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A Multidisciplinary Approach to Student International Experience

A thesis
presented to
the faculty of the Department of Technology
East Tennessee State University

In partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree
Master of Science in Technology

by
Kevin Varney
May 2011

Dr. W. Andrew Clark, Chair
Dr. Keith V. Johnson
Mr. Jeremy B. Ross

Keywords: Study Abroad, Engineering Technology, Rome, Italy, International Experience,
Multidisciplinary Curriculum

ABSTRACT

A Multidisciplinary Approach to Student International Experience

by

Kevin Varney

This project provides research and insight towards expanding the ETSU at Rome Program into a larger multidisciplinary study abroad program. The program's goal is to evolve from its presummer session with a one-course offering curriculum into a multidisciplinary, multicourse study abroad program for both the presummer session and entire summer session. Research and analysis have been conducted to discover best practices for study abroad programs in surrounding institutions. Additionally, in expansion upon existing efforts, this research helps seek out partnerships and collaborations within the institution and outside the institution. Professors from numerous departments throughout ETSU have been interviewed regarding their position and views of study abroad programs for students within their departments. Data have also been gathered to help better understand the potential and existing funding opportunities in a study abroad program. Additionally, other opportunities for growth and expansion and the challenges associated with these have been studied.

DEDICATION

This research is dedicated to my family for all of their encouragement and support through the years. Without the love and guidance of my parents John and Lisa Varney this work would not have been possible. My relationship with my brother and sister Shane and Mackenzie has played a key role in my life. It was through a loving, competitive nature that I always strived to score higher, run faster, and learn more. My family's love has helped motivate me to succeed in life.

This work is also dedicated to my friend and mentor, Jeremy Ross. His leadership, direction, and most importantly, his love for Rome have transformed my life into one full of learning and international adventure.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Students who study abroad gain valuable experience that affects not only their college education but their future professional careers as well. These students tackle challenges that generate personal growth and increase self-confidence. In addition, the study abroad experience helps students develop skills that are attractive to potential employers (Orahood, Kruze, & Pearson, 2007). With these known benefits, more universities are working to emphasize the importance of international experience for their students with the implementation of more study abroad opportunities.

A program featuring a larger selection of courses with the opportunity to enroll in multiple courses can spread its appeal to a larger and more diverse group of students. This aspect is largely why the goals of the existing ETSU at Rome Program incorporate a wider variety of offered courses.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to analyze the background of an existing study abroad program, ETSU at Rome, and to investigate means to expand the program into one of multidisciplinary curricula. The information in this research project has been gathered from numerous interviews with the founder and director of the ETSU at Rome Program, Jeremy Ross.

Largely, this project is a pilot study to investigate the initial opportunities for expansion of an existing study abroad program. Its purpose is to determine how much interest exists from faculty members in a collaborative effort with the ETSU at Rome Program. A survey was

conducted with ETSU professors to determine department and student interest. It also identifies potential challenges that departments may face in participating in the study abroad program.

Significance of the Study

The significance of the study is that the discoveries should provide insight into the possibilities of a multidisciplinary expansion throughout the East Tennessee State University (ETSU) campus to an existing study abroad program. This opportunity could incorporate a larger variety of students in addition to increasing the study abroad enrollment for the university. Research has shown that a large majority of students who study abroad gain long-lasting benefits that students who do not study abroad may not receive.

Research Questions

Study abroad opportunities incorporate a wide array of aspects such as curriculum, funding, student interest, and departmental involvement. No study can cover all bases of these opportunities. The majority of research discovered by this researcher refers to the potential to expand an existing program to incorporate more disciplines throughout campus. Questions could be asked regarding numerous aspects of this study. However, the primary goals of the researcher were to discover answers to the following questions from faculty members at ETSU:

1. Do the survey participants feel as though students within their department are interested or able to study abroad?
2. What potential departmental challenges do the participants foresee in participating with the ETSU at Rome Program?
3. Would the participants be interested in collaborating with the ETSU at Rome Program?

4. What would the survey participants expect their departments' level of involvement to be in a collaborative effort with the ETSU at Rome Program?

Limitations of Study

1. The study was limited by the number of faculty participating in the survey.
2. The study was limited by the degree of knowledge the participating faculty members possessed in regarding their department's interest and abilities in studying abroad.
3. The study only consisted of ETSU faculty members; therefore, no survey data were gathered from other institutions.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

Recent literature regarding study abroad programs describes the expanding ideas and gaining interest in the particulars of this subject. This research details the vast array of facets involved with creating and maintaining a program abroad. This review of particulars regarding curriculums, partnerships, funding, and marketing has shown many different ways to manage a study abroad program.

Additional review of Tennessee universities' study abroad programs has been conducted to evaluate existing practices in the region. These data have analyzed specifics of other universities' programs in order that a comparison could be drawn regarding the variety of available options with courses, time periods, and locations. According to Cunningham (2011), 85% of students enrolled at East Tennessee State University (ETSU) during the 2009-2010 academic year were classified as Tennessee residents as outlined by the Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR). This number shows that these students are interested in attending a Tennessee institution, which is why other Tennessee institutions were chosen for this study. The study abroad programs of ETSU and Middle Tennessee State University (MTSU) were evaluated in this study because they both must meet the same policies and guidelines set the TBR (Policies, n.d.). The University of Tennessee at Knoxville (UTK) was chosen as well because it competes for potential students in East Tennessee.

The following databases were used to research and review information: Google Scholar, WorldCat, ERIC, Wilson OmniFile, and LexisNexis. The major keyword search entries used

were international experience, study abroad, study abroad funding, international programs, short-term study abroad, and multidisciplinary curriculum. These search entries were used independently and in combinations together. Additional resources such as theses, articles, publications, guides, brochures, and journals were acquired through the online Sherrod Library search. University websites were also used in correlation with these searches to provide best practices research regarding existing study abroad programs.

Collection of Study Abroad Models

There are numerous variations of study abroad programs that can be created to enhance students' international experiences. Certain aspects to consider when creating a program are length of program, semester term, educational goals, and location. Educational goals can include curriculum as well as beneficial experiences students will receive. Long-term programs are programs of at least 1 semester in length, while short-term programs range from 2 to 8 weeks.

Long-term programs are quite popular with American students. However, short-term program enrollment has been steadily increasing with students choosing shorter programs that are more cost-effective with less expensive destinations (Witherell, 2010). In regards to short-term programs, "Three Models for Short-Term Study Abroad" by Sachau, Brasher, and Fee (2009) provides various options for study that would be categorized as a U.S. sponsor program. According to Moore (2000) this type of program refers to a program in which an American university creates the curriculum and housing arrangements for American students. Sachau et al. focus entirely on three specific forms of short-term, educational goals of study abroad and suggestions for faculty members leading these programs. The three forms of short-term study

abroad that are examined are the study tour, service learning programs, and summer semester abroad.

Initially, study abroad professors need to create specific goals for their students in regards to increasing knowledge, building confidence, and shaping attitudes. Each of these aspects can easily be attained with emphasis on curriculum, site visits, and individual travel time. Kathleen Fairfax, director of Michigan State University's study abroad office, (as cited in Arenson, 2003, p. 2) strives "to make the courses as culturally intense as possible for the short time the students are there."

The first program type analyzed by Sachau et al. is the study tour. This program is generally 1 to 4 weeks in length in which students travel around the region from city to city. This form of study abroad is quite similar to a typical tourist travel. Students and faculty normally travel by bus or train and live in hotels. Forming itineraries can easily be done by researching previous institutions that have completed a similar trip and then contacting the institution. Depending on the course, coursework for these programs typically consist of journal entries because there is limited space for test taking.

Service learning is another type of short-term program. These programs incorporate volunteer work and international travel usually lasting 2 to 6 weeks. The first step with this program is to contact a nongovernmental organization (NGO) that promotes service learning projects. According to the International Volunteer Programs Associations (n.d.), a few examples of NGOs involved with service learning are Cross-Cultural Solutions, Global Citizens Network, Projects Abroad, and ProWorld Service Corps. These projects, along with any other type of study abroad, rely on funding. Service learning allows students to establish relationships with those they work with abroad and will occasionally keep in future contact. This can be done via

internet, posting pictures and using discussion boards, or as pen pals. “Service learning in international education is a means to provide just such an education for global citizenship” (Annette, n.d., p. 1).

The summer semester abroad term is the final program analyzed. This program traditionally lasts 6 to 12 weeks in which students live on or near a campus and take multiple classes. Typically, these programs host classes 4 days per week leaving the other 3 days free for individual travel. This free travel time is a popular aspect of these programs. This gives students the freedom for adventure without the high level of uncertainty with a hostel tour.

The easiest way to start is to locate a university or business that can provide classroom space and assist with living arrangements. With little research, many providers can be found to supply these accommodations. Professors from the host university can collaborate to instruct multiple courses. Courses can be offered within a sponsoring department or include multidisciplinary courses, such as general education requirements. The benefits to offering a multidisciplinary curriculum are that students from any major can take advantage of the program.

Typically, programs substitute traditional lectures for site visits and guest speakers. These experiences can increase the cultural experience that the students receive. “Housing is one of the facets of the trip that has the most direct effect on the mood of the students” (Sachau et al., 2009, p. 652). Later emphasis is placed on the importance of housing location. Locations outside the town center may be more cost efficient; however, travelling to and from the city can waste valuable time.

Sachau et al. (2009) provide suggestions regarding financial aid because funding is always a key factor when considering studying abroad. He recommends tour guides and bus drivers because they can both provide vital information around the communities and historical

sites. Health insurance and liability forms are essential as well. Certain health insurance coverage can serve as a means of discount at museums, restaurants, etc. Liability forms will reduce the likelihood that an instructor will be held liable for student injuries.

Integrating Study Abroad into Existing Curriculum

The integration of study abroad programs into existing curriculums can pose a challenge to universities. Many private colleges and small liberal arts schools see the merit in study abroad education and have incorporated study abroad programs into their longstanding curriculums (Robinson, n.d.). With the realization of the importance of international experience, many accreditation associations have included an international component in recent years (Robinson, n.d.). Larger universities are beginning to adopt the same practices of the private colleges by integrating international experiences into their curriculum.

According to Robinson (n.d.) public universities do not have study abroad experiences integrated into their curriculums as much as private universities. It may be viewed as an additional or extra experience for students as opposed to a vital, much-needed experience (Robinson, n.d.). Even though studying abroad is gaining in popularity at campuses across the nation, the degree of importance to universities varies greatly. There are a few universities that make studying abroad a requirement for graduation, while other universities do not actively support the trend “or may even discourage it” (Johnson, 2008, p. 1).

Studies in recent years have shown a significant impact of internationalization into universities’ curriculums across the country (Robinson, n.d.). The University of Minnesota (UM) is a leading example of a campus integrating study abroad opportunities into its curriculums. In the late 1990s the overall goal of UM was to increase its study abroad participation from 15%, a

mark well below others in their conference, to 50% of the entire student population (Fischer, 2010).

UM created a campus-wide initiative to expand its interaction abroad while incorporating these experiences into its curriculums. The UM international programs office met with departments across campus to verify challenges and concerns for this merge. With this effort, both sides could work together to help overcome obstacles of incorporating international experience into their curriculums (Fischer, 2010).

With the ever-changing curriculums and study abroad opportunities, UM hosts annual campus-wide seminars on curriculum integration. Additionally, the UM international programs office holds training workshops for advisors and faculty to keep the campus up-to-date. As of March 2010, UM had not yet reached its goal to incorporate half the student population into study abroad programs. However, UM had doubled its participation rate to 30% since the initiative started. While it is still unknown if this campus-wide integration of study abroad into curriculums is suitable for all institutions, it has been implemented at other universities such as Oregon State University and University of California at San Diego (Fischer, 2010).

Specific disciplines can integrate study abroad into their curriculums more easily than others. For example, science and engineering disciplines pose a limited opportunity to merge an international experience into their existing coursework. Coursework in these curriculums is largely sequenced and poses time constraint issues due to students spending valuable time away from the host campus (Robinson, n.d.). These engineering discipline obstacles were not unique to UM and can cause challenges to departments of any highly structured discipline.

The Department of Communication at Kennesaw State University (KSU) has recently implemented a graduate program with an international exposure component directly built into the

curriculum. This 4-semester program includes a summer international module. According to KSU (n.d., p. 1) this module provides students four options regarding summer international exposure: “work abroad for a global organization, work domestically for a global organization on a global project, study abroad in a foreign country, or a professional study tour of global communication operations in a major foreign city.” The mission of this Master of Arts program at KSU is to “prepare the next generation of communication professionals who will be knowledgeable about and sensitive to the evolving global marketplace” (KSU, n.d., p. 1).

One key component to the success of these study abroad programs is the support of the professors, who must be prepared and willing to include international experiences into their coursework (Robinson, n.d.). Without their support of study abroad programs, the goals of the programs may not be attained and success would be diminished.

Study Abroad Funding

A relatively under-researched yet very crucial aspect of study abroad programs is how to successfully fundraise for these programs (Gliozzo, n.d.; Williams, 2011). Funding is usually the biggest challenge many students face when considering studying abroad (CRC, n.d.; International, n.d.). There are numerous innovative ways to create funding opportunities for study abroad programs.

University Involvement

Largely, many initiatives must be started within the institution itself. Many benefits arise from involvement and knowledge of the university’s Study Abroad and Financial Aid Office. Study Abroad Offices should be familiar with available funding and scholarship websites. According to Gliozzo (n.d., p. 1) websites such as “Fast Web (www.fastweb.com), Mark

Kantrowitz's guide (www.finaid.org), and the University of Minnesota online study abroad (istc.umn.edu/study/scholarships.html)” possess vital study abroad funding information.

Financial Aid Offices should be well-versed in information regarding applicable student loans, student grants, and fees.

The federal government awards numerous grants to assist in study abroad each year. It is beneficial for study abroad advisors to connect with other colleagues from different universities for information about these grants. With knowledge concerning these grants, study abroad advisors can apply and research specific grants for use at their own institution (Gliozzo, n.d.).

An additional contact universities can cultivate is their international alumni. However, this resource may be difficult to attain. The University of California at Berkeley, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and Princeton University have all reported large donations from international alumni directed towards international education (Gliozzo, n.d.). Domestic alumni who participated in a study abroad while enrolled in an institution are another potential resource for funding (Gliozzo, n.d.). Many students who have studied abroad see many positive facets about their experience abroad. Cultivating these alumni can prove to be a successful choice when fundraising for study abroad. In addition, cultivating these alumni can come in the form of a social network with the intention that these alumni can receive updated information about their alma mater as well as communicate with other alumni.

Institutional Money

Student fee money, endowments, and corporate gifts are all avenues of funding that can be attained by institutions. Each of these opportunities can create large revenue streams for Study Abroad Offices to be used for operating expenses and scholarships. Research has shown that student fees towards international programs at US institutions cover a wide range with many

universities not imposing this fee. However, at MTSU a \$10 fee is paid by each student per semester and is placed into a fund for international programs (MTSU, n.d.). Many universities' fees range from \$1 to \$4. The University of North Texas charges a \$4 study abroad fee per semester (Tuition, n.d.). At the University of Texas – Austin (UT) a \$3 international programs fee is employed, where \$1 is placed in an endowment for future benefits and \$2 is used for current student scholarships (UT, n.d.).

Additionally, study abroad offices can create endowments. Endowments are defined as a fund created by gifts or bequests where the principal remains intact and invested to create income (Fritz, n.d.). Initializing endowments for study abroad can create a great source of permanent annual income that can help defray costs for students.

Typically, large corporations give to institutions and not to individuals. Therefore, it is the responsibility of universities to seek out corporate donations. It can be beneficial for study abroad advisors and faculty to connect with a university advancement office to assist them in receiving grants or funds from the private sector (Gliozzo, n.d.). In addition to serving as a liaison between the study abroad office and the corporation, the development office can help find the best fit for potential donors.

Government

Federal and state governments offer numerous avenues for funding for study abroad programs and students. Many opportunities are specifically available for underrepresented students (i.e., minorities, disabled student, and nontraditional students). American Institute for Foreign Study, Council on International Educational Exchange, and National Science Foundation are a short listing of organizations that offer awards and scholarships to underrepresented students. Additionally, fellowships and grants are available for graduate study or research

abroad. Examples of this form of federal aid include Fulbright related grants, National Security Education Program grants, and National Flagship Language Program support (Gliozzo, n.d.; Kuenzi, 2005).

The government's increased involvement in study abroad education has become evident within the past 5 years. An example of this growing interest is the introduction of the Paul Simon Study Abroad Foundation Act in March 2010 (Durbin, 2007). This act proposes to increase the number of American study abroad students from the roughly 260,000 during the 2008-09 academic year to 1,000,000 by 2020 (Funding, 2010; Witherell, 2010). The Simon Act will largely be focused towards benefiting the underrepresented and low-income households as well as underdeveloped destinations like the Middle East.

Private Sector

Local organizations provide a potential "revenue stream" for students. Organizations such as civic clubs have given scholarships to local students for study abroad in the past. Corporations and businesses will possibly match gifts given to institutions by their employees. In addition to these potential "revenue streams," other potential donors are individuals (Gliozzo, n.d., p. 1). Linking with the university's development office can direct study abroad advisors and professors to possible individuals capable and interested in giving to study abroad programs.

Numerous awards available in the private sector may be offered to specific student demographics as well. Increasing income from the private sector is vital because "higher education institutions are spending more money on financial aid" (Gliozzo, n.d., p. 1).

Funding Conclusion

It is largely beneficial to the university and students for study abroad advisors to become more knowledgeable about fundraising because funding is undoubtedly the greatest challenge for any study abroad program (Funding, 2010; Gliozzo, n.d.). The perception of studying abroad as being only for the rich students is changing. Institutions interested in expanding educational opportunities see the merit in studying abroad. It is becoming an “expected part of a complete education in an interconnected world” and that “with effort and determination, students and universities can discover money to assist in studying abroad” (Funding, 2010, p. 1).

Marketing Study Abroad Programs

Effective marketing of a study abroad program can greatly contribute to its success. Accessing a program’s website is the most cost-effective and efficient way for a student to discover details of a study abroad program, so it is important that a program’s website provide information that will attract students. It is equally as important that the content of the program “correspond to what is advertised” (Bruening, 2007, p. 123).

There are numerous ways to market a study abroad program. Former study abroad students who enjoyed their experience can be a valuable resource in promoting the program to future students. Communication is key to successful marketing, whether it be an online source, a publication, or word of mouth. Holding informational meetings and visiting classrooms to discuss the program allows students an opportunity to ask questions and learn about the program. Study abroad fairs typically bring in students who already have an interest in the idea of studying abroad. Academic advisors should be kept in the loop with program details so that they can promote studying abroad to their students. Programs need to ensure that the study abroad

program information is included in college publications such as newsletters and catalogs. Informational flyers and brochures should be distributed around campus in as many places as possible (How to, n.d.).

Students will likely evaluate study abroad programs based on the foreign country, the purpose and benefits of the program, the acceptance requirements, and the courses offered. According to Bruening (2007, p. 125) many institutions use phrases such as “personal enrichment,” “providing skills for a career in a globalized world,” “cross-cultural sensitivity,” and “awareness of cultures” as a way to attract students to study abroad. Most institutions “advertise both benefits to career and the acquisition of foreign language skills” (Bruening, 2007, p. 126).

Partnerships in Study Abroad

Study abroad programs are becoming more and more popular each year, which may contribute to the increase in international program offices’ budgets and the number of programs that universities offer. Unfortunately, the amount of funding and scholarship opportunities available to the interested student has not maintained the same increase. Van de Water (2009, p. 26) stated that “this gap reflects the broader issues of public support for higher education combined with the problem of translating institutional rhetoric in support of international education into an increased funding priority on the campus.” The truth of the matter is the cost of “duplicating” programs throughout the world has made it necessary for universities to partner with other organizations to “pool resources” (Van de Water, 2009, p. 26).

Pooling resources by partnering with other organizations is an extremely cost-effective way to provide students the opportunity to learn and experience other cultures. Universities can

“share administrative costs, increase program quality, and diversify opportunities through merging or sharing programs” (Van de Water, 2009, p. 26).

One way that universities can increase opportunities for students to study abroad is to provide programs that are affordable to students. “This can be accomplished by controlling operational costs, maintaining low tuition and fees, carefully selecting program sites, and effectively using a variety of program designs such as exchanges, campus programs, institutional partnerships, and program providers” (Johnson, 2008, p. 1).

Benefits of Studying Abroad to Students

Studying abroad has the potential to change students’ lives in a number of ways. Students who have experienced studying abroad are likely to have an increase in personal and intercultural development, an “enhanced interest in academic study,” and are “more open to additional international experiences in their careers” (Dwyer & Peters, 2004, p. 1). These students are able to hone their foreign language skills, expand their perception of the world, gain an advantage for career opportunities, and establish lifelong relationships with other study abroad students and those international contacts made while studying abroad (Vistawide, n.d.).

Dwyer and Peters (2004) performed a study of more than 3,400 students on the benefits and life-changing effects of students who have studied abroad. This study showed that “studying abroad is usually a defining moment in a young person’s life and continues to impact the participant’s life for years after the experience” (Dwyer & Peters, 2004, p. 1).

Study abroad experience allows students to “see the world through the eyes of other nations and cultures and is increasingly important as more and more facets of American life take on an international dimension” (Hill, 1987, p. 88). An example of this is through students’

potential employers and career paths. According to Orahood et al. (2007, p. 120), two criteria that global companies use in searching for employment candidates are those who have a “respect for other cultures” and are motivated, “which is evaluated in terms of the candidate’s achievements and enthusiasm” (Orahood et al., 2007, p. 120). Students who have studied abroad are typically perceived to be “self-motivated, independent, willing to embrace challenges, and able to cope with diverse problems and situations” (Vistawide, n.d., p. 1).

According to Orahood et al. (2007), students who study abroad and “leave their comfort zone and live in another culture” accept a challenge (p. 128). Students who rise above challenges acquire the “ability to be open-minded and show initiative” (Orahood et al., p. 128). Table 1 summarizes the *Ten Reasons Why You Should Study in a Foreign Country*, according to Vistawide (n.d.).

Table 1

Ten Reasons Why Students Should Study Abroad

<i>Studying Abroad...</i>			
1	Is the optimal way to learn a language	6	Helps students learn about themselves
2	Provides the opportunity to travel	7	Expands students’ worldview
3	Allows students to know another culture first-hand	8	Provides the opportunity to break out of students’ academic routine
4	Will help develop skills and provide experiences a classroom setting never will	9	Enhances employment opportunities
5	Affords the opportunity to make friends around the world	10	Can enhance the value of a student’s degree

The benefits for students who have studied abroad also include skills gained in communications and learning how to “manage daily life and problem solving within an unfamiliar cultural context” (Orahood et al., 2007, p. 126). Students learn ways to communicate in a cross-cultural environment and in diverse situations, which may even influence their career paths. Studying abroad is an excellent means for students to hone their foreign language skills. “Living the language” allows students to gauge their level of comprehension by “practicing, applying, and testing foreign language” skills (Orahood et al., 2007, p. 127).

Friendships and professional relationships are made during the study abroad experience, and these have the potential to be lifelong relationships. Students who travel in the same program share a similar study abroad experience, which can also be a bonding experience. In addition, they can also establish relationships with new friends in their host country, as well as other international students studying abroad (Vistawide, n.d.).

In the survey conducted by Dwyer and Peters, students responded to questions related to personal development, academic commitment, intercultural development, and career development. Regarding personal development, 97% of students who participated in a summer study abroad program cited an increase in self-confidence. In the academic commitment category, 90% of students cited a “reinforced commitment to foreign language study” (Dwyer & Peters, 2004, p. 1). Ninety-five percent of students noted that they had a better understanding of cultural values and biases because of studying abroad, and 71% “acquired skill sets that influenced [their] career path” (Dwyer & Peters, 2004, p. 1). This study confirms that students who study abroad gain valuable skills and abilities that will increase self-confidence and enhance their employment skills as well as a long list of other benefits (Dwyer & Peters, 2004).

Existing Practices in Tennessee

This research evaluates existing practices documents other institutions' study abroad programs. MTSU, UTK, and ETSU have been assessed so that comparisons may be drawn to distinguish other present methods for study abroad opportunities within the state. These three schools chosen are currently listed as three of the four largest institutions in Tennessee categorized by enrollment size. The study abroad programs of ETSU and MTSU were evaluated in this study because they both must meet the same policies and guidelines set by the TBR (Policies, n.d.). UTK was chosen as well because it competes for potential students in East Tennessee.

Middle Tennessee State University

MTSU offers an expansive study abroad program and a student exchange program. Their program includes more than 400 options and involves 60 countries. MTSU contracts its study abroad services with seven different companies to allow hundreds of students to immerse themselves in different cultures. Students have many options when it comes to the length of time they would like to experience an overseas educational program. They can choose a program for the summer, one semester, an entire school year, an internship, or a student exchange (MTSU, 2010).

MTSU's study abroad program in Italy has students visiting three cities during a 3-week period: Venice, Rome, and Florence. There is an art history component to the program that allows students to visit "museums and historically significant architectural sites" (MTSU, 2010, p. 1). Students also observe and analyze European art. Students are required to keep a daily journal and accomplish tasks in both group settings and individually. Accommodations for students are made at either hotels or apartments close to the sites of interest (MTSU, 2010).

The total cost of the excursion is \$5,000, which includes \$3,300 for the program fee and \$1,200 for tuition. This price includes “housing, roundtrip airfare, and group transportation fees” but does not include “daily meals, extended travel, cell phone rental, health insurance, museum fees and recreational expenses” (MTSU, 2010, p. 1). Students receive six credits for taking two art courses in summer sessions I and II.

Scholarships are available from many different sources. All MTSU students pay a \$10 international fee as part of their tuition. This funding is made available in scholarships from the Office of Education Abroad & Student Exchange. Numerous other scholarships are made available from partnering organizations. MTSU operates its study abroad office with one director, one advisor, and one graduate assistant (MTSU, 2010).

According to MTSU’s study abroad website, 10 summer programs in 2011 are offered, which are taught by MTSU professors. Of these, nine programs provided details of course offerings and potential credit. Five programs have a 3-week duration, one program has a 4-week duration, two programs have a 2-week duration, one program has a 1-week duration, and one course has a 10-week duration. Course credits offered are 3, 6, or 12. Five programs offer 3 credits, three programs offer 6 credits, and one program offers 12 credits. Only the Toronto, Canada program is flexible in course offerings, while no programs offer flexibility in duration. Lastly, only three programs offer multidisciplinary courses (MTSU, 2010). Refer to Appendix A for more details.

University of Tennessee at Knoxville

Like MTSU and ETSU, UTK also offers an expansive study abroad program that includes internships and a student exchange. Their program also includes at least 400 options and involves 60 countries. UTK offers almost three times as many faculty-led programs (26)

compared to ETSU (10) and MTSU (10). UTK's faculty-led programs also travel to almost twice as many countries (21) as ETSU (11) and MTSU (9) (UTK, n.d.; MTSU, 2010; ETSU, n.d.).

Refer to Appendix B for more details.

UTK contracts its study abroad services with seven different companies to allow hundreds of students to immerse themselves in different cultures. Students have many options when it comes to the length of time they would like to experience overseas. They can choose a program for the summer, one semester, an entire school year, an internship, or a student exchange (UTK, n.d.).

UTK offers three separate study abroad programs in Italy: the first is a full-summer program to Urbino and offers six credits, the second is a Summer 2 program to Castiglion Fiorentino and also offers six credits, and the third is a mini-session program to Florence and offers three credits. Students who choose the Urbino program, UTK's longest running faculty-led program, have some flexibility regarding course selection. There are two different academics tracks students may choose: one track contains courses in Italian Language and Culture, and the other track contains a course in Public Relations with an optional course on Italian Culture. Students who choose the first track may select two of four courses offered, and they will earn six credits. Students who choose the second track have the option of earning either three or six credits depending on whether or not they choose the optional course (UTK, n.d.).

The Urbino program students spend the mornings in class and have plenty of free time in the afternoons to discover the Italian culture on their own. Weekend excursions are also planned for students to visit Florence and Rome. During their time at Urbino, student accommodations are provided in a residence hall (UTK, n.d.).

The total cost of the program earning six credits is \$5,972, which includes “all accommodations, most meals, field trips, and excursions,” but it does not include airfare or personal expenses. International scholarships to study abroad are available from many different sources. The University of Tennessee Parents Association offers an international scholarship and has many stringent rules for all recipients. Students are required to attend the university’s fall family weekend, speak at Parents Association events, write a follow-up essay and several thank you notes, and provide information to be included in scholarship publicity (UTK, n.d., p. 1).

UTK’s study abroad office staff is twice as large as MTSU having two assistant directors, two programs abroad coordinators, two administrative specialists, and one graduate assistant. Also included in the staff are seven peer advisors (UTK, n.d.).

According to its study abroad website, UTK offers 26 faculty-led programs in 2011. Of these, 4 programs were designed for a full summer, 11 programs are offered as mini-sessions, 2 during spring break, 5 for the first summer session, and 4 for the second summer session. Credits earned through these programs varied from 1 credit up to 15 credits. Two programs did not identify the number of credits, 5 programs earn 15 credits, 11 programs earn 6 credits, 8 programs earn 3 credits, 1 program earns 2 credits, and 2 programs earn 1 credit. Ten programs are flexible in course offerings, 14 programs are not flexible, and 2 programs were not identified either way. Nine programs offer multidisciplinary courses and 17 do not. The study abroad website even listed housing accommodations for students. One program provides housing at a residence hall, 10 programs have students staying at a hotel, 4 programs offer homestay accommodations, 5 programs provide apartments, and 6 programs were unidentified (UTK, n.d.).

East Tennessee State University

East Tennessee State University offers a variety of faculty-led study abroad opportunities that includes 10 programs and 11 countries. These programs range in length from 2 to 5 weeks and offer either three or six credits. Of the 10 programs, 7 are flexible in course offerings, 4 offer multidisciplinary courses, and no courses are flexible in their duration. Refer to Appendix C for more details.

Two programs travel to Italy and offer fairly different opportunities for students. Art students can earn three credits with a 2-week ceramics course titled Art, Culture, & Wood Fired Terracotta. This course allows students to “experience the incredible cultural and artistic history of the region and conversely the surrounding Tuscan landscape, art, and architecture provide inspiration for the work done in the studio” (Davis, n.d., p. 1). The ETSU at Rome Program allows students to choose between an Architectural History course and an Innovation and Technology course. Each of these courses is 3 weeks in length and earns students three credits. Students will “gain a significant understanding of Rome’s Complex Urban development over the past 2,000 years” during the Architectural History course (Ross, n.d., p. 1).

The cost of the art and ceramics program is \$2,400; however, that does not include airfare, transportation to and from Spannocchia, ETSU tuition, and Spannocchia membership. The ETSU at Rome Program cost is \$2,475 plus a \$150 refundable security deposit. Not included in this price are airfare, ETSU tuition, required medical insurance, and personal expenses (ETSU, n.d.).

ETSU students can receive thousands of dollars towards their study abroad experience by applying to the International Educational, Gilman, Boren, and Fulbright scholarships. The International Educational Scholarship provides a maximum of \$750 per week per student who

receives an award. Teaching internships are available with the Council on International Educational Exchange in China, Chile, Spain, and Thailand. ETSU also offers student exchanges with the International Student Exchange Programs (ETSU, n.d.).

The ETSU Study Abroad Office consists of one director, one executive aide, one international student advisor, one study abroad advisor, and one secretary (ETSU, n.d.).

Program Comparisons

Figure 1 is a comparative model of the three aforementioned universities categorizing number of faculty-led study abroad programs, available countries of study, programs with multidisciplinary curricula, and programs with multiple course choices.

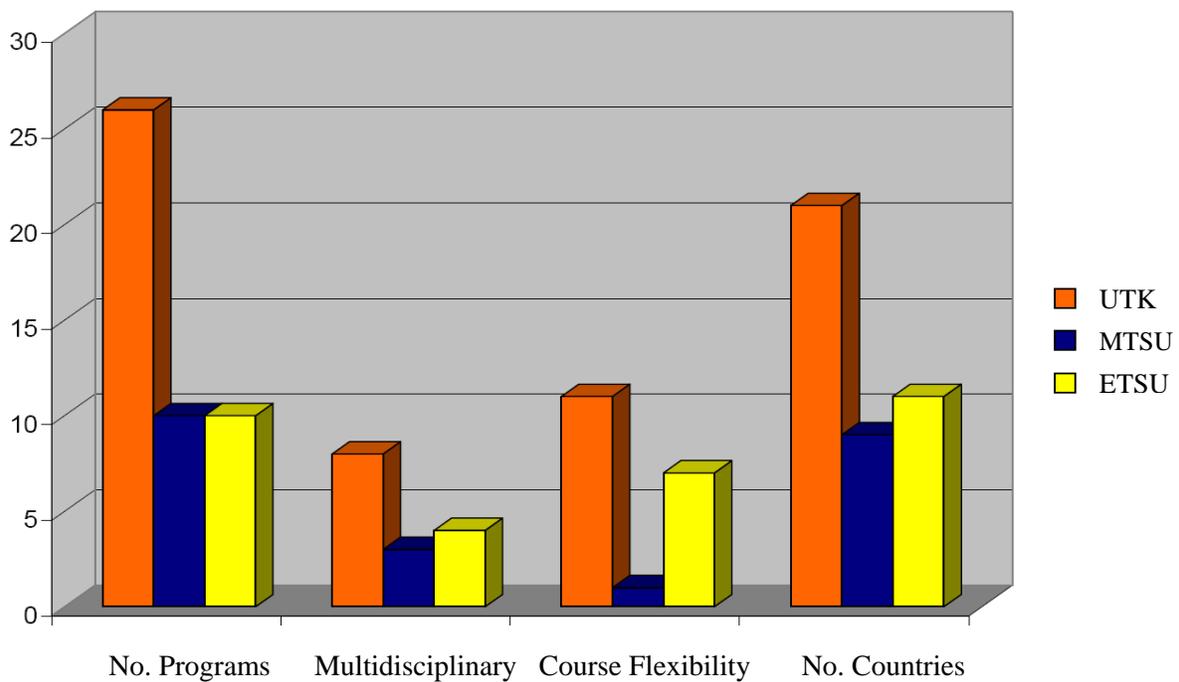


Figure 1. Program Comparisons

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to analyze the background of an existing study abroad program, ETSU at Rome, and to investigate means to expand the program to incorporate multidisciplinary curricula. The information in this research project has been gathered from numerous interviews with the founder and director of the ETSU at Rome Program, Jeremy Ross.

Additionally, a survey was conducted with five East Tennessee State University (ETSU) professors to determine department and student interest. It also identifies potential challenges that departments may face in participating in the study abroad program. This chapter lists the participating departments, outlines the survey design, and illustrates the approach used to collect the data.

Study Design

During this research qualitative research techniques were implemented. Mainly, this research is qualitative because it is based on input from a survey (Appendix D) presented to faculty on experiences and coursework abroad that would be most beneficial to students and university alike. This survey information was obtained via personal interviews and email conversations. Research data regarding the facets of the existing ETSU at Rome Program was obtained from Professor Ross, founder and director of the program, via interviews and email communications.

Participants

After consulting with Professor Ross, founder of the ETSU at Rome Program, the strategy chosen for determining potential participants focused on those most likely to complement the goals of the ETSU at Rome Program. Faculty members from the following departments were contacted to gauge their level of interest toward helping to expand the ETSU at Rome Program: Art History, Management and Marketing, Communication, Digital Media, History, and Interior Design. Also included in this group is the Roan Scholars Program.

Thomas, Nelson, and Silverman (2005, p. 349) describe the selection of participants in this qualitative research as involving “consideration of where to observe, when to observe, whom to observe, and what to observe.” The selection of participants was “purposeful ... and from which one can learn the most” (Thomas et al., 2005, p. 349). These participants were selected specifically because their input could most greatly impact the expansion of the ETSU at Rome Program.

Emails were sent to eight faculty members across the campus requesting their participation in the survey. Responses were not received from History, Interior Design, and Roan Scholars Program. Interviews and surveys were completed by the Digital Media, Communication, Management and Marketing, and the Art History Programs.

Survey Instrument

A nine-question survey was designed to gain input from ETSU faculty members regarding their current views on the value of study abroad within their department. In addition, responses were collected regarding their opinion of collaborating with the ETSU at Rome

Program in offering one or more courses. These questions were asked with the true intention of future collaboration with these departments.

A wide range of information was requested in the survey, which included the participants' opinions regarding the challenges their departments may face in the involvement of this program, the types of courses they may offer, and whether their curriculum can be integrated in an international experience. In addition to yes or no responses, the survey was also designed to allow participants to include any information they deemed valuable to the research process.

Data Collection

An email was sent to potential participants asking them to meet with the researcher. If the potential participant could not meet but wanted to participate, the survey was sent via email. If the participant had time to meet, an interview was conducted discussing the questions in the survey. The researcher was the main collector of data for the study. The data were received either via personal interview or email only.

Data Analysis

The analysis began after all interviews were conducted and email responses were received. Initially, responses were gathered and compiled, then the information was categorized by departments, and consistencies were identified within the data. Unanswered responses or answers receiving NA, not applicable, were not recorded in the analysis. Further examination was performed in order to compile the data into graphs to more easily show comparisons among all responses.

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to analyze the background of an existing study abroad program, ETSU at Rome, and to investigate means to expand the program into one of multidisciplinary curricula. Jeremy Ross, founder and director of ETSU at Rome, was interviewed on numerous occasions, providing insight and information into the program. Information supplied by Professor Ross laid a solid foundation for the overall aspects of the existing study abroad efforts with the ETSU at Rome Program. The details pertaining to this existing program have provided insight into its history as well as its vision for expansion.

Five professors from four departments at East Tennessee State University (ETSU) were interviewed or emailed a survey. The interviews were conducted on campus, and the data analysis was carried out by the sole researcher. These interviews with professors discussed the benefit of international exposure to students, challenges to studying abroad from students and departments, their interest in collaborating with the ETSU at Rome Program and level of participation, and courses within their department that would benefit students abroad. This information has largely been presented as qualitative. However, quantitative results have been shown where applicable.

ETSU at Rome Program

The information in this section has been gathered from numerous interviews with Jeremy Ross, the founder and director of the ETSU at Rome Program. It has been through these

interviews that data were collected regarding this program's history, funding efforts, marketing strategy, and vision. The impact these goals have on students has driven this program to grow, incorporate, and affect as many students as possible.

Brief History

Aside from this program in Rome, Italy, the Department of Engineering Technology, Surveying, and Digital Media at ETSU has no study abroad programs. The idea for initiating a study abroad program within this department began in late 2007. The first study abroad term for the ETSU at Rome Program took place in 2009. One course entitled Architectural History in Rome, Italy, was offered and 13 students enrolled. Most of these students were studying engineering technology and were familiar with the professor teaching the course, Professor Ross. Students received three credits for this elective to meet their degree requirements.

This course consists of classroom lectures, site visits, guided tours, and excursions. Coursework largely consists of group collaboration and projects. The majority of the research was completed outside of the classroom setting, engaging the students in Roman sites and experiencing the Italian culture.

During the initial course in 2009, there were a few select experiences outside of Rome incorporated into the curriculum. Three individual day-trips were taken to surrounding Italian locations. A trip to nearby Ostia Antica was scheduled to study and view the ruins of an ancient abandoned merchant city. Later that week, the students were bused to the neighboring town of Tivoli. This excursion was mainly used as a relaxing day to experience an old Italian villa filled with fountains and a view overlooking Rome. During the final week the students participated in a day-trip to Pompeii that included a guided tour with an archeologist studying in Pompeii.

In the summer of 2010, the curriculum increased to include two courses, Architectural History and Innovation and Technology. In addition, both courses were offered to undergraduate and graduate students. The Innovation and Technology course was a collaborative effort with Tom Rankin, a professor at the University of Rome. This collaboration helped to create international workshops and unique experiences for the students. During this trip students participated in additional excursions that were in conjunction with the three from the previous year. These additional tours included a 2-night stay in Sorrento after visiting Pompeii. While in Sorrento, a boat ride was taken to Capri to allow the students to spend a day exploring ancient empirical villas on the island.

The program grew to 17 students this year. The largest growth came from the Interior Design program, which is now a part of the Department of Engineering Technology, Surveying, and Digital Media. One key element to recruiting interior design students was the addition of Architectural History in Rome into the curriculum as an accepted course, moving away from a special topic course.

With the program having been established for 2 years, more students are enrolling. For the summer of 2011, the course offerings are the same as the previous year with over 20 students enrolled. Currently planned for this year's course are the three day-trips to Ostia Antica, Tivoli, and Pompeii and an optional excursion to Barcelona, Spain. This will take place at the end of the course and last an additional 4 days.

A third-party vendor is used to provide housing, classroom space, computer labs, and other logistical support. However, the majority of instruction and guides are provided by ETSU professors. Through partnerships with other institutions, international workshops, interactions

with foreign professors, and other global opportunities have been provided. Students live together in apartments in a traditional Roman neighborhood for the duration of the course.

What has set this program apart from other study abroad programs is its unique curriculum, creative private funding solutions, innovative mentorship program, direct attention to students, and its will to expand into a more diverse, multidisciplinary program.

Private Funding Solutions

The ETSU at Rome Program recognizes that funding is an extreme challenge for many students. Therefore, creative funding solutions have been examined and implemented. This has proven to be a large selling point for ETSU students. Every semester, as part of their tuition, each student pays an international education fee of \$10. The allotment of money created by these fees is made available for scholarships to students wishing to study abroad. This scholarship is directed by the International Programs and Services Office housed in the Honors College. In addition, each student receives a major sponsorship from a community leader.

For the summer of 2011, there are plans for a donor trip that will include approximately 14-16 people. Included in the fee to be a part of the experience, each participant will sponsor a student. This provides donors the opportunity to actually meet the individual they are assisting in Rome. Additionally, this important group will see first-hand the benefits of the program and all the Rome Center has to offer. The program hopes these participants will continue to support students long after they return from Rome and collaborate with this program to create more unique opportunities.

According to Professor Ross without private funding the ETSU at Rome Program would not be where it is today. In past years a mentorship program has shown that sponsors, students, and the ETSU at Rome Program all benefit. All sponsors are assigned a specific student so they

can directly see how our university and this program benefit from their donation. The student and sponsor relationships fostered through this mentorship program have produced lasting friendships as well as some internship and job opportunities.

In short, the foundation of the ETSU at Rome Program starts with funding. Students receive significant scholarships from student fee money and sponsorships from donors in their field.

Marketing

The marketing and recruitment process should be an aspect to which much time and effort is devoted because without students study abroad programs cannot exist. The ETSU at Rome Program understands that students need to feel comfortable with their professors, be well informed, and be clearly informed of their expectations for the experience to be successful. Much time and consideration is spent to ensure this takes place for the students. Predeparture meetings are held for students in order to stay up-to-date and prepared for their study abroad experience.

The ETSU at Rome Program has established numerous avenues to spread the word throughout campus, which has vastly benefitted enrollment. Recently, due to the efforts of one instructor and two students, a website was launched for the ETSU at Rome Program, www.etsurome.com. This website incorporates photo galleries, program details, donor recognition, various forms, and previous work (i.e., sketches, projects, writings, etc.). It also serves as a focal point of information for anyone interested in the program.

Vision

The vision for this program is to have a permanent study center abroad and create a more diverse, multidisciplinary curriculum for the students. It is this program's intention to have a full

summer program with numerous class offerings that will allow most ETSU students to complete a summer study in Rome or to complete an entire semester of their degree requirements.

The ETSU at Rome Program hopes that in the near future course offerings will be directly stated in students' curriculums. Once courses are listed in curriculums, it is assumed that the appeal of this program will become even greater amongst students. In addition, a multidisciplinary curriculum can incorporate a greater number of students than a traditional one-course program. Partnerships on and off campus will be essential to future success and the creation of a study center abroad that gives students much more depth than a simple field trip. The philosophy of the ETSU at Rome Program is that a study abroad program with a multidisciplinary curriculum provides students a better international opportunity to learn and grow.

Art History Program

Meeting with an art history professor at ETSU provided great insight into the goals and international opportunities available with a collaborative effort from this department and the ETSU at Rome Program. All of the information in this section was provided by this participant during an interview. The participant strongly stated that international exposure would enhance the education of students within her department. The participant added that many of these students have never viewed art before, and to "imagine what it would be like if the artworks in Rome were the first pieces they saw." In addition, the participant also mentioned many of these students have a strong urge to study abroad. There are no specific challenges for students in this department that would not be present for other students across campus.

If an art history course were to be taught within the ETSU at Rome Program, student recruitment within this department would not be a challenge. An easy and efficient way to spread the word of this program amongst the art history students would be through ETSU's Art History Society. Presentations regarding future study abroad opportunities could be made during their meetings. This group consists of approximately 20 currently enrolled students interested in art history. Recruiting 10-15 art history students for a future study abroad course would be highly possible.

The only possible challenge for this expansion would be the preexistence of another program within this department, also taught in Italy. This is a 2-week pottery program taught at Spannocchia. This program is open to students and nonstudents alike (Hill, 2009). The department could possibly host discussions between the two programs in Italy concerning options for future potential course offerings.

There would be no challenges proposed with a future course being integrated into their curriculum because there are a variety of courses already in existence that directly relate to art in Rome (e.g., Art History Survey I & II, Classical Art, Italian Renaissance Art, Baroque Art). These courses could be taught the same way as at ETSU, only with more site visits integrated into the curriculum. These possible courses would actually benefit the students more being taught in Rome than at ETSU.

The Art History Program expressed strong interest in collaborating with the ETSU at Rome Program to host one or multiple courses. Numerous courses could be offered to art history students, while one course could be offered for elective credit or a general education requirement. According to ETSU's website, two art history courses, Art History Survey I & II,

are established as two of the possible eight courses offered to meet the fine arts requirement. This widens the pool of potential students to every student enrolled at ETSU (Kirkwood, 2007).

Additionally, this collaboration has the potential to greatly impact the Art History Graduate Program. If graduate courses could be offered in Rome to directly meet a graduate student's requirements, the appeal of the Master of Arts (Art History Concentration) at ETSU will increase tremendously.

ETSU Digital Media

The information in this section is regarding graduate and undergraduate students in the ETSU Digital Media (DIGM) Program. This information was collected from two ETSU professors within the program, one via interview and another via email submission. Questions for which both participants provided feedback for contained very similar responses, placing emphasis on the same facets.

According to the survey participants, international exposure would be very beneficial to the Digital Media students at ETSU as it would provide "exposure to culture and gain a greater world-view." DIGM students rarely leave the Tri-Cities region, so an experience overseas would be a fabulous opportunity for them. There are many students within the department who would like to travel abroad. However, it is somewhat challenging to convince other students to choose a course abroad over the same course provided in Johnson City, Tennessee. One faculty member stated that DIGM students are often telling stories through visual means. Therefore, an opportunity to study abroad could provide many engaging experiences for these students. According to the survey participants, these experiences would be gained through "capturing visual source material, learning of ancient history, and personal experience and discovery."

Both faculty members expressed strong interest in collaborating with the ETSU at Rome Program. One faculty member expressed an interest in leading students abroad in a digital imaging and photography effort. Specific existing DIGM courses may be less valuable to students while studying abroad because these courses require the majority of the work to be completed behind a computer screen, which would negate one of the large benefits to studying abroad, the exposure to the local culture. Therefore, specific courses would be chosen or created to provide students the most beneficial experience abroad.

In regards to integration of potential abroad courses into the DIGM curriculum, this should not prove to be a difficult task for the department. Traveling overseas can provide a tremendous opportunity to capture imagery for any digital media project. Both faculty members stated there is potential for a one-course summer offering with the ETSU at Rome Program.

There are many opportunities for coursework within the DIGM Program to incorporate international experiences. Potential benefits and courses could involve in digital photography, video production, art history exposure, and architectural study (for digital artwork or video game environments). The new Master of Arts program in New Media Studio at ETSU would benefit in a unique way from this opportunity with a class: NMST 5000 Graduate Seminar.

Another opportunity in course creation is to institute a “session” of courses so that one portion would be taken in Rome, while the others would be completed at the Niswonger Digital Media Center. This opportunity could be implemented for photography, video production, or gaming courses. Coursework prior to departure would be composed of the preproduction stages of the project. While in Rome, coursework can consist of the production stages such as capturing photos, videos, or other forms of media on site. Postproduction could take place in the fall semester, consisting of compiling and finishing the proposed project.

Largely, DIGM students have a tendency to be introverted and wrapped up in a virtual world, and the faculty has had to work hard to convince the students to experience other methods of learning away from their computers. One faculty member stated that this is what makes ETSU at Rome a great opportunity – “a chance to broaden horizons.” However, the recruitment for potential course offerings would not be difficult and should involve word-of-mouth and social media generated by either students or faculty. Word-of-mouth and social media avenues will render the ETSU at Rome Program more exposure to DIGM students because these students typically ignore traditional recruitment methods such as posters.

Depending on the specific course offered abroad, certain issues regarding resources may arise. The Digital Media Program at ETSU is well-equipped with cameras. However, one possible challenge would be laptops. Students with their own laptops and the appropriate software, in addition to department resources, could alleviate this dilemma to some extent. Courses in digital photography or video production would not need a classroom, only a simple meeting space that has internet access and plenty of power outlets.

Department of Communication

The information provided in this section was gathered from an Assistant Professor in ETSU’s Department of Communication. The following information was collected via email submission and applies to students within this department. This participant mentioned that international exposure along with any exposure outside the region would benefit students’ education within their department. Largely, communication students want to study abroad. However, this experience would be more easily promoted to students if the course offered were to directly meet a degree requirement.

From information collected, collaboration between the ETSU at Rome Program and the Department of Communication would likely consist of one course offering. This offering would be potentially geared towards mass communication, advertising, or business specific. A potential course abroad would be allowed to substitute as one of the students' required electives. Currently, only four choices are available for elective credit. With students gaining educational credit toward graduation, funding would likely be the only challenge to overcome with respect to student recruitment.

Interest in collaborating with the ETSU at Rome Program was also expressed by the participant. Additionally, the participant stated that the department chair would support collaboration with enthusiasm. There have been a number of international study opportunities throughout the department, with many faculty members possessing experience and interest in such activities.

Department of Management and Marketing

Data provided in this section pertains to graduate students in the Master of Business Administration (MBA) Programs at ETSU, both accelerated and traditional. This information was collected from an interview with an Associate Professor in the MBA Program. The unique aspect of this program is that there is currently an existing study abroad course during the presummer session taught in China.

The survey participant stated that with this existing program, interest and importance placed on study abroad is already present within the department. The participant also pointed out that enrollment for this study abroad program has ranged between 12 and 15 over recent years. Currently, 15 students are enrolled for the summer 2011 course. A unique characteristic of the

Accelerated Master of Business Administration (AMBA) Program is the demographic of its students. A large percentage of the AMBA's students have a full-time career that places a time constraint on their availability to study abroad.

Suggestions were made regarding potential student benefits gained with a multidisciplinary curriculum. An idea was proposed to conducting a meeting between all represented departments to brainstorm ideas for potential coursework so that students can gain as much from this international experience as possible. This coursework could possibly come from an integrated effort from each department. Specific themes of integration may come from an assigned project within each course's curriculum requiring students to collaborate with other classes.

The participant mentioned that experiences available when collaborating with local experts are very valuable to students. These experiences can include personal tours through the town, presentations, and international workshops. Currently, a plan is in place for this MBA course to be taught in collaboration with the ETSU at Rome Program in 2012.

CHAPTER 5

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Introduction

Participants responded to a survey via email or personal interview with the researcher. Their input was based upon their perception of department and student involvement in study abroad as well as their own. Initially, an email requesting an interview was sent to nine potential participants in departments spread across campus. The five responders were either interviewed or emailed the survey consisting of 10 questions. These individuals are all faculty members at East Tennessee State University (ETSU).

Survey Research Findings

This chapter connects the survey questions proposed to the participants from Chapter 1 and the analysis provided in Chapter 4 with an examination of each research question delineated. With this information, a suggested plan of action is also given for possible expansion of the existing ETSU at Rome Program. The participants were encouraged to answer the survey questions with as little or as much information as desired. Additionally, this chapter connects benefits to students discovered in Chapter 2 with the analysis provided in Chapter 4. From this, a compilation of potential benefits to ETSU students has been gathered.

Research Question 1

Do the survey participants feel as though students within their departments are interested or able to study abroad?

All participants surveyed stated undoubtedly that there was interest from students in each of their four departments. The participant from the Department of Communication stated that a higher level of student interest could be achieved by creating a course that satisfies course requirements. The Art History Program participant is confident that she could easily recruit 10 of her own students in addition to 10 other Art History students. Students in Digital Media would be interested in studying abroad as another opportunity to tell stories through visual means.

The researcher acknowledges that the Department of Management and Marketing currently holds a study abroad program in China. Through this program, an interest has already been established by students to study abroad. Over the past several years, 12 to 15 students participated in the program, which indicates that the level of interest has remained steady. Most students in the Accelerated Master of Business Administration Program have a full-time career, so the ability of many students to travel for an extended period of time is limited.

Research Question 2

What potential departmental challenges do the participants foresee in participating with the ETSU at Rome Program?

Data gathered from this survey show that while some departments foresee potential challenges in this collaboration, these challenges are not too great to overcome. Student recruitment is always a topic when considering the creation of a study abroad program. Considering all data, every department does not foresee student interest and student recruitment as a large hurdle. Many departments provided suggestions for how to market the program to their students (e.g., student associations, social media avenues, and integration of course into curriculum).

ETSU Digital Media Program was the only program that viewed classroom resources as a potential challenge. These resources could include classroom space, supplies, studio space, and any other resources specific to its course or program. The Digital Media Program anticipates that the limited number of laptops with adequate software may cause a potential challenge. However, this issue may be alleviated by students transporting their personal laptops abroad with them. Participants did not foresee any challenges in regards to course instruction, student interest, and integration of course into existing curriculum. Figure 2 shows the departments that foresee a challenge posed by an existing program within their department. Figure 3 shows the departments that foresee a budget challenge within their department.

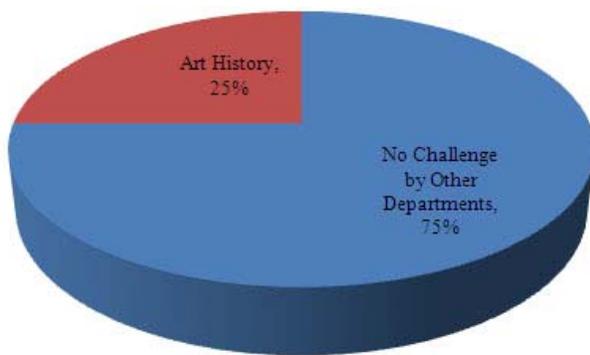


Figure 2. Challenge Posed by Existing Study
Abroad Program Within Department

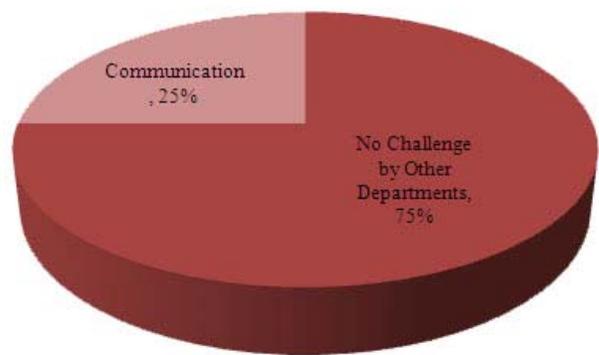


Figure 3. Challenge Posed by Budget
Constraints Within Department

Research Question 3

Would the participants be interested in collaborating with the ETSU at Rome Program?

The data gathered show a widespread faculty interest in instructing courses abroad in a collaborative effort with the ETSU at Rome Program. While some more than others, every participant involved in this survey expressed interest in a partnership. Additionally, all

respondents stated that they believed this effort would be supported by their dean or department chair.

Faculty-led courses experience a reduced cost to the university compared to courses being led by hired instructors or experts. Study abroad courses taught by an outside party tend to be more expensive than courses instructed by the university's own faculty. Each participating department, excluding Digital Media, already possesses a faculty-led study abroad course. In addition to the individual interest expressed by the survey participant, this shows interest from the department as well.

While the Department of Communication, Art History Program, and Digital Media Program expressed strong interest in partnering with the ETSU at Rome Program, the Department of Management and Marketing has already agreed to collaborate with the ETSU at Rome Program for its existing study abroad course for 2012.

Research Question 4

What would the survey participants expect their departments' level of involvement to be in a collaborative effort with the ETSU at Rome Program?

The professors who were consulted regarding the survey have provided vital and useful information for new study abroad opportunities. Each department interviewed has numerous available courses to teach abroad that can be implemented into their curricula, which makes these courses more desirable to a larger and more diverse group of students. The survey participants' expectations of involvement in a collaborative effort with the ETSU at Rome Program range from one course offering to a full summer session.

The Department of Communication and the Digital Media Program would each consider offering one course in collaboration with the ETSU at Rome Program, while the Art History

Program would be interested in offering a full summer session consisting of two courses. The Department of Management and Marketing has already agreed to offer one MBA course in collaboration with the ETSU at Rome Program in 2012.

Faculty interest in teaching study abroad courses was found to be high by all of the participants surveyed. The Department of Communication consists of many faculty members with study abroad teaching experience, and one participant from the Digital Media Program expressed his own personal interest in teaching a course abroad. Figure 4 depicts the level of expected participation of departments.

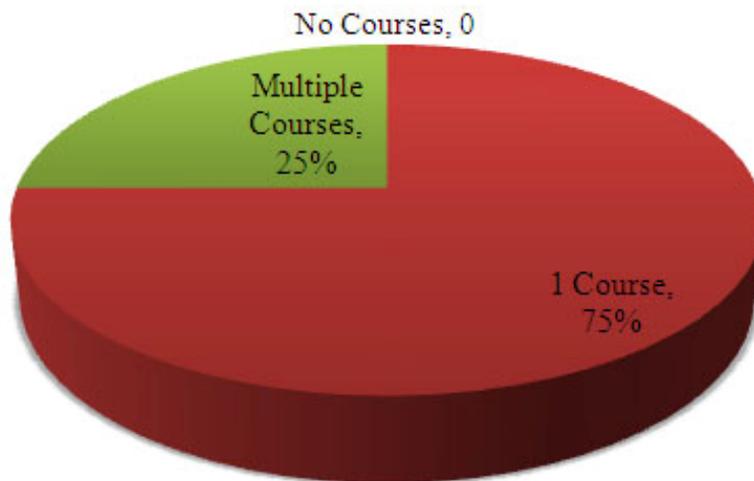


Figure 4. Department Participation Level

Viable Solutions to Expansion

The possible opportunities for expansion of the ETSU at Rome Program appear limitless. Each department surveyed welcomed a collaboration with the ETSU at Rome Program in which at least one course offering could be generated. Currently, there are two course offerings with the

existing ETSU at Rome Program, which are housed in the Department of Engineering Technology, Surveying, and Digital Media.

The Department of Management and Marketing has agreed to move its existing Master of Business Administration study abroad course to the ETSU at Rome Program for 2012. The Art History Department has a wide variety of existing courses within their curriculum that would greatly benefit from instruction in Rome, Italy. Potential Art History courses available include courses within the Art History Major as well as general education requirements. The Department of Communication suggested an elective course geared towards mass communication, advertising, or business. ETSU Digital Media proposed the creation of a new course that could be integrated into its curriculum.

Classroom space and additional accommodations would be provided by the existing third-party vendor. These accommodations include computer labs, a library, and student housing in traditional Roman apartments among others.

These solutions could expand the ETSU at Rome Program by offering multidisciplinary courses, which in turn would incorporate a larger variety of students and increase the study abroad enrollment for the university. The benefits and opportunities that a larger study abroad program would provide to ETSU and its students are immense.

Potential Benefits to ETSU Students

Studying abroad is not an ordinary experience for most people who live in this region. Having a multidisciplinary study abroad program implemented at ETSU would provide local students with a multitude of benefits. In addition, these students would have an increased advantage over students who pass up a study abroad experience. One specific advantage gained

is being considered cultured, cosmopolitan, and a cut above other job candidates when competing for employment in this area.

With the continued growth of the ETSU at Rome Program comes the potential for ETSU students to earn an entire semester of credits abroad. The expansion of study abroad opportunities is never a detriment to students. More course offerings will only afford ETSU students a more likely opportunity to fit an international experience into their required coursework. Additionally, many students do not know the direction their college education will take them early in their academic career. By offering general education courses, freshmen and sophomore students can be provided with a study abroad experience that may help them find the career direction they are searching.

A unique aspect of the ETSU at Rome Program is the mentorship scholarship program that pairs students with donors to the scholarship program. This mentorship program provides an opportunity to impact a student's career and provide a long-term professional relationship. The scholarship component of the program can be the determining factor in a student's ability to travel abroad.

Final Thoughts

With this study, great potential gains have emerged towards increasing study abroad opportunities for ETSU students. All of the five faculty members surveyed articulated their desire to offer courses abroad with the ETSU at Rome Program. Additionally, these departments did not foresee any challenges too great to overcome in this venture. Largely, these survey participants stated that student recruitment would not be an issue for a summer course offering

abroad. The possibility to offer courses which are integrated students' curriculum is very likely. With this, these study abroad opportunities will become even more appealing.

Research presents data defining the benefits of studying abroad to its participants. Potential benefits to ETSU students from this collaboration can be tremendous. Also, with an increase in study abroad programs, total enrollment for ETSU study abroad would increase likewise. With faculty interest and known student benefits, the possibility for future opportunities in the expansion of the ETSU at Rome Program can be remarkable.

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[Are/News-and-Events/Press-Center/Press-Releases/2010/2010-11-15-Fall-2010-Study-](http://www.iie.org/en/Who-We-Are/News-and-Events/Press-Center/Press-Releases/2010/2010-11-15-Fall-2010-Study-Abroad-Snapshot-Survey)

[Abroad-Snapshot-Survey](http://www.iie.org/en/Who-We-Are/News-and-Events/Press-Center/Press-Releases/2010/2010-11-15-Fall-2010-Study-Abroad-Snapshot-Survey)

APPENDIX A
MTSU Study Abroad Spreadsheet

Middle Tennessee State University
Faculty-Led Study Abroad Programs

No.	Program	Weeks	Credits	Courses	Course Offering Flexible	Duration Flexibility	Multi-disciplinary
1	Canada	1	3	Geography OR History	Yes	No	Yes
2	Cuba	10	12	Spanish (9) AND History (3)	No	No	Yes
3	Egypt	3	6	English AND Global Studies	No	No	Yes
4	France	4	6	Franch AND French	No	No	No
5	France	3	3	Global Elective	No	No	No
6	Italy	3	6	Art AND Art	No	No	No
7	Japan	2	3	Fashion	No	No	No
8	Russia	3	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
9	Taiwan	3	3	INFS 4840 OR INFS 5840	No	No	No
10	Normandy	2	3	History	No	No	No

APPENDIX B
UTK Study Abroad Spreadsheet

University of Tennessee at Knoxville
Faculty-Led Study Abroad Programs

No.	Program	Term	Credits	Courses	Course Offering Flexible	Duration Flexibility	Multi-disciplinary
1	Australian Business Program	Full summer	6	IB439 AND BA400	No	No	Yes
2	Berlin in the 20th Century	Mini	1	German 491	No	No	No
3	CASNR Jamaica Study Tour	Mini	1	AGNR 491	No	No	No
4	Communication & Information Summer in Cypress	Summer 1	6	JEM 446 AND JEM494	No	No	No
5	Communication & Information Summer in Madrid	Full summer	6	IS 495 AND Management in the Workplace	No	No	Yes
6	Drama in Stratford & London	Summer 2	3 or 4	ENGLISH 491 OR 591	Yes	No	No
7	Finland Summer Architecture Institute	Full summer	15	College of Archit. Courses & Finnish courses	Yes	No	Yes
8	French Language in Paris	Summer 1	6	2 different programs	Yes	No	Yes
9	Cloister to the College	Mini	3	English 492 OR UH 337	Yes	No	Yes
10	Full Time MBA Program	Mini	2	BA 591	No	No	No
11	Global Competition from the French Perspective	Mini	3	IB 459	No	No	No
12	Glorious Gardens of Holland & France	Mini	3	Plant Sciences 455/555	No	No	No
13	Ghana	Mini	3	Africa Studies/Foreign Studies 491	No	No	No
14	Urbino, Italy	Full summer	6	Italian Track OR Public Relations Track	Yes	No	Yes
15	Vietnam	Mini	3	Sociology 491 or UH 337/347	Yes	No	Yes
16	International Business in Italy	Summer 2	6	IB 429 AND MGT 472	No	No	Yes
17	International Communication ... Paris & Brussels	Summer 2	6	Communication 491 & 493	No	No	No
18	Management & Finance Business Practices	Mini	3	BA 400	No	No	No
19	Nursing International Clinical Experience	Spring Break	Unknown	Nursing	Unknown	No	No
20	Professional MBA Program	Spring Break	Unknown	MBA	Unknown	No	No
21	Psychology in Greece	Summer 1	6	PSYC 360 AND PSYC 475	No	No	No
22	Spanish Language in Puebla, Mexico	Summer 2	6	SPAN 323, 489, 491/591 OR 461.	Yes	No	No
23	Spanish Language Summer Program	Summer 1	6	SPAN 211 AND 212	No	No	No
24	Summer Spanish Language Program in Alicante	Summer 1	6	SPAN 422 AND SPAN 461 OR 491	Yes	No	No
25	Visual Explorations: Florence	Mini	3	ART 299/499	Yes	No	No
26	Japanese Architecture, Landscape & Interiors	Mini	3	ID 491 or LAR 491	Yes	No	Yes

APPENDIX C
ETSU Study Abroad Spreadsheet

East Tennessee State University
Faculty-Led Study Abroad Programs

	Program	Country	Weeks	Credits	Courses	Course Offering Flexible	Duration Flexible	Multi-disciplinary
1	Beijing & Xi'an China	China	5	6	PSCI 4007/5007 OR HIST 4007/5007	Yes	No	Yes
2	Fossil Field Trip - China	China	3	3	UHON 4808-SA2	No	No	No
3	Tropical Botany OR Spanish Language in Ecuador	Equador	5	3	BIOL 4956/5956 SA1 OR SPAN 4956/5956	Yes	No	Yes
4	London Theatre	England	2	3	ENGL 4957/5957 OR THEA 4957/5957	Yes	No	Yes
5	Topics in Film: French Film	France	3	3	ENGL 4340 OR ENGL 4956	Yes	No	No
6	ETSU @ Rome	Italy	3	3	ENTC 4957, ENTC 5957 OR ENTC 5900	Yes	No	No
7	Art, Culture, & Wood Fired Terracotta	Italy	2	3	ARTA 4117 STA OR ARTA 5117 STA	Yes	No	No
8	Politics, Culture, and Society in Central East Europe	Poland & Czech	2	3	PSCI 4007	No	No	No
9	Scotland & Northern Ireland	Scotland & N. Ireland	3	3 or 6	APST/ENGL 4237/5237	Yes	No	Yes
10	ETSU in Spain/Morocco	Spain & Morocco	5	3	MCOM 4957-SA1 OR MCOM 5957-SA1	No	No	No

APPENDIX D
Participant Survey Form



Study Abroad Thesis Survey
Kevin Varney

Brief Background of ETSU at Rome

In 2009, the College of Business and Technology at ETSU initiated a study abroad program in Rome, Italy. The desire was and is to create the first permanent study abroad center for the university. Since its inception, this program has added an additional Innovation and Technology course to its original Architectural History offering. In its first year, 13 students participated in the program. Currently, 22 students are expected to travel to Rome in May 2011.

ACCENT, a third-party vendor, provides classroom space, a library, a computer lab, and additional resources. ACCENT also provides student housing in traditional Roman apartments in the heart of Rome. Typically, students and instructors meet in the classroom for a short lecture before conducting site visits throughout the city. Additional excursions each year have been taken to Tivoli and Pompeii. Side trips to Sorrento and Capri were taken in 2010, and a trip Barcelona is scheduled for 2011.

Potential expansion consists of multidisciplinary courses offered through ETSU campus so that more students can attain international exposure while gaining educational credit. Additional information regarding ETSU @ Rome can be found at www.etsurome.com.

Questions

1. Would an international exposure enhance the students' education in your college?

2. Do you feel students within your department want to study abroad?

3. What challenges would your department face in participating in the ETSU @ Rome Program?
 - Recruitment
 - Budget
 - Integration into Curriculum
 - Instruction
 - Resources (classroom space, studios, supplies)
 - Leadership within your Department
 - Student Demographic (non-traditional, gender, culture)
 - Student Interest
 - Other

4. What challenges might prevent students within your department from studying abroad?
 - Safety
 - Funding
 - Other

5. Would you be interested in participating/collaborating with the ETSU @ Rome Program?

6. How would you see your department participating in a study abroad?
7. What possible level of participation do you see your department having with the ETSU @ Rome Program?
- None
 - No study abroad interest
 - No interest in study abroad with ETSU @ Rome
 - One Course
 - Full Summer Offerings
8. What specific courses, experiences, or opportunities do you feel would be most beneficial to students within your department?
9. Do you have any suggestions that would enhance the success of the ETSU @ Rome Program?
10. Additional Comments.

Honors and Awards: Gamma Sigma Alpha National Greek Honor Society (2009)
Epsilon Pi Tau – Leading International Honor Society of Technology (2009)
International Study Abroad Scholarship (2009, 2010)
Anita Bates International Scholarship (2010)
Dan Eldridge International Scholarship (2009)
Associated General Contractors of America National Scholarship (2008)
Charles Wilkey Math Scholarship (2007 – 2008)
Dean’s List (Spring 2008, Spring 2007)
Alpha Lambda Delta Honor Society (2006)
Academic Performance Scholarship (2005 – 2009)
Faber-Neal Scholarship (2006)
Hope Scholarship (2005 – 2009)
Wilson-Hartsell Scholarship (2005)

Presentations: Design and Innovations, International Workshop Presentation
 University of Rome, Rome, Italy, 05/25/2010
Study Abroad Fair Presentation
 ETSU Study Abroad Fair, 10/30/2010
Lunch and Learn Seminar Presentation
 Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society, 10/22/2010
Working with International Third Party Providers
 Study Abroad Faculty Workshop, ETSU, 11/5/2010
Private Funding for Study Abroad
 Study Abroad Faculty Workshop, ETSU, 11/5/2010