TRANSLATING STUDY ABROAD

From classes to career

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TODAY’S GOAL

Learn how language and other soft skills that you gain abroad can help you professionally (Interview focus)
THE BASICS

**Global = global**
- The U.S. population is impacted (in education, legislation, boardrooms, media, environment…) by how the world works.
- Country or economic borders can protect but walls or other ‘safety’ measures will not change this.

**Today’s undergraduate = tomorrow’s leader**
- U.S. competitiveness and influence will depend on a globally-aware U.S. population.
- Today’s Freshman class is part of 2020 workforce.

**Leadership attributes**
- Ability to work in or lead a team of diverse thinking styles, beliefs, cultures.
- Aware of economic systems and politics.
- Effective communication across cultural and linguistic boundaries.
‘I STUDIED ABROAD, BUT…’

• How are you articulating this experience as you prepare for the workforce?

• Study abroad or foreign language fluency do not always top the list of desired experience or skills
  • Caveat: Foreign language skills - US Job Market (Mar 2017)

• How do I...?
  • elevate ‘I studied abroad’ beyond a bullet point on my resume?
  • make this more interview-relevant than ‘it was life-changing’?
‘HOW DO I TRANSLATE STUDY ABROAD IN A JOB INTERVIEW?’

- Consider all aspects of your experience abroad: housing, academics, travel, student clubs, volunteering, internship
  - Who did you meet? What did you learn? How did you impact?

- Think of specific aspects which could provide a direct benefit to an organization, institution or company

- Consider career implications
  - starting from ‘now’ when you decide on an international program
  - ...to challenges overcome while abroad, your applied learnings
  - ...to job interviews where you’re asked to describe your skills or attributes

- **Tip:** review job descriptions / industries that interest you after graduation, and highlight desired skills or attributes
EXAMPLE: TRANSLATING MY EXPERIENCE
- FRENCH MAJOR / SPANISH MINOR
- FRANCE AND SPAIN SEMESTERS ABROAD
- GAP YEAR OF WORK BETWEEN JUNIOR AND SENIOR YEAR

Forecast or address business situations from a different cultural frame of reference
Take personal risks; act independently
Flexible and adaptable to rapidly changing work environments
Contribute to an ethnically diverse team
Self-confident, yet able to listen and learn from people whose value systems are different

Adapted from: Effective Marketing of International Experiences to Employers by Cheryl Matherly
‘I CAN NOT STUDY ABROAD…’

- Really? Truly...??
- Timing, finances => no undergraduate time abroad?
- What to do
  1. Make an appointment with UWEC’s Center for International Education
  2. Intern with US-based international company
  3. Select specific non-US news sources; review daily
  4. Find your focus - a region, a country - what’s trending?
  5. Join a student organization with international focus
  6. Interview UWEC students who studied abroad
  7. Interview UWEC students from EU/Americas/Asia/Africa - keep in contact!
YOU’RE IN AN INTERVIEW…

Your global thinking skills

- Do you follow the news from multiple countries on a regular basis?
- When news happens in one country, do you often think of its implications on other countries?
- Can you describe political parties from at least one country on each major continent?

Your language / communication skills

- In what languages are you fluent (spoken/written)? Read only?
- Do you have a network of professional contacts in other countries?
- Are you able to recognize different meanings in gesturing from more than one culture?

Your knowledge of culture (traditional & popular)

- With what cultures and nationalities have you had close dealings?
- Are you familiar with ethnic or religious traditions beyond your own? With cultural, religious or national festivals and their significance?
- Can you identify traditional and/or contemporary art from abroad?
- Are you familiar with social trends abroad (music, fashion, movies)?
YOU’RE IN AN INTERVIEW…

Your knowledge of business employment practices
- Can you articulate similarities and differences of predominant management styles in more than one country?
- Are you familiar with labor laws and/or hiring practices in other countries?

Your ability to adapt
- How long does it generally take you to settle into a new environment?
- How long do you feel it will take to make an impact in your new job?
- Tell me about a time when you took a risk. What did you gain / lose?

Why did you participate in an international experience? How did you choose your program and location?

Tell me about a time when you used your presentation skills to influence someone’s opinion

What skills did you learn abroad? How could these skills be applied to our company?
TRY THIS…

Think of 1-2 key questions to ask your interviewer/employer

- Global mindset
- Language / communication skills
- Culturally aware
- Business practices / norms outside US
- Adaptive
- Other skills or attributes* relevant to a job that interests you

* See tip slide 5
TODAY’S GOAL
To learn how skills gained abroad can help you professionally
(Interview focus)

THANKS FOR YOUR TIME!
NEXT STEPS

If you have already gone abroad

Attend:
‘Resume Writing Workshop’
Monday March 13
3:30-4:30pm
Where: Centennial 1920

If you are interested in going abroad

Make an appointment:
Center for International Education
715-836-4411
Where: 3, Schofield