ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE AND
DIVERSITY PARTICIPATION
IN STUDY ABROAD

by

HOLLY SUZANNE HUDSON

KARRI HOLLEY, COMMITTEE CHAIR
CLAIRe MAJOR
ARLEENe BREAUX
NATHANIEL BRAY
WILLIAM ROSS BRYAN

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation seeks answers to perplexing questions: 1) Why don’t more students—particularly minority and other traditionally underserved students—participate in study abroad programming? 2) Does institutional culture play a role? In higher education, study abroad is almost universally perceived to be good for students. Research supports this view, as there are tangible and intangible benefits for students who study abroad during their college careers. While participation is up, it has not increased significantly—certainly not to the extent that one would expect given the way it has been prioritized. The majority of participants are still mostly white women. Despite making both internationalization and diversity strategic priorities and even major principles of their mission statements, colleges and universities have failed to raise study abroad participation among traditionally underserved students. I sought to understand the role of institutional culture in this shortcoming by conducting a single-case study of a large, public university. I interviewed administrators, faculty and staff, and reviewed promotional and informational materials from the Study Abroad office. I found that the institution’s culture, particularly if the institution emphasizes traditions centered on traditionally served students, can inhibit the program growth and diversity initiatives, even if those are made institutional priorities.
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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

“Diversity is the magic. It is the first manifestation, the first beginning of the differentiation of a thing and of simple identity. The greater the diversity, the greater the perfection.”

~ Thomas Berry

Advancements in technology, greater ease of mobility, economic interdependence, and an expansion of diplomatic efforts have made the nations of the world more interconnected than ever before. While there’s evidence of some pushback against globalization in recent elections in Europe and the United States, most institutions have embraced the fact that we now live in an increasingly global society.

Institutions of higher education certainly have. Each individual institution has its own mission statement, but collectively they are engaged in a democratic project involving teaching, research and service with the aim of creating an informed, engaged citizenry. Bringle, Games and Malloy (1999) define the role of the university as the responsibility to produce “students who are able to integrate knowledge, communicate, collaborate, display critical thinking, understand other perspectives, and be active participants in a democratic society” (Bringle, Games and Malloy, 1999, p. 7).

“Understand[ing] other perspectives” in a global society involves learning about other cultures. It is critical part of the collective mission of higher education to produce graduates to be the future leaders of the world who are familiar with and sensitive to cultures other than their
Study abroad programs play a critical role in giving students direct access to these “other perspectives.” In helping students develop intercultural knowledge and communication skills, study abroad programs contribute to the public mission in a few ways: they prepare students to be informed global citizens, thus helping them be individually successful in a global society; they produce citizens who are culturally and politically knowledgeable in a global sense; they produce students whose awareness of cultural differences makes them more aware of and able to advance the interests of our nation. For more practical and tangible purposes, students who studied abroad get hired faster, get accepted into graduate schools at a higher rate, and earn more in starting salaries that students who did no study abroad (“Career Outcomes,” 2012-2015). And for higher education institutions, study abroad programs also help with recruiting and branding efforts.

Given that study abroad programs accomplish all these things, institutions of higher education in the U.S. have increasingly prioritized and made global engagement part of their strategic plans. Nearly all of the 3,000 accredited, four-year institutions in the U.S. engage in some kind of education abroad activity. Many colleges have or are establishing foreign campuses. Lastly, the third-party and affiliate programs industry has expanded rapidly. All of these developments reflect the increasing priority universities have placed on study abroad as part of their internationalization efforts.

Yet, despite the consensus that studying abroad is an important tool for understanding and embracing other cultures, study abroad participation in the U.S. has not increased at a rate that reflects the emphasis higher education has placed on it. While more students are studying abroad, numbers of study abroad participants has not increased at a rate commensurate with
increasing enrollment numbers. In addition, the duration of study abroad programs has decreased considerably at the same time that participation has risen.

Perhaps more troublingly, participation among minority students lags behind participation by white students and is not growing. The Institute of International Education (IIE), the leading not-for-profit educational and cultural exchange organization in the U.S., has been conducting an annual survey of international activity on U.S. campuses since 1919. The census collects data on approximately 3,000 accredited institutions. IIE’s most recent Open Doors Report (2018) reveals that close to 75 percent of students who study abroad are white, though whites make up only 58 percent of college students overall. Hispanic students make up only eight percent of study abroad participants, though they account for 17 percent of college students overall. African-American students comprise only six percent of those who study abroad, while 14 percent of college students are African American (Open Doors). The small percentage of students who study abroad are simply not representative of the student demographic of higher education in the U.S. Minorities are underrepresented. Therefore, the benefits of study abroad participation continue to accrue to a small, homogeneous percentage of the population, primarily White women.

Since the mission of study abroad programs is to expose students to diversity, it is ironic that these programs don’t attract a diverse group of participants. In an attempt to understand why minorities are underrepresented in study abroad programs, why efforts to increase diversity in study abroad participation aren’t working, and what can be done about it, this dissertation explores the lack of diversity in study abroad and the inability to improve diversity participation in study abroad through the examination of one representative institution. Though the study
focuses on a single institution, the findings from the study of this institution are applicable to many other institutions.

This opening chapter provides an introduction to the research and the purpose of the study and includes an overview of the research goals and methods. The chapter serves as background to the study and summarizes the internationalization of higher education and provides a synopsis of the history and current state of study abroad. It also includes a description of the national policies aimed at increasing and diversifying study abroad that I examine in the case study. I conclude with an outline of the remaining chapters.

**Purpose of the Study**

Diversity contributes to creativity and can spawn new ideas that advance technology and generate knowledge. In short, students learn when they are exposed to difference. It’s the essence of higher education to be exposed to a diverse range of people and ideas. To some extent this happens just by going to college. Students are challenged in and out of the classroom when they encounter other students who are different than they are and when they experience new environments.

Not only does being around difference help students learn, giving minority populations access to higher education has benefits to those students and to our society. Getting a college education is empowering for the traditionally underserved and a vehicle for social mobility. In addition, for our nation to maintain global competitiveness, higher education is responsible for improving the skills of the entire society, not just those few who have historically had access to higher education.
Thus, there is a growing emphasis on diversity in American higher education. Universities have hired diversity officers, started organizations for first-generation students and minority students, and a host of other support programs. And while there has been progress made on providing access to higher education to marginalized people, our efforts still don’t translate into a student body that is representative of the diversity in our general population. In the field of international education, and particularly study abroad, diversity has even lagged behind the already poor representation of minorities with access to higher education. We can and should do better.

Given the changing demographic profile of the American college student and the important dialogue around race and inclusion taking place on college campuses, there is a decisive need to identify ways in which institutions can embrace and increase diversity, particularly in study abroad. What will be required to drastically alter institutions and their programs to make them more inclusive? Why is it so challenging for universities to become more diverse organizations? These questions may be answered through a careful examination of a cross-section of higher education to identify and analyze programs and strategies aimed at diversification.

I suggest that issues of inclusion and representation in higher education are typified by study abroad programs. Consequently, this dissertation examines diversity in study abroad at a single institution as it grapples with the topics of underrepresentation and inclusion on its campus. The purpose of this study is to illustrate how institutional people, practices, and policies support or inhibit diversification efforts in higher education, through the example of study abroad programs, and more broadly, to explore how effectively the diversity initiatives on campus affect
study abroad programs. In order to examine diversity, I apply the framework of transformational change presented by Eckel and Kezar (2003).

Despite the emphasis on expanding both the number and diversity of study abroad participants in the U.S., the participation rate and demographic has remained relatively unchanged. There are national level policies and programs aimed at achieving a significant change in the number of and profile of study abroad students. Although the policies and practices have been widely adopted by study abroad offices, they have made a negligible difference in diversifying study abroad participation. Perhaps the failure to diversify study abroad participation does not fall on the shoulders of study abroad offices, but in the culture of the campus as a whole. Could representation in study abroad be static because, despite the efforts of study abroad offices, colleges have not embraced diversity in ways that transform campus culture?

For this study, I define diversity to include race, gender, socioeconomic status, and ability; more broadly, diversity describes the homologous types and geographic locations of study abroad programs. The overarching goals of this study are as follows: to consider if universities value diversity as much as they purport to in their mission statements, strategic plans or list of priorities; to consider if study abroad is a program that values diversity as much as it purports to in a set of fairly consistent mission statements; to explore whether or not the lack of diversity in study abroad stems from the culture of higher education; to illustrate how institutional people, policies, and practices support or inhibit transformational change; to consider if a university’s study abroad program can overcome institutional obstacles and positively contribute to diversity on campuses, thereby achieving a broader representation of students and faculty in the field of study abroad.
The research questions that will guide this study are:

1. Why, despite the self-awareness of their inadequacy in extending programming opportunities to minorities and efforts to correct it, has diversity participation in study abroad at the case-study institution not increased significantly?
2. Is the failure to significantly increase diversity participation in study abroad reflective of larger institutional shortcomings in expanding opportunities to traditionally underserved student populations?
3. To what extent does the institution’s culture support or inhibit the kind of transformational change that would increase access to programming for diverse student populations?
4. What can this institution—and, by extension—all institutions of higher learning—do to improve diversity participation in study abroad and other programming?

To accomplish the goals of the study and answer the research questions, I conduct a qualitative, single case study that evaluates one institution’s study abroad programs, considers the culture of an organization and the factors required for transformational change, and explores the application of the change strategy to a number of diversity issues in the field of study abroad. For this study, qualitative research is most appropriate because it allows the researcher to explore a phenomenon in context using data gathered from a variety of sources (Creswell, 2012; Yin, 2009). A case study design should be used when the focus of the study is to answer how and why questions and contextual conditions are relevant to the phenomenon of the study. For this study, there needs to be a context in which underrepresentation in study abroad are explored. Thus, I chose to conduct an exploratory, single case study to determine why diverse populations of students and faculty are underrepresented in study abroad programs in the context of one
institution. I sought to discover what employees—faculty, administration and staff—thought about the culture of the institution, the diversity programming and initiatives that have been undertaken, what’s working and what isn’t, and why underrepresented students participating in study abroad at a rate commensurate with the enrollment percentages.

**Significance of the Study**

This study is significant for several reasons. First, study abroad is viewed as a catalyst for producing an informed, well-rounded, and engaged citizenry, help students be more graduate school and employment-ready, and as a way for institutions to add value and attract students and faculty. The Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) lists study abroad as one pathway to realizing the High Impact Practice of Diversity/Global Learning (accu.org). The beneficial outcomes for students who study abroad are documented and measurable. IIE surveys of college graduates since 1999-2000 who studied abroad report that their study abroad experience enhanced 14 of the 15 key skills in today’s workforce. Increased interpersonal skills, flexibility/adaptability, self-awareness, curiosity, and confidence were the areas of improvement as a result of study abroad experience most cited by respondents. Approximately 75 percent reported improvements in these skills. Over half reported improved problem-solving, interpersonal, and communication skills. Over half of the survey respondents said that they believe their study abroad experience led directly to job offers. And those who were not sure if study abroad led to job offers said that the skills they gained studying abroad “had proven relevant and useful throughout their careers, particularly as they were promoted to management-level positions where communication, interpersonal skills, and the ability to understand and work with difference were key criteria for promotion” (Farrugia and Sanger, 2017).
If a select few benefit from this practice that positively contributes to the education and future of its participants, what does that mean for our society? This study will extend the literature by addressing the racial divide in study abroad and on college campuses. It will add to the literature on current institutional internationalization efforts and the implementation of study abroad programs as a means to expand access and diversify college campuses. The success of those initiatives in supporting minority participation in study abroad programs will be considered, and the results of this study may provide suggestions for improved program development, marketing, public relations campaigns, as well as financial programs that support the diversification of study abroad. This study will also contribute to the body of knowledge on institutional change and, specifically, on the people, policies, and programs that effect transformational change. It may also provide suggestions on changes in organizational structure, or at least identify areas where re-organization would be beneficial.

The population of students who study abroad will not significantly change unless the way administrators develop, support, and promote programs transforms. Change may also involve institutional re-organization. The problem of diversity, or lack thereof, is evident across college campuses and in myriad areas of study abroad including program type, location, and the student and faculty demographic. This is a problem that will continue to grow as higher education in the United States evolves to become more inclusive, and less White. Considering the current national climate surrounding the issues of race and gender, the value of higher education, nationalism and globalization, and the reluctance of institutions to embrace change, intentional action through programs and strategies is required to bring about real transformation.
**Background of the Study**

In order to explore the issue of diversity in study abroad programs, the concept of internationalization and the history of study abroad should be considered. Additionally, an exploration of the current state of study abroad, the changing demographics of university students, and the current national initiatives aimed at increasing the number and the diversity of participants is essential for examining the phenomena of underrepresentation in study abroad programs.

**Internationalization in Higher Education**

The concept and definition of internationalization emerged as in the 1980s to make a distinction between a set of activities or approaches at the institutional level and comparative education, global education, and/or multicultural education (Knight, 2004). While comparative education, global education, and/or multicultural education can happen within departments and by an institutional mandate, the term internationalization reflected growing emphasis on programs that were not restricted by borders, but embraced the idea that education should not be limited geographically.

In the mid-1990s, the definition broadened to include the process and approach to internationalization. Knight (1994) proposed a new definition that expanded the meaning of the term to incorporate the organizational process that should be integrated into institutional practices, defining “internationalization” as the “process of integrating an international and intercultural dimension into the teaching, research and service functions of the institution” (Knight, 1994, p. 7). The definition of internationalization continued to expand beyond the institution to include internationalization of the external environment (Van der Wende, 1997). In
2003, Knight suggested that internationalization needed to be understood at the national and institutional level, and proposed an update to the definition to acknowledge both levels of internationalization and the relationship that exists between them, ultimately defining internationalization as “the process of integrating an international, intercultural or global dimension into the purpose, functions, or delivery of post-secondary education. (Knight, 2003, p.2). Knight explains that the definition needs to reflect that internationalization is an ongoing process, thus the term “process” is used in the definition. She also substituted “into the purpose, functions, or delivery of post-secondary education” for “into the teaching, research, and service functions of the institution” in order to emphasize the role higher education institutions play in the greater society, rather than just within the institution itself.

The rationales for institutional and national internationalization vary. According to Knight (2004), institutional-level rationales range from a variety of factors including but not limited to geographic location, faculty profile, student population, funding sources, and mission. Though motivations for internationalization can differ from institution to institution, the heightening of international reputation, research interests, strategic alliances, student and faculty development, and income generation, or some variation of these, is often cited as common reasons to push for internationalization in higher education (Altbach, 2004; Knight, 2004; Middlehurst, 2013).

**Internationalization as a National Project**

The U.S. Department of Education published the nation’s first official international strategy in November of 2012. The international strategy articulated two goals: to strengthen education in the United States and to advance American international goals or agendas by
strengthening global competency, learning from other countries, and engaging in education diplomacy (Middlehurst, 2013, p.4). The report acknowledges that, while national security relies upon graduates with foreign languages skills and specific areas of expertise, global awareness and civic engagement are also required for international relations. Further, it implies that the ability to understand and appreciate different perspectives is essential to the healthy development of American society and effective international diplomacy. Middlehurst (2013) explored the unique international strategy adopted by the United States and examined the implications of national-level internationalization strategies outside of the U.S. and considers their alignment with institutional initiatives. He concludes that, while other countries have internationalization strategies, the U.S. is somewhat unique in integrating these in a national strategy that spans all stages of education and all types of students (Middlehurst, 2013). According to Middlehurst (2013):

The US is not unique in wishing to develop “a globally competent citizenry” capable of sustaining economic competitiveness. However, the need for students to have the substantive knowledge, understanding, and communication and collaborative skills to address challenges that cross borders, including man-made and natural disasters, is not necessarily articulated as clearly by other countries as a key rationale for internationalization strategies. (p.30)

Thus, internationalization in higher education in the United States is a national priority advanced by American political agencies.
**Organizational Perspective of Internationalization**

The internationalization of higher education is the process of integrating ideas, activities, and strategies into the functions of the institution and can be accomplished through multiple approaches (Knight, 1994, 2004; Van de Wende, 1997; Soderqvist, 2002). International education includes internationalizing college campuses and curricula by offering degrees and classes in global and international studies, encouraging study abroad programs, expanding international student enrollment and participation, engaging in exchange programs, and pursuing international educational partnerships (Williams, 2007). Integrating a global perspective into the curriculum, initiating international research partnerships, developing dual degree programs, supporting faculty and students exchange, increasing international student enrollment, and advancing study abroad fall under the umbrella of internationalization in a higher education context. For the purpose of this study, I will provide background on the aspects of internationalization that primarily focus on student mobility with an emphasis on study abroad. Student mobility is a comprehensive term used to describe the process of moving students from one country to another and can describe both education abroad participants and international students. The term is widely used across European countries and in the United Kingdom, Canada, and Australia.

**Internationalization by International Student Mobility**

Higher Education leaders in the United States are faced with the challenge of answering the call of the federal government to maintain or enhance the global strength of the U.S. and prepare students for an increasingly interconnected and interdependent world. American universities are seeking to prepare graduates for an increasingly globalized workplace by
emphasizing and encouraging students and faculty to seek opportunities for international engagement (Research and Policy Committee of the Committee for Economic Development, 2006). As a result of globalization, it is increasingly likely that a U.S. college graduate will study or work with someone from a different country or cultural background than their own (Alves., Kathi, Charles, Dmytro, Fuminori, & Ke 2006; Schmidt, Conway, Easton, Wardrope, 2007). The current global marketplace requires that all employees have cross-cultural communication skills, understand the nuances of cultures, and obtain international experiences (Williams, 2007).

Institutional leaders are looking for ways to make the university experience more meaningful to today’s graduates by making higher education applicable to a global society (Williams, 2007). Additionally, leaders must balance the cost of a college education with the value of the degree in a time when significant budget cuts and declining state appropriations are driving tuition rates higher and higher. One way institutions have supplemented their budgets while simultaneously increasing internationalization is through international student recruitment. According to the Institute of International Education (IIE) Open Doors Report (2014), there are 886,000 international students studying at institutions of higher education in the United States. This represents a 72 percent increase in international students in the U.S. since 1990 (IIE Open Doors, 2014). Moreover, international student enrollment in U.S. universities and colleges increased by seven percent from 2012 to 2013, resulting in 55,000 more students enrolled in American institutions (IIE Open Doors, 2014). The majority of students, approximately sixty percent, come from just five countries, China, India, South Korea, Saudi Arabia, and Canada (Open Doors, 2014). International students represent the largest share of enrollment at universities in Washington D.C., Delaware, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Washington State,
Texas, California, Florida and Hawaii (IIE Open Doors, 2014). The Institute of International Education reports that approximately 44 percent of international students are women (IIE Open Doors, 2014).

In 2013/14, international students contributed 27 billion dollars to the U.S. economy. According to IIE Open Doors, this amount represents an all-time high (2014). IIE Open Doors reports that the international students receive approximately 74 percent of their funding from outside of the United States. The majority of these funds come from personal and family support, followed by financial assistance from government programs or home universities (2014).

In 2013/14, the home state of my case-study institution hosted over 7,400 international students who contributed $182,523,000 to the state’s economy. International students and their families supported or created over 2,000 jobs last year (IIE Open Doors, 2014). The significance of international student enrollment to the U.S. economy is clear. Although increases in international student enrollments contribute to the internationalization of U.S. campuses, international students constitute less than four percent of the over 21 million students currently enrolled in U.S. institutions (IIE Open Doors, 2014).

**Internationalization by Study Abroad**

In addition to internationalization through international student recruitment, study abroad is often a catalyst for promoting intercultural competence and preparing students for success in the global market (Hoffa, 2007; Williams, 2007; Harder, Andenoro, Roberts, Steadman, Newberry, Parker, & Rodriguez, 2015; Horn, Hendel, Fry, 2012; Jackson, 2015). While domestic student mobility does not usually provide a financial benefit to institutions, it helps satisfy the
aforementioned state department goals for internationalization, adds value to the degree program, and can raise the academic profile of the institution. As such, university leaders recognize the positive effects of study abroad and are promoting it as an institutional strength and as an opportunity for students to gain cross-cultural skills to compete in today’s global market.

Global engagement through study abroad programs is in the mission statements of many colleges and universities in the United States, and study abroad program participation is strongly encouraged on most campuses. In fact, many universities are expanding international programs or making them part of a degree requirement (Williams, 2007). During the 2011/12 academic year, 283,332 American students studied abroad for academic credit, representing a three percent increase from the prior year. This increase indicates that university administrators and the U.S. government have placed strategic importance on international education. Moreover, they are committed to providing students with meaningful and in-person international experience before graduation (IIE Open Doors, 2014; Committee on Foreign Affairs, 2007).

The emphasis and steady participation rate in study abroad programs indicates that American college administrators, faculty, parents, and students are interested in international education. In spite of these efforts, however, growth in study abroad participation has been not been commensurate with increasing enrollment in universities. Moreover, study abroad participation continues to be dominated by one demographic group: white women. While there has been increasing emphasis on diversity on campuses, study abroad programs have not been able to attract minority students, as study abroad participation by White students continues to outpace their percentages of enrollment, 75 percent to 58 percent, respectively. Meanwhile, minority student participation in study abroad falls significantly below enrollment percentages. Hispanic students make up eight percent of study abroad participants, though they make up 17
percent of total enrollment; for African Americans comprise 6 percent of study abroad participants, while counting for 14 percent of the student population overall.

A variety of factors influence why a student decides to study abroad. Research indicates that financial barriers, curriculum restrictions, and lack of guidance or support all contribute to a student’s decision not to study abroad. However, considering the growing access to higher education and the emphasis on study abroad at U.S. universities, the lack of diversity is a troubling and vexing problem. Increasing diversity positively effects student learning and contributes to creativity. Yet, when minority students in the Southeast and Southwest of the United States attend study abroad fairs on their home campus, they are recruited by an industry of providers located in the Northeast that are predominately represented by White women. When students go to websites and read marketing materials created by universities and third-party providers, they see pictures of mostly White women standing in front of landmarks such as Big Ben, the Eiffel Tower, the Leaning Tower of Pisa, the Sagrada Familia, or the Berlin Wall. These images do not necessarily speak to a diverse population of students or suggest that universities are extending an open invitation to all students to study abroad. The overall number of students participating in a study abroad program for credit has more than doubled in 15 years, but not at the rate that enrollments in colleges and universities has increased. Even with record numbers of Americans studying abroad, the percentage who do so before graduating is still less than ten percent (IIE Open Doors report, 2014). Further, the make-up of the student population benefiting from study abroad is not representative of the demographic of students enrolled in American institutes of higher education.
Internationalization on College Campuses

Over the past decade, a number of studies have been conducted by the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) that examine global learning outcomes as part of its Shared Futures initiative. Global Learning for All, a guide published by the American Council on Education (ACE), provides universities and colleges with a guide for understanding terminology and developing a strategic framework, as well as advancing and assessing comprehensive internationalization efforts. Both AAC&U and ACE have emphasized the importance of developing global learning programs on college campuses. The need for globally competent graduates is also expressed by employers. According to Hovland & Schneider (2011), the results of a 2007 AAC&U study indicated that 48 percent of employers surveyed graded students poor in the area of global knowledge. The survey asked CEOs what areas should be emphasized in higher education. Of the CEOs that responded, 67 percent indicated that students needed improvement in their ability to understand the global context of situations and decisions, while 57 percent said the students needed deeper knowledge about the role of the United States in the world and cultural diversity. Moreover, a whopping 71 percent stated that students needed to develop more intercultural competence and improve teamwork in diverse groups (Hovland & Schneider, 2011).

“Mapping Internationalization on U.S. Campuses” (2008), published by the American Council on Education (ACE), indicated that a number of institutions cite internationalization in their mission statements and have convened committees focused on the task of expanding international engagement. The study found that over half of colleges and universities with graduate programs included internationalization in their mission statements, and that most institutions provide some form of administrative support for their international initiatives. The
results of the study also indicated that a majority of universities offered study abroad opportunities. Colleges and universities in the U.S. are investing in faculty-led study abroad programs, and are increasing international student recruitment efforts (Green, Luu, & Burris, 2008). American institutions have increased their support for and investment in faculty participation in several areas, including developing and leading study abroad programs, attending conferences overseas, and providing professional development workshops on second language acquisition.

American institutions of higher education have embraced internationalization rapidly. For example, in 2001, 46 percent of institutions indicated support for faculty leading study abroad programs as compared to 58 percent just five years later in 2006. Additionally, support for faculty participation in international conferences and meetings rose from 40 percent in 2001 to 56 percent in 2006 (Green, Luu, & Burris, 2008). The National Association of State Universities and Land Grant Colleges (NASULGS) states that internationalizing the campus involves “enlarging the mission, shifting the academic culture, broadening perspectives, making new connections, getting everyone involved, and changing the way things get done” (NASULGC Task Force on International Education, 2004, p. 17).

A strategic plan and institutional leadership are required for internationalization to be successful. However, not all factions of an institution will embrace internationalization in a positive way. Universities and colleges consists of clashing interest groups and competing factions with different goals and values (Birnbaum, 1988; Kezar 2001; Kezar and Eckel, 2005). In a study on understanding leadership strategies and advancing diversity, Kezar and Eckel (2005) view diversity as a political position. They identify four themes that leaders can apply to the advancement of an institutional diversity agenda. The themes identified in the study are:
commitment and focus, presidential points of leverage, investment in people, and inevitable conflict (Kezar and Eckel, 2005). These themes can also be applied to internationalization, which is one component of diversification. Institutional leaders can apply the lessons described by Kezar and Eckel (2005) to garner the support of students, faculty, staff, and the larger campus community required to advance internationalization as a priority. Further, Kezar and Eckel (2005) found that institutional leaders who are successful in advancing a diversity agenda are deeply committed to ensuring the success of underrepresented and minority students.

Conclusion

Chapter one of this dissertation provided an introduction and background to the study, outlining the current national emphasis on expanding study abroad programming and the current state of study abroad participation. I explain that, while there are national and institutional efforts to expand study abroad opportunities to minority students, study abroad programs continue to be dominated by student populations it has traditionally served: Whites and, more specifically, White women.

The following chapter will provide an overview of the research on the benefits and perception of study abroad, the diversity of program types and locations, the presence and importance of a diverse and representative faculty and student body in study abroad, and the current climate of issues of inclusiveness on college campuses. Chapter Two also explores Eckel and Kezar’s (2003) transformational change model as a framework for examining for institutions ability to embrace the changing demographic of higher education. Chapter Three focuses on research methods of the dissertation and provides a context and rationale or the study. Chapter Three also provides details of interview protocol and the site of this study. Chapter Four
describes the findings of interviews with faculty, staff, and administrators at the case-study institution and reviews promotional and informational literature published by the study abroad office, affiliate providers, and third-party providers. Chapter Five presents my conclusions, which are based on interviews of faculty, staff and administrators at my case-study institution, analysis of promotional and informational materials published by the institution, and my personal experiences at the institution. Chapter Five also explains how I applied Kezar and Eckel’s theory of transformational change, makes recommendations for increasing diversity participation in study abroad, and details my biases and the limitations of my study.
CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

In Chapter One, I described the current state of study abroad in U.S. higher education as one in which there is a national emphasis on increasing study abroad participation and an institutional effort to expand study abroad opportunities to minority and traditionally underserved student populations. Despite this emphasis and effort, study abroad among minority and traditionally underserved students remains stagnant. Chapter Two presents a review of the current literature related to the benefits and perception of study abroad, as well as institutional initiatives to improve inclusion on campuses. Chapter two also introduces Kezar and Eckel’s transformational change theory as a model for how institutions could become more inclusive.

This review and synthesis of existing literature examines research articles, books, publications and statistics on study abroad, participation in study abroad, benefits to study abroad, university retention, financial aid, access to higher education, first generation students, higher education mandates, higher education policies, and barriers to higher education. The journals most relevant and important to my study are: *Frontiers: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Study Abroad*, *Journal of International Education*, *Journal of Higher Education Theory & Practice*, *Research in Higher Education*, *New Directions for Student Services*, and *New Directions for Teaching and Learning*. The majority of materials reviewed were published between 2005 and 2015. In November of 2005, the Commission on the Abraham Lincoln Study Abroad Fellowship Program published a report that outlined the current position of study abroad
and the challenges ahead, and made detailed recommendations for a national undergraduate study abroad fellowship program to dramatically increase and diversify study abroad participation in the United States. Thus, articles published after 2005 are most relevant to this study. Seminal studies, books, and articles in the field of International Education published between 1960 and 2016 were also consulted.

**Development and History of Study Abroad**

Higher Education in the United States has a long history of sending students to other countries to study. At the end of the nineteenth century, colleges along the Eastern seaboard sent female students on organized group tours to learn languages and experience foreign cultures (Hoffa, 2007).

In the early years of American international programs, two primary options existed: the Junior Year Abroad (JYA), and the faculty-led study abroad program. The JYA was a popular option for students who wanted to develop cross-cultural competence and immerse themselves in a different culture. JYA programs typically lasted an academic year, and participants were directly enrolled at a foreign university or assigned an international tutor. Over several decades, the JYA became synonymous with study abroad and continues to represent the ideal of international programs in higher education today. Faculty-led study abroad programs, referred to as study tours, visited several countries, usually by train or ship (Hoffa, 2007). Study tours were the basis of the current faculty-led program model that has gained popularity at U.S. institutions over the last decade. Prior to World War I, those who studied abroad generally did so as part of academic or professional training. Most study abroad participants were graduate students who went to Europe (Walton, 2005; Hoffa, 2007). Germany, the United Kingdom, and France
accepted students from the United States to study with faculty in specialized fields such as medicine (Walton, 2005).

The Institute of International Education (IIE) was founded in 1919 and was the first national, nongovernmental, independent, non-profit organization to play a role in promoting international education and study abroad programs in the United States (Hoffa, 2007). In 1949, IIE began tracking the participation of U.S. students in study abroad. IIE continues to administer the only comprehensive, nationwide survey that tracks participation and trends in study abroad in the United States, including the participation of minority students (Sideli and Kreutzer, 2005; Hoffa, 2007; Institute of International Education). Initially, IIE was charged with developing policies and procedures to ensure the quality of JYA programs. As such, IIE played a critical role in the development and continuation of the JYA. The work of IIE was extensive and included the creation of policies on admitting international students to the United States, and it was the first organization to advocate for study abroad to become part of the undergraduate curriculum rather than an extracurricular activity (Hoffa, 2007). At its inception, study abroad programs served to provide specialized training to graduate and professional students, expose young scholars to new cultures, provide language immersion, and to foster peace and cultural understanding among nations. The founding of the IIE indicated that study abroad was becoming more important in U.S. higher education. Franklin Roosevelt’s administration promoted the importance of cross-cultural understanding and initiated an effort to internationalize higher education (Klinger, 1964). JYA and IIE were instrumental in helping institutions achieve this goal.

The U.S. Department of State became more interested in international education after World War II, believing that area and language studies and educational exchange could
positively impact U.S. diplomatic efforts and enhance the image of the United States abroad (Hoffa, 2007). During the Cold War era, the federal government became more invested in international exchange and study abroad by promoting several initiatives such as the Fulbright Program administered by IIE.

The Fulbright program was established in 1946 to create international exchange opportunities for students, scholars, and professionals. Fulbright fellowships afforded qualified American students, scholars, teachers, artists, and scientists the opportunity to study, teach, research, or work abroad, while foreign students, teachers, artists, scholars, and scientists could do the same in the United States. Fulbright fellowships were—and still are—prestigious and awarded to deserving applicants on a highly competitive basis. Today, the Fulbright remains a cornerstone of international education and an important component of the national agenda for international relations (Institute of International Education; Hoffa, 2007).

In addition to Fulbright, several other acts and initiatives were developed post World War II, including the Smith-Mundt Act (1948); the National Defense Education Act (1957); the Foreign Assistance Act, which established the Peace Corps and the U.S. Agency for International Development; and the State Department Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, which provided subsidies to establish study abroad programs in Latin America (Bu, 1999; Hoffa, 2007). In addition to IIE, the Council on International Educational Exchange (CIEE), National Association of Foreign Student Affairs (NAFSA), and the Forum on Education Abroad have formed and are providing leadership in efforts to advance study abroad in the United States. CIEE and NAFSA remain principal organizations concerned with programming, advocacy, and professional development. The Forum on Education Abroad, CIEE and NAFSA work alongside IIE to construct, develop, and revise policies, procedures, best practices, curriculum, and
As the government became more involved with the promotion of international education and exchange during the Cold War era, resources and finances were directed to those programs that aligned with U.S. foreign policy interest and political objectives (Bu, 1999). Federally-funded programs like the National Security Education Program (NSEP) and the Critical Language Scholarship program were established to provide scholarships for students who study languages and cultures considered critical for U.S. National security interests (Critical Language Scholarship Program; National Security Education Program; Hoffa, 2007; Hoffa & DePaul, 2010; Middlehurst, 2013). Both the NSEP and Critical Languages Scholarship programs still exist today.

Two trends have dominated study abroad since 1965: expanding access and fostering academic legitimation (Hoffa & DePaul, 2010). During this period, significant growth in U.S. higher education has been accompanied by the expansion of globalization. The trends created an additional rationale for study abroad: the development of cross-cultural competence in graduates so they can compete for jobs in the global workforce and economy (History and Purposes, 2010). As such, the past two decades have placed strategic importance on the internationalization of campuses and, more recently, the diversification of study abroad. Diversification efforts span many aspects of study abroad programs and include the development of new curricula and programs to attract majors who have not traditionally studied abroad, an expansion of geographic locations to include less developed and non-European countries, and an emphasis on increasing participation in underrepresented student populations including first generation students,
minorities, males, students with disabilities, and students with low socioeconomic status (History and Purposes, 2010).

**Current State of Study Abroad**

In 2000, 65 percent of U.S. universities offered study abroad programs and by 2006 this number had increased to 91 percent (Stearns, 2008). While the majority of international students come to the United States independently in order to obtain a degree, that is not generally the case for American students who study abroad. The majority of U.S. students who study abroad do so for less than one year as part of their academic degree program (Hoffa, 2007). In fact, most of the growth in international programs has been in short-term programs (IIE Open Doors, 2014). The development of these short programs (often two to six weeks in duration) create opportunities for students who are not able to spend a semester or year abroad due to academic or social commitments. Because these programs are shorter in duration, they also tend to be less expensive.

The variety and number of academic experiences available to students has greatly expanded in the past few decades. Along with the traditional JYA programs, there are multiple program types available to students today. Faculty-led programs provide American students with an opportunity to travel in a cohort with an American professor and earn academic credit from their home institution that plugs directly into the degree program without complication. Faculty-led programs are growing in popularity and are attractive to students, parents, and administrators. Students are attracted to faculty-led options for several reasons: programs are shorter in duration, students can travel with classmates and friends, and students can earn academic credit in a short amount of time. Parents appreciate that faculty-led programs are often less expensive than
traditional semester programs or third-party programs, institutional scholarships and financial aid can be applied, and they are perceived as being safer. Administrators appreciate the faculty-led model because it generates credit hours and tuition dollars. These programs also provide an opportunity for faculty to engage in international activity without high cost or a long period of absence from their regular duties.

While many universities maintain direct enroll or bilateral exchange agreements with overseas institutions and coordinate their own faculty-led programs, a group of study abroad program providers have also emerged to service the international programs industry. A program provider is “an institution or a stand-alone non-profit or for-profit entity that administers one or more education abroad programs primarily for students who are not enrolled there to pursue the primary degree” (Forum on Education Abroad). Third-party providers have allowed universities to offer more study abroad opportunities to their students without having to invest their own resources in program development and infrastructure (Johnson, Rinehart, & Van Cleve, 2005). The large majority of study abroad third-party providers are located in the Northeast of the United States, primarily in and around Boston. The typical provider model employs recruiters and assigns them to institutions by region or institution type. The third-party provider’s representatives visit campuses at various times during the year to recruit students and promote programs to faculty and study abroad staff. Some program providers also offer customized faculty-led options whereby the provider handles all the logistics, manages the risk, provides on-site support, and responds to emergencies, allowing the faculty member to focus solely on delivering the course.

**Study Abroad Participation Lagging Behind Efforts, Especially for Minorities**
According to the 2016 IIE Open Doors annual report, 313,415 American students studied abroad for academic credit in the 2014/15 academic year, representing less than a three percent increase from 2013/14. Although study abroad participation in the United States has more than tripled over the past two decades, the number of students attending college, according to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), has risen from just over 10 million to close to 20 million over the same period of time (“Fast Facts,” NCES.ed.gov). Though statistically study abroad participation has increased, enrollment has also expanded. And the number of students studying abroad is not commensurate with efforts and resources devoted to study abroad programs. Moreover, compared to students in other first-world countries, American students lag behind when it comes to international experiences.

Recognizing study abroad as a high impact activity, many universities are allocating resources to develop robust study abroad programs aimed at substantially increasing participation rates. While thirty-six U.S. campuses reported undergraduate study abroad participation rates of more than 70 percent in 2013, that number is not reflective of the majority of U.S. institutions (IIE Open Doors, 2014). The average participation rate is at an all-time high; however, it still only constitutes fewer than ten percent of U.S. undergraduate students. Despite the efforts of leadership to offer and incentivize study abroad, the proportion of students who participate is not increasing significantly (IIE, Open Doors, 2014; National Center for Education Statistics, 2014).

In addition to the only moderate increases in study abroad participation, the demographic representation of students participating in study abroad remains relatively unchanged. The female to male ratio is nearly two to one, and this figure has not changed significantly in decades. In a 2008 Inside Higher Ed article entitled “Women Abroad and Men at Home,”
Elizabeth Redden explores the gender gap between men and women in study abroad. Redden interviewed several international education experts, including William Hoffa, the author of many scholarly articles and two comprehensive histories of study abroad. Hoffa says:

Initially, the problem was perceived to be curricular, meaning the curriculum of study abroad was likely to be in the humanities, social sciences, with a strong language dimension. To the degree that women were more likely to study in those areas, and the curriculum of study abroad was in those areas, it meant men that were studying more in science and business and technologies didn’t have the curriculum overseas….however, while there’s likely still a bias toward the humanities and social sciences in study abroad, the curriculum of study abroad is actually pretty much across the spectrum these days. (Qtd in Redden, 2008).

Other research supports Hoffa’s claim. According to Redden, the National Science Foundation reports that men earn 80 percent of bachelor’s degrees in engineering. Yet, women's participation in the Global Engineering Education Exchange program ranges from 30 to 39 percent – exceeding their 20 percent representation as engineering majors (Redden, 2008). Therefore, what this statistical evidence suggests is that the gender disparity in study abroad participation is not entirely a consequence of course offerings geared toward women’s interests. The culture of study abroad also contributes.

In addition to gender inequity, study abroad participation also suffers from inequity in participation rates by race and ethnicity. Of the undergraduate students who study abroad, the large majority are female and White. In 2014, IIE reported that over 75 percent of all undergraduate study abroad students in the U.S. were White and less than six percent were African American (IIE Open Doors, 2014). Hispanic or Latino(a) students make up just over
eight percent of study abroad participants, while Asian or Pacific Islanders make up just under eight percent, and less than four percent of participants identify as multiracial. When you consider that less than ten percent of American undergraduates study abroad and of those 75 percent are White, the lack of diversity in study abroad becomes clear. (IIE Open Doors, 2014).

Another underrepresented group in study abroad is disabled students. In 2014, 273 institutions reported disability status in study abroad participation indicating that less than six percent of students at those institutions that disclosed disability status participated in study abroad programs (IIE Open Doors, 2014). Of those students who disclosed a disability, over 75 percent reported having a learning, mental, or sensory disability while less than four percent reported a physical disability (IIE Open Doors, 2014).

If the benefits of study abroad include increased student success both during college and after graduation, then institutions ought to make every effort to encourage participation in study abroad programs for all groups. As it stands, statistics show that those benefits are being accrued primarily by White, able-bodied, females. The larger implication of this phenomenon is that the purpose of study abroad is getting lost in its promotion and application. Universities and program providers are making money, and professors and students get to benefit intellectually and socially from foreign travel, but diverse groups of students aren’t having immersive, enriching study abroad experiences.

There are a number of other issues facing study abroad participation in higher education. One of the chief issues is that there’s not much diversity in the locations where students study abroad. Students continue to predominately attend programs in Europe, with the United Kingdom, Italy, Spain, and France constituting the top four locations. European countries host
over half of all U.S. study abroad students. China ranks fifth in destinations with less than five percent of the total population of study abroad students. (IIE Open Doors, 2014).

Considering the proximately of Latin American and the fact that the region makes up between 20 and 25 percent of total U.S. trade, student mobility and exchange with those countries is important (ustr.gov). Additionally, China is currently the largest, single nation trading partner with the United States with $598 billion in total goods traded during 2015 (ustr.gov). Considering our relationship with the Chinese, U.S. university graduates would benefit from the kind of cultural immersion and understanding that a study abroad program in China could provide for them.

National Study Abroad Initiatives

In 2005, the Congress appointed The Lincoln Commission to examine the idea of significantly increasing the number of Americans studying abroad. The impetus of the Commission was the vision and work of the late Senator Paul Simon from Illinois, who wanted “millions of American undergraduates studying abroad and carrying the name and values of Abraham Lincoln with them” (NAFSA). The Lincoln Commission report detailed the state of study abroad, identified the challenges ahead, and offered recommendations for a national undergraduate study abroad fellowship program designed to increase and diversify study abroad participation in the United States (NAFSA). The goals of what is known as the Senator Paul Simon Study Abroad Fellowship Act were to:

1. Create a more globally informed American citizenry.
2. Increase participation in quality study abroad programs.
3. Encourage diversity in student participation in study abroad.
4. Diversify locations of study abroad, particularly in developing countries.

5. Create an innovative partnership with higher education to open more doors for study abroad.

6. Internationalize U.S. higher education by making study abroad a cornerstone of undergraduate education.

The Senator Paul Simon Study Abroad Program Act was introduced in the Senate by Democratic Senator Richard Durbin from Illinois and Republican Senator Roger Wicker from Mississippi. It has passed the House of Representatives in two previous Congresses and has robust bipartisan support (NAFSA). Following the Lincoln Commission Report, the U.S. Senate issued a resolution designating 2006 as the Year of Study Abroad in recognition of the national benefits of American participation in study abroad. The resolution was intended to raise global awareness and to help increase the number of U.S. students studying abroad.

In addition to the Simon Act, President Obama’s administration has called for an increase in international exchange and study abroad. In November 2009, President Obama announced the first “100,000 Strong” initiative, in recognition of the strategic importance of U.S.-China relations. The initiative is designed to increase the number and diversity of American college students studying in China. In support of the initiative, the Chinese government committed to providing 10,000 “Bridge Scholarships” for American students. Following the initial program in China, President Barack Obama launched the “100,000 Strong Partnerships of the Americas” in March of 2011 with the goal of increasing the number of U.S. students studying in Latin America and the Caribbean by 100,000 by 2020. The aim of the initiative is to increase prosperity and to provide opportunities for students to be better prepared, globally aware, and culturally competent (“100,000 Strong,” 2012). To support the “100,000 Strong” initiative and
promote transnational institutional partnerships, the President established an Innovation Fund through a public-private partnership between NAFSA, the U.S. Department of State, and Partners of the Americas. (”100,000 Strong, 2012; NAFSA.org).

In response to the national focus on increasing study abroad participation, the Institute of International Education (IIE) launched Generation Study Abroad in March 2014. The five-year initiative aims to double the number of American university students who study abroad by 2020. Currently, there are 700 Generation Study Abroad partners worldwide, of which 400 are U.S. universities and colleges (iie.org). IIE has supported the Generation Study Abroad commitment with $2 million and has actively raised funds to provide scholarships to students and grants to institutions.

In March 2015, Assistant Secretary of State Evan Ryan announced in her plenary remarks at The Forum on Education Abroad Annual Conference the creation of a Study Abroad Branch within the U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. Secretary Ryan said, “We lag behind other countries in student mobility to our detriment. We want to make sure the future leaders of our country are international and globally competent” (Forum on Education Abroad transcript). The study abroad office is housed within the Global Educational Programs in the State Department’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs which oversees the Open Doors Report and EducationUSA.

**Benefits and Perception of Study Abroad in Higher Education**

The immediate and long-term effects of engaging in study abroad have been documented through qualitative and quantitative methods. The first large-scale survey to explore the long-term impact of study abroad on a student's personal, professional, and academic experience was
conducted by the Institute of International Education of Students (IES Abroad). The survey included data from 3,400 respondents, all alumni of IES programs from 1950 to 1999. The data collected show that study abroad positively influences the careers, world-view, and self-confidence of students. Approximately 97 percent of respondents indicated that studying abroad increased their level of maturity, 95 percent said that it has had a lasting and positive impact on their worldview, 96 percent stated that it increased their self-confidence, and 89 percent said it made them more tolerable of ambiguity. Over 50 percent reported that they are still in contact with friends they met while studying abroad, and 73 percent said the experience continues to influence the decisions they make in present lives. Ninety percent said that the experience influenced them to seek out a greater diversity of friends, and 98 percent said that study abroad helped them to better understand their own cultural biases. When asked about academic pursuits, 87 percent of respondents reported that their study abroad experience influenced subsequent educational experiences, and 64 percent reported their decision to attend graduate school was impacted by their study abroad program. Interestingly, nearly half of all respondents reported volunteering or working internationally since studying abroad (Dwyer, 2004).

There are multiple types of study abroad programs. Long-term programs, usually exchange or direct enroll programs, last for an entire semester or a full academic year. Short-term programs are generally offered in the summer semester and can be led by the home institution’s faculty. Research indicates that longer programs allow for greater student development in areas such as language proficiency, cross-cultural awareness, and self-understanding (Engle & Engle, 2003; Ingraham & Peterson, 2004; Medina-Lopez-Portillo, 2004). However, it has been demonstrated through qualitative and quantitative research that students who return from short-term study abroad programs experience similar development in
these areas (Christie & Ragans, 1999; Lewis & Niesenbaum, 2005, Black & Duhon, 2006). Both
program types are beneficial to students and provide a context for intercultural learning and
competence (Black & Duhon, 2006).

The outcome of study abroad for each student is dependent on the individual, the nature
of the program, and the experience itself (ASHE Higher Education Report). Each of these
variables contributes equally to the overall experience of each participant. Thus, providing
opportunities that are interesting and appropriate to a diverse group of students is essential to the
growth and success of study abroad as a whole.

Hoffa and DePaul (2010) suggest four primary reasons institutions provide and promote
study abroad to their students. These reasons are, “the curriculum argument, the cross-cultural
argument, the career enhancement argument, and the development argument” (p.8). The
curriculum argument supports study abroad as a way to enhance the academic content of the
degree by exposing students to cultures and systems that differ from those on their home campus.
The curriculum argument supports alternative approaches to standard classroom learning such as
immersion programs for language acquisition. The cross-cultural argument contends that study
abroad is a way for students to experience other cultures and provides them with a new lens with
which to view their own culture. The career-enhancement rationale upholds the belief that
students who participate in study abroad develop skills that employers value such as learning to
work in ambiguous and diverse environments. Lastly, the student development rationale
subscribes to the theory that study abroad develops the whole person and participants benefit
from intercultural, social, emotional, and intellectual growth. (Hoffa & DePaul, 2010). From
these benefits of international engagement, it is apparent that, in order to sustain the U.S.’s
position of influence, respect, and power in the world, a multiculturally adept citizenry is essential.

The four rationales for study abroad often overlap and can work at cross purposes to justify study abroad as a serious academic endeavor. Regardless, researchers have demonstrated that study abroad is a valuable experience with measurable benefits to its participants (Younce & Assay, 2003; Kuh et al., 2005; Black & Duhon, 2006, Rust et al. 2008, Lou & Jamieson-Drake, 2015). Thus, the emphasis on and support of study abroad is evident at the federal and institutional level.

Study abroad is also a means of engaging students in a way that will sustain not only their academic learning, cultural literacy and personal growth, but will connect them to their university experience. Researchers have determined that student involvement in study abroad increases the likelihood that a student will graduate (Kuh et al., 2005; Rust et al. 2008; Luo & Jamieson-Drake, 2015). Research shows that when students participate fully in their education and invest in activities that are engaging, they become more involved and committed to their degree program (Kuh et al., 2005; Rust et al., 2008; Luo & Jamieson-Drake, 2015). Study abroad participation immerses students in cultural and academic learning and contributes to student engagement in academic and extracurricular activities and degree completion (Kuh et al., 2005; Rust et al., 2008; Luo & Jamieson-Drake, 2015).

Study abroad participation is a positive experience that substantially increases a student’s understanding of and sensitivity toward other cultures. It inspires a sense of confidence and independence and enhances the overall academic achievement and personal development of its participants. Using the Cross-Cultural Adaptability Inventory test, Kitsantas and Myers (2002) conducted a pre- and post-test study to assess the impact of study abroad programs on
participants. Kitsanas and Myers found that students who study abroad have higher test scores in the dimensions of emotional resilience, flexibility and openness, perceptual acuity, and personal autonomy after their study abroad experience than do students who did not study abroad (Kitsantas and Myers, 2002).

According to a study conducted by McLeod and Wainwright (2009) to explore Social Learning Theory and its relation to study abroad, students who studied abroad experienced both successful and stressful events during their overseas experience, both of which led to intellectual, social, and emotional development.

Successful events led to an increase in student self-confidence, and changes to their self-perception and the world around them. On the other hand, stressful events such as feeling discomfort due to a cultural disconnect or language barrier, can lead to self-awareness, increased empathy, and maturity, as well as intellectual and emotional growth. This research confirms that students who study abroad have both negative and positive experiences and that those experiences help students develop increased self-confidence and respect for difference (McLeod and Wainwright, 2009).

Earlier research on student study abroad experiences found that students experienced the growth in the following areas: appreciation and understanding of other cultures, independence and maturity level, self-awareness, increased tolerance for different ideas and people, and interpersonal skills (Cash, 1993). Additional research has shown that students who study abroad also return home with an increased desire to travel overseas again, a heightened interest in new subjects and foreign languages, an increased awareness and openness to diversity, and an appreciation for global engagement and international understanding (Douglas & Jones- Rikkers, 2001; Wortman, 2002; Younes & Asay, 2003; Fernandez, 2006). Students who study abroad also
show significant improvements in global knowledge and cross-cultural adaptability, which includes flexibility/openness, emotional resilience, perceptual acuity, and personal autonomy (Mukherjee, 2012; Hadis, 2005; Kitsantas, 2004). All of these benefits are important to students as they navigate an increasingly diverse and interconnected world where their ability to understand, appreciate, and communicate with people of different cultural values and customs is essential to their success.

The benefits of a study abroad experience are well-documented. The most respected and credible extant research shows that participation in study abroad programs is integral to the mission of most higher education institutions to help students develop knowledge about their world and their place in it.

It is easy to see the role that study abroad programming plays for college students and the institutions themselves. Given the importance of study abroad in student development and for the institutions themselves, why can’t institutions more effectively expand the reach of study abroad programs? There is much more to be considered from an administrative standpoint in order to insure that all students are afforded the opportunity to participate in these beneficial experiences. It is one thing to understand the importance of study abroad program participation; however, we must also learn how to create a culture that fosters this type of activity for all students.

**Diversity of Program Type and Location in Study Abroad**

Study abroad options are typically categorized by four program types. Researchers have identified the four basic models of programs: Island, Integrated, Hybrid, and Field-study programs (Brockington, Hoffa, & Martin, 2005).
1 Island Programs: Students participating in island programs study outside the borders of the U.S. alongside other American students. Island programs are typically sponsored by U.S. universities or third-party providers, who develop a curriculum specifically for American students.

2 Integrated Programs: Integrated programs allow students to enroll directly in courses alongside local students at a host university. Integrated program sponsors may provide additional services, such as assistance with course registration and language tutoring.

3 Hybrid Programs: Hybrid programs combine elements of both island and integrated programs. Students can take a portion of their coursework at a host university and the remainder under the direction of an American professor.

4 Field-based Study Abroad Programs: Field-based programs for academic credit are less structured and generally involve a thematic focus, field study training, and an independent study project.

Although these four program models account for the majority of study abroad programs, it is possible for these models to be combined to create multiple options for students (Norris and Dwyer, 2005).

While various types of programs exist from which students can choose, the majority of U.S. students choose to participate in short-term, island programs. According to Open Doors Report published by the Institute of International Education, in 2014/15 over 63% of students studied abroad for less than eight weeks, while just 2.5% did so for an academic or calendar year (IIE, Open Doors, 2016). The growth of short-term programs has been rapid. In 2008/09, just 54.6% of students participated in a program lasting less than eight weeks. Most students seek short-term programs for their study abroad experience.
And they are choosing to go to a select few countries. The destinations for students in study abroad programs over the same period has remained static. Over half (54.5 percent) of students who chose to study abroad in 2015 traveled to Western Europe in four countries, the United Kingdom, Italy, Spain, and France (IIE Open Doors, 2016). The United Kingdom hosted 12.2 percent of American students, representing the most of any country. Because the UK is culturally similar to the US and there is no language barrier, the choice to study there can be more palatable for students and parents alike. According to the National Geographic-Roper Public Affairs 2006 Geographic Literacy Study, students in the U.S. assume that English is the most widely spoken language in the world, and 38 percent of students thought that exposure to another language “was not too important” when choosing a study abroad program. The Modern Language Association (MLA) has conducted regular surveys and analyses of foreign language enrollments in institutions of higher education across the United States. Since the survey began in 1961, enrollment in foreign language classes has remained at roughly 8 percent of registered students, which means that approximately 92 percent of American college students are not studying any World Language (Wang, Jackson, Mana, Liau, & Evans, 2010). The lack of interest among US university students in the study of other languages is reflected in their study abroad locations.

Students who study abroad almost always report experiencing personal, social, cultural and academic enrichment as a result of their participation in study abroad programs. But what these studies reveal is that perhaps most American students do not see the value the study abroad experience as much as the institution, or as much as their fellow students who have had the experience. Moreover, efforts to expand study abroad programs to destinations outside the West and to recruit a more diverse pool of students have not yielded significant results. Thus, even
many students who do study abroad do not do so for reasons that align with the goals of study abroad.

The lack of diversity in program choice and location reflects the demographic of the American study abroad student. While White students represent 58 percent of enrolled students in U.S. universities and colleges, they make up 74 percent of study abroad participants (IIE Open Doors, 2017). In 2015/16, 28 percent of study abroad students identified as a member of an underrepresented racial or ethnic group. Black students comprise 14 percent of undergraduate enrollment in U.S. universities, but only six percent of study abroad participants. (U.S. Department of Education, 2017). Hispanic students are the fastest growing population of U.S. undergraduates at 19 percent of undergraduate enrollment, yet the account for only ten percent of study abroad participants (IIE Open Doors, 2017).

Research shows that the absence of relevant study abroad programs for non-White students or students from culturally diverse backgrounds contributes to low study abroad participation rates by those students (Jenkins, 2002; Brux and Fry, 2010). Jenkins (2002) spoke to the benefits of studying abroad in ‘nontraditional’ locations, saying, “These nontraditional study abroad destinations can reveal the global interconnectedness of problems once thought to be local” (p. 50).

Diversity of Study Abroad Participants

Intent to Study Abroad

Determining why some students study abroad and others do not is the key to increasing the number and diversity of study abroad participants. Current research looks at the factors that influence study abroad intent as a way to determine what causes some college students to study
abroad and others not to study abroad.  Research shows a large discrepancy in intent and participation by race, gender, and major (Desoff, 2006; Salisbury et al., 2009, 2010; Stroud, 2010, Luo, & Jamieson-Drake 2015). Examining the factors that contribute to study abroad intent provides information on why some students view study abroad as a possibility and others do not consider it at all. Race, gender, major, and ethnicity are factors that impact student intent to study abroad and studies show that there are many differences between whites and minorities and study abroad intent (Salisbury et al 2009, 2011; Stroud 2010). Females are also more likely to intend to study abroad than males (Salisbury et al, 2009, 2010; Stroud, 2010; Luo & Jamieson-Drake, 2015).

Socioeconomic status also contributes to study abroad intent. Salisbury et al. determined that white students from privileged socioeconomic backgrounds had higher odds of intending to study abroad, and students of all racial and ethnic backgrounds from lower socioeconomic backgrounds and those who receive federal grants had lower odds of intending to study abroad (2009, 2010). Further, they found that across all racial, ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds, study abroad intent was less for males than for females.

A wide range of complicating issues influence students’ intent to study abroad, and study abroad intent is not always a predictor of participation. Luo & Jamieson-Drake (2015) found that African-American students exhibited the same level of interest in study abroad as their Caucasian peers, but family and financial constraints may have prevented them from pursuing a study abroad experience or ultimately participating (2015). These findings differ from previous research on intent that indicated that African-American students have lower intent to study abroad during their college years (Salisbury et al., 2009, 2010, 2011; Stroud, 2010). Salisbury et al. (2011) suggest that study abroad participation may appear to African-American students as an
endeavor that will expose them to stereotyping. Because study abroad is rarely a required part of the curriculum, African-American students may be more likely to decline the opportunity even when presented with incentives (p.145). Salisbury et al. (2011) point out that recent—albeit limited—qualitative research (Kasravi, 2009) that examines the challenges faced by minority students abroad found that they encountered negative stereotyping from their own community while considering a study abroad experience. These studies (Salisbury et al., 2011; Kasravi, 2009) utilize the Student Choice Construct and demonstrate the diversity of decision-making patterns for diverse student groups that contribute to study abroad intent and provide additional evidence for continuing to study distinct student groups separately and in their specific contexts.

**Women in Study Abroad**

Research shows that being female, attending school more than 100 miles away from home, living on campus, and having an interest in other cultures have a positive influence on study abroad intent (Stroud, 2010). Students who intended to major in engineering or professional programs such as architecture, medicine, nursing, or physical therapy do not tend to have a strong intent to study abroad (Desoff, 2006; Salisbury et al, 2009, 2010; Stroud, 2010). Existing research provides some insight into student intent to study abroad and the important factors to consider when constructing initiatives that encourage participation; however, additional research is especially important when considering what causes a student who intends to participate in study abroad not to follow through and do so.

While study abroad may have once been perceived as the pursuit of well-to-do women, a tour conducted with safety in numbers as opposed to an academic endeavor, and an inferior academic experience overall (Gore, 2005; Hoffa, 2007), it is now highly regarded as an
important—if not essential—component to an undergraduate education. As a result, study abroad participation has grown—albeit not at rates that reflect increasing enrollments and institutional emphasis; however, the percentage of male students participating programs abroad has not increased significantly (IIE, 2013).

Despite efforts to grow study abroad in numbers and diversity, the female to male ratio has remained two to one for a decade. According to the Institute of International Education Open Doors statistics, the overall number of Americans studying abroad for credit has more than doubled in 15 years, but the percentage that study abroad before graduating is still under 10 percent and, of those, approximately 66 percent are female (2013). Salisbury et al. (2010) conducted a study to explore the gender gap in intent to study abroad and to analyze what aspects of human, financial, social, and cultural capital acquired either prior to or while in college that affect male and female intent to study abroad differently. Their study showed that intent to study abroad was higher for females than for males and that gender differences play an important role in shaping the ways females and males develop interest in studying abroad (Salisbury et al., 2010).

In a December 4, 2008, article from the electronic journal Inside Higher Education entitled “Women Abroad and Men at Home”, Elizabeth Redden examined the gender gap between men and women in study abroad. Redden interviewed several international education experts, including William Hoffa, the author of many scholarly articles and two comprehensive histories of study abroad. Hoffa explained:

Initially, the problem was perceived to be curricular, meaning the curriculum of study abroad was likely to be in the humanities, social sciences, with a strong language dimension. To the degree that women were more likely to study in those
areas, and the curriculum of study abroad was in those areas, it meant men that were studying more in science and business and technologies didn’t have the curriculum overseas….however, while there’s likely still a bias toward the humanities and social sciences in study abroad, the curriculum of study abroad is actually pretty much across the spectrum these days (Redden, 2008).

According to Redden, the National Science Foundation reports that men earn 80% of bachelor's degrees in engineering. However, women's participation in the Global Engineering Education Exchange program ranges from 30 to 39% – exceeding their 20% representation as engineering majors (Redden, 2008). This suggests that the theory about curriculum didn’t fully explain the gender differences in study abroad participation.

Though women did not receive access to institutional education until much later than men, they currently makeup the majority of undergraduate students in the United States and receive more postgraduate degrees than men (Almanac of Higher Education, 2014). Women in the Global Economy: Leading Social Change, published by Institute of International Education in 2013, explores the role of women in society and economic growth. The book concludes that the influence of women is critical to social change and economic development. It identifies the influence of international exchange programs in contributing to the increasing numbers of women in leadership positions around the world and argues that these experiences foster the kind of cross-cultural sensitivity necessary to be an agent for social and political change, as well as successful leadership (Tierney, 2013).
Minority Students in Study Abroad

I have introduced studies showing that student involvement in activities like study abroad increases the likelihood that a student will graduate (Kuh, Kinzie, Schuh, Whitt, & Associates, 2005). The studies show that when students participate fully in their education and invest in activities that are engaging, they become more involved and committed to their degree program. Thus, universities are investing in programs and activities that add value and engagement to the student’s university experience. Current research demonstrates that study abroad participation contributes to student engagement and degree completion (Kuh et al., 2005). However, minority students, who have the highest risk of leaving the university before graduation, do not participate in study abroad at the same rate as White students.

African-Americans have a long-established history of pursuing education abroad. This history began with black Americans who traveled outside of the United States for opportunities and that were not available to them in the United States. Among the most prominent Americans to study abroad in the nineteenth century was W. E. B. Du Bois, African American scholar and leader, who studied in Germany during the early 20th century (Beck, 1996; Evans, 2011). Early African Americans who traveled to the United Kingdom and continental Europe did not experience the discrimination that was typical in the United States; they were readily able to access public spaces and utilize public transportation without restrictions to certain areas and felt that they were no longer defined by race or subject to discrimination (Beck, 1996; Evans, 2011; Pryor, 2008). These travelers used their experiences abroad “as evidence of the arbitrariness of racial degradation back home” (Pryor, 2008, p. 11) and critiqued racism in the United States (Evans, 2011).
However, the history of African Americans pursuing higher education abroad has not translated to active participation in study abroad programs. Of the ten percent of undergraduate students enrolled in U.S. institutions of higher education who study abroad, the large majority are white. The Institute of International Education reported that over 78 percent of all undergraduate study abroad students in the United States were white and less than five percent were African American (IIE Open Doors, 2011). Many of the existing research on study abroad intent and participation is specific to data from primarily white, homogenous institutions (Jaoka, 2010; Salisbury et al, 2009, 2010, 2011; Stroud, 2010). Salisbury et al. (2011) examined the choice process of study abroad, and found many factors, including aspects of human, financial, cultural, and social capital that influenced the intent to study abroad in different ways for the four racial/ethnic groups considered in their study. For example, as ACT scores increased for African American students, the likelihood to intend to study abroad decreased, which was not the case for White, Asian American, or Hispanic/Latino students (Salisbury et al., 2011). Aspirations to a graduate degree increased the likelihood of study abroad intent for African American and Asian American students, but reduced the likelihood of study abroad intent for White students (Salisbury et al., 2011). These findings illustrate the importance of not using white as the assumed norm.

Low numbers of minority participation have sparked accusations of systematic racism in study abroad offices and faculty who lead study abroad programs. The accusation of racial discrimination in study abroad consists of three primary factors: financial barriers, institutional discrimination, and cultural perspectives (Dessoff, 2006). In America, minority status intersects with low socio-economic status at a higher rate than for Caucasians, so it is not a surprise that financial concerns create a barrier for minority students when it comes to participation in study
abroad programs (Dessoff, 2006). While the financial barrier is a profound problem, legislation like the Simon Act is aimed at providing funding to help students go abroad, minority students in particular. The legislation calls for an increase in the number of minority students who study abroad to accurately reflect the demographics of college enrollment and of the U.S. population (Lantos, 2007).

Charges of institutional racial discrimination in study abroad stem from the upper middle class, white history of study abroad. This history has led to a situation in the field that caters to a mostly white audience in course offerings and program location, which is consistent with the design of the American social structure. Since whites have enjoyed a position of privilege throughout America’s history, institutions and systems arise and develop in ways that meet their needs and desires. Study abroad programs are not exception.

With this in mind, studies on how such systems and institutions only serve certain demographic groups are a welcomed addition to attempts to understand the lack of diversity in study abroad program destinations and participants. These studies also suggest how the lack of diversity in study abroad can be addressed. Recent studies have shown the importance of cultural programming and diversification of geographic destinations to make study abroad more appealing and interesting to minority students (Brux and Fry, 2010). Minority students are interested in going to places that they can connect to and that speaks to their history. There has been some success in developing programs that respond to their interests. While Europe continues to host more than 50 percent of American study abroad students, Latin American now host 16 percent of students followed by Asia at 11.1 percent, Oceania at 4.2 percent, and Sub-Saharan Africa at 3.9 percent (IIE Open Doors, 2017).
African American students indicate that lack of funds, family support mentors, and previous travel experience prevents them from engaging in a study abroad experience (Jackson, 2005; Salisbury et al., 2009). Fear of delaying graduation and the possibility of racism abroad also contribute to African American students’ hesitation to pursue international program opportunities (Jackson, 2005; Simon, 2007, Salisbury et al., 2011).

Underrepresentation of black students in study abroad is an issue of equal access and opportunity in higher education. Students who do not study abroad are missing out on exposure to other ways of thinking present in other cultures, as well as educational and career opportunities provided to students who do study abroad. Study abroad programs give university students an opportunity to develop critical thinking skills that are important in today’s interconnected world and students who do not participate may not be as competitive as their peers who have taken advantage of studying abroad.

Expanding the range of study abroad destinations doesn’t merely benefit minorities, but institutions of higher education, and society as a whole. The underrepresentation of African Americans in study abroad may also have consequences for institutions, employers, and international relations (Lebold et al., 2005). The private and public enterprise of the U.S. economy needs a globally prepared workforce that is diverse and representative of the population (Wilson-Oyelaran, 2007; Movassaghi, Unsal, & Gocer, 2014). And a country that proclaims to value fairness and opportunity for all ought to work to make its values a reality.

Existing research in study abroad on minority students focuses more on access than anything else. Many articles on minority participation in study abroad are not research-based and offer “casual anecdotal evidence” (Salisbury et al, 2011, p. 125); however, it is important to consider these works, as they influence the conversations and practices in the study abroad
professional. To make study abroad reflect the diversity of university enrollments and, more importantly, American society, transformational change must occur.

**Organizations and Transformational Change**

Organizations are complex environments shaped by internal and external forces (Bess & Dee, 2012). As such, they are often resistant to change and averse to uncertain conditions. Higher education has long been criticized as unresponsive to the external environment and slow to embrace change. Research shows that institutions of higher education are inward looking organizations and, as such, fail to acknowledge feedback that could positively impact the reputation, performance, and contribution of the organization (Tierney, 1992, Keller, 1993). Yet, American higher education has a history of evidence that institutional missions, goals, values, and programs change over time (Brint et al., 2005; Hartley, 2003; Hartley & Schall, 2005). Certain educational values gain favor during particular periods, and institutions may be called upon to redefine their purpose (Hartley & Schall, 2005). Even the missions of the most successful universities must adapt with changing demographics and environments (Hartley, 2003; Hartely & Schall, 2005).

**Organizational Culture**

In order for institutions to embrace the changing demographic of the nation and create equal opportunity and access for all students, transformational change must occur. Transformational change is intentional and permeates the culture of the institution (Eckel & Kezar, 2002). Merriam Webster defines culture as, “the customary beliefs, social forms, and material traits of a racial, religious, or social group; also: the characteristic features of everyday
existence (such as diversions or a way of life) shared by people in a place or time; the set of
shared attitudes, values, goals, and practices that characterizes an institution or organization.”
Pettigrew (1979) defines culture as, “the system of …publicly and collectively accepted
meanings operating for a given group at a given time. This system of terms, forms, categories,
and images interprets a people’s own situation to themselves” (p.574). The culture of an
academic institution is a value statement. Through traditions, symbols, and rituals, it
communicates the importance or significance of particular ideas or behaviors (Bess & Dee,
2012). Edgar Schein (1992) suggests that organizational culture exist on three levels which he
calls artifacts, values, and basic assumptions. Artifacts are observable and include the physical
environment, social environment, technology, the written and spoken language, overt behavior,
and symbols. Much of what we see at the surface of the organization is, according to Schein, an
artifact of culture. The values and assumptions of culture are beneath the surface. Values and
assumptions, “exist as inferences about how people within the organization feel and believe and
the assumptions on which those feelings and beliefs are based” (Bess & Dees, 2012, p.365).
Values reflect people’s feelings about or towards other persons, things, or actions. Assumptions
are a deep and unconscious dimension of culture that guide behavior. For example, if an
organization values a culture that is more conservative and traditional, it may promote those
ideals by supporting programming and people who demonstrate those beliefs. According to
Schein (1992) each component of his framework has a significant effect on organizational life in
colleges and universities.

Organizational culture plays a critical role in the way an institute develops and changes.
According to Eckel, Hill & Green (1998), organizational culture is one of the four elements of
planned change. They state that transformation at an institutional level: “alters the culture of the
institution by changing select underlying assumptions and institutional behaviors, processes, and products; is deep and pervasive, affecting the whole institution; is intentional; and occurs over time” (p. 3). Case studies of institutions engaging in transformation efforts (Kezar & Eckel, 2000) indicate that organizational culture can inhibit or facilitate transformation, depending on the fit between the existing culture and the planned change. Kezar (2001) stated that “…higher education environments differ from other organizations that are highly vulnerable to the external environment” (p. 81); therefore, identifying appropriate models of change is crucial to successful and transformational change.

In a study by Eckel and Kezar (2002) of institutions undertaking change initiatives, they identified five core strategies of transformational change: senior administrative support, collaborative leadership, flexible vision, faculty and staff development, and visible action. As institutions attempt to advance diversity, applying these core strategies may promote a comprehensive approach to changes that result in institutional transformation. The importance of administrative support, collaboration, flexibility, and faculty and staff development have been examined by several scholars; however, providing visible action and meaning to these change strategies can guide institutions and programs through the transformation of institutional culture. Kezar and Eckel’s model of transformational change provides a lens with which to view and understand how institutional people, practices, and policies support or inhibit transformational change in study abroad programs.

Organizational Change

Organizational change within a university is often complex. According to Kezar and Eckel (2002), there are six primary categories of theories relating to change: teleological,
biological, political, lifecycle, social cognition, and cultural. In this study, I chose to apply a cultural framework. The cultural framework is most appropriate for analyzing and understanding change in a higher education environment (Merriam, 2009; Kuh & Whit, 1988; Tierney, 1988). In an effort to expand internationalization, the cultural framework can make the commitment to achieving the kind of diversity in study abroad participation that reflects the enrollment of the institution and the diversity of America much more comprehensive.

Olson (2005) states that if internationalization is truly comprehensive it will be “broad and deep” and “transformational change” will occur (p. 67). In other words, the entire institution would address and remedy all the factors that restrict access to internationalization and would encourage and support efforts such as internationalization of the curriculum across disciplines. The institution would also embrace increasing diversity and the diversity of participation in study abroad. These changes would signify transformational change with regards to changing the culture to support internationalization and diversity initiatives.

So far, however, despite efforts to increase diversity participation in study abroad, transformational change has not occurred. It is important to identify the reasons that inhibit transformational change so that it can occur. Lewis (2000) found that problems of communication surrounding the message of change and the vision of the proposed change play a part in the failure of an institution to enact change. These problems of communication could be in the content or delivery of messaging, mitigated messages that reflect a less than total commitment on the part of the institution to create change, conflicting messages, or inconsistency between words and actions.

What, then, do institutions need to do to make transformational change happen? Institutions must fully commit to changing their culture and stay committed to change. Lewis
suggest that there are five elements that keep an organization committed to change: “creating vision, maintaining buy-in to mission, sense-making and feedback, establishing legitimacy, and communication goal achievement” (Lewis, 2000, p. 151). According to Lewis (2000), opportunities for constituents to provide input and feedback are critical to garnering support and suppressing resistance.

**Conclusion**

Internationalization in American higher education is increasingly at the center of a majority of institutional strategic plans. Internationalization is one aspect of diversity. University graduates will work and live in a global society that requires them to be comfortable with diversity and familiar with cultures other than their own. As such, institutions must be inclusive in their approach to internationalization and consider how diversity initiatives impact the success of their efforts at internationalization.

Study abroad is one way to increase internationalization, as it prepares students to be leaders in a global society. Existing research in study abroad on minority students focuses more on access than anything else. Many articles on minority participation in study abroad are not research-based and offer “casual anecdotal evidence” (Salisbury et al, 2011, p. 125). Therefore, it is important to carefully and critically consider these texts, as they influence the conversations and practices in the study abroad profession. Salisbury et al. (2009) noted that “Surprisingly, almost no empirical research has explored the potential interaction of factors that affect intent to study abroad” (p. 121). This interaction of factors that impede access for minority students and prohibit them from benefiting from the study abroad experience must be explored if efforts to increase diversity in study abroad are more than lip service. The lack of research suggests that
international educators may tend to assume that what is true for White students is also true for non-White students.

Existing studies are limited by small sample size and the narrow sampling of student data from highly selective, private, universities (Black & Duhon, 2006; Luo & Jamieson-Drake, 2015). Relatively few studies have used race and ethnicity as variables when examining study abroad access or outcomes. The limited studies that have disaggregated results by race and ethnicity have discovered differences among racial/ethnic groups in factors that impact study abroad participation, intent to study abroad (Stroud, 2010; Salisbury et al., 2011), and the influence of study abroad on graduation rates. To best serve all students, we must examine their experiences both individually and collectively (Tuitt, 2009; Salisbury et al. 2009, 2010, 2011). When reviewed in the context of the results of studies conducted by Salisbury et al. (2009, 2010, 2011), it becomes evident that increasing diversity in study abroad participation requires a targeted approach to each diverse group of students. To fully understand why some students study abroad and others—particularly from minority groups—do not, additional research on student participation abroad needs to be conducted.
CHAPTER THREE

METHODS

Chapter one provides a context for this study, reviewing important historical data and background information and introducing the research study. Chapter two reviews the current research relevant to the research study. This chapter explains and provides a rationale for the methodological design of this research study. First, this chapter provides an overview of the goal and overarching questions guiding the study. Next, the chapter summarizes the rationale and purpose of the study, the research design, and site selection. Finally, the chapter outlines the data collection methods and data analysis.

Purpose of the Study and Rationale

The purpose of this study is to illustrate how institutional culture supports or inhibits diversity in study abroad programs in order to make recommendations on how to increase diversity participation in study abroad. More broadly, this dissertation seeks to explore how diversity initiatives on campus contribute widely to study abroad programs at one large, public research institution in the South.

Interviews were conducted with 20 individuals who either 1) work in higher education administration at the targeted institution 2) are faculty who lead study abroad programs at the targeted institution. This study will be conducted using a qualitative research methodology and an exploratory single case study design. Interviews will be the primary source of data collection.
Interviews will be semi-structured, and guided by an interview protocol. Data will also be collected from document analysis.

**Restatement of the Research Questions**

The following research questions shape the focus and direction of this study:

1. Why, despite the self-awareness of their inadequacy in extending programming opportunities to minorities and efforts to correct it, has diversity participation in study abroad at the case-study institution not increased significantly?

2. Is the failure to significantly increase diversity participation in study abroad reflective of larger institutional shortcomings in expanding opportunities to traditionally underserved student populations?

3. To what extent does the institution’s culture support or inhibit the kind of transformational change that would increase access to programming for diverse student populations?

4. What can this institution—and, by extension—all institutions of higher learning—do to improve diversity participation in study abroad and other programming?

To accomplish these goals and answer the research questions, I conducted a qualitative, single-case study which evaluates one institution’s study abroad programs, considers the institutions organizational culture alongside the factors required for transformational change, and explores the application of the change strategy to a number of diversity issues in the field of study abroad. For this study, qualitative research is most appropriate because it allows the researcher to explore a phenomenon in context using data gathered from a variety of sources.
(Creswell, 2012; Yin, 2003). A case study design can be utilized when the goal of the study is to answer how and why questions and when contextual conditions are relevant to the phenomenon of the study.

Quantitative analysis, on the other hand, would be less effective in a study with these aims. With a growing emphasis on diversity in U.S. higher education, as well as a changing demographic profile of the American college student and the important dialogue around race and inclusion taking place on college campuses, there is a decisive need to identify ways in which institutions can embrace diversity. What is required to drastically alter institutions and programs? Why is it challenging for higher education to change and become a more inclusive? These questions may be answered through an examination of a cross section of higher education to identify programs and strategies aimed at diversification. Examining the value and perception of diversity on a college campus or within a given program is not something that lends itself to quantitative analysis. An organization’s emphasis on diversity and evidence of transformational change are best measured by the experiences of those within the organization (Eckel & Kezar, 2002). Further, identifying what strategies are successful in creating transformational change is best-suited by an analysis of a variety of sources. A qualitative approach emphasizes the qualities of entities, processes and meanings that are not experimentally examined or measured in terms of quantity, amount, intensity or frequency (Denzin & Lincoln 2000, p.8).

For this study, I define diversity to include a race, gender, socioeconomic status, and level of preparedness; and more broadly to describe the homologous types and geographic locations of study abroad programs. The overarching goals of this study are: to consider if universities value diversity; to consider if study abroad is a program that values diversity; to better understand if the lack of diversity in study abroad stems from the culture of higher education; to illustrate how
institutional people, policies, and practices support or inhibit transformational change; to consider if a university’s study abroad program can positively contribute to diversity on campuses, thereby achieving a broader representation of students and faculty in the field of study abroad.

**Significance of the Study**

This study is significant for several reasons. Study abroad is viewed as a catalyst for graduating a more informed and engaged citizenry; If we are only providing a few students with beneficial opportunities that will positively contribute to their education and their future, what does that mean for the future of our society and for the role higher education plays in that future? Furthermore, increasing international engagement for a wider pool of students could enable institutions to enhance its brand-recognition and add value by attracting students and faculty.

This study will extend the literature by addressing the racial divide in study abroad and on college campuses. It will add to the literature on current institutional internationalization efforts and the implementation of study abroad programs as a means to expand access and diversify college campuses. The success of those initiatives in supporting minority participation in study abroad programs will be considered, and the results of this study may provide guidance for developing improved programming, marketing and public relations campaigns, and financial programs that support the diversification of study abroad. This study will also contribute to the body of knowledge on institution change, and specifically, on the people, policies, and programs that effect transformational change.
Qualitative research underscores the importance of understanding phenomena in order to affect or improve practice (Merriam, 2009). Qualitative research explores the meanings, concepts, definitions, characteristics, metaphors, symbols and description of things (Berg, 2007). It also explores, examines, and interprets issues situated in a social, cultural, or political context (Creswell, 2012). Thus, a qualitative approach was selected for this study in order to understand whether or not diversity is valued and how diversity is demonstrated in study abroad, which will provide valuable insight for education abroad leaders as they strive to embrace diversity and expand opportunities to students and faculty from all backgrounds.

According to Creswell (2012), qualitative research begins with assumptions and the use of interpretive or theoretical frameworks that inform the study of research problems addressing the meaning of individuals or groups ascribed to a social or human problem (p.44). Adopting a qualitative approach to research allows researchers to position themselves in the study, to modify the study as it emerges, and to present a holistic picture of the phenomenon being studied (Creswell, 2012). As such, a qualitative design is most appropriate to study the lack of diversity in international programs and to understand the decision making of administrators in the internationalization of higher education at an institutional level. Although increasing and diversifying international activity and engagement are often institutional priorities, study abroad growth remains largely stagnant on most U.S. campuses and continues to benefit a majority White population. To provide a context in which to explore underrepresentation in study abroad and to better understand this phenomenon, I conducted research using a qualitative research methodology and a narrative, single case study design. The case study provides a platform for
researchers to situate its implications in a real-world context and investigate a contemporary phenomenon in depth (Yin, 2014, p. 16).

Case-Study

The case-study is an appropriate research design for analyzing the multiple variables present in this study. I chose to conduct an exploratory, single-case study of one institution to determine why diverse populations of students and faculty are underrepresented in study abroad programs. I suggest that the issues of inclusion and representation in higher education are typified by study abroad programs and that institutions are similar in the way they are resistant to transformational change. Thus, this dissertation examines diversity in study abroad at a single institution as it grapples with the topics of underrepresentation and inclusion in its study abroad programming and participation. The purpose of this study is to illustrate how institutional people, practices, and policies support or inhibit transformational change through the example of study abroad programs and, more broadly, to explore how diversity initiatives on campus contribute widely to study abroad programs. In order to examine diversity issues, I apply the framework of transformational change presented by Eckel and Kezar (2002).

Possible Limitations and Statement of Researcher Position

The primary limitation of case study design is the lack of generalizability. The study will be limited to a single case focused on one large public institution in the Southeast United States. Though likely applicable to many institutions, especially peer institutions (public, state universities of at least 20,000 students), the results of the study may not be applicable across all institutions of higher education in the United States.
An additional limitation of case study design is potential bias of the interview participants. Administrators will likely want to give a positive impression of the institution and their contributions toward transformational change. Interviews with faculty and students will provide alternate voices in the study and seek to balance any potential bias present in the opinions of senior administrative leadership.

Finally, the nature of the case study design is limited by the subjective decision making of the author and researcher (Merriam, 2002). The researcher determines what is valuable and applicable to the study and what is not. Thus, some researcher bias is inherent in the research design. Merriam recommends that “researchers articulate their assumptions, experiences, worldview, and theoretical orientation to the study” (Merriam, 2002, p. 26). In this study, the author and researcher is the director of international education at a mid-size public institution in the South where globalization is part of the institution’s strategic plan. The author and researcher believes that a comprehensive approach to internationalization is essential, especially for underrepresented students, who are likely to have limited exposure to other cultures, limited knowledge about study abroad programs, and limited resources to invest in study abroad opportunities. The author and researcher believes that providing global experiences to all students is critical to embracing diversity and changing the fabric of our institutions and our country so that all persons—regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, or socioeconomic background—have an opportunity to succeed. It is the role of colleges and universities to lead the way by eliminating the barriers that prevent so many citizens from fully participating in our democracy. The author and researcher also believes that it is the responsibility of institutions of higher education to demonstrate to students the interconnectedness of a global society and foster an awareness and appreciation of different cultures. Thus, the author and researcher is an
advocate of the internationalization of higher education, as well as expanded opportunities to programming for underrepresented students.

**Setting and Site Selection**

The university, which I will hereafter refer to as “Southeastern University” to protect the identity of research subjects and for the sake of convenience, chosen for this study is a large, comprehensive, public, research university that has experienced significant growth over the last decade. It was founded over 150 years ago and is the among the oldest and largest institutions in its state. In the fall of 2017, enrollment was at record high of 38,000 plus students. The 2017 entering freshman class included nearly 7,400 students and was the second largest and best qualified in Southeastern University history. Over 40 percent of the institution’s freshman class scored 30 or higher on the ACT, and 38 percent of those graduated in the top ten percent of their graduating class. Southeastern University currently enrolls more than 500 National Merit Scholars, which places it in the top percentage of public universities nationwide in the enrollment of these high achieving students. Southeastern has ranked among the top 50 public universities in the nation in U.S. News and World Report’s annual college rankings for more than a decade, and is ranked in the top 50 among public universities in the 2017 rankings. Southeastern offers nearly 200 undergraduate, graduate and doctoral degrees with a student/faculty ratio that averages 21:1. It also offers professional programs in law and rural medicine. It is ranked “Research University/High” by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. Less than half the students enrolled at Southeastern are in-state students. Approximately 41 percent of enrolled students are in-state residents, three percent are international, and 56 percent are women. According to the University’s Office of Institutional
Research and Assessment, 16 percent of students are minorities and, of those, approximately 11 percent identify as Black or African American (from institutional website). According to the 2016 Census, over 30 percent of the state’s residents are minorities. Thus, as the state’s flagship university, Southeastern’s student body is primarily out-of-state students and is not representative of the state demographic.

According the University’s 2016-17 Education Abroad Annual Report, over 1,200 students studied abroad for credit. The top majors represented in study abroad were Marketing, Political Science, and Chemical Engineering. Over 50 percent of students went abroad on a faculty-led program. Eleven percent of students who participated in education abroad programs identified as minorities. Of those, five percent identified as African American. Twenty-nine percent of study abroad participants were on financial aid, while close to 60 percent of participants received scholarships. The institution top destinations for study abroad were Spain, Italy, and England. Almost 70 percent of study abroad participants were female, 46 percent were Honors students, and just 28 percent were in-state residents.

I chose to focus my study on a single institution for several reasons: the recent institutional attention to diversity issues, and the ease of access to the institution. I am familiar with the institution and its internationalization efforts. I have in-depth knowledge and information on the growth and development of its international programs. In addition, I have access to students, faculty, and administrators who have participated in international education. An additional rationale for choosing this single site for the case study is limited time and financial resources. Southeastern University is within a few hours’ drive, which allows me to conduct research there with relative ease. Moreover, Southeastern University has experienced significant enrollment growth and, as a result, its study abroad programs have expanded. Lastly,
the current director of the study abroad identifies as Hispanic and Black, which is unique to the University and to study abroad in general.

**Research Design**

This study was conducted using a qualitative research methodology and an exploratory single-case study design. The case study is an appropriate research design for analyzing the multiple variables present in this study. All research was conducted at the aforementioned University. In order to present an in-depth analysis of the issues, I will collect and analyze multiple forms of data including interviews, documents, and observations.

**Data Collection and Analysis**

Data was collected from three basic sources of information: interviews, observation, and document collection and review. I also kept field notes for each of the interviews where I documented my experience and observations of the interviews. Field notes provide the descriptive quality necessary to create the narrative from the data analysis. The field notes include three criteria as described by Merriam (2002):

1. Verbal descriptions
2. Direct quotes or the essence of what participants expressed
3. Observer’s comments

The interviews were semi-structured and guided by an interview protocol. The protocols provided a framework for consistency while the semi-structured approach allows the participants to expand their answers and the researcher to explore when appropriate. I employed three different interview protocols: one for Deans and Academic and Student Affairs Leadership, one
for administrators and advisors in Study Abroad, and one for faculty leaders of study abroad programs.

With University leadership, I did not feel it was necessary to ask whether or not the University wants to become more diverse, since embracing diversity is part of the University’s mission statement and strategic plan. Instead, I had three goals: I wanted to see what they thought was or wasn’t working in the University’s efforts to diversify, what role culture played in encouraging or discouraging change, how important minority representation on faculty and staff are, and how internationalization and study abroad fit into the plans to increase diversity campus-wide.

I started by asking whether or not they think diversity initiatives are working. I also asked about their view of the University’s culture and whether or not they thought it aided in or hindered the University’s efforts to diversify. I asked more specific questions about what practices, policies or other changes have been made to accomplish the goal of increasing diversity laid out in the University’s mission statement, priorities, and strategic plans. I asked about the importance of imagery in promotional and informational materials. I asked whether or not they felt it was important to hire more diverse faculty and staff. I inquired to see how internationalization and Study Abroad are included in the University’s efforts to diversify. I asked if they felt all students should be afforded the opportunity to study abroad. I asked what major steps would have to be taken to make the kinds of changes that would move internationalization forward and create more access to study abroad and other programming to traditionally underserved students.

With International Education and staff in the Study Abroad office, I sought to learn about their individual perspectives on the impacts of diversity initiatives at the University, what they
were doing in International Education and Study Abroad to increase diversity participation, how the culture of the institution promoted or inhibited their efforts, and what more could be done to fulfill the mission and accomplish the strategic objectives of the University to increase diversity representation and participation in programming.

I asked administrators in International Education and staff in the Study Abroad office what they thought about the culture of the University. I asked for their opinions on whether or not institutional leaders thought diversity was important and took it seriously. I asked what indicators of success in diversity efforts would look like. I asked how they felt the Study Abroad office fit into the University’s effort to become more diverse. I asked what percentage of students at the University study abroad and, of those, what percent were minorities. I also asked whether they felt diversity in study abroad was important and, if so, what they did to promote it. More pointedly, I asked what would help them achieve more diversity representation and participation in programming. I also asked if they thought it was important for underrepresented students to see underrepresented faculty and students on study abroad promotional and informational literature.

With faculty leaders of study abroad programs, I sought to understand the institution’s diversity initiatives from their perspective. Specifically, I wanted to know their views on the practices or policies the University had implemented and whether or not those were effective. I wanted to find out if they thought campus culture encouraged or inhibited internationalization or diversification. Lastly, I wanted to know if minority students were effectively made aware of study abroad opportunities. And I wanted to know if they could make recommendations for how to improve internationalization or diversification efforts.
In order to clearly understand the position of faculty leaders of study abroad programs, I asked specifically about the revisions of the University’s mission statement and strategic plan, practice and policy changes that followed, and hiring minority faculty and staff. I asked about the relationship between the culture of the institution and its efforts to improve minority access to programming. I asked whether minority students went on study abroad programs and whether minority faculty were leading them. I asked about the destination of study abroad programs. Depending on the answers given to these questions, I asked follow-up questions about what was working well or what needed improvement.

In addition to the interviews and the field notes, I analyzed documents. The document analysis included study abroad marketing materials both in print and online, a review of the institution’s study abroad program portfolio, data related to study abroad enrollment and faculty participation, and news stories and articles related to the institution and current diversity issues on campus. Document analysis enhances the case study and provides the context for a comprehensive narrative (Yin, 2009). Additionally, including a review of documents in the study can provide some advantages (Merriam, 2002). According to Merriam (2002), documents are easily accessible and free, thus they save the researcher valuable time and money. Additionally, the data available in documents can be used in the same manner as the data from observations and interviews, as well as to provide descriptive data. Finally, data contained in documents is fixed, and less likely to be misinterpreted by the researcher. (Merriam, 2009).

The data collection strategy and analysis was guided by the framework of transformational change advanced by Eckel and Kezar (2003). According to Eckel and Kezar (2003), transformational change alters the way an institution behaves, as well as how the members of the institution view the organization and its behavior. The rapid pace of social
change, technological advances, changing demographics, competing values, and changes in state support make change, “an imperative for much of higher education” (Eckel and Kezar, 2003).

We conduct qualitative research when we want to give individuals a voice and to minimize the power relationships that exist between the participants in a study and the researcher (Creswell, 2012). By collecting data through interviews, I used a data collection technique that prioritizes the participants’ stories and recognizes the interviewee as the expert in their story (J.A. Smith & Osborn, 2008).

**Instrument and participant selection**

The primary source of the data analysis came from 20 interviews. The approved sample size for the study was 25 interviews. I initially solicited 28 participants by email and 23 responded to my initial correspondence. Three individuals declined to participate in the study. I interviewed 20 participants one time each. I called five of the participants for clarification one time each after the initial interview. The semi-structured interviews were conducted with participants to include each of the college deans, leadership from academic and student affairs, the vice provost of international outreach and global affairs, and the director of international education. In addition, interviews were conducted with faculty who have led study abroad programs. Faculty participants were selected using a purposeful sampling strategy. The parameters for selection included faculty and who identified as minorities or who led or participated in programs, especially those that traveled to non-European, less traditional education abroad locations.

Questions for the semi-structured interviews were guided by Eckel and Kezar’s (2003) five core strategies essential to transformational change. Those strategies include senior
administrative support, collaborative leadership, flexible vision, faculty and staff development, and visible action. Each interview lasted 45 to 90 minutes with the shortest being 46 minutes and the longest being just over 90 minutes. All interviews were recorded using the recording application on an iPhone. During the semi-structured qualitative interviews, the questions located in Appendix A were asked and when necessary, additional follow-up questions were asked to clarify responses and elicit more details.

Because of the nature of semi-structured interviews, additional questions guided by the research questions were asked. The analysis of the data was coded and sorted by the themes that emerged during the interview process. I used the model of transformational change advanced by Eckel and Kezar (2003) to identify codes and themes and analyze the data. However, I was limited by Eckel and Kezar’s framework and allowed for the semi-structured nature of the interview to identify other emergent themes (2003). Several themes outside the framework emerged during the interview process.

Data analysis

I conducted twenty interviews, I transcribed seven of the twenty verbatim, and thirteen interviews were professionally transcribed verbatim using a professional transcription service. Upon receipt of the transcriptions I read through each one and compared the written transcription with the digital recording and with my notes to insure accuracy. After insuring that all the transcriptions were accurate, I read each transcript individually and began to code the data. I reread each interview multiple times throughout the process of analysis.
Timeline of the Study

The study received IRB approval in July 2017. I began conducting interviews in September 2017 and completed interviews in January 2018. Interviews were conducted over a period of eleven days. I began analysis through holistic coding after the data from interviews was transcribed. I reviewed my notes for observations and conducted a document analysis of marketing materials, annual reports, and web content. I identified common data trends and subsections of trends. I maintained audio recordings of each interview and transcribed my dictated field notes. The study and analysis were concluded by June 2018.

Conclusion

The population of students who study abroad will not change significantly unless the way study abroad is done changes significantly. The problem of diversity or lack thereof is evident across college campuses, and evident in myriad areas of study abroad including program type, location, and the student and faculty demographic. This is not as a problem that will resolve itself as higher education in the United States continues to evolve and become more inclusive, and less White. Considering the history of race and gender in the U.S. and the current national climate on issues surrounding these identities, the reluctance of institutions to embrace change is a problem that requires intentional strategies that bring about transformation.

Despite the growing emphasis on increasing both the number and diversity of study abroad participants in the U.S., the numbers have remained relatively unchanged. There are national level policies and programs aimed at achieving a significant change in the number of and profile of study abroad students. Although those policies and practices have been widely
adopted by study abroad offices, they have made a negligible difference in the overall demographic of the program.

The benefits of a study abroad experience are well-documented, and the literature on college student development makes the connection on the importance of study abroad experiences for college student success. Understanding the role that study abroad programming plays for college students is certainly important; however, to ensure that all students are afforded the opportunity to participate in these beneficial experiences, there is much more to consider. Creating an inclusive study abroad program requires that we learn how to develop a culture that fosters this type of activity for all populations. Shaping a campus culture that embraces diversity and promotes inclusive participation is an organizational challenge that requires consideration and additional research which this study will provide.
CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

In order to explore issues of diversity in study abroad, I conducted a qualitative, single case study of one institution’s study abroad programs, taking into consideration the culture of that institution, as well as the attempts to increase diversity acceptance and access to programs at that institution. My case study consisted of interviews of university administrators, faculty, and staff. I conducted 21 interviews.

My interview approach varied depending on the occupation of the interviewee. In total, I employed three separate interview protocols, one for faculty, one for administrators, and one for study abroad staff. The primary themes of my questions, regardless of protocol, were as follows: institutional culture, diversity initiatives, the importance of study abroad, and what would help increase diversity participation in study abroad. I asked each participant to share their perspectives on these themes.

Participants

For my study, I interviewed twenty-one people employed by Southeastern University. Among these were a variety of faculty, staff and administrators at varying levels of rank, but all with knowledge of study abroad and/or university diversity efforts. I interviewed administrators from the level of associate provost and dead down to assistant director, faculty from full professor to instructor, and staff in the Study Abroad office. Of my interviewees, twelve were
white males, four were white females, three were minority females, and two were minority males.

**Analysis**

**Institutional Culture**

Every interviewee was asked to describe the culture of the institution. The interviewees’ assessments of the institutional culture of Southeastern University was consistent, with little variation. Interviewees identified the University as a Predominately White Institution (PWI) defined by Greek fraternities and sororities, steeped in tradition and southern heritage. Its core values are research, teaching, and service and it defines its mission as, in part, advancing the state in which it resides and society at large. It is, effectively—in its role to serve its state, region, nation, and the world—working to increase diversity and inclusivity, but there are obstacles in the way of true implementation of the kinds of practices and policies that would accomplish this part of its mission. Resoundingly, interviewees identified Greek life participation, which is among the highest on college campuses across the United States, and intercollegiate athletics programs, which have experienced historic and present success on a level beyond its peers, as the institution’s defining cultural factors.

Moreover, interviewees identified the institution as one that has a shameful history of exclusion of all minorities. This history has remnants in the present, which have, even recently, been publicized nationally. Interviewees asserted that the institution professes a desire to be more accepting and inclusive and seems to be plotting a course to accomplish that end. Interviewees believe that progress is being made toward becoming an institution that embraces diversity and serves a more diverse populous, though there was some disparity in the interviewees’ opinions
on the pace of this cultural shift and the sincerity of University leaders in making the changes that embrace, rather than just tolerate, diversity.

Each interviewee identified the institution as primarily white and dominated by Greek societies. Study Abroad advisor Mr. Hunter said, “I would say it is a mono-culture . . . Greek-centric. Greek life is so huge here that it is hard to see anything past that. It is so prevalent on campus that it dominates the conversation.” Dr. Tine, an upper level administrator, said, “It is a very traditional institution. It draws students who like those kinds of traditions in terms of the Greek community. There is a perception that you are going to come here and join a frat or sorority and have a lot of fun.” Study Abroad administrator Ms. Cruz said, “It has the same characteristics as other Predominately White Institutions. You know Greek life and sports.” Mr. Carr, an administrator in international programming, confirms these assessments:

I think it fits the mold of what you would expect out of a traditionally White institution. You know, having worked for several of them there is kind of a thing: the majority population tends to be middle-class to affluent White students who are definitely not first generation, they are often third, fourth, fifth generation students of the institution.

The major takeaway here is that interviewees unanimously described the institution as primarily White and Greek-centric. Other important characteristics identified by interviewees included that there is a large population of “legacy” students, or those whose parents and, in some cases grandparents and beyond also attended the institution.

Two interviewees did identify positives in the University’s culture. Ms. Cruz, the administrator in Study Abroad, pointed out the advantage in having a culture based on Southern tradition: “Our placement in the Southeast brings in a different type of culture… southern values
of friendliness and open-ness.” And Dr. June, a faculty member and administrator, described the culture of the institution as “healthy”: “We’re a healthy blend of traditional and progressive.” These responses diverged from the norm and were more positive assessments. However, they were far from endorsements of the University as an institution that celebrates and embraces diversity and works actively to increase it.

Overall, the interviewees’ responses reflected a consensus that the University’s culture is exclusive, favoring White students with ancestral ties to the institution and those within the fraternity and sorority system. Some were very critical of the lack of diversity on campus. Dr. Sefu, a faculty member and study abroad program leader, said:

This is not at all a diverse institution. When I go into the classroom I have 150 students and five black faces. It is the same thing with faculty—only one black face in the department. And it is the same with women, only two ladies in the department. The idea of a ‘university’ itself is to be ‘universal.’ If we are universal, then we have to be more diverse.

**Embracing Diversity**

Despite the consensus, however, that the culture of the institution is homogenous based on the exclusivity inherent its roots in Southern tradition, there was a general sense among most of the interviewees that the institution’s culture is evolving to become more progressive, and that that evolution represents a positive development. The interviewees see the institution becoming more diverse and plotting a course to accelerate that trend by adopting policies that promote inclusion. Interviewees believe that these actions are making a difference, though to varying degrees.
In response to the question, “Do you think the institution values and embraces—not just tolerates—diversity?” faculty member Dr. Davis said:

The culture here is evolving. It is much more inclusive and diverse than it was when I started here twenty years ago. It’s evolving in the sense that the caliber of students is much higher than it was twenty years ago. It used to be that 95, 98 percent of my students graduated from high schools in-state. And now 62 percent are from out of state. So the caliber of student getting into school here has gone up considerably, which makes them more engaged and more interactive.

Mr. Cook, an administrator in Study Abroad, noted that the changes have political ramifications: “It is becoming more diverse with the influx of out of state students, more politically diverse than it used to be – maybe closer to an even split.”

Some of the interviewees expressed a great deal of confidence in the institution’s changing attitude toward diversity: “This is a University in transition,” said Dr. Tally, a faculty member and administrator. “It used to be more insular, inward looking, and provincial. Now, with the majority of students coming from out of state, it is changing. It used to be conservative, traditional, Greek-centric. While those values are still in place, they are being tested more.”

Nearly all responders saw the institution’s culture as a work-in-progress. The consensus is that it is traditional and exclusive now because that’s the way it has always been, but that it’s in the process of becoming more progressive. “It is an interesting time to be here,” said Dr. Douglas, a faculty member and leader of a study abroad program. “[The University] is marching forward.” Dr. Davis agreed, saying, “The school still has some challenges with change and with diversity and inclusion, but it’s getting better or has been since I’ve been here.” Southeastern
University is, thus, like most other institutions of higher education, working toward inclusion, equal access, and globalization.

There were differing views on how effective efforts to facilitate this evolution are, as well as different levels of satisfaction with the pace of change. Some interviewees provided endorsements for the University’s efforts at increasing diversity access and acceptance on campus. Administrative Director Dr. Lawler said:

I would say from an administrative perspective, we do [value and embrace diversity]. Every staff person I have ever encountered does. They work hard at it. It’s a priority for them. It’s a passion for them. It informs their work and the ways they relate to students and what they communicate to students about what’s important.

Dr. Davis expressed similar sentiments:

I think our current [administration] does, yes. I think they support diversity and inclusion. And everything from – we’re one of the top schools in the country for supporting veterans. Spectrum [the LGBTQ support group] is 34, 35 years old. So, the LGBT community is well supported here. It’s been active for decades. We’ve got a good Title IX group that really works on women’s rights and tries to make sure that they get treated fairly by everybody. And then, even though we have a super small percentage of foreign students, I think they get mainstream and even, in some cases, special treatment. I would describe the institution as aspirationally diverse.

So there is a sense that the institution is actively promoting diversity, at least for some of the interviewees.
Some interviewees, however, felt that the institution’s efforts to promote diversity were
disingenuous: “There is a lot of talk about diversity among administrators and a growing number
of students, but not sure there is a lot of action,” said Mr. Cook, an administrator. Faculty
member and study abroad program director Dr. Ursin cited the financial realities the institution
faces that lead to a compromise between progressive and traditional:

The culture of the institution is a compromise – an attempt to reconcile the needs
of certain economic communities. There is a division between owner and worker,
concealed by issues of race, gender, etc. What you really have is an attempt to
move forward and keep the money flowing to the University.

Administrator Mr. Carr seconded this sentiment: “The institution is scared of the idea of
celebrating or embracing diversity; it’s okay to get diversity up to a certain percentage, but fear
of a pushback if you cross a threshold. We’re scared of becoming a minority majority
population; keep it at 70% white and traditional.” The implication here is that, as has become the
case in higher education as a whole, universities must do what it takes to keep student enrollment
and alumni donations rolling in. In some cases, as these interviewees argue, the institution must
cater to the most traditional among its alumni and donors, sometimes at the expense of diversity
initiatives.

Others indicated that the University values diversity but falls short in achieving it. Staff
member Ms. Wren argued that the institution “values diversity on paper” and that “recently more
importance has been placed on diversity but not necessarily in equity or inclusion. There seems
to be no response from senior leadership on issues new faculty and students are facing.”
Diversity Initiatives

As a follow up question to whether or not the institution values and promotes diversity, I asked interviewees to assess initiatives and programs aimed at expanding inclusiveness and embracing diversity. To recap, interviewees do perceive that the institution values and embrace diversity, if their belief in the commitment of the university to these principles varies in degrees. Their perception of the initiatives and programs that promote diversity and inclusion reflected even more variance.

One interviewee highlighted the hiring of a Chief Diversity Officer as a key sign—if even just a symbolic one—that the institution is now committed to promoting diversity. “I don’t think the hiring of a Chief Diversity Officer will solve all the problems here, because it won’t,” said administrator Dr. Ball. “But what the Chief Diversity Officer will do is make sure that this issue is important and is constantly being raised around campus. But this is everybody’s responsibility.”

Other interviewees also identified initiatives and programs aimed at increasing diversity within the institution: “I think a variety of offices and units on campus promote diversity, like the Crossroads Community Center, the Study Abroad office and International Student Center” said administrator Dr. Tine. “There’s also an annual diversity report that compiles statistics on diversity to highlight what’s working and what isn’t.” Mr. Carr, an administrator in the international education office, stated, “We have coffee hour for international students, the domestic and international student mixer, the international spouse support group, the success group partnership with the counseling center, and various international student associations.”

Some interviewees’ responses reflected dissatisfaction with diversity initiatives and programs. Faculty member and study abroad program director Dr. Douglass said, “The majority
of faculty thinks diversity is important and values it; leadership communicates about diversity more than acting to support it.” Administrator Ms. Cruz explained, “There is some programming on campus that supports diverse students. Could we be doing better? Yes.”

Some interviewees, particularly faculty, responded that, within their departments, there was an expressed desire to hire more diverse faculty, but that they did not know specifically about diversity initiatives the Institution had undertaken. Some interviewees identified national programs or department programs aimed at increasing access for minority students or opportunities to study abroad. “The Colleges of Engineering and Business,” said Study Abroad administrator Mr. Cook, “offer lots of scholarships, Education Abroad grants, and other programs.”

Other interviewees expressed a kind of cynicism behind the University’s emphasis on diversity. “I’m not sure how genuine our efforts really are,” study abroad staff member Mr. Johnson said. “Certainly, talking about diversity increases numbers and promotes the brand.” Staff member Mr. Hunter also reflected cynicism: “I think a lot of diversity and inclusivity actions have been more reactions it seems like.” Yet another staff member, Mr. Johnson, shared their cynicism and expressed even a bleaker vision: “Leadership likes the idea of diversity, but has no vision, drive, action to get it accomplished. It’s all lip-service. They see it as important to their reputation and brand, but historically are behind the times.”

So, there are a variety of responses to questions about the existence and effectiveness of diversity and inclusion initiatives and programs. Some interviewees do believe that the institution is making a sincere effort to promote and celebrate diversity and inclusion. Others see a lack of sincerity in pronouncements of diversity but little or ineffective action to support it. Clearly, there is a stated emphasis on diversity and inclusion, but perhaps a disconnect between
the University’s official position and its tangible actions, or at least a shortcoming in its messaging about those actions. Administrators at higher rank expressed more confidence in the genuineness of leadership when they assert that diversity and inclusion are priorities for the University.

**Value of International Education and Study Abroad**

Given the institutional culture and the institution’s attitude toward diversification, I wanted to find out how much the institution valued international education, as well what value each of the interviewees’ places on study abroad. Since international education—and particularly study abroad—inherently contributes to diversity because they expose students to other cultures, I asked interviewees to weigh in on how much value they place, personally, on study abroad as a significant component of higher education, as well as how much the institution really values and supports international education efforts. I asked these administrators, faculty and staff their personal views about the importance of study abroad. I followed up by asking if international education is part of the mission, core values, and strategic plan of the university, and whether or not the institution adequately promotes and supports study abroad.

Interviewees unanimously agreed that study abroad is a beneficial component to the mission of higher education. Study Abroad administrator Ms. Cruz said that study abroad and higher education “works together hand-in-hand,” as it serves to expose students to new ideas and “challenges them to get comfortable with students who are not like them.” Faculty member Dr. Davis also made an explicit connection between study abroad and promoting diversity, saying “Study abroad broadens students’ cultural horizons and makes them think about diversity in a
different way,” adding an additional benefit: “it also makes them appreciate what they have at home a lot more.” Administrator Dr. Tine said:

There are tons of [benefits to study abroad]: exposure to people from different backgrounds—culturally, potentially economically, linguistically. We live in a society where you have to learn to work in groups. In many groups, you’ll have to work with people who are different than you. And facing problems in a foreign country improves problem solving skills in a way that doesn’t happen in a classroom. Also, I think it develops in students an ability to deal with ambiguity. They don’t know everything that’s happening or going to happen around them. There’s a lot of personal growth that can happen there.”

Lastly, faculty member Dr. Sefu argued that, “when students get out of their bubbles, they become aware of what goes on outside the U.S. and learn about themselves. We live in a global village, so students need to see and know what it takes to be the future leaders of the world. It’s invaluable and should be a part of every curriculum and afforded to all students.”

If study abroad, according to the administrators, faculty and staff of Southeastern University, is so integral to the project of higher education, it should be accordingly valued by the institution itself. For the most part, interviewees said that study abroad and, more broadly, international education, is a priority for the institution. Faculty member and study abroad program leader Dr. Kidd said, “Leadership is absolutely prioritizing diversity, globalization, and inclusion. Dr. Tine affirmed this view:

The mission is global. And the most recent strategic plan under [the current president] has really brought into focus more international education. The
president talks specifically about giving students a global perspective in their education here. I think that’s raised the visibility of study abroad. He routinely mentions study abroad and international education. So, all those are positives.

Dr. Tine went on to say:

In the strategic plan, the pillar, as they call it, of the strategic plan that I mentioned earlier, it says that students should attain a global perspective during their education here. It’s also supportive in terms of our budget. We have seen increases every year for the amount of scholarship money that we can give to students. Students are allowed to use their general UA scholarships toward education abroad. I think there are a lot of policies that do certainly encourage education abroad here.

Administrator Dr. Ball said,

I think [the University does value international education and study abroad]. The President recently released the strategic plan. The first part of the plan really was on all students—undergraduate and graduate—having a global curriculum or having an understanding of curriculum with a global impact. The second part [of the strategic plan] was for the University to become a more inclusive place.

Administrator Dr. Lawler asserted that the current president “considers study abroad one of the best things ever.” She continued, “I have heard him personally speak about his own family, friends, and/or children of friends and how significant study abroad programs were in their education and lives.” Several other interviewees answered in the affirmative that international education and study abroad are pillars of the current president’s strategic plan.
Faculty member Dr. June and administrator Mr. Carr admitted that international education and study abroad are perhaps more important to the administration than to the majority of students or to the community and state in which the institution resides, but believe that the institution is doing its best to influence an evolution in the thinking of much of the student body and the community to embrace international education and study abroad. Overall interviewees expressed confidence that the current administration does value internationalization and study abroad and will be supportive in efforts to increase both.

**Importance of Study Abroad**

As an extension—or perhaps a more specific aspect—of my question about whether or not the institution places value on international education, I asked interviewees about institutional support of Study Abroad. I asked each of the interviewees a variation of the following question: Do you think the institution supports and encourages study abroad?

The answers to this question were nearly unanimous in the same way that they were to questions about the extent to which the institution values diversity and international education. Everyone views study abroad as valuable. Responders listed many benefits to studying abroad: broadening students’ worldview and perspective, intercultural competence, confidence in language and intercultural communications, social awareness, increased empathy, problem solving skills that translate to other environments, enhanced ability to deal with ambiguity, teamwork, increased self-awareness.

Interviewees felt unanimously that the institution supports and promotes study abroad. The university’s president promotes it. The colleges promote it. They do so to varying degrees, but every college does to some extent. “Study abroad is becoming part of the culture of the
University,” said Study Abroad administrator Ms. Cruz. Faculty member Dr. Davis cited the prevalent presence of study abroad on campus: “Study Abroad fairs are very prevalent, visible and popular on campus. And we’ve had the Study Abroad folks come to our classes and do fairs just in CMBA.” Administrator Dr. Tine said. “We have seen increases every year in the amount of scholarship money the University is making available to students to study abroad. “Students are even allowed to use their general scholarships to study abroad.”

**Diversity in Study Abroad**

Administrators, faculty and staff have testified that increasing diversity on campus and minority access to programs and services is a priority, though with varying degrees of confidence in the commitment of the University to achieve these goals. Understanding the larger scope of the culture of the institution and institutional efforts to increase diversity will help as I narrow my focus to study abroad, specifically. Once I had gathered from interviewees their views of institutional culture, diversity initiatives, the importance of international education and study abroad I turned by attention in interviews to study abroad specifically. I asked interviewees a series of questions to determine if diversity is important in study abroad. Questions and follow-up questions varied depending on protocol and interviewees answers, but the goal in the questions was to acquire answers to this question: Is it important to offer all students, regardless of race, ethnicity, nationality, gender and socioeconomic status, the opportunity to study abroad. If so what measures, initiatives or actions are being taken on campus to encourage support for study abroad for underrepresented populations?

When asked if underrepresented students should be able to study abroad, responses were unanimously in the affirmative. Administrator Dr. Lawler said, “I think if we could send every
college student abroad, that would be a phenomenal thing.” Administrator Mr. Cook agreed, 
saying, “Absolutely. Study abroad is a life-changing opportunity that can lead to growth as an 
individual and for society. In a society that wants to improve lives and help people achieve 
dreams and goals study abroad is important and should not be limited to those who are 
financially able to afford it.” Two interviewees used the term “transformative” when referring to 
study abroad. Mr. Hunter, a staff member in the Study Abroad office summed up the general 
sentiment: “We all share a value for diverse participation in study abroad. And we’re all very 
supportive of non-traditional study abroad students pursuing study abroad opportunities.” These 
are not surprising answers, since interviewees value study abroad, improving minority access to 
programs and increasing diversity on campus. Everyone wants to see the opportunity to study 
abroad extended to all students. In order to accomplish that goal, the study abroad office does 
outreach to faculty and students by study abroad fairs, direct contact and promotional literature, 
and promotes scholarships and grants.

Outreach to faculty is crucial. When asked if faculty are encouraged to develop and lead 
study abroad programs at Southeastern University, Dr. Tine, the Study Abroad office 
administrator, said, “In general, yes, we absolutely do. I think really the majority of deans 
recognize the importance of that and support it.” Business faculty member Dr. Davis answered, 
“In my department, we are encouraged to do study abroad programs and to go abroad to do 
seminars and consulting.” Dr. Kidd, a faculty member in the School of Engineering reiterated 
that point and extended it: “The College of Business, the College of Education and the College 
of Arts and Sciences all have a dedicated person in place to promote study abroad.”
Obstacles to Increasing Diversity in Study Abroad

Mr. Hunter, an advisor in the Study Abroad office summed up nicely what interviewees indicated about diversity and study abroad:

I think that everybody in the office is really interested in the quality of our programming, even though, obviously, the quantity is important. I think we all share a value for diverse enrollment—diverse participation in study abroad and to diverse destinations. And we’re all very supportive of non-traditional students pursuing study abroad opportunities and minority faculty guiding programs. I just don’t think we’re very effective at that yet. I don’t think we have yet successfully engaged diverse populations or not-traditional students and faculty because it’s not reflected in our numbers. From some of our initiatives—we’re trying; it’s just not been as effective as we’d like.

Ms. Cruz, an administrator in the Study Abroad office asserts that everyone is on board: “It’s important to deans and important to faculty. Now we have a top down push as well. Our outreach is wide. We have a newsletter we send out twice a month to students—maybe six or seven thousand—who signed up at events like orientation; we do a lot of social media—Facebook, Instagram, that kind of thing; we do a lot of TV network across campus.”

The question, then, is: If study abroad is perceived as important by administration, faculty and staff, and the institution itself values internationalization, diversity and study abroad, then why is diversity participation in study abroad—as well as diversity in study abroad destination—not increasing? So I asked interviewees what measures could be taken to attract a more diverse group of students to study abroad and what problems or obstacles contribute to stagnant growth in study abroad and continue to deny access to non-traditional participants. I asked a variety of
questions to address this point. I started by asking, what are the challenges in increasing study abroad participation and diversity participation in study abroad? I varied follow up questions based on the answers provided to this initial question.

There were a variety of answers to this initial question. School of Business faculty Dr. Davis responded, “The only thing stopping any students I know is financial considerations. I know there are scholarships and stuff, but most underprivileged students come in not thinking it’s possible for them.” Dr. Tine, an administrator in the Study Abroad, office expanded on this problem, saying “For first generation and other underrepresented students, just coming to the university is a big step, financially and in other ways. Then to ask them to do something like study abroad . . .” Dr. Lawler, an administrator in a non-study abroad office reiterated this point: “I’m not saying that any student who’s a minority is challenged economically, but many of those of our students who are underrepresented populations are working jobs while going to school and study abroad is not perceived as an option.”

Dr. Douglass expanded on this point when asked if underrepresented students are aware of study abroad opportunities: “I wouldn’t fault Education Abroad for it, but I would say, I don’t know that the average student who is a part of an underrepresented population would know much about [study abroad]. For them, study abroad is just not an option, or they don’t perceive it to be.”

Administrator Dr. Lawler explained that it’s a communication problem:

I think the Study Abroad office works hard to get the message out there. The Study Abroad Fair happens in the middle of the Student Center, There’s an Education Abroad photo exhibit that’s well-advertised and centrally-placed. I hear from students all the time that they don’t know about the services my office
offers. I explain that it’s in the newsletter, on social media, we sent out emails. Students say they don’t even read their emails. I don’t know what to do about that.

College of Engineering faculty Dr. Kidd made a similar point: “I don’t think we’ve figured out how to make communications effective in today’s digital environment. Everybody gets too many emails and disregards stuff, but that’s not the fault of those who are trying.” One major obstacle, according to these claims, is just getting the word out to students that study abroad opportunities are there for all students and that funding to cover the cost of these programs is available.

In addition to the difficulties communicating opportunities to students, interviewees also cited problems recruiting faculty to develop and lead study abroad programs. Running a study abroad program is a perk, in that it offers faculty an opportunity to travel and a salary stipend; however, junior faculty must prioritize tenure over everything else until they have attained it. Education Abroad administrator Dr. Tine identified the pursuit of tenure as an obstacle in the recruitment of faculty to lead study abroad programs: “I think faculty find themselves in very different places in terms of where they are in their career, so you can have some reticence from junior faculty who may not have tenure yet and might feel that they should focus more on research and publishing than directing a study abroad program.” As this administrator points out, this source of reticence for faculty is particularly present for young faculty. Given that the impetus to hire more diverse faculty is relatively recent, minority faculty in particular could be disproportionately dissuaded from developing and leading study abroad programs.

Mr. Carr, an administrator in International Student Services, highlighted how this problem disproportionately affects minority faculty:
I think that for some of the minority faculty on campus that’s their main complaint, is that so often they’re not, the service that they do and outreach to the minority communities that they work with, where it’s almost a given that they have to do it, works against them in the tenure process. Because they’re the only faculty of a certain ethnicity, race or group, they’re the default faculty representative, but they’re not going to get any credit for this when it comes to tenure. And so, it’s wasted time, but if you could encourage those things, if you can encourage their leadership in faculty-led programs, I think they would jump at that opportunity. They wouldn’t look at it as a, how am I gonna squeeze this in? but more of a now I’m going to do this.

An administrator in the Study Abroad office also touched upon the reticence on the part of faculty who must focus on credentialing for tenure as one of the problems for increasing participation in study abroad. I followed up by asking how support for study abroad would change if developing or leading study abroad programs was made part of the promotion and tenure process. Dr. Tine responded,

Wow. Fancy that. Well, I think that if it was part of the promotion and tenure process, more junior faculty members would certainly be more encouraged to take that time and delve into it. When you have younger faculty members coming on campus, it may very well be that they’ve had study abroad experience, so their energized to lead a program and help students have that experience also. If you combine that with some kind of credit in terms of their tenure, I think it would really help.
Ms. Cruz, another administrator in the Study Abroad office responded to the same question by saying, “Oh my gosh, yes. Making it part of tenure and promotion would open study abroad to faculty who aren’t doing it because they’re so focused on what they have to do to get tenure.”

When asked this same question, Engineering faculty member Dr. Kidd said:

Faculty are smart people and they’re gonna spend time doing what they want but they also want to know the scorecard. If they see running a study abroad program as something on the scorecard for tenure, they’ll do study abroad.” He immediately qualified that statement, however, by saying, “I’m not advocating that it be there [on the scorecard].

Asked if she thought it would help increase participation—especially minority participation in study abroad—if developing or directing study abroad programs was incentivized for faculty by making it a part of the tenure and promotion process, faculty member and associate dean Dr. Tally responded, “Yes. But . . . now . . . that would be tricky. Junior faculty need to increase their research profile by focusing on research.” So, an upper level administrator and a faculty member/associate dean agree that making developing and directing study abroad programs part of the tenure and promotion criteria would help recruit younger faculty in general and younger minority faculty in particular to lead study abroad programming. And they agree that it could lead to increasing participation numbers among traditionally served and underserved students. And all interviewees agree that increasing diversity and study abroad participation are institutional priorities. Yet, they have reservations about making the development or directing of study abroad programs ought to be factors in tenure and promotion for faculty.
If there’s an unwillingness to try to change something as fundamental as the criteria for tenure and promotion, I wondered what measures are being implemented to increase study abroad numbers and improve diversity participation in study abroad.

**Organizational structure**

When asked how we could best support study abroad and improving diversity participation in study abroad, or simply international education efforts, interviewees responses beyond messaging to students about affordability and recruiting faculties focused on the organizational structure of the institution. Faculty member and Associate Dean Dr. Tally responded:

The existing office of International Education could have a broader view of what international education is. We could develop curriculum to have a more global outlook—with assignments, courses, activities, exposure to international scholars. We could bring the world into the classroom. More human resources would be helpful. We could have an international lab.

Engineering faculty member Dr. Kidd suggested a change in the organizational structure of the institution: “I would like to see us have a permanent staff member [in the College of Engineering], an advising center. That person’s job is international programming. They could work with inbound students to get them acclimated and work to find programs for outbound students.” Dr. Tine, the administrator in Education Abroad agreed, saying, “Organizationally, I think we are in the right place; but, at the same time, we’re in some ways an isolated office. I think that one major challenge is that we need to get people who are specific to education abroad—as advisors or however you want to label them—into the colleges.” I asked, as a follow-
up question, who that person would report to. Dr. Tine replied, “This is always challenging because, where do people really feel their allegiance? It’s where they are, physically. That’s a challenge we would have to work out. I almost think it would have to be a split line and that way there’s an investment from the centralized office and from the college.”

This is where the organizational structure of the institution prohibits the flexibility necessary to effectively address a need. Dr. Tine continued:

There has to be investment from the study abroad office and the college on a split line position. Then you have to figure out the actual on-the-ground, day-to-day reality of what that position looks like. Are they in the study abroad office two days a week and in the college three? Are they reporting to two different people?

Administrator Dr. Lawler highlighted the problems of the organizational separation between student services, academic services, and colleges:

Campus leadership supports diversity and inclusion; I feel very supported. Have we figured out how to facilitate it? We’re doing our best, but we could use thousands more staff. I don’t even need more funding. I need people’s time and commitment, because being inclusive takes practice and time. Getting students’ time and faculty’s time, that’s the challenge. We’ve talked and talked about that in the diversity strategic planning committee. We propose you could have a mandatory course; they probably need a one-year experience, because if it’s voluntary, you’ll have like five out of 38,000 show up. That’s why we made the Honors course for Honors and non-Honors students in 2013. It’s for a one-hour credit, but we had students sign up because they need an honors credit or an hour to fill out something.
According to Dr. Lawler, this course led to positive outcomes. “In exit interviews students have said they didn’t know what they were getting into, but met people from divers groups they never would have hung out with and made friends for life.” Yet it still highlights the difficulty of working diversity or study abroad into curriculum. “The only way the course got on the books was to have it sponsored by the Honors College and made available to non-Honors students,” she said.

Administrator Dr. Carr said that the Study Abroad office just doesn’t have enough influence over deans. He asserted that lot of international student programming ends up falling on the students to take the initiative themselves:

The Hispanic Latino Association here on campus didn’t exist three years ago, they’d been trying for years and years. And it was a young woman, new freshman, who just really expressed the fact that she was frustrated that it didn’t exist. In a meeting, a couple of us told her if you want it done you’re gonna have to be the first president. She said, ‘How can I be, I’m a freshman.’ Well, it doesn’t matter. And they paired her up with a Latina faculty member here on campus, who honestly is just about as involved as any group advisor ever is. So, she says, ‘you go do the things, I’ll be there to sign off on the stuff that needs to be signed off on, but you lead. And it has been amazing how that organization has grown and how it served a need on campus. But that’s unusual. And it shows how many hoops you have to jump through to get something going. And when you’re a minority and just trying to fit in, you may not want to draw attention to yourself.

Arts and Sciences faculty member Dr. June argues, “The Study Abroad office needs to better sculpt efforts around diversity; faculty won’t do it.” Thus, efforts to expand study abroad to
minority participants is hamstrung by questions about who is responsible for making it happen. Certainly, the Study Abroad office holds the majority of the responsibility, but has no actual power over the colleges to mandate or incentivize increasing minority participation.

**Use of Minority Images and Content on Promotional and Informational Materials**

To close out interviews, I asked interviewees if images and content matter in study abroad promotional materials and pictures with regards to generating minority interest in study abroad. Interviewees were unanimous in the affirmative, and those with influence over images and content in promotional and informational materials believe that they do have adequate minority representation. Faculty member Dr. Kidd said, “Yes. I think students need to see themselves in order to feel like programs are for them.” Dr. Tine, an Administrator in Education Abroad said, “I think it’s important. I mean, I don’t want to say it’s all about marketing, but marketing is absolutely a part of it.” Education Abroad staff member Mr. Hunter also agreed: “Promotional materials are recruitment materials, right? So, if you’re trying to recruit someone, then you need to represent them in your promotional materials. They need to be able to see themselves having a similar experience. They need to be able to identify.”

Not only did interviewees say that images matter, they expressed a belief that the images used at Southeastern University and third-party providers reflect diversity. Ms. Cruz, an administrator in Education Abroad claimed, “We are very particular about our marketing. So, diverse faces are on our brochures. Anything we put out, everyone in this office understands that it needs to be seen in a certain eye. We are choosing diverse interns. Out of our twelve, four are non-white. We’re representing diversity intentionally.” Mr. Carr, an administrator in International Student Services praised the efforts of Education Abroad in including diversity on
promotional materials: “Students consider opportunities and think ‘Is it for me, is it not for me.’ And I think that that’s something that study abroad and education abroad has fought to represent: that it’s for everybody; it can be affordable, we can make this work.”

**Analysis of Promotional Materials**

In addition to the field interviews, I reviewed promotional materials on websites and brochures from both Southeastern University’s Study Abroad office and the third-party providers Southeastern students use for study abroad programs.

At the time this study was conducted, there were six thumbnail pictures on the home page of the study abroad website. Two of the six pictures contain photographs of students. All of the students represented in the two pictures are female. Two of the 12 people featured in the photos are students of color. There are three large scrolling images at the top of the Education Abroad homepage. One of those images contains a photo of a student who is a white female.

Navigating away from the homepage, most of the photos on the Education Abroad website feature international landmarks or landscapes. Many of them are easily identifiable as locations in Europe such as Rome, Venice, Paris, and Berlin. However, some are of less traditional locations such as Cuba. I was able to find three additional photos of students following different links on the homepage. Two of the three contained individual pictures of white females, and one contained a group photo of what appear to be students holding a school flag. There are no students of color in the group photo.

The printed marketing materials for faculty-led programs, which made up 53% of participants in 2016-17, contain photographs of the country where the program is located. For example, on the Faculty-led program to Liverpool rack card, there is a picture of the Liverpool
Museum, the Liverpool riverfront at night, and the front of a university. There are no photographs of students on the faculty-led promotional materials. A review of supplemental printed marketing materials for information sessions, scholarships, and other programs or events revealed that students featured in photographs were almost exclusively White and predominately female.

The website does contain an Identity and Diversity Abroad page. The link to the page is located off a secondary page from the main landing page of the Education Abroad website. The Identity and Diversity Abroad page contains information on how some identities may be perceived abroad and provides students with access to resources that may better prepare them for their experience. The text on the page reads:

The office of Education Abroad is committed to the intellectual and social advancement of the University and seeks to foster values of inclusion and equal opportunity. We are dedicated to offering accessible programming because we believe that all students can benefit from an international experience. Study abroad represents a worthwhile endeavor to better understand oneself and the world in which they live. In preparation of such a transformative international experience, it is important to consider identity (Southeastern website).

The resource links provided are labeled Accessibility Abroad; DACA; First Generation; Gender & Sexual Orientation; Race, Ethnicity & Nationality; Religion & Faith; Socio Economic Status; Veterans. The links lead to more detailed information for each identity group. If you follow the Accessibility Abroad link, there is a photo of a differently abled person in a recumbent bicycle. When you follow the Race, Ethnicity, & Nationality link, there is a photo of a Black male in front of some ancient ruins.
Although Southeastern University claims to supporting diversity in study abroad, they use promotional and informational images and content that reinforce the predominant culture. By having images of people of color exclusively on a website of resources for Race, Ethnicity & Nationality, the message is one of exclusion, not inclusion.

Promotional images and content on affiliate and third-party developed programs also failed to adequately represent minority students. Thirty-one percent of study abroad participants who studied abroad at Southeastern University did so on Affiliate or third-party programs. The University’s website list 15 approved third-party program providers. I reviewed the homepages of the websites of all 15 providers listed. Of the 15 provider sites reviewed, six of the providers featured photographs with exclusively White students. Two providers did not contain pictures of people, only landscapes and iconic landmarks—mostly in European locations. Two program providers had video footage on their homepages which contained some images of students of color. AIFS featured six photographs on their homepage, four with people, only one non-white student—a black female. API contained 21 thumbnail photographs and one banner image on its homepage. Most of the images were of locations, and three contained group photos of diverse students. ASA’s website contained six thumbnail photographs of students on study abroad programs. Of those six, there was only one student of color. Although diversity and inclusion are topics that many of the program providers promote, their messaging is not consistent with their professed commitment to offering study abroad experiences to all students.

This absence of minority representation in promotional and informational content and images is inconsistent with beliefs about the importance of images in promoting study abroad to underrepresented student populations. Perhaps more importantly, it’s inconsistent with the perception of administrators and advisors who generate and design the promotional materials.
CHAPTER 5
CONCLUSIONS

Overview

The Lincoln Commission identified the connection between diversification efforts and study abroad in 2005 and recommended that universities attempt to increase study abroad participation and make study abroad more accessible to minority populations. Many leaders in higher education and colleges had recognized this link before and begun efforts before 2005, but the Lincoln Commission study and recommendations made increased study abroad participation and accessibility of study abroad to a more diverse body of students a national project. If they hadn’t before, institutions of higher education embraced study abroad programs as a way to increase diversity on campus and as a part of a larger project to internationalize American education.

This larger project in American higher education sought to create a more globally informed American citizenry capable of understanding, interacting and working with people unlike themselves. This benefits students in the areas of personal and academic advancement, increased global awareness, and even college completion rates. For the nation, study abroad prepares students to understand other cultures, other nations’ national interests, advance American national interest, and build a workforce that is competitive in a global economy. Thus, the project to internationalize American higher education serves to help students grow personally and academically, while advancing American interests around the world.
The project to internationalize higher education also supports, in a broader sense, the mission of higher education itself. If higher education aims to facilitate a personal transformation for students from young and promising to self-actualized, confident, capable of working in teams with people from different backgrounds, adept at dealing with ambiguity, personally responsible, empathetic, globally competent, broad-minded, and critically thinking individuals, study abroad plays a significant role in higher education. It is consistent with the mission of higher education for colleges and universities to invest in study abroad.

American colleges and universities have, thus, revised their missions and strategic plans, emphasizing diversity initiatives and study abroad efforts. While study abroad participation has increased, the percentage of college students studying abroad has not risen at the same rate that enrollments have. Moreover, the duration of study abroad programs has declined considerably. More troublingly, while study abroad is perceived to go hand-in-hand with increasing diversity on college and university campuses, minority participation in study abroad continues to lag far behind that of Whites. So, if institutions of higher education were counting on study abroad to help them become more diverse, study abroad has let them down. Study abroad programs are also not serving traditionally underserved populations of students. If study abroad does deliver the benefits that research shows it does, shouldn’t those benefits be offered to all students rather than the privileged?

While diversity participation in study abroad has not increased and study abroad participation in general has not increased as much as might be expected given the priority American institutions of higher education have placed on it, it’s not for lack of trying. In the past several decades, American colleges and universities have focused their efforts on increasing diversity, study abroad participation, and diversity participation in study abroad. While study
abroad participation has increased, it has not done so in a way that reflects the missions, strategic plans, and initiatives undertaken in American institutions of higher education. Colleges and universities have been even less successful making study abroad accessible to minority students, as study abroad participation rates fall well short of enrollment rates for African Americans and Hispanics.

**Research Questions**

I set out in this dissertation to discover why universities have been unsuccessful in increasing diversity participation in study abroad. I conducted a single case-study of a representative institution—a large public university in the American South. I began my research by asking the following questions:

1. Why, despite the self-awareness of their inadequacy in extending programming opportunities to minorities and efforts to correct it, has diversity participation in study abroad at the case-study institution not increased significantly?

2. Is the failure to significantly increase diversity participation in study abroad reflective of larger institutional shortcomings in expanding opportunities to traditionally underserved student populations?

3. To what extent does the institution’s culture support or inhibit the kind of transformational change that would increase access to programming for diverse student populations?

4. What can this institution—and, by extension—all institutions of higher learning—do to improve diversity participation in study abroad and other programming?
In order to answer these questions and follow their implications to arrive at new knowledge about what causes diversity participation in study abroad to be so stagnant and what could possibly be done about it, I employed a case-study methodology, which requires a combination of interviews, document analysis, and personal observations. Following the case-study methodology, I reviewed scholarship on study abroad and diversity in American higher education, I conducted interviews with administrators, faculty, and staff at my case-study institution, and I analyzed informational and promotional materials generated by the Study Abroad office at the case-study institution, as well as informational and promotional materials produced by third-party and affiliate study abroad programs. In addition to these methods of inquiry, my conclusions are based on my own observations.

Theory of Transformative Change

In my examination of how colleges and universities in the United States are attempting to increase diversity and expand study abroad participation—particularly for minority students, I applied Adrianna Kezar and Peter Eckel’s “Theory of Transformational Change.” In their essay, “The Effect of Institutional Culture on Change Strategies in Higher Education,” Kezar and Eckel (2002) assert that “The array of challenges that higher education faces today is virtually unparalleled when compared to any other point in U.S. history” (p. 435). In the face of these daunting challenges (financial pressure, growth in technology, changing faculty roles, public scrutiny, changing demographics, competing values, and the rapid rate of change in the world both within and beyond our national boarders) institutions of higher learning are feeling immense pressure from within and without to change. Indeed, in order to successfully address the challenges they face, they must change. Kezar and Eckel clarify what they mean by change
by stating the following: “The change under investigation in this study is comprehensive change; it is defined as change that is pervasive, affecting numerous offices and units across the institution; deep, touching upon values, beliefs and structures, is intentional, and occurs over time” (p. 440). In this study, I not only accept their view of change, I argue that my case-study university needs to undergo such change if it wants to see improvement in the areas of diversity and diversity participation in study abroad.

As they attempt to make the changes that would help them meet these challenges, institutions of higher learning look to how other organizations have affected change for models of successful transformation. Kezar and Eckel first assert that change theories began with ideas that were too general, failing to offer the kind of specificity that institutions need to implement change. Responding to these overgeneralized—or macro—theories, other higher education scholars responded by developing context-based, or micro-level theories. Kezar and Eckel claim that these micro-level theories were too specific to the institutions at which they were implemented to help other institutions promote a theory of transformational change. Thus, something in the middle was needed.

In response to this excessive generality followed by excessive specificity, Kezar and Eckel begin examining the role an institution’s culture plays in its ability to change. The culture of the institution could either facilitate or inhibit the changes it needs to implement in order to successfully address the challenges it faces. Kezar and Eckel explain that, preceding their study, there had been two views of how institutional culture and change were linked. The first, by Barbara K. Curry in 1992, argues that institutions need to cultivate a culture that encourages and supports change. Curry’s study offered advice on how to create a culture that facilitates institutional change. The second (Chaffee & Tierney, 1988; Eckel, Hill, & Green, 1998; Guskin
1996) looks at how culture is influenced by change. In other words, rather than culture facilitating change, institutional cultures in higher education shift as a result of changes made within the culture. Where Kezar and Eckel’s 2002 study fits into this discussion is in presenting a third way to view the link between culture and change. Kezar and Eckel investigate “the ways in which culture shapes an institution’s change processes or strategies” (p. 438).

In their study, Kezar and Eckel understand culture as it is defined by Peterson and Spencer (1991): “the deeply embedded patterns of organizational behavior and the shared values, assumptions, beliefs, or ideologies that members have about their organization or its work” (Peterson & Spencer, 1991, p. 142). The advantage of the Peterson and Spencer conception of culture is that it allows for nuanced understanding of how culture can be subtly different at different levels within a particular organization. These levels where unique cultures may exist are: “the enterprise, the institution, the subgroup (faculty, administrators), and the individual levels” (Martin, 1992).

Lastly, the Kezar and Eckel study “adopts two conceptual frameworks of culture: (1) Bergquist’s institutional archetypes of culture and (2) Tierney’s unique institutional culture” (p. 439). Rather than impose a general cultural description, Bergquist proposed that there are four archetypal cultures operating within most institutions of higher education, “collegial culture, managerial culture, developmental culture, and negotiating culture” (p. 439). The levels of prominence of each of these archetypes varies from institution to institution. The “collegial culture” represents the faculty perspective, valuing “scholarly engagement, shared governance and decision making, and rationality.” The “managerial culture . . . values efficiency, effective supervisory skills, and fiscal responsibility” to further the goals of the institution. The “developmental culture” seeks to encourage personal and professional development of all
members of the academic institution. The “negotiating culture” seeks to establish “equitable and egalitarian policies and procedures, valuing confrontation, interest groups, mediation, and power” (p. 439).

Because Bergquist’s framework ignores the uniqueness of each individual institution, or how culture could vary from institution to institution, Kezar and Eckel adopt a second framework developed by William Tierney. Tierney’s framework aims to explore “the ways in which culture affects change processes within unique institutions” (p. 439). Kezar and Eckel find Tierney’s framework useful because it is applicable to individual institutions, rather than identifying overarching archetypes. Tierney identifies six categories of culture within institutions of higher education in the United States: “environment, mission, socialization, information, strategy, and leadership” (p. 440). Tierney’s framework proposes that the culture of a particular institution can be determined by analyzing its “processes and artifacts” (p. 440). By combining the frameworks proffered by Bergquist and Tierney, Kezar and Eckel are then able to perform both an overarching cultural analysis and adjust accordingly to account for the uniqueness of particular institutions.

Lastly, Kezar and Eckel incorporate the list of five core change strategies formulated by Jack Lindquist (1978). These describe what must happen for institution of higher education to accomplish transformative change. First, senior administrators must support the change by issuing value or mission statements, supplying resources, or instituting new administrative structures. Second, there must be “collaborative leadership,” in which “positional and nonpositional individuals throughout the campus are involved in the change process from conception to implementation” (p. 441). Third, change requires what Lindquist calls “robust design.” Lindquist is referring to a plan for the future to achieve a vision that is “clear and
understandable,” “includes set goals and objectives,” and is “flexible” enough to that it does not “foreclose possible opportunities” (441). Fourth, the change plan must include efforts to develop staff so that they “learn skills or knowledge related to issues associated with the change effort” (p. 441). Fifth, the effort to affect change must entail “visible actions . . . that are noticeable” (p. 441). This means that individuals throughout the institution can see that the change effort is actually important to the institution and that it is in progress.

Kezar and Eckel believe that considering the theories of institutional transformational change devised by Bergquist and Tierney, along with the change strategies developed by Lindquist, provide a framework to understand the role of culture on change. If change is successfully implemented, what is it about the culture of the institution that enables it? Conversely, if an institution seeks change, but isn’t successful in affecting it, what about its culture hinders or impedes its efforts?

**Application of Theory**

The framework of Kezar and Eckel, which is informed by the views of Bergquist, Tierney and Lindquist, influenced my study. Adopting the framework of Kezar and Eckel, I viewed Southeastern University both through the archetypal cultures put forth by Bergquist and the six categories of culture formulated by Tierney. This framework shaped the questions I asked during my interviews with faculty, administrators and staff at Southeastern University, my analysis of the informative and promotional literature published by Southeastern University’s Study Abroad office and, lastly, my own observations of the institution and its Study Abroad office.
Southeastern University is an institution that is attempting to change its culture. This is borne out in interviewees’ answers to questions about the culture of the institution and in my own observations. According to all interviewees, Southeastern University is culturally evolving. It is transitioning from a traditional, state-serving institution to one that recruits nationally and embraces and celebrates diversity and adopts an international worldview, at least among its faculty and current administrative leadership. This transition is also reflected in the recruitment of higher-achieving students and a student body that is at least more regionally diverse, if not yet racially and socio-economically so.

The impetus for Southeastern University’s effort to transform its culture is rooted in a desire to brand itself as a world-class institution. Many people at the institution describe it as a place that is historically perceived by the rest of the world to be backward-thinking, particularly pertaining to issues of race and gender. This perception of the institution is influenced by its location in the South and its history of racial segregation and racial strife. There have even been relatively recent news stories about segregation in Greek fraternities and sororities that recall shameful episodes in the University’s history that the University is attempting to distance itself from. The institution’s faculty and administrators at the highest levels know that, if the institution is going to climb the U.S. News and World Report rankings by recruiting better students and faculty, it is going to have to rebrand itself as more progressive. The effort to be internationally renowned necessarily involves changing the culture of the institution.

Southeastern University is currently, however, an institution still rooted in traditions associated with the American South. Primarily, the Southern traditions of the school are kept alive by Greek fraternities and sororities. Fraternities and sororities and many other groups associated with the institution strive to hold on to the University’s defining Southern
characteristics. It is worth mentioning that not all Southern characteristics are bad in the sense that they resist diversity. Some Southern characteristics like hospitality, loyalty, family, courtesy, respect for elders, and appreciation for a slower pace of life are attractive and could be selling points for faculty or students from other regions.

Conversely, however, the South is characterized by religiosity, conservatism, rigidity, and a tendency to romanticize the past that often put its at odds with change. Groups such as Greek fraternities and sororities, which are selective based on family ties, legacy, race, socioeconomic status, and adherence to cliquish style and behavioral codes, perpetuate the same kind of tribalism based on class and race that Southern traditions do. They preserve the exclusivity of the dominant class and coerce homogeneity. Throughout college and beyond, these organizations attract and then provide benefits to those who are privileged enough to be deemed worthy of entrance into their society. Sometimes these benefits include job placement and promotion. Thus, the extent of their power to restrict privilege to groups that already enjoy it is sweeping.

The Greek organizations are favored by many of the institution’s alumni, donors, booster, and board, as well as many incoming students. Hence, there’s a tension at the university between those who want to move it forward by embracing diversity and internationalization and those who want it to retain its association with Southern traditions. This creates a dilemma for the University’s leadership, as they seek to balance competing desires on one hand to preserve traditions that are antithetical to increased diversity and internationalization and, on the other, to embrace diversity initiatives and internationalize the campus, expanding access to traditionally underserved student populations.
Another area of the institutions culture where a similar tension exists is in athletics. Athletics plays a major role in defining the culture of Southeastern University. Athletics has been instrumental in creating brand recognition for Southeastern University and contributing to its growth.

Southeastern University is currently experiencing unparalleled success in athletics. The University’s athletic success has led to increases in revenue from ticket sales, alumni donations, and licensing agreements. The athletic department isn’t the only beneficiary of the University’s athletic success. Also coinciding with wins on the field is unprecedented increase in student applications and growth of the student body. Much of the influx of new students has come from out of state. Since out-of-state students pay higher tuition rates, the University itself is reaping the financial benefits of the success it has sewn on the field.

While sports (to be clear, many sports have enjoyed incredible success as Southeastern University, but football is the school’s highest profile and the sport that most shapes its identity) can bring people together and contribute to a communal pride, it can also work to highlight privilege and preserve traditions that are antithetical to inclusion. At Southeastern University, football game days do bring people together on campus and in one stadium. However, Greek organizations are given priority seating in the student section. Additionally, a stroll around the campus on game day highlights the special privilege these Greek organizations enjoy on campus. Fraternity and sorority houses occupy prime real estate around the perimeter of the stadium and on main thoroughfares. And their pre and post-game activities, with parties featuring live music behind wrought-iron fencing offering exclusive admission to current and former fraternity or sorority members, demonstrate privilege and exclusivity.
Furthermore, sports success is one of the major aspects of the University’s identity. Southeastern University has a history of success that is revered and celebrated by students, alumni, and residents of the state. It’s current and former coaches are honored more in memorials and a museum on campus than any of its presidents or professors. This aspect of the University’s culture also emphasizes history and tradition over all else. The cultural markers are present all over campus and all over the city in which the campus resides. Buildings and restaurants named after coaches or given monikers like “Legacy” or “Traditions” serve as symbols signifying that sports and traditions surrounding it or associated with it take precedence over all other aspects of the University’s mission, including to “advance the intellectual and social condition of the people of the state, the nation and the world through the creation, translation and dissemination of knowledge with an emphasis on quality programs in the areas of teaching, research and service” (“Our Mission”). The messages of these symbols also contradict one of the Universities “strategic goals,” which is to “[e]nrich our learning and work environment by providing an accepting, inclusive community that attracts and supports a diverse faculty, staff and student body.”

These differences between the professed mission and goals of the University and the realities of campus life create tension between faculty and administrators who formulate the mission and the goals of the University and the boosters, alumni, some students and, in some cases, members of the board of trustees who have an interest in holding on to these traditions of the past. These sources of tension make transformative institutional change from a traditional institution to one that embraces and celebrates diversity or commits to internationalization difficult to enact. University leadership must tow a razor-thin line between satisfying the demands of faculty, administrators and students who want to see progress in the areas of
diversity, inclusion and internationalization and alumni, donors, students and residents of the state that want traditions celebrated and indulged on campus.

Thus, these factors put faculty and administrators who support change at odds with trustees, donors, alumni, and many students. To use Kezar and Eckel’s framework (adopted from Bergquist and Tierney), the managerial culture sometimes thwarts the efforts of the collegial and developmental cultures. We see this conflict highlighted in comments from some interviewees about how the institution’s leaders profess to support diversity but fail to take decisive or sufficient actions. When interviewees express a lack of confidence in the actual commitment of leadership to follow through on claims made in strategic plans, they are basically alleging that university leaders are being careful not to enact the kind of sweeping change that might offend alumni, trustees, and current legacy students who most benefit from and, therefore, want to preserve the institution’s traditions. Moreover, the conflict is also apparent in comments where interviewees assert that university leadership must negotiate a compromise to keep the groups most interested in preserving the exclusive, segregationist characteristics of the institution happy in order to sustain the financial support these groups provide.

In Tierney’s framework, this conflict would play out between the “environment” of the university and its “mission.” The stated mission of the university is to “advance the intellectual and social condition of the people of the state, the nation and the world through the creation, translation and dissemination of knowledge with an emphasis on quality programs in the areas of teaching, research and service.” Moreover, Southeastern University’s “Core Values” and “Strategic Goals” reflect a global focus. One of the Core Values is to foster a “Campus life that embodies collaboration, collegiality, respect and a culture of inclusivity.” And among the University’s “Strategic Goals” is to “provide a premier education that offers a global
perspective” and provides “an accepting, inclusive community that attracts and supports a
diverse faculty, staff and student body.”

The current environment, while described as evolving, does not support transformational
change. While there are some signs of progress in the areas of diversity and inclusion, the pace
of progress is slow considering that they are expressed priorities of the institutions. The culture
of the institution, thus, hinders its ability to achieve its own stated goals.

Lindquist’s strategies for transformational change highlight the ways the culture of
Southeastern University inhibits transformational change. Lindquist argues that an institution of
higher learning must implement five core strategies to accomplish real transformation. It must,
first, have senior administrators who support the change by issuing value or mission statements,
supplying resources, or instituting new administrative structures. That has been accomplished at
Southeastern University. However, an examination of Southeastern University reveals that it
does not meet other strategies developed by Lindquist. Lindquist’s second strategy stipulates that
there must be “collaborative leadership,” in which “positional and nonpositional individuals
throughout the campus are involved in the change process from conception to implementation”
(Kezar and Eckel, 2002, p. 441). That isn’t the case at Southeastern University, where, though
there are many institutional leaders, administrators and faculty committed to “a culture of
inclusivity” and a “diverse faculty, staff and student body,” there is an opposing contingent of
alumni, donors, trustees and students—some of whom wield profound influence over the actions
of the university—who are opposed to cultural transformation. Southeastern University’s attempt
at transformation does feature “robust design” in that it’s “clear and understandable” and has “set
goals and objectives.” It also includes efforts to develop staff, satisfying another of Lindquist’s
strategy. While the institution may be taking “visible actions,” those actions are undermined by other actions it takes or, perhaps more precisely, doesn’t take.

Interviewees’ remarks about the heavy Greek organization influence and football focus reflect this tension between opposing forces—inclusion on the one hand and tradition on the other—that leadership has to negotiate. Other remarks from interviewees about the constant necessity to compromise to serve the mission of the institution while keeping donor money coming in makes a similar implication, as do comments explaining that leadership wants the University to be inclusive and afford opportunities to underserved student populations “up to a certain extent.” Leadership may want the University to fully embrace diversity and equal opportunities for minority students, but it has to be careful to keep its core of traditional students—many of them legacy students, alumni and donors—on board.

Lastly, in my personal experiences with Southeastern University I see this same tension. Minority and international students do have a presence on campus and there are opportunities available to them. Faculty and administrators are open, progressive in terms of diversity and internationalization, and committed to transforming the organization’s culture. Yet, it is hard not to formulate an impression on Southeastern’s campus that the place belongs in many ways to the traditionally-served, privileged, fraternity or sorority affiliated, white student whose parents and grandparents also attended the University. While this may be changing, it is changing gradually and change agents have a real fight on their hands. In many ways, this process of evolution parallels the politics of America. While the demographics are changing, those who have historically enjoyed the privilege of their race, class and socioeconomic status fight to preserve the traditions, characteristics, codes and behaviors that indicated their privilege. When faced with change, they become defiant, with defiance itself becoming one of their defining traits. Perhaps,
with leadership committed to transforming the culture, change will occur. But there is resistance from those whose place of privilege is being challenged. They are not embracing change because they don’t see it as a positive for them—even if it would improve campus life, provide more opportunities to learn and gain experience that could enrich their lives and increase job opportunities. Rather they’re resisting it because they see it as an infringement on their status of privilege.

In conclusion, signs indicate that Southeastern University does want to make progress in the areas of diversity and opportunities for underserved students (such as study abroad), but it falls short of satisfying Kezar and Eckel’s prescription for how to affect transformative change. The change strategy implemented by the University appears to be too weak in its propensity to compromise. Institutional leaders don’t seem willing to upset the traditionally-served students in an effort to get them to buy in to change, which creates the perception among those who want change that leaders are catering to the privileged. In the framework Kezar and Eckel borrow from Bergquist and Tierney, compromise between tradition and change creates tension between the managerial and the collegial and developmental cultures of the University. And in the core strategies developed by Lindquist, change efforts at Southeastern would fall short of satisfying all the change strategies necessary for institutional transformation.

This is not to say, to be clear, that leadership has done a poor job because they tend to try to compromise between continuing to serve in traditional ways those students that have historically been served and changing the University to one that affords opportunities to traditionally underserved populations. Southeastern University is thriving, at least in a business and branding sense, and perhaps there’s an argument to be made that it is doing so because it has employed compromise in its dealings between opposing visions of what it should be. It could
also be argued that preserving traditions appeases traditionally-served students and keeps money rolling in that can then be used to fund scholarships and programming opportunities for underserved populations. However, while it may be making some progress in increasing diversity and offering opportunities to minority students, the reluctance to offend the traditionally privileged class of people associated with the University slows efforts to change the University’s culture to one that serves all people of its state and nation, that fulfills its goal to “[e]nrich our learning and work environment by providing an accepting, inclusive community that attracts and supports a diverse faculty, staff and student body.”

**Recommendations and Implications**

Southeastern University is faced with a dilemma as it moves forward. It must respond to faculty, staff and students who would like to see increased diversity on campus and more access to services and programs for traditionally underserved students. On the other hand, it is beholden to large numbers of students, alumni, donors, and trustees who want to preserve the very traditions associated with the University that contribute to perpetuating a system that affords opportunity to the same student populations it has historically served. This same dilemma is faced by a lot of Primarily White Institutions.

Southeastern University has taken actions to afford access and opportunity to minority students. It has revised its mission statement and its statement of values and strategic priorities. These actions are important steps and the University deserves credit for taking them. At the same time, there is more the University could do to increase diversity and access to programming on campus, specifically study abroad. Actions it could implement emerge from the interviews I did with faculty, administrators and staff, as well as my examination of the promotional and
informational material published by the study abroad office and reflection on my personal experience at the University.

Most interviewees stated that the University is taking positive actions to increase diversity and improve access to programs for minority students. Administrators in the University’s Study Abroad office state that improving access for minority students is a top priority, and that they are making efforts to recruit minority students and find scholarships and other funding sources for them. However, there is more they could do and some things they could do more effectively.

First, the Study Abroad office needs to improve its recruitment of and outreach to minority faculty. Interviewees unanimously agreed that faculty representation was important for student involvement. If students see faculty who look like them, they are more likely to find opportunities offered to them to be within their reach. In effect, faculty representation serves as evidence to support claims by advisors and promotional materials that there is funding available to help students study abroad who may not otherwise be able to afford it. Faculty representation could also encourage minorities to study abroad by sending a message that study abroad programs are welcoming to minorities.

Of course, efforts to increase diversity among faculty leaders of study abroad programs would benefit from a University-wide effort. The first way to facilitate the recruitment of more minority faculty to lead study abroad programs would be to hire more minority faculty. The mission statement, value statement, and strategic priorities help, but the University and departments have to be willing to pay salaries that make Southeastern a place that minority faculty applicants see as an attractive place to build their careers. I have heard faculty from multiple departments say that minority faculty candidates turned down positions at Southeastern
for more money elsewhere. Even if it’s a matter of perception, the institution needs to recognize that its history and location may put it at a disadvantage when trying to hire minority faculty and offer higher salaries in order to overcome that disadvantage.

Another action the University could consider would be to make developing and directing study abroad programs a factor in tenure and promotion. Taking students on study abroad programs is a necessarily long and involved process; from proposing the program to recruiting students, leading a study abroad program takes time. Many interviewees stated that faculty who have yet to earn tenure are deterred by the fact that they need to focus all of their energy on work that leads to tenure. Making direction of a study abroad program a factor in tenure and promotion would incentivize it to new faculty. This would be particularly effective in combination with the recruitment of minority faculty. New faculty hires have to do what is required to get tenure. If study abroad were part of the tenure and promotion process, new faculty would have a greater incentive to run study abroad programs.

Another thing the Study Abroad office could do independently of the rest of the University would be to increase minority representation in its promotional and educational material. Historically it has been the case that study abroad materials feature images of students on programs. Many of these images are derived from photographs taken of students by other students or program directors. The problem with using these images to advertise programs or recruit students is that the messaging targets the same kind of students who traditionally go on study abroad programs. Interviewees agreed—and it is my believe as well—that seeing people who look like you on flyers, pamphlets, web pages and associated publications communicates the message that the programming being promoted is open to everyone. This may mean that images have to be sourced from somewhere else. While study abroad offices must be careful to
avoid the perception that they are fabricating images, it is important to be intentional in representing diverse groups if the goal is increasing diversity. Thus the authenticity is of the vision of study abroad at the institution in the future, rather than what it is in the present.

What’s surprising about the issue of minority representation in images used by the Study Abroad office to promote programs and participation is that personnel from the Study Abroad office claimed that their materials do feature diverse students. In my review of materials published by the Study Abroad office, I did not find that to be the case. There were very few minorities featured in flyers, pamphlet, and website photos. At the time of this study, two of the six pictures on the website contained photographs of students. All of the students represented in the two pictures are female and only two of the 12 people featured in the photos are students of color. Navigating through the website, I was able to find three additional photos of students. Two of the three contained individual pictures of white females, and one contained a group photo. None of the additional photos contained people of color. The printed marketing materials for faculty-led programs, which made up 53% of participants in 2016-17, did not have photographs of students on promotional materials. A review of supplemental printed marketing materials for information sessions, scholarships, and other programs or events revealed that students featured in photographs were almost exclusively White and predominately female.

This discrepancy in the Study Abroad staff’s perception that they represent minority students in their promotional and informational materials is one of the more perplexing problems I have encountered in my research. People who care deeply about this issue believe that their materials reflect diversity when, in reality, it does not. This presents an opportunity for improvement, but also highlights the limitations of using firsthand photographs in office productions. It is an opportunity to remind staff that there is more they can do to accomplish the
goals they are heavily invested in accomplishing. It feels awkward or even condescending to misrepresent in advertising for programs. However, perhaps being intentional in the gathering of photographs of diverse faculty and students is the one approach. Rather than randomly soliciting images from all students, the Study Abroad Office could reach out directly to those underrepresented past participants and ask them to share their stories and pictures. This way the Study Abroad Office is being direct and transparent in their mission to diversify study abroad. They are also giving voice to underrepresented students so that they can help craft the narrative.

The last area of concern interviewees identified is the organizational structure of the Study Abroad Office within the university. Study Abroad reports up through Academic Affairs and is an academic support service. While most administrators and faculty agree that this is the most appropriate location for a study abroad office, many expressed the limitations such a structure presents. Chief concerns are that it causes confusion about who is responsible for affecting the kind of change administrators and faculty want and that has been endorsed by university leaders and codified in mission statements, value statements and strategic plans. It is one thing to say we want to see a more diverse campus or even that we want more diversity participation in study abroad. But then everyone looks around at each other and shrugs, wondering who is in charge of implementing a directive. Surely, it’s the responsibility of the Study Abroad Office, but then if the Study Abroad Office has no influence over the colleges or departments, how can the Study Abroad Office do anything other than recruit and advocate for its programming? Like many academic support services, the Study Abroad office is in the position of having responsibility without power. They can promote programs on the value they add to the institution or enrichment they provide for students, but they cannot force deans or chairs to encourage or mandate that their faculty lead study abroad programs, direct programs in
more diverse destinations, or recruit minority students. The institution appoints a Chief International Officer (CIO) to guide the institutions international engagement plan and a Chief Diversity Officer (CDO) to guide the diversity and inclusion efforts, but there is no intersection of these roles. These positions, though seemingly working toward the same goals, do not work together. The CDO is part of Student Affairs and the CIO is part of Academic Affairs. Thus, the organization is not structured in a way to address or support the issue of underrepresentation in study abroad programs.

Bias and Limitations

This study is limited to a single-case focused on one large public institution in the Southeast United States; therefore, it is not generalizable across institutions. However, it is likely applicable to several institutions, especially other public, state universities of 20,000 plus students. Another limitation of this study is the potential bias of the interviewees. During the data collection process, I noticed that upper level administrators tended to respond more positively to the institution’s diversity and inclusion efforts. These participants generally thought the institutional leadership was sincere in their approach and doing a good job at addressing issues of inequality and access. Faculty responses were mixed, but many seemed skeptical about the intentions of the upper administration. The responses from support staff were much more cynical. All the reactions from interviewees at a director’s level or below felt that the administration was disingenuous its attempts to diversify and create an inclusive campus community. Thus, there was clearly bias in the responses of the study participants.

Lastly, the nature of the case study design is limited by the subjective decision making of the researcher (Merriam, 2002). In creating the study and analyzing the data, I determined what
was valuable and applicable and what was not. Thus, there is researcher bias inherent in the research design. I am the author and researcher of this study and also the director of international education at a mid-size public institution in the South where globalization is part of the institution’s strategic plan. I believe that a comprehensive approach to internationalization is essential. I also believe that there must be a top down initiative to both internationalization and diversity and inclusion efforts. This initiative must be supported at every level and mandated across campus. This is especially important at institutions where diversity has not historically been tolerated, much less encouraged. Underrepresented students often have limited exposure to other cultures, limited knowledge about study abroad programs, and limited resources to invest in study abroad opportunities. I believe that providing global experiences to all students is critical to embracing diversity and changing the fabric of our institutions and our country so that all persons—regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, or socioeconomic background—have an opportunity to succeed. I believe that it is the role of colleges and universities to lead the way by eliminating the barriers that prevent so many citizens from fully participating in our democracy. This is especially true for Public institutions with a mandate to educate the citizenry of the states in which they operate. I also think that demonstrating the interconnectedness of a global society and foster an awareness and appreciation of different cultures is the responsibility of institutions of higher education.

Conclusion

Technology, ease of mobility, economic interdependence, and increased diplomatic efforts have made the nations of the world more interconnected. As such, most institutions have embraced the fact that we now live in an increasingly global society and are striving to internationalize their curriculums and campuses. Institutions have mission statements that
support creating an informed, globally competent citizenry prepared to work and lead a global society. Succeeding in a global society involves learning about and engaging with other cultures. It is critical part of the collective mission of higher education to produce graduates to be the future leaders of the world who are familiar with and sensitive to cultures other than their own. Study abroad programs play a critical role in giving students access and information about other cultures. Study abroad programs contribute to the public mission in a many ways: they prepare students to be informed global citizens, thus helping them be individually successful in a global society; they produce citizens who are culturally and politically knowledgeable in a global sense; they produce students whose awareness of cultural differences makes them more aware of and able to advance the interests of our nation.

Given that study abroad programs bring success and recognition to students and campuses, institutions of higher education in the U.S. have increasingly prioritized and made global engagement part of their strategic plans. Nearly all of the 3,000 accredited, four-year institutions in the U.S. engage in some kind of education abroad activity.

Yet, despite the consensus that studying abroad is an important tool for understanding and embracing other cultures, study abroad participation in the U.S. has not increased at a rate that reflects the emphasis higher education has placed on it. While more students are studying abroad, numbers of study abroad participants has not increased at a rate commensurate with increasing enrollment numbers. Additionally, as minority student enrollment has increased in higher education, participation among minority students in study abroad lags behind participation by white students and is not growing significantly. IIE’s most recent Open Doors Report reveals that close to 75 percent of students who study abroad are White, though White students make up only 58 percent of college students overall. Hispanic students make up only eight percent of
study abroad participants, though they account for 17 percent of college students overall. African-American students comprise only six percent of those who study abroad, while 14 percent of college students are African American (Open Doors, 2018). The small percentage of students who study abroad are simply not representative of the student demographic of higher education in the U.S. Minorities are underrepresented. Therefore, the benefits of study abroad participation continue to accrue to a small, predominately White, percentage of the population.

Since the mission of study abroad programs is to expose students to diversity, it is problematic that these programs do not attract a diverse group of participants.

In order to improve in the areas of exposing students to diversity and offering equal access to enriching academic programming, colleges and universities need to increase study abroad participation across the board and, especially, among minority students. Prioritizing study abroad and inclusion and diversity efforts make a difference. But, for some institutions, these efforts to become more globally minded and inclusive can be hindered by the kind of culture that characterizes the institution. These institutions must transform their culture if they want to truly embrace global engagement and inclusivity and become institutions that serve their state, the nation and the world.

My study focuses on a single institution—a publicly-funded, state university—currently attempting a transformation to a more globally-minded and inclusive institution. I sought to understand this institution’s challenges as it attempts to increase its study abroad participation, particularly among its minority students, in order to draw some conclusions about why minority participation in study abroad nationwide is not improving in a way that is commensurate with efforts being made to increase it. It is my hope that my findings will help institutions understand what factors are inhibiting efforts to increase diversity participation in study abroad so that they
can address these factors and make study abroad programming an opportunity that is afforded to all students.
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APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

To the Deans and Academic and Student Affairs leadership:

1. Briefly describe your position at the University.

2. What does institutional diversity mean to you?

3. Please describe the diversity initiatives at the institution from your perspective.
   a. Is diversity included in the institution’s strategic plan?
   b. What practices or policies have been implemented to increase diversity in non-academic programs?
   c. Do you think imagery is important to students when it comes to embracing diversity?
   d. Is hiring a representative faculty important to embracing diversity on campus?

4. What are some of the leadership challenges associated with diversity?

5. What are the indicators of success when it comes to diversity?

6. Do you think the leadership of the institution feels that diversity is important?

7. Please describe the internationalization and study abroad program at the University from your perspective.
   a. Is internationalization included in the institution’s strategic plan?
   b. Do you think study abroad is important?
   c. Do you believe that all students should be afforded the opportunity to study abroad?
To the Vice Provost of Global Initiatives, Director of International Education, and Study Abroad Advisors:

1. Briefly describe your position at the University.

2. Please describe the diversity initiatives at the institution from your perspective.
   a. Is diversity included in the institution’s strategic plan?
   b. What practices or policies have been implemented to increase diversity in non-academic programs?
   c. Is hiring a representative faculty important to embracing diversity on campus?

3. Does the institutional leadership think that diversity is important?

4. What are the indicators of success when it comes to diversity?

5. Please describe the internationalization and study abroad program at the University from your perspective.
   a. Is internationalization included in the institution’s strategic plan?
   b. Do you think study abroad is important?
   c. Do you believe that all students should be afforded the opportunity to study abroad?
   d. What percentage of students study abroad here?

8. Do you think internationalization plays a part in diversifying the campus culture?

9. Do you think diversity in international programs/study abroad is important?
   a. What does diversity in international programs look like to you?
i. What percentage of those are minority students?

6. Do you think diversity in international programs/study abroad is important?
   a. What does diversity in international programs look like to you?

7. What factors do you consider when determining what study abroad programs to promote?
   a. Do you think images matter in promotional materials?
   b. How do you determine what images to use when promoting study abroad programs?

8. How do you determine what faculty to involve in leading study abroad programs?
   a. Do you think students chose to participate in study abroad programs based on faculty leadership?
   b. Do you think it is important for underrepresented students to see images and/or faculty who look like them in study abroad promotional materials?

9. Are you aware of national efforts to diversify study abroad participation?
   a. What specific national programs or efforts are you aware of?

10. Do you think institutional efforts to embrace diversity will positively impact the diversity of study abroad programs?

11. Do you think the overall campus culture and attitude toward diversity contribute to the kinds of study abroad programs you offer?

12. Do you think internationalization plays a part in diversifying the campus culture?

To the students who have studied abroad:

1. Do you think the campus culture is one that values and embraces diversity?
2. Do you think diverse populations are represented in the university’s international/study abroad programs?

3. Are diverse or non-traditional locations represented in the university’s international/study abroad programs?

4. Are faculty leaders from diverse backgrounds represented in the university’s international/study abroad programs?

5. Are minority and underrepresented students aware of study abroad opportunities?

6. How important is diversity to you on campus?

7. How important is diversity in study abroad leadership to you?

8. How important is diversity of program location in study abroad to you?

9. What factors did you consider when determining what study abroad program to participate in?
   a. How important was faculty leadership in determining what study abroad program to participate in?
   b. How important was the program location in deciding on your study abroad program?
   c. Why did you decide on your program location?

10. Do you think images matter in study abroad promotional literature?
    a. Do you remember anything specific about the images on the web or in print materials advertising your program?
    b. Do you think it is important for underrepresented and minority students to see images of students and/or faculty who look like them in study abroad promotional materials?
11. Are you aware of institutional efforts to embrace or promote diversity?
   
a. Do you think institutional efforts to embrace diversity will positively impact the diversity of study abroad programs?

b. Do you think the overall campus culture and attitude toward diversity contribute to the kinds of study abroad programs promoted to students?

12. Are you aware of national efforts to diversify study abroad participation?
   
a. If so, what national programs or efforts are you aware of?

To the faculty leaders of study abroad programs:

1. Briefly describe your position at the University.

2. Please describe the diversity initiatives at the institution from your perspective.
   
a. Is diversity included in the institution’s strategic plan?

b. What practices or policies have been implemented to increase diversity in non-academic programs?

   c. Is hiring a representative faculty important to embracing diversity on campus?

3. Does the institutional leadership think that diversity is important?

4. Do you think the campus culture is one that values and embraces diversity?

5. What are the indicators of success when it comes to diversity?

6. Do you think diverse populations are represented in the university’s international/study abroad programs?

7. Are diverse or non-traditional locations represented in the university’s international/study abroad programs?
8. Are faculty leaders from diverse backgrounds represented in the university’s international/study abroad programs?

9. Are minority and underrepresented students aware of study abroad opportunities?

10. Do you think institutional efforts to embrace diversity will positively impact the diversity of study abroad programs?
   a. Do you think the overall campus culture and attitude toward diversity contribute to the kinds of study abroad programs promoted to students?

11. Are you aware of national efforts to diversify study abroad participation?
   a. What specific national programs or efforts are you aware of?
APPENDIX B: IRB APPROVAL
July 6, 2017

Holly Hudson  
College of Education  
The University of Alabama  
Box 870302

Re: IRB #17-OR-221, "Diversity in Study Abroad: Does Institutional Culture Matter?"

Dear Ms. Hudson:

The University of Alabama Institutional Review Board has granted approval for your proposed research.

Your application has been given expedited approval according to 45 CFR part 46. Approval has been given under expedited review category 7 as outlined below:

(7) Research on individual or group characteristics or behavior (including, but not limited to, research on perception, cognition, motivation, identity, language, communication, cultural beliefs or practices, and social behavior) or research employing survey, interview, oral history, focus group, program evaluation, human factors evaluation, or quality assurance methodologies.

Your application will expire on July 5, 2018. If your research will continue beyond this date, please complete the relevant portions of the IRB Renewal Application. If you wish to modify the application, please complete the Modification of an Approved Protocol Form. Changes in this study hazards to participants. When the study closes, please complete the Request for Study Closure Form.

Please use reproductions of the IRB approved stamped consent forms to obtain consent from your participants.

Should you need to submit any further correspondence regarding this proposal, please include the above application number.

Good luck with your research.

Sincerely,

Carpanito T. Myles, MSM, C  
Director & Research Compliance  

IM, CIP  
Officer

Office for Research Compliance
UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD FOR THE PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS
REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF RESEARCH INVOLVING HUMAN SUBJECTS

I. Identifying information

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<td><a href="mailto:hshudson@crimson.ua.edu">hshudson@crimson.ua.edu</a></td>
<td><a href="mailto:kholley@bamaed.ua.edu">kholley@bamaed.ua.edu</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Title of Research Project: Diversity in Study Abroad: Does Institutional Culture Matter?

Date Submitted: April 19, 2017
Funding Source: none

Type of Proposal: ☒ New   ☐ Revision   ☐ Renewal   ☐ Completed   ☐ Exempt

UA faculty or staff member signature: ____________________________

II. NOTIFICATION OF IRB ACTION (to be completed by IRB):
Type of Review: _______ Full board   ☒ Expedited

IRB Action:
☒ Approved-this proposal complies with University and federal regulations for the protection of human subjects.

Approval is effective until the following date: 7-5-18

Items approved: ☒ Research protocol (dated 7-6-17)
☒ Informed consent (dated 7-6-17)
☒ Recruitment materials
☒ Other

Approval signature: ____________________________ Date 7/6/2017
THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA
HUMAN RESEARCH PROTECTION PROGRAM
UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

Study Title: Diversity in Study Abroad: Does Institutional Culture Matter?

Investigator: Holly Hudson, Graduate Student in Higher Education Administration at The University of Alabama

IRB Approval #

You are being asked to take part in a research study.

This study is called “Diversity in Study Abroad: Does Institutional Culture Matter?”

The study is being done by Holly Hudson, who is a graduate student at the University of Alabama. Ms. Hudson is being supervised by Professor Karri Holley, PhD, who is an Associate Professor of Higher Education at the University of Alabama.

What is this study about? What is the investigator trying to learn?
This study is being done to find out how institutional culture supports or inhibits diversity in study abroad programs. This study is explorative in nature.

Why is this study important or useful?
This knowledge is useful because there is a growing emphasis on study abroad at U.S. colleges and universities. Study abroad has been identified as a High Impact Practice and shown to be beneficial for college students from many backgrounds. Despite the consensus that studying abroad is beneficial, participation rates in the U.S. have remained relatively stagnant. The few students who do study abroad are not representative of the diverse student demographic. Therefore, the benefits of study abroad participation continue to accrue to a small, homogeneous percentage of the population and not to students from multiple backgrounds. This study seeks to explore the relationship between institutional culture and diversity in study abroad programs; to understand better ways to support access to and participation in study abroad.

Why have I been asked to be in this study?
You have been asked to be in this study because of your role in higher education at an institution targeted by this research. We seek participants who have expertise and insight into the institutional culture and the challenges and benefits of diversity initiatives.

How many people will be in this study?
About 25 other people from the targeted institution will be in this study.

UA IRB Approved Document
Approval date: 7-6-17
Expiration date: 7-5-18
What will I be asked to do in this study?
If you meet the criteria and agree to be in this study, you will be asked to complete a one-on-one interview with the principal investigator(s). The interview will last approximately 45 minutes to 1 hour, and will be audio recorded. The interview will be conducted in person at a location mutually agreed upon by the participant as well as the principal investigator(s). Your interview will be recorded. However, if you do not wish to be recorded, tell the principal investigator(s), who will then take handwritten notes.

How much time will I spend being this study?
Participants will complete a one-time interview that lasts approximately 45 minutes to 1 hour. In some cases, a brief follow-up interview may be requested.

Will being in this study cost me anything?
The only cost to you from this study is your time.

What are the benefits of being in this study?
There are no direct benefits to participating in this study.

What are the risks (dangers or harms) to me if I am in this study?
There are no risks involved in this study. Your identity will remain confidential, and you may decide to discontinue your participation at any time.

What are the benefits to science or society?
Results from this study will be used to better understand the relationship between institutional culture and diversity initiatives on campus as they relate to study abroad programs.

How will my privacy be protected?
We will not tell anyone that you have participated in this study. You do not have to answer any questions or give us any information that you do not want to disclose.

How will my confidentiality be protected?
Names will only be known to the principal investigator(s). The names will not be used as identifiers in the research to ensure confidentiality of the participants and the institution. No information will be released that identifies you by name or affiliation. Information from the interviews will be kept in a locked drawer. Electronic data will be maintained on a password-protected. The audio recordings of the interviews will be destroyed when the study is completed.

What are the alternatives to being in this study? Do I have other choices?
The alternative to being in this study is not to participate. You do not have to be in this study.

What are my rights as a participant in this study?

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Taking part in this study is voluntary. It is your free choice. You can refuse to be in it at all. If you start the study, you can stop at any time. There will be no effect on your relations with the University of Alabama.

The University of Alabama Institutional Review Board ("the IRB") is the committee that protects the rights of people in research studies. The IRB may review study records from time to time to be sure that people in research studies are being treated fairly and that the study is being carried out as planned.

**Who do I call if I have questions or problems?**
If you have questions, concerns, or complaints about the study right now, please ask them. If you have questions, concerns, or complaints about the study later on, please call Holly Hudson at 205-535-2756 or email her at hshudson@crimson.ua.edu. You may also email Dr. Karri Holley at kaholley@ua.edu or call her at 205-348-7825.

If you have questions about your rights as a person in a research study, call Ms. Tanta Myles, the Research Compliance Officer of the University, at 205-348-8461 or toll-free at 1-877-820-3066.

You may also ask questions, make suggestions, or file complaints and concerns through the IRB Outreach website at [http://osp.ua.edu/site/PRCO_Welcome.html](http://osp.ua.edu/site/PRCO_Welcome.html) or email the Research Compliance office at participantoutreach@bama.ua.edu.

After you participate, you are encouraged to complete the survey for research participants that is online at the outreach website or you may ask the investigator for a copy of it and mail it to the University Office for Research Compliance, Box 870127, 358 Rose Administration Building, Tuscaloosa, AL 35487-0127.

I have read this consent form. I have had a chance to ask questions. I agree to take part in it.

I will receive a copy of this consent form to keep.

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**Signature of Research Participant**

**Date**

I agree to to have the interview audio recorded. Please check one: ____ YES  or  ____ NO

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**Signature of Investigator**

**Date**

**UA IRB Approved Document**

Approval date: **7-6-17**

Expiration date: **7-5-18**