In an era of increasing accountability within U.S. higher education, it is strategically important that education abroad professionals not view research and scholarship as a burden or an addition to an already demanding workload. Rather, we must recognize that at a minimum, our professional success is closely tied to our ability to effectively identify, access, and utilize research and scholarship to inform our collective practice.

It is important for education abroad scholar-practitioners to challenge untested claims and avoid casual assumptions about the potential value and impact of education abroad.

The following is a brief list of some of the major knowledge areas within contemporary education abroad scholarship and a listing of books, book chapters and/or articles that provide foundational reading within each area. This essential reading provides insight into the existing research and scholarship that informs our practice. This list is neither prescriptive nor exhaustive and should be adapted and expanded upon.

1. COMPREHENSIVE INTERNATIONALIZATION

What does successful internationalization of higher education mean? In his influential book on comprehensive internationalization, J. Hudzik links an institution’s success to its commitment and action to infuse international, global, and comparative content and perspectives through the teaching, research and service missions of the institution. As these readings below illustrate, comprehensive internationalization not only impacts all of campus life but also the institution’s external frames of reference, partnerships and relationships.


2. INTERNATIONAL AND COMPARATIVE EDUCATION

Around the world, internationalization has been one of the most powerful forces at work within higher education. Contributors to The SAGE Handbook of International Higher Education argue that it has become nearly impossible for institutions to avoid the powerful influences of internationalization. The rise of global ranking schemes, for example, now serve as powerful global reference points for higher education systems. Education abroad professionals must strategically observe and navigate these ever-changing dimensions of higher education.

3. U.S. EDUCATION ABROAD HISTORY

According to historian B. Hoffa, the earliest forms of credit-bearing education abroad began at Indiana University, when, in the 1880s, IU faculty took students abroad to study language and natural history during the summer in Switzerland, France, England, Germany, and Italy. In the 1920s, the University of Delaware became the first institution to begin offering credit-bearing education abroad programs for U.S. undergraduate students. Although student enrollment patterns have constantly shifted over the decades, the primary modes of U.S. student mobility have remained consistent. Hoffa’s scholarship provides essential reading for those interested in the historical beginnings of U.S. education abroad.


4. EVALUATION & ASSESSMENT

Education abroad professionals are increasingly being asked to evaluate and assess the overall impact of their programming efforts and, in many cases, demonstrate the value added to overall student learning and development. A foundational text long regarded as an essential resource for planning as well as for developing and conducting effective evaluation and assessment is M. Bolen’s 2007 edited volume, *A Guide to Outcomes Assessment in Education Abroad*. In recent years, several similar publications have emerged that provide added insight into evaluation and assessment.


5. STUDENT SUCCESS

Considerable research has focused on specific aspects of the undergraduate student experience and their relationship with student success, such as student retention, graduation, and academic achievement. Specifically, well-known theoretical models include Tinto’s *Student Integration Model* (1975) and Astin’s *Student Involvement Model* (1984). Most recently, Kuh (2008) identified high-impact educational practices that theoretically affect student retention and persistence toward graduation and overall academic performance. As a noted high-impact practice, education abroad participation provides students with specific global learning opportunities to augment their understanding of multicultural and intercultural differences. Recent studies such as those listed below have begun to build on this theoretical foundation to empirically investigate the causal and/or correlative relationship between education abroad participation and student success.


6. CURRICULUM INTEGRATION & INTERNATIONALIZATION AT HOME

Curriculum integration initiatives have advanced quickly across the education abroad landscape in the past decade after a grant-funded project at the University of Minnesota brought heightened attention to this concept. A central purpose of curriculum integration is to develop major-specific advising resources to assist undergraduate students in program selection and faculty and staff with advising and guiding students interested in pursuing education abroad within their disciplines. An intended outcome is for education abroad programming to be seen as a primarily academic endeavor that is integral to undergraduate education. G. Woodruff provides answers to key questions on implementing curriculum integration strategies in the 2012 NAFSA publication, *Curriculum Integration of Education Abroad*. The concept of *Internationalization at Home* has emerged as a related model for preparing every student with the needed competencies for today’s globally interconnected world.


7. STUDENT LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT

The treatment of student learning and development theories, whether cognitive, psychosocial or otherwise has over the years been increasingly utilized in education abroad research. The 2008 publication of Engle and Engle’s seminal article, *Study Abroad Levels: Toward a Classification of Program Types* sparked wide-spread discussions on how to best to intervene or enhance student learning and development by intentionally leveraging specific programming components. Likewise, Vande Berg, Paige and Lou have been instrumental in catalyzing an interventionist approach with their 2012 publication, *Student Learning Abroad: What our students are learning, What they’re not, and What we can do about it*.

8. **STUDENT ADVISING & SUPPORT**

Over the years, there have been a number of useful books published for student audiences with the goal of supporting their pre-departure preparation and maximizing their learning abroad. There have similarly been numerous publications written for parents, too. Many of these publications focus largely on cultural engagement and programming logistics. Published in 1992, *Students Abroad: Strangers at Home* still resonates as a useful publication for education abroad professionals concerned with supporting student learning abroad.


9. **ONGOING ORIENTATION**

Designing and facilitating effective orientation programming for students has long been of paramount importance to education abroad professionals. In recent years, there has been a shift toward implementing ongoing orientation in which a comprehensive curriculum encompassing pre-departure, while abroad and upon return phases is determined in advance and in conjunction with well-articulated learning objectives. Via blended learning methodologies, content is delivered when it is most relevant to students and facilitated in a way that motivates students to engage with the information. This approach to linking entry to reentry was first advanced in 1993 by B. La Brack in his seminal chapter, *The Missing Linkage: The Process of Integrating Orientation and reentry*.

- Bathurst, L. & La Brack, B. (2012). Shifting the locus of intercultural training: Intervening prior to and after the student experiences abroad. In M. VandeBerg, R. M. Paige, & K. H. Lou (Eds.), *Student learning abroad: What our students are learning, what they’re not, and what we can do about it* (pp. 261-283). Sterling, VA: Stylus.

10. **INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCY**

A long-held assumption has been that education abroad programming can be strategically leveraged to support the development of global-ready graduates who are able to work effectively in intercultural settings. Not surprisingly, there has been considerable research and scholarship in this area. Underpinning much of this work has been the seminal 1993 article by M. Bennett, *Towards Ethnorelativism: A Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity*. This publication provides the initial theoretical foundation for the frequently utilized Intercultural Development Inventory.

11. GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP

In much of the language promoting the benefits of international education, global citizenship has become a widely used concept that seems to be universally understood, but is rarely conceptually or operationally defined. Although some scholars have debated the meaning of the term, many assert that the integration of education abroad experiences into the undergraduate curriculum is an effective pathway on which to guide students toward becoming engaged global citizens. Perhaps the greatest challenge to this claim came from T. Zemach, a student herself at the time of writing the well-regarded 2008 essay, American students abroad can’t be global citizens.


12. CULTURAL LEARNING & ENGAGEMENT

What makes education abroad a potentially transformative experience for students is in their ability and willingness to engage in their host cultures. Education abroad professionals have long acknowledged that students are likely best served when they are enabled and empowered to step outside of their comfort zones and engage respectfully with the host culture. In his 2007 article, The View from the Veranda, A. Ogden challenges education abroad professionals to make it impossible for students to avoid direct and meaningful contact with the host culture, to learn with and from them, and to explore new values, assumptions and beliefs.


13. DIVERSITY & UNDERREPRESENTATION

The typical profile of an education abroad student is someone who is white, female, without any disability, majoring in the humanities, social sciences, or business, from a highly-educated family, with little to no financial need, and studying in Europe on a program of fewer than eight weeks’ duration. There have been numerous calls over the decades urging education abroad professionals to provide holistic support to a more diverse student population. Led by M. Salisbury and his methodology of utilizing odds ratios, there has been considerable research into traditionally underrepresented populations and barriers to their participation.


**14. CAREER DEVELOPMENT & EMPLOYABILITY**

Although international educators have long extoled the value of education abroad, there is heightened interest in the linkage between education abroad and early career benefits. Among the more documented benefits of education abroad include improved interpersonal and communication skills, teamwork skills, and problem solving and analytical skills. In the 2011, *AIFS Student Guide to Study Abroad and Career Development*, M. Tillman provides students with a helpful framework to understand the added value of education abroad for career development.


**15. ACADEMIC ENGAGEMENT & DEVELOPMENT**

Although many in higher education are concerned with assessing what students are learning through education abroad, few studies have attempted to assess academic development in a broad, encompassing way. Instead, most assessment of academic learning has focused on discipline-specific knowledge. In their book, *Writing Across Culture: An Introduction to Study Abroad and the Writing Process*. T. Magistrale and K. Wagner (1997) expand on the importance of encouraging students to recognize academic programming as a vehicle through which to learn more about the host country’s language, history, politics and culture. Students can use analytical writing as a tool for both displaying and acquiring knowledge.


**16. LANGUAGE ACQUISITION**

For decades, institutions have leveraged education abroad programming to enhance student learning in the area of foreign language acquisition. Developing foreign language proficiency was once a major consideration for students in choosing to study abroad. Although this is less often the case today, foreign language learning remains very much a central rationale for developing and promoting education abroad. C. Kinginger’s 2009 publication, *Language Learning and Study Abroad* offers a comprehensive summary of foreign language acquisition in education abroad contexts. As demonstrated in the *Georgetown Consortium Project*, the Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) and the Simulated Oral Proficiency Interview (SOPI) can be leveraged to effectively measure proficiency gains through education abroad. W.
Rivers may have been the first to challenge long-held assumptions about language learning acquisition through education abroad.


17. PROGRAM TYPES

As education abroad programming has grown, distinct program types have emerged beyond traditional study abroad, such as international internships, global service-learning, and undergraduate research abroad. Traditional programming has also moved beyond the junior year and now includes a growing range of distinct short-term programs that occur throughout undergraduate education, including semester-embedded programs and first-year seminars. Much is being published in these areas especially in relation to education abroad as a high-impact practice affecting persistence.


18. EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

Experiential learning is a widely used pedagogy in education abroad programming. D. Kolb’s *Experiential Learning Cycle* provides a stable foundation for facilitating student learning and reflection in the context of education abroad and is arguably becoming more relevant as program offerings expand to include more community-engaged programming, such as international internships, undergraduate research and global service-learning. Community-engaged learning is not without some criticism, stretching back to I. Illich’s famous 1968 speech, *To Hell with Good Intentions.*

19. GLOBAL HEALTH PROGRAMMING

By all accounts, academic global health programming appears to be burgeoning. In response to increasing student demand and enthusiasm, institutions are providing short-term training and service experiences in global health settings. The goal of these programs generally focus on reducing disparities in global health through a combination of research, education, and service. There are important ethical considerations associated with global health programming and in recent years, there have been a number of important publications that describe some of the issues and how to facilitate global health education effectively while minimizing unintended adverse consequences. The Forum on Education Abroad has produced its Guidelines for Undergraduate Health-Related Programs Abroad and the University of Minnesota offers an extensive online worship for participants, called Global Ambassadors for Patient Safety.


20. SHORT-TERM EDUCATION ABROAD

Whether the popularity of short-term programming is being driven by changing student interests and demands, or whether institutional leadership and increasing faculty engagement are dictating and guiding the direction of program development, short-term programs are, according to L. Chieffo, “here to stay.” The momentum toward short-term programming has certainly sparked scholarly interest in understanding and documenting the various outcomes specifically associated with shorter program durations.


21. GENERAL RESEARCH & SCHOLARSHIP

Whereas the profession of education abroad is growing, so too is the field of scholarly research on student mobility. There is a growing plethora of journals, books, databases and websites that are of relevance for those involved in the study and/or practice of education abroad. H. de Wit and D. Urias provide a comprehensive overview and analysis of international education, research, training, and resources in the Sage Handbook of International Higher Education. The Association of International Educators released a research agenda in 2016 on U.S. education abroad, authored by A. Ogden.

22. GENERAL PROFESSIONAL

Essential reading to professionals in education abroad is NAFSA’s Guide to Education Abroad for Advisors and Administrators. Now in its 4th edition, this indispensable publication provides essential reading for education abroad professionals in all stages of their careers. NAFSA and the Forum in Education offer numerous other resources on specific topics relevant to education abroad professionals.


**ADDITIONAL REFERENCES**

There is a wide array of outlets for the latest research in education abroad, including well-respected, peer-reviewed journals, such as *Frontiers: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Study Abroad*, the *Journal of Studies in International Education*, and the *Comparative Education Review*, only to name the most prominent. Other key references include:

- The Center for Global Education (http://globaledresearch.com/) provides a searchable database.
- Dr. David Comp’s International Higher Education blog (https://davidcomp.wordpress.com/).
- Numerous education abroad offices provide compilations of reading and career development information, such as the University of Illinois (http://studyabroad.uic.edu/perspectives/) and the University of Minnesota (https://umabroad.umn.edu/professionals/intleducators/tips).
- NAFSA provides research relevant to international education on its website, including, *NAFSA Research Connections* offering bibliographies on new research & scholarship and *Global Studies Literature Review* (https://www.nafsa.org/Resource_Library_Assets/Networks/RS/Book_Reviews/Global_Studies_Literature_Review/)