



UNIVERSITY OF  
CALGARY



**Send me a Postcard!**  
**Advising for International**  
**Experiences & Study Abroad**



# Defining study abroad and international experiences

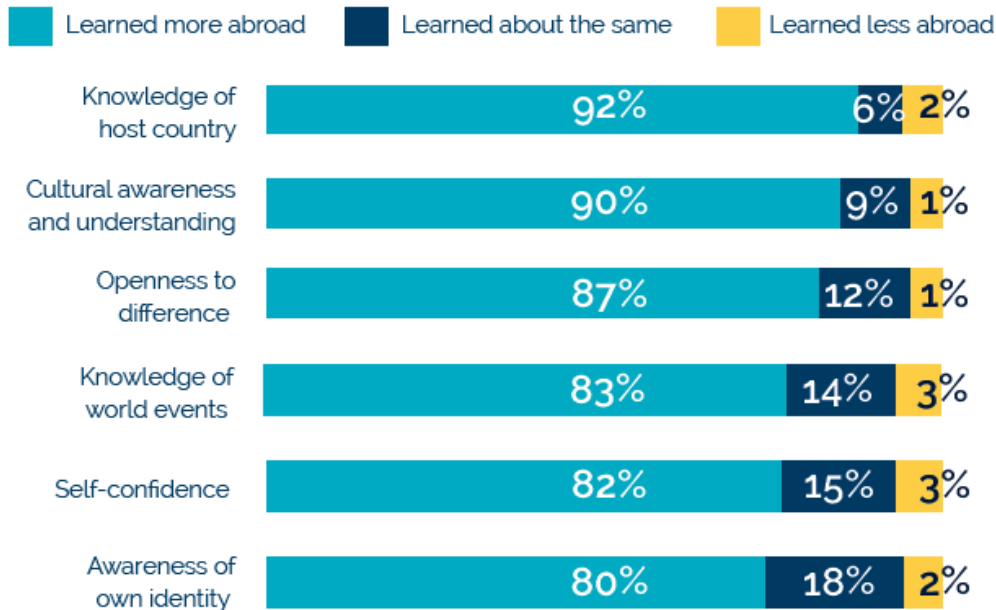
- Study abroad frequently refers to exchange programs (1-2 semesters) and implies study outside of Canada at another institution.
- However, these can include:
  - Research placements
  - Internships
  - Field study/field trips
  - Dual and joint degrees
- International experiences include:
  - Service learning and volunteer opportunities
  - Research placements
  - Internships (paid or unpaid)
- Typically conferences excluded – valuable professional experience but little cultural engagement.



# Benefits of study abroad and international experiences

- 7 out of 10 students agree that their study abroad experience influenced their career choice
- 2/3 of students agreed positively influenced their academic career
- Strong elements of personal, professional, and academic growth

## Education Abroad Top Outcomes





# University of Calgary Internationalization efforts

- Eyes High initiative to position UCalgary as a top 5 research institution in Canada
- Internationalization strategy supports Eyes High: UCalgary as a global intellectual hub
- Goal: 50% of students have an international experience before graduation
- Faculty of Science: working to create partnerships that encourage discipline-specific research and learning opportunities

**THE** WORLD  
UNIVERSITY  
RANKINGS

#195 in 2016 - 2017

**#1** young  
university in  
north  
america

2015 - 2017

**U<sup>15</sup>**  
Group of Canadian Research Universities  
Regroupement des universités de recherche du Cana

**TOP 200**  
most globally  
oriented universities  
in the world (THE)

2016 - 2017



# Canadian trends & data: Who goes abroad?

- 66% self-identify as female, 34% male, year 1-2 undergraduate student, aged 18-24
- 41% of international experiences are exchange, 20% for courses other than exchange, 11% for internship
- Top 6 countries of **interest**: Australia, United Kingdom, France, Germany, USA, Japan
- Top 6 **destinations**: France, United Kingdom, United States, Germany, Spain, Italy
- 24% of programs are 3-4 months in length (1 semester)
- Top financial contributions: parents/ relatives/ guardians; personal savings; university or college scholarship; work income; student financial aid
- Only 6% of students report encouragement from advisors (main source: friends, parents, or none at all)
- Roughly 2-5% of Canadian students actually go abroad



# Barriers to study abroad and international experiences

## The 5 Fs impacting study abroad (perceived and/or real)

### 1. Fit

- Transfer credit issues, hard to find 'mobility window' in program

### 2. Finances

- Costs, value of experience, lack of funding, loss of income

### 3. Faculty and advisor support

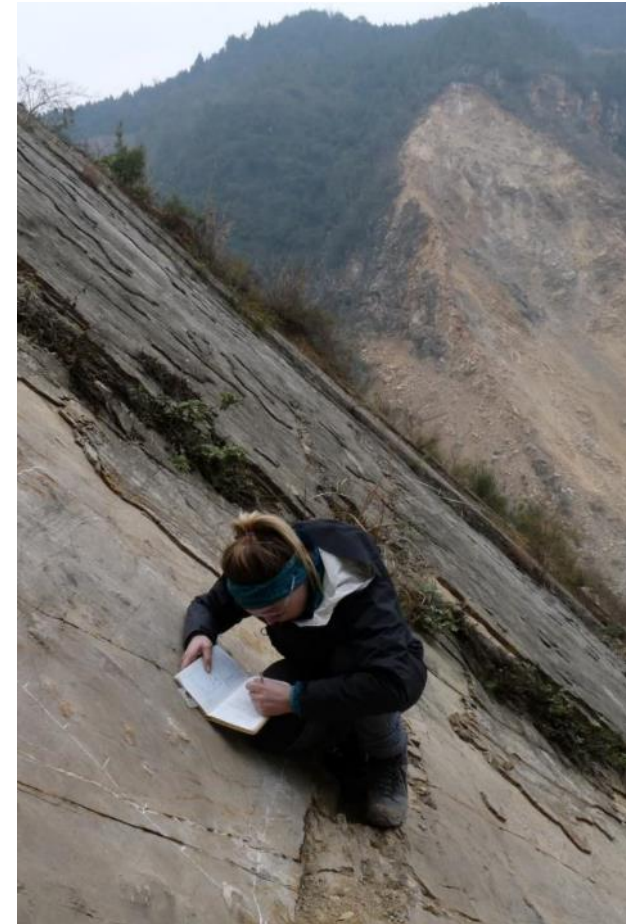
- Lack of awareness of opportunities and encouragement

### 4. Family and friends

- Lack of support, commitments at home, family obligations

### 5. Fear

- Safety concerns, fear of unknown or missing out





## So what does this mean?



- Students are reporting a lack of institutional support, advising, and academic support
- Students largely pay for these opportunities themselves
- But – of students who actually go on international/study abroad, almost all report significant personal gains and growth
- This growth includes development of:
  - Intercultural skills
  - Flexibility and adaptability
  - Self-awareness
  - Curiosity and confidence
  - Tolerance for ambiguity
  - Language and problem-solving skills
- Institutional benefits include increased retention and engagement, increased rates of grad school attendance and employment

# Supportive advising for study abroad

- Consider your view on study abroad – do the 5 Fs apply to your perspective of international experience?
- Learn about study opportunities available to your students as well as funding sources.
- Ask for promotional materials and post them in advising space
- Start the conversation with students by asking questions and making suggestions
- Address the 5 Fs and devise solutions
- Reinforce the positive benefits of study abroad
- Provide re-entry advising and service referrals
- Help to connect interested students with those who have returned from similar experiences





## The 5 Ls of high impact advising

### 1. Lean in

- Emphasize value proposition – what makes it worthwhile for the student?
- Study abroad is an investment in skill and personal development
- Connections to professional and future career development

### 2. Language and tone

- Shift from 'where' to 'what'
- provide major-specific advising to assist in program selection
- How is the experience relevant to your major?
- What makes sense for your career and personal goals?
- What do you want to learn?



### 3. Leverage information and resources

- Be able to appropriately refer students to campus services
- Financial planning, credit transfer, risk management, formal and informal sources of information

### 4. Look for fit

- When is the best time in a program for study abroad?
- Help students explore best fit for their needs/wants/desires

### 5. Listen

- Deploy your active listening skills
- Hear and respect concerns/fears/worries
- Listen for cues to help guide discovery
- Meet with returning students and ask about their experience





# Resources for Further Reading

QS rankings

<https://www.topuniversities.com/qs-world-university-rankings>

Times Higher Education rankings

<https://www.timeshighereducation.com/world-university-rankings>

Canadian Bureau of International Education Learning Beyond Borders

<http://cbie.ca/our-network/learning-abroad/>

NAFSA Association of International  
Educations

[www.nafsa.org](http://www.nafsa.org)

NACADA advising for Study Abroad

<http://www.nacada.ksu.edu/Resources/Academic-Advising-Today/View-Articles/Effective-Advising-for-Study-Aboard.aspx>

