Simon Fraser University**, a large(ish) public research-intensive university near Vancouver, Canada. I read your post with great interest, and I have sent it to our Director here in charge of exchange programs for a longer response. We have similar challenges encouraging students to consider international experiences such as exchange.

My colleague will be able to elaborate if she gets a chance to respond but in short, despite a multitude of exchange opportunities, our students seem relatively risk and expense averse, are loath to leave part time jobs, and the curricula in many of our programs may not support or encourage international experiences.

We really look forward to seeing the compilation of the responses you receive.

Sarah Dench [[sjdench@sfu.ca](mailto:sjdench@sfu.ca)]

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**4)** This is a subject that would interest us as well at **Concordia**, in Edmonton, Canada, as we are starting the awareness of a study abroad program among our students. We are a small independent, publicly funded university but would like to have the numbers of outgoing students – for short term faculty-led or semester or year-long exchange experiences – increase as well. We are working on our procedures/policies right now and will have a first comprehensive students information about the matter in early March.

Thank you for whatever you can share,

From: Dr. Manfred Zeuch  
Vice President International & Director, Master of Arts Program  
[\[manfred.zeuch@concordia.ab.ca\]](mailto:manfred.zeuch@concordia.ab.ca)

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5) One suggestion would be to connect study abroad to the key issues impacting USF. For instance, there is some recent research connecting study abroad to retention and success on campus (see:

<http://globaledresearch.com/study-abroad-impact.asp>). Although there is a limited amount of data, some institutions are using study abroad as a strategy in this area.

From: Gary Rhodes [[garymrhodes@gmail.com](mailto:garymrhodes@gmail.com)]

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6) I just reviewed your post with great interest. Our consortium, the **Diversity Abroad Network**, was created to assist higher institutions of all types in increasing participation and serving the needs of diverse and under-represented students in education abroad. Among other services we work with individual campuses to develop a strategy for increasing participation in education abroad, specifically with the populations that you noted. You can learn more about our consortium here: <http://www.diversitynetwork.org>

I'd be happy to schedule a call and learn more about international education at USF and give you a few recommendations for increasing participation. I look forward to hearing back from you.

Andrew Gordon  
Diversity Abroad  
Email: [ajgordon@diversityabroad.org](mailto:ajgordon@diversityabroad.org)

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7) You might want to take a quick look at (relatively) recent research results posted on my website -- one finding (in both studies) was the importance of advising...

Ann Imlah Schneider, Ph.D.  
International Education Consultant  
[www.internationaledadvice.org](http://www.internationaledadvice.org)

Email: [Aimlahs@aol.com](mailto:Aimlahs@aol.com)