Examining the Impact of Study Abroad for Community College Students: Five Case Studies

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EXAMINING THE IMPACT OF STUDY ABROAD FOR COMMUNITY COLLEGE
STUDENTS: FIVE CASE STUDIES

by

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A master’s thesis submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Liberal Studies in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts, The City University of New York

2018
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This manuscript has been read and accepted by the Graduate Faculty in Liberal Studies in satisfaction of the thesis requirement for the degree of Masters of Arts in Liberal Studies.

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ABSTRACT

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There is general agreement that positive student learning outcomes are associated with participation in study abroad. The aim of this paper is to explore how participation in study abroad by community college students impacts their global learning. While studies about the impact of study abroad are plentiful for senior colleges, research about community college students’ experiences is lacking. Furthermore, while studies about how study abroad impacts language acquisition or cultural awareness are common, there is a need for more research about the impact of study abroad programs on global self-awareness. Additionally, this paper explores how students who are ‘emerging adults’ might be learning about the world in specific ways given the nature of this developmental stage. This phenomenological study explores the experiences of five, second-year community college students who participated in a short-term, faculty-led study abroad program in China. Data show that there is a range of learning outcomes that occur as a result of studying abroad for the five interviewees, such as expanded sense of one’s capacities, increased ability to connect with others, identification of family/community as inspiration to study abroad and an understanding of connections of the self to the global context. Limitations in the findings include lack of pre-travel/baseline interviews from which to compare, as well as a pre-existing interviewee-interviewer relationship. This research provides implications for improved pre, during and post travel trainings and curricular models, as well as more equitable, culturally-relevant study abroad policies. The paper ends with suggestions for future research. (Keywords: Global Learning, Self-Awareness, Study Abroad, Emerging Adult)
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CHAPTER 1 : INTRODUCTION

We shall not cease from exploration;
And the end of all our exploring;
Will be to arrive where we started
And know the place for the first time

- Excerpt from Four Quartets by TS Eliot

The real voyage of discovery consists not in seeking new land, but seeing it with new eyes

- Marcel Proust

1.1 Overview

“Our global era requires globally competent citizens. (Dewey and Duff, 2009)” Most educators would agree the 21st century college experience must prepare its students for a global workforce and an interdependent, global world. Students must critically question their own place in the world, engage with new cultures, all while grappling with complex global issues. College graduates must be well-versed in the intersections of a global economy, international conflict, transnational migration, technological revolutions and a planet threatened by climate change. Today, more than ever, there is a greater flow of ideas, people and information across borders. Local and global issues have collided. Educators are uniquely positioned to develop globally competent citizens in this vastly global era.
Global education programs exist on many college campuses across North America in the form of on-campus global programming (i.e. language programs, globalized curricula, campus events), as well as “study away” (i.e. domestic travel) or study abroad (i.e. international travel), but nonetheless, more resources, time and attention are needed. Study abroad programs in particular present an exemplary opportunity for global engagement that can impact students not only in terms of their academic and professional development, but also in deeply personal ways. This research paper is based on a qualitative, phenomenological study that interrogated the ways in which a short-term study abroad program impacted global self-awareness and perspective-taking for five community college students studying in China. The hypothesis is that as a result of their participation, the students learned more deeply about themselves and their perspectives on the world will have expanded. This paper asserts that as a result of cultivating a deeper understanding of oneself in a global context, students develop greater agency and ultimately, become better global citizens. The findings suggest that as a result of exposure to global learning experiences, students will not only thrive personally and academically, but will also have developed globalized critical thinking and problem-solving tools to analyze the world’s complexities. Ultimately, global citizens can contribute to creating a more just and sustainable world.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Education organizations across the country have made the call for increased attention to addressing global competencies for all students. Almost a decade ago (2010), the National Education Association (NEA) asserted that “America’s students need to become more proficient in world languages and become more aware of global issues...to compete in the global economy.” The American Association of Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) suggests that “in
our rapidly globalizing world, college-aged students need to embrace disruption rather than certainty . . . [and] interdependence rather than insularity …(they) need to see (them)selves as very much part of a larger community; part of a global sea” (2016). International organizations like UNESCO and the World Bank have even called out a global learning crisis across the world. According to a recent World Bank press release, in developing and developed countries, young people are either not completing school at all, or completing school “without the basic skills they need for the 21st century workplace. (This is) a generation of young people who should be forging the economic and social capital of their countries, but who lack the skills to do so. (Hay, 2017)” Clearly, there is concern about the global competency of our future workforce. In order to solve the enormous challenges of the 21st century, all sectors of society all across the globe must learn and produce knowledge collectively, integrate diverse viewpoints and creatively implement change.

In a democratic society, all students should have equal access to a high quality education. Clearly, it is essential that global education is woven into both curricular and co-curricular models of an institution. Not only is global education important for the future success of the individual student but, ultimately, for a thriving global society. Higher education institutions must create global learning opportunities for all its students, ranging from campus programs, to pedagogical methods to study abroad programs. There are many examples of powerful global education offerings at 2- and 4-year colleges all across the US, nonetheless the need for more opportunities is great. Not to mention, there are vast disparities in access to global education experiences across the 2- and 4-year colleges. Colleges must continue to develop best practices for global education programs, policy, teaching and research. Resources must be invested in understanding 21st century global education best practices for an increasingly diverse US student
population and specifically for immigrant, first-generation and low-income college students. This paper aims to contribute to this important conversation as it explores the findings from five interviewees who are first-generation community college students of color from low-income families. The research aims to explore the question: what do the interviewees learn about themselves and the world, by participating in a short-term, faculty-led study abroad program? Do they develop deeper insights about themselves and the world as a result of the transformative nature of study abroad? The findings reveal a deeper understanding of the student experience and highlight improvements for policy and pedagogy, as well as insights about the gaps in research.

1.3 International Educational vs Global Learning

Students enter college with ideals about who they will become and their professional pursuits. As a college student’s identity develops over the college years, their sense of self and identity grows within a local, national and global ecosystem. The college campus is its own microcosm of policies, classes, experiences, professors and peers who influence an individual’s personal growth trajectory. Oftentimes, graduates report that a single person, class or experience deeply impacted their college experience. Study abroad is often one of those experiences. One recent college graduate noted that, “study abroad seriously changed my life. One semester in Argentina made me do a 180. I felt like I finally knew myself, I understood the world and my confidence in my abilities grew tremendously. (anonymous, 2016)” While only about 10% of graduating college students in the US study abroad, that number is slowly growing. (IIE, 2017) Alan Goodman, the president of Institute of International Education asserted in a New York Times op-ed piece (2014) that, “(g)lobalization is here to stay, and students who want to work in our interconnected global world should study abroad.”
When the Institute of International Education (IIE) was established by Nobel Peace Prize winners Nicholas Murray Butler and Stephen Duggen in 1919, little did they know a thriving field of international education would soon evolve (IIE, 2018). The University of Delaware hosted the first official study abroad program in Nancy, France in 1923 and Smith College and many other colleges quickly followed suit. Study abroad offerings really began to bloom in the 1960s and 70s, predominantly at private, 4-year institutions. On some campuses, “junior year abroad” became a sort of rite of passage. In recent decades, study abroad has expanded to public universities, including community colleges and more students are experiencing its benefits. In 1985, 45,000 students studied abroad, by 2000 145,000 students studied abroad and in 2017, that number has more than doubled to 350,000. (IIE Open Doors Report, 2017) Non-profit organizations and for-profit companies are touting the intellectual, psycho-social and workforce readiness benefits of study abroad for both college and high school-aged students. The multi-billion dollar industry has exploded and students these days can study, intern, work or do service in almost every country, city and town in the world. Even junior high and high school students are participating in study abroad. For many college admissions committees, global education experiences reflect a sophisticated and well-rounded candidate, more prepared for a global curriculum who will ultimately better succeed in a global workforce.

Meanwhile, on the ground and in the classroom, teachers and professors have embraced the pedagogical tenets of global learning. While similar to international education in that it has a distinctly international lens - global learning is a more of a pedagogical practice and paradigm than a program or policy. One might say global learning practice moves minds from one place to another, whereas international education moves bodies from one place to another. Global learning has been a high-impact practice situated in the universe of experiential education for
decades. A recent AAC&U (2016) publication articulated that, “the challenges facing our nation and the world in the twenty-first century are global in nature, and students need to be prepared to solve these problems with an ethical, global mindset—an awareness and a willingness to investigate and solve problems using diverse perspectives and working with diverse groups of people.” Global learning pedagogies permeate classroom readings, assignments, discussions, lectures and field trips. A professor might add global learning language to their course learning outcomes or maybe their evaluation rubrics. Teaching with a bent on global learning is both a framework and a teaching philosophy that can be implemented across disciplines. Global learning should “create settings that foster students’ understanding of the intersection between their lives and global issues and their sense of responsibility as local and global citizens. (AACU, 2016)” In its most ideal iteration, study abroad programs are steeped in global learning principles. International education programs that leverage the best practices of global learning will maximize the learning potential of their student participants.

1.4 Student Demographics: Who is Studying Abroad?

Open Doors is an annual report published by the Institute for International Education that is supported by a grant from the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs at the U.S. Department of State. The report provides information about international education in the United States each year, including data about rates of participation in study abroad and student participant demographics. U.S. Study Abroad Data (IIE, 2017) reports that in 2015/2016, 1.7% of Study Abroad participants were Associates degree seeking students, 86% of participants were Bachelors-degree seeking and 12.1% were graduate students. Comparatively, in 2009/2010, the Report notes that .1% of Study Abroad participants were Associates degree seeking students, 85.3% of participants were Bachelors-degree seeking and 13.6% were graduate students. Data
shows that the demographics for study abroad participants in 2015/2016 was White - 71.6%; Hispanic or Latino - 9.7%; Asian, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander - 8.4%; Black or African-American - 5.9%; Multiracial - 3.9%; American Indian or Alaska Native - 0.5%.

Comparatively, the report notes that in 2009/2010, the demographic data for study abroad participation in the US was White - 78.7%; Hispanic or Latino - 6.9%; Asian, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander - 7.9%; Black or African-American - 4.7%; Multiracial - 1.9%; American Indian or Alaska Native - 0.5% (Institute for International Education, 2017). This distribution indicates a obvious disparity in participation across race/ethnicity.

The diversity of America’s college student population is not accurately reflected in the study abroad student participant data. For example, Hispanics represent 18% of the total US college population (see Table 1), but only 9.7% of the study abroad population, and 14% of the US college population is represented by Black or African American students (see Figure 1), whereas only 5.9% of study abroad students are Black or African American. This presents a concerning disparity in participation in study abroad. If there is an international call for greater global competence for a global world and a national call for greater global skills so Americans remain competitive in a global marketplace, then global education is a necessity not a privilege. All students on all campuses should have access to a rich array of global experiences in college. From an ethic of equity, the demographic distribution of study abroad participation should at the very least equate to - if not exceed - the college student demographic in this country.

1.5 Student Demographics: Who is attending college in the US?

America’s postsecondary student population is larger and more diverse than ever. According to the National Center for Education Statistics, in Fall 2017, 20.4 million students (an increase of about 5.1 million since Fall 2000) were enrolled in college, of which 34% were
enrolled at 2-year institutions and 56% were enrolled at 4 year institutions. According to the National Center for Education Statistics (2013), 41% of the 18- to 24-year-old population were enrolled in college and “(b)etween 2000 and 2014, attending college rose from approximately 27.3 million to nearly 31.5 million.” College attendance is increasing. Today, most of the 18-25 year old demographic (a.k.a “the millennials”) are going to college, living with their parents and struggling or perhaps experimenting with different vocations. They are not graduating high school and heading right into marriage, family and independence. Some might argue that as a result of the new patterns of behaviors exhibited by millennials that a new and distinct phase of identity development has emerged. “Settling down” for millennials is happening much later, and sometimes, not at all, compared to the1960’s when the average age of marriage was 20 for women and 22 for men. Today the average age is 27 for women and 29 for men. (Cohn, 2011)

The developmental pathways of the 18-25 year old demographic in America has shifted dramatically in the past 40-50 years. In the 1960’s, this age range was usually getting married and having kids. They were usually employed in a particular industry in which they planned to stay for the entirety of their career. The “transition to adulthood” was marked by distinct milestones: graduating high school, leaving home, becoming financially independent, marrying and having a child. Until the 1960s, for a select few - predominately white, male and privileged - attending college was the next step after high school. College served as a time and place to not only cultivate a career identity, social capital and financial security, but to also explore the possibilities of notions of “the self”. The individual could continue to develop with temporary freedom from restrictive social milestones of ‘adulthood’. Meanwhile, this exploratory developmental timeframe called college was inaccessible to most, particularly, women and students of color.
Figure 1 below displays an informative infographic published by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (2017) that provides context about the diversity of today’s college students.

The college student population in America is 54% White, 18% Hispanic, 14% Black, 7% Asian/Pacific Islander, 1% American Indian/Alaska Native, 4% two or more races and 44% non-White.

**FIGURE 1: “Today’s College Student Infographic”**
Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, 2016
National Center for Education Statistics, Digest of Education Statistics and U.S. Department of Education and American College Health Association)

1.6 City University of New York (CUNY)

When Townsend Harris founded City University of New York (CUNY) in 1847, he proclaimed a mission to “educate the whole people.” CUNY is the oldest public university system in the United States and arguably provides the best public education in the world. CUNY serves approximately 300,000 students across 24 campuses in all 5 boroughs of New York City.
and represents tremendously diverse races, ethnicities, languages, religions and even ages.

CUNY students are well into their careers and some have even retired and decided to go back to school. Nonetheless, the mean age of CUNY undergraduate students is quite young at 24 and almost 75% of the students are 18-25 years old. (CUNY, 2015)

As NYC grew and diversified, so did CUNY whose demographics reflect a student population that hails from almost every country in the world, speaking hundreds of languages. New York City’s reputation as a city created by and for immigrants was emblazoned in its identity from the founding days of the city, therefore it is not surprising today that it continues to identify as a global epicenter. According to a recent report, of the total population of more than 8 million people, over 3 million are foreign-born immigrants (City of New York Department of City Planning, 2013). “The foreign-born represent a global microcosm and account for 38% of the city’s population and 46% of its resident labor force.” CUNY mirrors this through its very diverse student population. According to the CUNY Office of Institutional Research and Assessment (2015), almost 40% of CUNY undergraduate students are born outside of the United States, there are 210 reported ancestries, 186 languages spoken and 80% are non-white (CUNY, 2015). In the community college population in particular, 49% are first-generation, 48% report a household income of less than $20,000 and 66% are PELL Grant recipients. (CUNY, 2015)

Given this vast diversity, CUNY faculty are compelled to offer CUNY students learning experiences that are not only culturally sensitive and grounded in global perspectives, but also leverage the diverse, multi-cultural student perspectives. Study abroad is one effective way of increasing global pedagogies, as are on-campus internationalization efforts. According to CUNY International Education’s website (2018), there are over 130 study abroad offerings across the 18
campuses. Student participant data is not accessible for international education, but there are clearly hundreds if not thousands of CUNY students who study abroad each year.

1.7 Stella and Charles Guttman Community College

Stella and Charles Guttman Community College – the newest of the 7 community colleges in the City University of New York (CUNY) system - opened its doors to the first class in August 2012 with then-mayor Michael Bloomberg cutting the ribbon. The Guttman “model” was intentionally designed to meet the needs of diverse, urban, community college students. Guttman made a firm commitment to provide its students with dynamic, relevant and rigorous academic experiences. It aims to “support student achievement in a dynamic, inclusive and intellectually engaging environment.” (guttman.edu, 2018) As of Fall 2017 there were 1066 matriculated students. It is a diverse (e.g. 90% Black or Hispanic), HBCU-designated institution, serving mostly young (e.g. 98% under 22 years old), low-income students (e.g. 71% Pell Grant Recipients). With a campus located overlooking Bryant Park, the students are immersed in global learning experiences just by walking down the block on their way into the building. A Guttman student commented that, “sometimes it feels like every country, religion and background is present in my classes. (anonymous, 2018)” In an environment like Guttman, teaching global competencies goes with the territory. Students arrive in the classroom with a multiplicity of perspectives and global paradigms. It is the work of the college to create transformative learning opportunities for the students to deepen their global perspectives and prepare for the global workforce. According to the college’s mission, “Guttman fosters an environment of cooperation and collaboration, where students, faculty and staff respect and appreciate each other’s perspectives, commonalities, differences and contributions” (Guttman,
2016). So, when Guttman’s study abroad program, Global Guttman, first emerged, it fit very naturally and effectively into the college’s mission.

1.8 Global Guttman

Experiential learning has always been a core tenet of Guttman Community College’s pedagogical model, and more recently global, experiential learning opportunities have become increasingly prioritized. CUNY made a commitment to “[widen] the pipeline of language training, study abroad, and cross-cultural learning and collaboration for all students” (CUNY, 2012) and the Global Guttman program is explicitly aligned with this goal. Global Guttman is an equity based global learning program that offers study abroad – both internationally and domestically – as well as campus-based programming that provides students opportunities to expand their visions of themselves and the world. Global Guttman offers Guttman students the opportunity to foster a deeper understanding of themselves in a global context, their sense of personal/social responsibility and to engage with complex ideas about global interdependence, while developing intercultural skills needed in a global workforce. Travelling abroad is always powerful. Studying abroad as an embedded experience in a college class can be truly transformative, particularly for students from under-resourced formative schooling. By experiencing new cultures and languages, while grappling with complex global issues, students benefit personally, educationally, and professionally. They often gain a better understanding of themselves, improve their ability to evaluate elements of their own and other cultures and frequently feel a greater sense of self-efficacy. Global Guttman programs examine multi-dimensional approaches to the big questions of the 21st century related to sustainability, climate, food systems, poverty and globalization and explore innovative solutions.
Global Guttman ran its pilot program in Berlin, Germany in 2014 with 10 outstanding pioneer students. It was a resounding success. What began as an idea quickly evolved into a robust global learning program with annual study abroad offerings, as well as dynamic year-round, on-campus global programming. In 3.5 years, Global Guttman has offered 13, fully-funded, short-term, faculty-led travel programs in 8 countries, across 4 continents to: Berlin (x 2) Ecuador (x4), Alaska, Nicaragua, Jamaica, Belize, Chile, New Orleans, and China. One of the primary obstacles to community college student participation in study abroad is financing such an endeavor which is addressed directly through the generosity of the Guttman Endowment.

The Global Guttman program offers a comprehensive, 4-phase model (See Figure 2) with critical reflection practice embedded at each phase of the program. The student’s inquiry and reflective practices are captured in ePortfolio as they post, reflect and comment on each other’s work. The transformative experiences that occurs while studying abroad demand intentional teaching practices that encourage critical reflection before, during, and after the experience. ePortfolio provides an effective space for making this deep learning visible. It serves not only as a space for an authentic audience - consisting of peers, professors, and the school community - but also as a place to re-visit and ponder old reflections from which new ones can be generated. ePortfolio is also used for assessment purposes as assessment teams analyze student work in search of indicators of global learning outcomes.

**FIGURE 2.** The Global Guttman Model
The Global Guttman students have transformative experiences from which they extrapolate deep learning in the months and years after they return. Emboldened by their global experiences, students often discover greater self-confidence and an expanded global perspective which show up in the classroom, and campus-wide, in both formal and informal leadership roles. In its most idealist form, the Global Guttman student becomes the teacher and global leader – in their families, their peer groups, in the workplace, or even, on a global stage. Global Guttman aims to help student’s question the structures within which they function and to see more clearly how the individual-level connects to the global. In many ways, the Global Guttman program is grounded in constructivist and Deweyian ideals. Dewey (1897) believed that to educate meant, “to prepare him for the future life means to give him command of himself; it means so to train him that he will have the full and ready use of all his capacities.” In other words, to educate means to provide students with the opportunity to self-direct, to experience ideas manifesting into action and to develop self-efficacy. A constructivist approach encourages students to construct their own understanding and knowledge of the world through experience and subsequent reflection on that experience.

Preliminary assessment data show that Global Guttman is highly successful and student reflections are by far, the best measure. Student reflections convey how truly transformative their experiences have been, the intricacies of their new ideas and perspectives and how their sense their own capacities has expanded. The Global Guttman program has been intentionally designed to support students in personal, academic, professional development, including evoking “the global self”. Rich global learning experiences occur as students at phases of participation – as they prepare to travel abroad; during the immersion program; and, upon return as they
integrate their learning into their day-to-day lives and their sense of their place in a complex, globally interconnected world.

1.9 Global Guttman in China

The Global Guttman in China Program was a 10 day travel program for 10 students and three faculty during Spring Break of 2018. This was the first Global Guttman program in Asia. The program primarily focused on global economics and technology, so attracted students from Business and IT majors. The program was embedded in across three course: Micro-Economics, Web Technologies and a liberal arts course called Global Learning. The China program aimed to support student growth academically as well as professionally and personally. As students compared and evaluated Chinese society, its enterprises, and governmental structures, they tackled problems related to economic growth and urban development as they relate to technological advancement. Students were also asked to more deeply understand the lived experiences of Chinese college students in order to more deeply understand different developmental paradigms.

1.10 Global Guttman Learning Outcomes

The average age of a Global Guttman student is 19 years old and most have just finished their first year, thus identity exploration is a natural part of their developmental stage. They are actively engaged with notions of themselves as scholars - and by participating in Global Guttman - themselves as global scholars. Global Guttman aims to ignite students’ ability to explain their identity and positionality in a global context. Global Guttman creates the opportunity for students to develop a deeper global self-awareness, or “the continuum through which students develop a mature, integrated identity with a systemic understanding of the interrelationships among the self, local and global communities, and the natural and physical world. (AAC&U, 2017)” As a
result of travel - and the reiterative reflective practices built into the Global Guttman model - students develop deeper understandings of themselves in relationship to the world around them. The Guttman Community College website (2018) states that “(c)ollege is a time and a place and an idea—an opportunity to cultivate the knowledge and experience required to meet intellectual, creative and professional goals.” The school setting creates conditions for learning and growth for its students. If there is both a national and international call for increased global competencies in schools - and if the call is not heeded the future workforce will be less than its potential - then colleges need to sincerely assess the state of their globalized curricula and learning outcomes.

Global learning should enhance students’ sense of identity. Global learning cannot be achieved in a single course or a single experience but is acquired cumulatively across students’ entire college career through an institution’s curricular and co-curricular programming. Students must have a “global vision and culture, recruits and prepares internationally-oriented teachers, transforms curriculum and instruction by integrating international content, emphasizes language proficiency, and expands student experiences through harnessing technology, international travel and partnerships, and international service learning and internships. (West, C, 2008, p.34)” Whether in a study abroad program or in a “globalized” classroom, students are exposed to situations and ideas that ask them to think outside their accustomed experiences and think critically about cultural diversity, their own perspectives and global self-awareness. Educators must not only create opportunities within which global learning occurs, but must also be well-versed about the 18-25 year old demographic in the 21st century for whom they are trying to create educative experiences. What defines this generation whose characteristics and contours are often dramatically different than previous ones? Psychologists, academics and policy-makers
are in deep debates about how and why the evolution from adolescence to adulthood has changed.

1.10 Terminology

*Study Abroad*

- Study abroad program is usually short-term or long-term travel program offered at many colleges that aim to offer students a more in-depth international perspective and experience. There are various formats to study abroad programs, some may last only 1-2 weeks, while other are full-semester or year-long programs at partner universities abroad, sometimes with homestay programs. Study abroad programs are cultural immersion experiences whereby students engage in unfamiliar environments that encourage them to adapt to new languages and morays.

*Global Learning*

- Global Learning is a term used by global education teachers and administrators to describe a learning outcome, an assessment model, and an experiential education practice. Global learning “is based on the principle that the world is a collection of interdependent, yet inequitable systems and that higher education has a vital role in expanding knowledge of human and natural systems, privilege and stratification, and sustainability and development to foster individuals’ ability to advance equity and justice at home and abroad.” AACU, 2016.

*Global Self Awareness*

- The AAC&U publishes learning outcomes from which many colleges develop their own institutional learning outcomes. (See Appendix A) One of the 6 outcomes listed is titled, “Global Self-Awareness”. Cultivating global self-awareness can be understood as “the
continuum through which students develop a mature, integrated identity with a systemic understanding of the interrelationships among the self, local and global communities, and the natural and physical world. (AAC&U, 2016)”. The ultimate milestone in the Global Self-Awareness Rubric (AACU, 2016) is that students “effectively addresses significant issues in the natural and human world based on articulating one’s identity in a global context; articulates one’s identity in a global context and from that, able to address significant issues in the world.”

**Emerging Adult**

- According to Jeffrey Arnett (2000), Emerging Adulthood is a phase of the life span between adolescence and adulthood that has evolved as society has evolved in the late-20th/21st centuries. Emerging adults are 18 to 25 and developmentally distinct from teenagers and adults. In recent decades, societal expectations in terms of behaviors that mark independence like marriage, children, career, financial independence and home ownership have changed and emerging adults operate on this continuum of independence.
CHAPTER 2 : LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Overview

This literature review will explore two primary research domains as they relate to the study’s research question. First, this literature review will explore the developmental stage presented by Jeffrey Arnett called Emerging Adults. The study population for this thesis research paper is community college students who are 18-20 years old. The literature about this particular developmental stage suggests that as a result of changing societal influences, a new stage of post-adolescence/pre-adulthood has developed. A more robust understanding of this developmental stage presents potentially interesting implications for study abroad programming.

Second, this Literature Review research that reveals findings about study abroad programs at community colleges. Community College students represent a significant percentage of undergraduate students in the US (i.e. 36% according to NCES, 2016) but a disproportionately small number of study abroad participants (i.e. 1.7% in ’15/’16 according to IIE,2017). More research is needed about reasons for and ways to address this inequity and also best practices in study abroad programming for community college students. A plethora of research exists about the many ways that study abroad impacts undergraduate students, specifically for various for aspects of student learning, yet literature related to Global Self-Awareness produced little to no results.

2.2 A New Developmental Phase: Emerging Adult

Studies suggest that “Gen Y’ers” are, in fact, delaying entrance into what previous generations defined as “full” adulthood. Jeffrey Arnett – a social psychologist from Clark University - would argue that they have essentially created an entirely new, developmental stage called “emerging adulthood” (EA). In May 2000, Arnett published a groundbreaking article in
American Psychologist that presented this new developmental stage as a culturally-relative, “distinct period demographically, subjectively, and in terms of identity explorations,” that is “characterized by change and exploration of possible life directions. (p. 469)” This stage emerged as a result of multi-dimensional forces, from the individual to the national, and even to the global scale. While, (some) young people have been making personal choices that influenced the evolution of EA, equally, if not more powerfully, economic, political and social forces have created this developmental space. Given that for 40% of EA’s are in college, this phase of identity development occurs in the context of - and is directly shaped by - the college experience.

College students are in a liminal space between adolescence and adulthood that is a threshold rife with personal examination and experimentation. “To some, what we’re seeing is a transient epiphenomenon, the byproduct of cultural and economic forces. To others, the longer road to adulthood signifies something deep, durable and maybe better-suited to our neurological hard-wiring.” (Henig, 2010, p.MM28) As emerging adults explore their interests and capacities the environments around them can have a deep and lasting impact on their personal development. Their belief in their own capacities can be influenced by family, peers, society at large as well as the experiences they have at school – both in the classroom and when in engaged in high-impact experiences like study abroad. Some studies suggest that study abroad experiences can actually contribute to increased belief in one’s personal agency and capacities.

Albert Bandura’s (1989) argued that humans’ self-belief is framed by a triadic reciprocality of, “personal factors in the form of cognition, affect, and biological events, their own individual behavior, and the environmental influences around them. (p.2.)” “Given this theory, if the environmental influences are restrictive, then the individual’s behavior, cognition and affect will be restricted as well. This creates a learning experience that is externalized from
the individual. The young person’s locus of control over their educational landscape is faint. One would hope that once a young person enters college, opportunities to exercise personal agency would be plentiful.

2.3 Study Abroad and the Emerging Adult

Jaworska and MacQueen (2015) offer a cogent definition of adolescence in the Journal of Psychiatry and Neuro-Science as “the period marking the transition from childhood to adulthood. Historically, this typically spans from 12 to 18 years of age, which roughly corresponds to the time from pubertal onset (i.e., specific hormonal changes) to guardian independence (i.e., the legal definition of “adulthood” in many countries). (p. 291)” The teenage years are often wrought with hardship as we make the pivotal transition from childhood dependency to adulthood independence and self-sufficiency. This transitional period can bring up issues of individuation and identity; as well as challenges in acquiring a sense of personal agency in what for many teens feels like an authoritative world. Personal agency refers to one's capability to originate and direct actions for given purposes (Zimmerman, 2006). It is influenced by the belief in one's effectiveness in performing specific tasks – or, self efficacy - as well as by one's actual skill. Barandarian (2016) provides a powerful conceptual model to more deeply understand agency. He argues that “an agent is an autonomous organization capable of adaptively regulating its coupling with the environment according to the norms established by its own viability conditions.”
Figure 3: Barandiaran Model of Agency and Environment

Through opportunities to exercise agency, an adolescent can more deeply engage with her subjectivity and positionality. Students who apply to Global Guttman believe that study abroad is possible and that if they put forth sufficient effort, their goals might be attained. “This belief in one's self-regulative capability to attain goals is the core of a resolute sense of personal agency” (Zimmerman, 2006, p. 212). If we assume that short-term study abroad program offerings in colleges are, in fact, transformative, increased agency is a possible finding. Cubillos & Ilvento (2013) presented interesting findings related to self-efficacy and study abroad. Self-efficacy can be understood as an individual's belief in his or her innate ability to achieve goals. Statistical analysis of the self-efficacy measures showed that participation in a study abroad program had a significant impact on perceptions of self-efficacy. Additionally, the degree to
which a student gained self-efficacy was found to be associated with the extent and type of interaction with members of the host country.

2.4 Study Abroad Programs and Community Colleges

According to the National Association for Study Abroad (NAFSA) (2017), “multiple large-scale studies have found that students who study abroad, especially underrepresented or “at-risk” students, are more likely to complete their degrees or certificate programs than students who did not study abroad.” The NAFSA report indicates that transfer rates from 2-year to 4-year colleges for community college students who studied abroad were greater than for those did not study abroad. Clearly, as a result of studying abroad students are somehow more motivated to continue pursuing their studies. Further research is needed to reveal the deeper meaning of this increased motivation and academic success.

Raby, Rhodes & Biscarra (2013) published relevant best practice findings in the Community College Journal of Research and Practice. Their article, Community College Study Abroad: Implications for Student Success explores if there is a connection between studying abroad and academic achievement. Using a mixed-methods design, the California Community College Student Outcomes Abroad Research project (CCC SOAR) examined data that illuminated how “participation in study abroad programs not only has implications for personal development and global learning, but also has a range of indicators of academic success variables.” Raby et al suggest that participation in study abroad creates opportunities for students to experience shared common experiences and collaborative activities with peers, as well as supportive faculty.

McKeown’s (2009) First-Time Effect: The Impact of Study Abroad on College Student Intellectual Development is a book published by SUNY Press suggests that the cultural and linguistic benefits of study abroad are just some of the opportunities for intellectual growth.
presented by study abroad programs. Interestingly, McKeown shows that for some students—“particularly those without substantial prior international experience—study abroad is associated with significant gains in intellectual development.” Meanwhile, for students who have experienced study abroad previously, the same growth findings did not hold true. McKeown outlines broad implications for education policy and practice.

A study conducted across nine Florida community colleges (Roberston and Blasi, 2016), through the Florida Consortium for International Education (FCIE) found that most of the students responding were interested in global learning. Interestingly, family encouragement and personal experiences encouraged interest, rather than something they learned about in school or the news. Meanwhile, those who reported an interest in global learning also thought it was unrelated to their daily lives. The FCIE aimed to contribute to the conversation about best practices for administrators and faculty to engage community college students with global learning programs both on and off campus.

A study conducted among three mid-Atlantic schools (Amani, 2018) aimed to better understand college students’ decisions to participate in short-term study abroad programs and to identify influential factors. Using student interviews revealed that there are, in fact, decision factors that are distinct to community college students that need to be explored further. This finding is very relevant to the conversation about student marketing and recruitment. Student interviewees commented that study abroad was affected by multiple variables like academic transfer prospects, personal timing, cost affordability, family support, to name a few. This study found that familial and vocational challenges presented barriers to study abroad for community college students.
Jessica Normal (2017) recently published her dissertation titled, *Experiences among U.S. Students of Color, Travel Background, and Cultural Attunement to Intersectionalities in Study Abroad Programs* that “examined the cultural experiences and development of cross cultural intersectionalities in U.S. students of culture participating in a study abroad program to Argentina.” Normal notes that the significance of study abroad programs for under-represented often goes unnoticed in the literature and that, in fact, creates long-lasting, transformative change. While her work does not specifically discuss community college students, her findings about the lack of literature about study abroad best practices for students of color is relevant to this research study.

First-generation community college students rarely have access to study abroad opportunities (IEE, 2016). George Kuh (2006) argues that global education experiences seem to be so powerful for under-served youth because of a “compensatory effect” that occurs. When a young person has sudden exposure to a high-impact and empowering educational experience, the learning curve will be significantly steeper than for more privileged students for whom international travel or even study abroad are the norm as early as junior high.

While researchers have presented work about community college students and retention statistics or community college students and the impacts of study abroad on academic achievement (Raby et al, 2013) there is a dearth of research about how study abroad impacts global self-awareness for community college students. The AAC&U (2016) defines global self-awareness as “the continuum through which students develop a mature, integrated identity with a systemic understanding of the interrelationships among the self, local and global communities, and the natural and physical world.” Study abroad can be deeply transformative for a student. They often emerge with a new appreciation for and understanding of themselves and the world.
around them. One might even argue that the maturation process is somehow sped up when a student experiences cultural and academic immersion in a foreign country with their home campus peers. Some argue that community college students who have very little experience with high-impact educational experiences like study abroad actually have a steeper learning curve than their peers who have previously experienced study abroad.

Study abroad experiences provide a set of rich learning opportunities that cannot be replicated elsewhere and make this an especially important component of increasing global awareness and perspective taking. Student Intercultural Proficiency from Study Abroad Programs published in the Journal of Marketing Education (Clarke et al, 2009) suggested that participation in study abroad experiences may lead to a multiplicity of global learning skills, like increased openness to diversity, ‘global-mindedness’, an increased understanding of self-identity and a greater proficiency in intercultural interactions. This study noted that students describe study abroad as “life-changing” yet little empirical evidence exists to explain the nuances and significance of this statement.

Brux & Fry (2009) explore the constraints for under-represented students participating in study abroad may face which are not necessarily those faced by their majority student peers. Through surveys and focus groups, Brux and Fry’s findings suggest that “institutional factors (academic scheduling difficulties, absence of relevant programs, lack of information, etc.), as well as other factors that can be moderated by institutional effort (providing encouragement, addressing financial issues, discussing family concerns, etc.), prevent students of color from participating in study abroad programs. (p.1)”

In his article titled, Assessing Progress in Global Learning and Development of Students with Education Abroad Experiences, Larry Braskamp (2009) argues that while study abroad is a
powerful learning and value-added experience in college, yet “to date little evidence exists about the potential influence of education abroad on holistic and global learning and development” and his study aims to fill the gap. Using a pretest-posttest design to measure changes in students’ global perspective over the period of one semester, Braskamp found that education abroad is an effective educational experience for students.

In his piece, *Global Learning: What Is It? Who Is Responsible for It?* (Hovland, 2009) explores questions of diversity, identity and citizenship as they relate to global learning. Hovland suggests ways that colleges can provide students with opportunities to approach the world's challenges from multiple perspectives. Hovland’s work presents vast implications for teaching both in the classroom and in the field.
CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Purpose Statement

The purpose of this study was to explore what types of global learning outcomes that community college students experience while engaged in a short-term, faculty-led study abroad program in China.

3.2 Research Questions

The primary research question was what do the five interviewees in question learn about themselves and the world as a result of participating in a short-term, faculty-led study abroad program in China?

3.3 Rationale for Qualitative Research:

This study aims to identify a deeper understanding of the community college student’s global learning experience so that educators can improve program design, leadership and teaching practices and will also provide insights about the gaps in research. In order to address the research questions and understand the participants’ experiences, a qualitative research design was chosen. Qualitative research helps us to understand “subjective meaning or the social production of issues, events, or practices and produces the thick (detailed) description of participants’ feelings, opinions, and experiences.” (Rahman, 2016) After reviewing the literature, a case study approach was deemed the best strategy to uncover the thick and detailed description of individual student learning experiences. Through individual structured interviews, a sub-set of Global Guttman students were provided the opportunity to voice their reflections, in a discipline (i.e. international education) where the community college student perspective is so often under-represented. The aim of this study was not to necessarily to generalize findings for all study abroad students, but to share insights in program models, policy and future research for both the
Global Guttman program specifically, and for community college global learning programs, in general.

3.4 Researcher Position

While conducting this research study and writing the research thesis, I was aware of my multiple positionalities. As a middle-class, 30-something white woman who participated in study abroad as an undergraduate at a private, predominately white institution, I understood how my personal views on my experience may have affected how I interpreted my students’ experiences. I approached this study with an intention for objectivity, but I was a co-leader on the program in China, therefore I actually witnessed some of the experiences the 5 student interviewees referenced. Additionally, I have worked in the global education discipline for 17 years prior to the onset of this study, so my past experiences doubtless informed by analysis.

Since my research focuses on young students of color, who were the first in their family to attend college, I was aware that the difference in my background may impact the interviewees level of comfort or perception of relatability in answering the questions. While the participants did, in fact, share information about their identities during the interviews, my research focus did not explicitly address their multiple identities which inevitably informed their experiences abroad. Due to both my positionality and lack of direct line of questioning about the influence of personal identity on learning, the interviewees may have been reticent to share certain aspects of their learning experiences.

3.5 Research Methodology

This research study is a qualitative, phenomenological study about the effects of a short-term study abroad program on global self-awareness and perspective-taking for community college students studying in China. The hypothesis is that the Global Guttman study abroad
experience in China will enhance student’s global self-awareness and perspective taking. The target population was a particular sub-set of students who traveled to China with the Global Guttman program during Spring Break 2018. This sub-set is 5 Global Guttman China students who were not registered to the Researcher’s course. The Researcher taught a Liberal Arts elective course to which 8 Global Guttman China students were registered. These 8 students were not eligible for the study, thus they were not contacted. The Researcher had access to the target population’s college email address because she was also coordinating some of the logistics of the trip and student participants were required to submit their college emails to the program coordinators. The research design is qualitative, using individual student interviews to understand the learning that occurs for a small target group of program participants. Each student was interviewed for 30-45 minutes within 4-6 weeks of return from the China study abroad program. Interviews were recorded using the PI’s iPhone, transcribed by the Researched and each interviewee was given a pseudonym. Transcriptions were analyzed for indicators of learning related to global self-awareness and perspective-taking.
CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

4.1 Overview

Each of the 5 interviewees below were interviewed within 3 weeks of their return from the China program using the same interview methodology and interview questions (See Appendix A). The questions being asked aimed to generate authentic responses in the interviewees about their study abroad learning experiences. Each of the interview write-ups below are based on transcribed recordings completed by the researcher and in adherence to the IRB standards of operation. All 5 of the interviewees shared insights and reflections from which 4 themes clearly emerged. The themes are summarized into Keywords and Key Findings and merit deeper analysis which is addressed in the “Discussion” section of this paper.

4.2 Sarah

Sarah is a 19-year old, second-year college student earning her Associates in Business Administration. She is a very bright student who will be transferring to a senior college in the Fall to continue her studies in business. She is considering a concentration in international business after travels in China. Sarah was born in Puerto Rico, but is also of Dominican heritage from her father’s side. She is estranged from her father who still lives in Dominican Republic, but since acquiring a passport for the China program, has decided to fly to Dominican Republic (DR) to visit him. Sarah lives with her mother and 2 sisters in the Bronx. She works at a retail store and is committed to making money, acquiring material goods, so that she doesn’t struggle, like “so many folks around (her) do.” Sarah is the first to attend college in her family and considers it her responsibility to do well in school and take advantage of opportunities on their
behalf. She hopes that a career in international business will be the pathway to achieving her goals and making her family proud.

Sarah applied for the China program for familial and professional reasons. Her application essay discussed how Global Guttman in China would expand her perspective about China and the US within the global economy which would ultimately help her understand the bigger context of her own business. She wants to be a business owner someday and knows that all businesses “are globally connected and I will have to be a player in that game.” Sarah also explained how important this trip would be for her family. She wrote, “it will mean that they have raised me to become such a hard-working young lady who earned the opportunity to travel outside the U.S for school which not many students like myself get the chance to do.” Sarah discussed how she was curious what it would be like to travel with the explicit purpose to explore. She had traveled to Puerto Rico in the past, but that was family purposes or practical obligations. She had never traveled exclusively for an adventurous, educational experience. She knew it would take her out of her comfort zone. Sarah closed her application stating that she genuinely feels like she will grow as a person going on this trip.

Sarah learned a lot about the possibilities that exist for her future as a result of studying in China. Sarah also learned about different perspectives. She was surprised how open she was to meeting new people. She explained that being asked to work with new people -both her Guttman peers and Chinese college students - “you are forced to get creative about how to build relationships.” If you have to work together to reach a common goal, “then I had better not be close-minded to new ideas which I could sometimes be.” Sarah was very interested in the ways that learning about new and totally foreign perspectives actually made her reflect on her own. She said this trip made her “look at herself more closely, somewhat.”
Something new that really sticks with Sarah about her travels was how she really acted in a more direct and bold way than she does regularly at home in NYC. Sarah said she had this sense that her “time there was limited, so (she) felt more compelled to try new stuff, take risks and even be more confident”. For example, when she was climbing the Great Wall of China in the snow with her classmates, she found that her attitude was actually positive and enthusiastic, even though she would imagine that she would have been angry and negative. Climbing the stairs was difficult, it was cold and she really didn’t know how long she was going to be out in inclement weather. Sarah explained that if she had placed herself in the same conditions in NYC she would have broken down. But, because she was somewhere so famous and she was struggling alongside her peers, that she found herself being more confident and positive than ever.

One of the more challenging moments of the trip for Sarah was when she became so exhausted from the time change and sick from the food. Sarah explained how her physical discomfort became psychological discomfort and she truly felt anxious about being so far away from home. Sarah knew that her peers had experienced the same discomfort and homesickness. She explained how identifying that other people’s feelings were similar to her own - and that were able to be resilient in the face of adversity - made her “feel more courageous.”

In summary, Sarah’s learning as a result of studying abroad was meaningful. She is more open-minded, in general, and ultimately more open to engaging with people who are different from her. She had a memorable interaction on the Beijing college campus that exemplified her openness. A woman randomly approached Sarah and her friend and struck up a conversation with them. Sarah noted that prior to the China trip she would not have been open to the advance of a stranger. After a lively conversation, the woman actually gave them her business card and
asked them to follow-up about potential jobs. Sarah noted that “it inspired me to think about what the possibilities are for me; like, I’ve been so close minded about what business means. There’s so much more I can do than I previously thought!” As a result of her openness to others, Sarah actually opened new doors of possibility for herself and her own life trajectory.

4.3 Ingrid

Ingrid is a 19-year old second year college student earning her Associates in Business Administration. She is a bright student who will be transferring to a senior college in the Fall to continue her business studies. She was born and raised in Queens, New York by parents who immigrated from Mexico. She has 2 sisters and a brother and they breed pitbulls. Ingrid is interested in running her own business someday, hence the choice of major. She is the first to attend college in her family and clearly feels the weight of her family’s expectations on her. She says that “her goal to travel the world is her family’s goal to travel the world.” She has traveled internationally only once before - to Mexico - with her family and was very scared to travel to China. Ingrid was concerned about being away from her family for so long and being disconnected from the comfort of home. Her family was actually surprised that she would participate in study abroad given how dependent she was on them.

Ingrid applied for the Global Guttman program because “after so many years working so hard in school, she wanted to really make her family proud.” She emphasized that “I am the only who has made it this far in their life”. In her application, Ingrid discussed how at one point, she wouldn’t have believed this opportunity would have been possible for her, because of “where she grew up” and “how society had made us believe that we wouldn’t go so far in life”. She actually feels empowered by this negative messaging in that it has “only made me grow stronger and work hard in school to prove these stereotypes wrong”. Ingrid believed that this opportunity
would teach her more about how she can participate in the international business environment. “I am choosing to belong to in the future.”

Ingrid learned a lot about her own capacities simply by being selected from the competitive pool of applicants. She explained that “I’m not really a risk taker so to even apply was one thing, and then to actually get selected really blew me away! I was like, woah this really shows me what I am capable of.” Ingrid describe herself as friendly, but kind of shy and lacking self-confidence in certain situations. One of her best friends also traveled to China and at first, she was very attached to this friend. But, as the trip unfolded, she forced herself to connect with others in the group as well as the Chinese students. She knew that “this was a once in a lifetime opportunity” and knew it would benefit her to step outside of her “usual habits that were more closed-off.”

Something new that sticks with Ingrid is the experience visiting a state-sponsored elderly home. The program incorporated a volunteer visit with the elderly as a way for the students to give back and to connect with a demographic of China with whom they wouldn’t otherwise have had contact. The visit really made an impact on Ingrid because it highlighted how relatively poorly the elderly are treated in the US. The visit reminded Ingrid of her own grandmother in Mexico. She felt comforted that the elderly women in China were so happy and well-treated, just like her own grandmother will be someday when under care in Mexico. Ingrid talked about what she has heard about state-sponsored elderly homes in NY and her understanding is that the “old people live in depressing environments, that there are issues with abuse and its kind of like society just dumps their elderly.” Ingrid suggested that “Chinese society must respect elderly better that the US” and that “because they are more advanced, they have better resources, like nice elderly homes.”
One of the more challenging moments of the trip for Ingrid was when she felt reserved and anxious about meeting Chinese college students. She said, “I know I should be more open, but its like I just get stuck in certain social situations. But, the trip leaders forced us to talk. They forced us to find ourselves in what we thought would be awkward social situations and then it turned out, I was totally fine! I was totally capable of coming out of my shell. It was pretty cool.”

Ingrid also talked about challenges she faces regularly in the US based on her ethnic heritage. She explained how she faces stereotypes about Mexicans that she has had to really work to overcome. Ingrid feels that the US climate around immigrants is really negative these days and in some ways it has weighed her down, but more so, it has inspired her to prove people wrong. She feels “proud of (her) Mexican heritage and knows that its actually a strength.” Ingrid was curious what it would be like to live in China given that the stereotypes against Mexicans don’t really seem to exist.

In summary, Ingrid’s learning as a result of studying abroad was meaningful. Ingrid feels like she “learned that I am able to do amazing things that are out of this country and that there are many opportunities for Americans like me overseas. I want to do more.” Meeting students – the school system is very well resourced and makes me want to go there – plus the campuses are really big and much nicer. Ingrid was really impacted by how meaningful her participation in Global Guttman China meant for her family. She expressed how “they have raised me to become such a hard-working young lady who earned the opportunity to travel outside the U.S” She believes that as a result of this opportunity, her academic and professional goals are in closer reach. She has gained “a better perspective about the world and thinks what she learned will “help (her) understand how to successfully run (her) future business.”
4.4 Ernest

Ernest is a 19-year old, second year community college student earning his Associates of Science in Information Technology. He is a very good student with an above average GPA who will be transferring to a senior college in the Fall. He is not convinced that IT is the correct path for him, but he knows it is practical, so he plans to continue studying in this field. He participated in the Global Guttman in China program as part of the IT Capstone course and developed content related to culture and social practices for the course website. Ernest was born in Puerto Rico and moved to the Bronx as a child. He was always interested in understanding and helping others, perhaps because he has 2 younger siblings for whom he cares on a daily basis. He feels responsible to serve as good role model for his siblings. If he wants them to be their best selves, then he needs to push his own limits, so they will learn from him. Ernest had never traveled outside of the US and acquired his first passport just before the China trip. He hopes to travel more now that he has developed some confidence and travel skills.

Ernest applied for the Global Guttman program because he “wanted to step out of (his) boundaries and explore something new about himself and the world”. He explained that he grew up never really leaving New York City, so had never immersed himself in another country. He feels like he had “never really experienced new things since I am in such a routine in NYC.” His aspiration in applying was to leave China as a different person. He hoped that that this experience would “transform (his) life forever.” By traveling to China, Ernest believed he would get closer to achieving his academic and professional goals and, ultimately, his ideal goal to somehow contribute to changing the world for the better. Ernest believed that by going to China and being exposed to new cultures and traditions, he might be able “to get an idea of what
changes would (he) would want to make in this world.” He had hopes that Global Guttman in China would reveal some of the strengths and flaws of this world and allow him to gain ideas of what changes he might want to pursue.

Ernest learned about his personal preferences while traveling in China. He describes himself as very picky with a ‘bad’ stomach. He gets sick alot and is particularly sensitive to spicy, rich foods. Nonetheless, he was a relatively adventurous eater while in China and discovered that when he has limited options, he actually pushes himself to try new dishes. He was struck by the contents of breakfast in China. He talked about how certain dishes in the US or Puerto Rico are just clearly reserved for lunch or dinner - like meat and rice. But, meat and rice were served at breakfast in China. This seemingly inconsequential detail made Ernest think twice about his pre-conceived notions of right and wrong. He said “if I have rigid ideas about what’s ‘normal’ breakfast food, but I am like totally self-centered about what normal means, then in what other parts of life am I doing this?” Basically, Ernest had an epiphany over his breakfast pork fried rice.

Something new that sticks with Ernest is the traditional Chinese performance that the group attended one night. He admits the he “kind of thought it was weird. Maybe weird isn’t the right word, but it was definitely different.” Ernest said he felt bored or that he just didn’t like it. But, then realized that maybe ‘It was just cuz I didn’t understand what was going on.” He said that after reflecting on it, he thought about parades back in Puerto Rico and maybe non-Puerto Ricans might think that they were weird or confusing or different. He said, “I guess an outsider wouldn’t really get it, cuz you would have to know the history and all the layers of culture and stuff.” Ernest feels like he really started to understand the impact of difference and that if we
don’t take things the right way, that it can cause greater confusion. He feels like this trip “really opened (his) mind and got him thinking about his own judgments.”

One of the more challenging moments of the trip for Ernest was actually on the first full day when the students were asked to participate in a scavenger hunt throughout Beijing. Ernest described how on multiple levels that this was a challenge for him. He really didn’t understand the instructions, he was totally unfamiliar with the city which meant that wandering made him really nervous, not to mention that he “felt forced to collaborate with others.” He explained that in classes back in NYC “there was so much group work and it was very hard for (him) because (he) really doesn’t like to depend on others and have to interact with people (he doesn’t) know.” Ernest was able to participate in the game, albeit reluctantly. He said that by the end he was exhausted and actually felt mad at the game organizers for not being clear and annoyed with the trip leaders for forcing him to collaborate. But, later in the trip, he explained, this ridiculous experience of wandering the city, getting lost and not really understanding the rules actually ended up bonding the group. He says that they all realized they were kind of miserable and after awhile it was funny. “It weirdly made us closer and more open, even though we all found the experience really uncomfortable and not as fun as the leaders thought it would be. Its so funny how that happens.”

In summary, Ernest’s learning as a result of studying abroad was meaningful. He learned about expanding the boundaries of his own comfort zone and was “forced me to open up to people from a totally different culture and not only do small talk, but actually interview them about real life issues.” Before traveling to China, it felt very clear to Ernest that he was not one to open up and speak to random people.” Before travelling to China he felt like in order for him to socialize it was a pre-requisite that he be totally comfortable in his surroundings. “Before, it
was like there was no way I was going to open up and speak but now I feel like, hey, you never know what can impact you by just opening up to someone.”

Ernest explained how he - and his family - can’t really believe how socially aware he’s become and how when interacting with someone from the other side of the world, he so easily connected them and shared their stories.”

4.5 Henry

Henry is a 20-year old, second year college student earning his Associates in Business Administration. He is exceptionally intelligent, yet has struggled with engagement in his college coursework, thus his GPA is only average. Henry was born and raised in Harlem, New York. While he describes his own family as “stable and supportive” he describes the environment in which he was raised as turbulent and rife with untrustworthy community figures. Henry explained that he’s “seen crazy stuff; my best friend’s mom is a crackhead; so growing up, I felt like the world was unstable. I learned that people around me do not have my back.” Henry describes that as he matured in this community, he learned to exclusively cater to himself and depend on no one. But, deep down, he knew he had to grow out of his negative instincts and that it was ultimately, unproductive and even damaging to his future success. Three years ago, Henry obtained a passport and traveled internationally for the first time. He pursued an opportunity to participate in a free youth travel program in South America. Henry said, “my brain was hard-wired not to trust” and that by traveling to South America he was able to connect with people in a way that significantly changed his paradigm about trusting others. “I changed my outlook on life and my place in the world. That is a feeling that I wish to expand upon. I also hope to work on my leadership skills in a setting such as this trip.”
Henry applied for the Global Guttman in China program because he wanted to expand the boundaries he had placed on himself. He was concerned that his grades might cripple his application to the China program, but in fact, his application essays conveyed shining potential and sincere interest. Henry will be transferring to a senior college in the Fall to continue his studies in business with a focus in the sports and fitness industry. In preparing for the Global Guttman China trip, he was interested in learning more about Chinese sports culture, in particular he wanted to know more about the basketball industry. Henry explained that this trip “would allow me to broaden my global view. This experience would also act as a means of preparing me to know how to function in today's global business world. Having an understanding of the country’s cultural and business practices will only benefit me and add to the skills and qualifications that I would bring into my future business dealings.”

Henry learned a lot about himself while in China. He expanded the notions of his own capacity for independence and also his ideas of trust. Henry said the trip helped him to better “know what I am able to do. It helped me understand that I can do more than I give myself credit for.” Something that came up for him was a reflection on his earlier realizations around trust. Henry’s analyses about the structures within which he’s lived in Harlem are profound. He explains, “I feel like there is structural and institutionalized practices that have been forced upon us and make people just do things for themselves; they are reactive; this is especially true for poor people of color. US society puts people in scenarios where they have to fend for themselves; they have to put their needs first.” He went on to explain that being in and learning about China highlighted this negative societal influence in the US even more. Henry explained that he felt he has always been taught that “to solve the problems you were dealing with, you alone had to figure it out and you couldn’t depend on anyone else.” He said traveling in a
collectivist countries like with his past program in South America and with this program, Global Guttman China (along with general maturation and other, significant relationships in his life) have helped him to adopt a new paradigm, one in which he is more conscious of what other people are going through and where he tries to think beyond himself and only his needs. He actively worked to connect with his peers and create trusting friendships. He realizes that he is connected to others in a way that is deeper than he wanted to admit. Henry felt that when he was exposed to Chinese culture that they “got this; like, whereas I was brought up to be seriously, seriously independent, in China, the self was not insular….like the individual was intertwined with those around them.”

Something new that sticks with Henry was an unfamiliar - yet, exhilarating - feeling of independence in China and the realization that “I am more capable than I give myself credit for.” Henry felt a level of independence that he had never really experience previously. While he wasn’t actually alone all that much, he would sometimes wander the college campus in the evenings and even played pick-up basketball when possible. As a result of the China trip, Henry feels like “I can be myself and function anywhere…..if I can function in China which is SO different from the US, then I feel like regardless of where I am on the globe - even if I can’t communicate, I am still capable of navigating it.”

One of the more challenging moments of the trip for Henry was when he faced a serious language barrier. He was really not feeling well, so went to the store to get some medicine, but realized he was without an interpreter and without the necessary language skills to ask for what he needed. “It’s hard to get the things you want when you can’t talk to someone. Especially when you are from NYC where you can basically get anything you want at all hours of the night and basically everyone speaks English.” Henry was really struck by how much he takes English
for granted and how awkward it was to not be able to speak Chinese. Another experience that was somewhat challenging was at an organized lunch with Chinese college students and a discussion about communist vs capitalist societies. Henry said that he had such a hard time wrapping his head around “how they were possibly so accepting of how regulated their lives were.” He asked them “how they feel about how they can’t question the government and they seemed so oddly accepting”. Henry noted that their mindset was completely different from his and that he found it confusing and kind of shocking. From his perspective, Henry felt like the Chinese college students were “just rationalizing the fact that they can’t do certain things and it sounded so unbelievable to me.” Henry ended by saying that “once you start traveling the world and learning about new cultures and sharing your own, I guess there’s always going to be drastic differences and that’s the spice of life.”

In summary, Henry’s learning as a result of studying abroad was meaningful. He had many personal and philosophical revelations. “The moments of just wandering or just thinking about life in China vs the US - when I was by myself - were actually the most memorable.” Henry really emphasized that he discovered this inner freedom and as a result, greater self-confidence.”I don’t really explore in NYC – since we live here and have routines and end up doing the same thing everyday - and being in China just kind of broke me from my own monotony and then really made me take a look at how I perceive myself. and how I have grow in new directions when I return.” Henry went on to explain participating in the China program enhanced his “global perspective” and helped him to better situate himself in the global community because when you go to new countries, you get to see how other cultures perceive of you as an individual or as an American.” Henry ended by saying, “this was a once in a lifetime experience - and I want to go back!”
4.6 Leonard

Leonard is an 18 year old, second year community college student. Leonard moved from Dominican Republic (DR) to Queens., New York in 2015, 3 years prior to the China program. He attended a multi-ethnic public high school and identifies as more of a New Yorker than a Dominican. Although he is an Information Technology (IT) major, he also identifies as an artist given his affinity for both photography and painting. Both of his parents went to college in DR and his father has a job that allows him to travel internationally on a regular basis. He is inspired to travel because of his father’s global work. Leonard’s family members in NYC - with whom he lives - have not completed college and work long hours in tough jobs which inspired him to succeed in college and pursue every opportunity possible. He knows they are proud that he traveled to China, representing them and his college.

Leonard applied to the Global China program because he wanted to learn something completely new and to challenge himself. He participated as part of a Web Technologies course and produced educational content about China as part of the course requirement. This was Leonard’s first study abroad experience. His professor urged him to apply based on his dynamic interests and strong academic standing. Leonard knew that if he traveled to China that it would change something in him in a “certain, unknown way.”. He knew that attending college and pursuing as many opportunities as possible would help him discover what he wants in life and ultimately, who he is. Traveling to China would provide yet another glimpse into himself.

Leonard learned a lot about how his own interpersonal style has been influenced by his surrounding. He stated that, “before this trip I didn’t like working with people. I was in my own circle and just did my own thing. But, traveling in China taught me that with some people, I could actually go deeper.” He explained that he always considered himself shy, but that by
traveling with the program he explained that he is “too comfortable in my comfort zone, I know now that I need to break that pattern.” He also discussed how the anonymity of travel provides the space to test comfort zones. Leonard said that “(i)n China I felt more comfortable; maybe because nobody knew me, I could do and be whatever I wanted to some extent.”

One of the more challenging facets of the trip for Leonard was how Chinese people moved very fast and he had a hard time keeping up. It made him feel self-critical; as if his slow pace inhibited completion of tasks and his own advancement. He also struggled with language barriers. He said, “my English is not perfect, so sometimes it was hard to express myself to my group mates and it was really, really hard to communicate with the Chinese students with English as the communication tool.”

In summary, Leonard’s learning as a result of studying abroad was meaningful, although is also leaving him with questions. Leonard’s perspective on his own capacity to successfully get outside of his own comfort zone has changed. He felt very clear that “it expanded the boundaries of (him)self.” He talked about how he feels proud about being a global traveler now. But he simultaneously expressed uncertainty about some of the lessons he drew from this experience. He “know(s) that something changed, but for some reason, (doesn’t) yet know what it is.” For Leonard, the expectation is that the learning that resulted from the Global China program will continue to unfold in the months and years to come.

4.7 Cross Case Analysis

Four major learning themes emerged that were consistent across the 5 interviewees. The themes that emerged were: 1.) expanded notions of one’s capacities; 2.) being more open to connection to others; 3.) family/community as inspiration/impetus for studying abroad; 4.) self in relationship to the global world. The most compelling information is that emerged from the
student interviews is conveyed below, based on each of the four themes. More robust and comprehensive data can be found in the Appendix.

**Theme 1: Learning about expanded notions of one’s capacities**

Five of the 5 interviewees (100%) discussed that as a result of their experiences studying in China, they adopted expanded notions of their own capacities. The responses in Table 1 are collected predominantly from the students’ responses to the interview question that asked, “what did you learn about yourself in China that you couldn’t have learned here at home?” as well as from the question, “what are the three most positive learning experiences from the Global Guttman China program?” All five students expressed some degree of trepidation about leaving their comfort zone, but that as a result of their travels, they learned about themselves and their own capacity for growth. Capacity for growth can mean development of an individual’s sense of self and identity. Capacity for growth can also mean one’s cognitive and/or psycho-social growth on inter and intra-personal levels.

Within this broad theme, a number of more specific ideas or sub-themes were identified by all five students. The ten sub-themes that were patterned across all five interviews are as follows: Examine the possibilities that exist for one’s future beyond limiting self-beliefs; act in a more direct, confident, courageous, bold way than when at home; taking a risk and the resulting rewards can shift your sense of your own capabilities; breaking patterns can create room for new branches of identity to take shape; place self in different environment might allow us to change perception of the self; challenge us to think about what we thought was “normal”; normal is actually relative; we can have self-limiting beliefs; we don’t always give ourselves credit for our capacities; ability to function and thrive in such a foreign environment made them feel more confidence, competent, agentic; We can interpret difference negatively and be judgmental; it’s
not necessary; and, I have the capacity to connect with people from a very difference culture/paradigm.

**Theme 2: Being more open to connecting with others**

Five of the 5 interviewees (100%) discussed how traveling to China provided an opportunity for them to connect with or open up to others in ways that were unique to the travel program. The responses in Table 2 were collected predominantly from interview question that asked, “we were faced with very different worldviews and lifestyles while in China. Talk about a time during our travels in China when you interacted with individuals/communities/cultures whose perspectives were very different than yours and how you navigated that difference.” All five of the interviewees discussed ways in which they are closed, shy, reserved or self-protective when they approach new situations in their “normal” habitus is NYC, but when they did study abroad, they found themselves acting and reacting differently. Four of 5 described stepping out of their comfort zones and pushing themselves to connect with others. ‘Others’ might have included the other Guttman study abroad travelers, their Chinese college student counterparts, or complete strangers. ‘Connecting’ might be described as talking, playing with (e.g. ping pong at the college), working with (e.g. scavenger hunt), dining with or watching a performance with (e.g. Chinese acrobatic show).

Within this broad theme, a number of more specific ideas or sub-themes were identified by all five students. The 12 sub-themes that were patterned across all five interviews are as follows: Being taken out of comfort zone can make us more open to meet others: When asked to work with new people, have to get creative about finding ways to connect; Being open to connect with others might open doors to professional opportunities; To reach a common goal, must maintain open mind in order to successfully reach that goal; Seemingly awkward social situations can
actually be liberating because you realize that you are capable of emerging out of shell and connecting when you may have thought you couldn’t; Because of requirements of global course, actually go deeper with people - for example when you have to interview them about real life issues for purposes of the research project; Challenges self-limiting beliefs that you are shy, reserved, self-protective, that you don’t “like others” or certain “types” of people; As a result of connecting with someone new, you might be changed in some way great or small - and you might change someone, too; Might highlight how much we depend on others; that connection is actually essential and important; We shouldn’t assume that there are pre-scripted “levels” at which we can connect with others - we may be able to connect more authentically than we assume; Helps us to examine our patterns of engagement with others when we are back home and easily fall into habits and patterns; Sometimes the anonymity of travel makes us feel uninhibited; and travel allows us to connect with people to whom we would otherwise be closed off.

**THEME 3: Family/community as inspiration to study abroad**

Four of the 5 interviewees (80%) noted that their participation in a travel program to China was strongly supported by and in some cases, being lived vicariously by, their family members. The responses listed in Table 3 are predominantly collected from the interview question, “What did you learn about yourself that you could not have learned if you didn’t travel to CHina?” and “describe the ways in which your understanding of your own identity has been shaped by global forces. Please provide an example.” All four students expressed how they felt a responsibility to pursue this global learning opportunity on behalf of their family members. Their family’s had not had the same chance, whether because of their age, education status or perhaps even citizenship status. In some cases, the juxtaposition of the family members’ struggle and the
interviewees participation in such an exceptional program (i.e. travel to another hemisphere) made it that much more powerful for the entire family. The interviewees were being nurtured and encouraged to grow beyond the limitations that other family members experienced. The support and love they received from ‘home base’ encouraged the students to step into new zones and see themselves in new ways. Two interviewees (40%) explained how travel abroad was a way for them to counter the negative influences or stereotypes of their community or society-at-large.

Within this broad theme, a number of more specific ideas or sub-themes were identified by all five students. The 12 sub-themes that were patterned across all five interviews are listed below. Six of the sub-themes are about family and six are related to the influence of community and society. The six themes about family are as follows: By engaging in interesting programs, family is proud of your courage and interesting life; Study abroad is an effective way to fulfill family’s dreams and expectations for their child; Family clearly lives vicariously through the student; it’s a collective learning experience; You often serve as a role model for younger family - or community - members, so we can be mindful of our actions; if you push yourself they will too; Given the fact that you might have family members with no college degree who are struggling; and the student derives pride in self because family is proud of choice to travel abroad. The six themes about the negative influence of Community/Society that emerged are as follows: Sometimes in spite of society and community expectations, we push ourselves; Society can limit us based on stereotypes based on our background, pushing ourselves beyond them can challenge society’s notions; Counteracting stereotypes about what society tells us can make us feel proud of ourselves; Society’s limiting beliefs about what we are capable of can make us feel angry and motivated to prove them wrong by engaging in the exact activity that was seemingly
out of reach; Community can influence us to engender negative universal perceptions of people and by, participating in a constructive experience like study abroad can help us perceive other communities and our own differently; and if raised in a fractured social environment, our ability to trust/depend on others might be fractured too, experiences on study abroad programs can help us understand that it is possible to trust/depend on others

Theme 4: Learning about self in relationship to the global world

Five of 5, (100%) of the interviewees discussed how their experience studying abroad helped them to understand themselves in a global context. The responses listed in Table 4 are predominantly collected from the interview question, “Describe the ways in which your understanding of your own identity has been shaped by global forces. Please provide an example” as well as from the question, “what are the three most positive learning experiences from the Global Guttman China program?” All students struggled somewhat to start with the global level and work “down” to the individual level in making connections. Yet, each of the 5 interviewees spoke about their individual-level learning first and then worked “up” to the global-level they were able to draw connections to the self with greater ease.

Within this broad theme, a number of more specific ideas or sub-themes were identified by all five students. The 12 sub-themes that were patterned across all five interviews are as follows: Think seriously about globalizing your career aspirations; The workforce is globally connected, so global perspectives will be essential to being a competitive player; Examine the origins of our worldviews; The treatment and respect of elderly ought to be universally held value; We can confront stereotypes that we face based on our background or color of our skin; Increase pride in own heritage and inspire deeper exploration of own heritage; Inspire you to find your calling; in what way you want to contribute to making the world a better place; Helps us think beyond
ourselves and our own needs; successfully navigating a new culture/geography gives us confidence to explore and engage with other, new cultures/geographies; Be okay with difference; not feel threatened by others’ experiences in the world that are different than ours; Understand how others perceive of you as an American; and, can instill a sense of pride about being a global traveler.
CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

5.1 Summary

This study was an examination of learning experienced by five community college students who participated in a short-term study abroad program in China. The primary research question interrogated the deeper nature of the learning that the students experienced, particularly about their own self-awareness and engagement with new perspectives. The hypothesis was that as a result of their participation, the students would learn more deeply about themselves and their perspectives on the world would expand. This paper asserted that as a result of cultivating a deeper understanding of oneself in a global context, students develop greater agency and ultimately, become better global citizens. This paper suggests that as a result of exposure to global learning experiences like study abroad, students will not only thrive personally and academically, but will also have developed globalized critical thinking and problem-solving tools to analyze the world’s complexities. Ultimately, global citizens can contribute to creating a more just and sustainable world. Study abroad is a transformative global learning practice. In an increasingly globalized world and workforce study abroad should not be considered a luxury, but rather an imperative. Higher education institutions should invest time and resources into increasing the number – and diversity - of student participants in study abroad programs, as well as comprehensive training, reflection, assessment, evaluation and curricular models for this growing field of education. According to NCES report about Enrollment and Employees in Postsecondary Institutions, as of Fall 2016, 36 percent of undergraduate students attended public and private two-year colleges, 20 percent of whom attended public, two-year colleges (NCES, 2016). Community college students represent a significant percentage of the undergraduate
student population in the US, yet community college students are starkly under-represented in study abroad programs across the country - 1.7% according to IIE, 2017. This is an issue of equity, inclusion and diversity that must be addressed.

This study revealed many interesting findings about the student’s learning experience. This discussion section highlights three of the primary findings. First, an unanticipated finding was the integral role of family and community. Family strongly and positively influenced interviewees in their decision to pursue study abroad and in their ability to overcome insecurities about applying for study abroad. As first generation college students, they often felt compelled to travel on behalf of their families who did not otherwise have an opportunity like study abroad or as role models for their younger family members. In other words, they felt a sense of responsibility to their families. For two interviewees, the negative and limiting messages from community and society actually served as inspiration to ‘prove them wrong’. A second interesting finding was how all students described their surprise about their own ability to step quite far outside of their social comfort zones. They engaged with and showed curiosity in others - both their fellow travelers and Chinese people they met - that exceeded their ‘normal’ social behaviors at home in NYC. Lastly, the findings suggest that the study abroad experience expanded the perimeters of the boundaries that the interviewees had previously conceived of for themselves. In other words, they realized their capacities were greater, they possessed greater agency and even their plans for their future expanded. This section elaborates on the three primary findings and more, as it discusses the four themes that emerged and their significance, as well as the implications of the findings for future research, policy and teaching.
Discussion of the Four Primary Themes

The four major learning themes emerged from the research were: 1.) expanded notions of one’s capacities; 2.) being more open to connection to others; 3.) family/community as inspiration/impetus for studying abroad; 4.) self in relationship to the global world. As a student explores their identity, perspectives and ideas, there are multiple influences in their environment that can actually transform them in powerful ways. Study abroad provides a unique opportunity for transformation intellectually, personally and socially.

5.2 Theme 1 - Expanded Notions of One’s Capacities

There were various notable findings related to the students’ learning about themselves and their capacities. All students explained how participation in the program inspired them to push boundaries and how it evoked parts of themselves that were previously unknown. One student explained that the exposure she gained on the program, inspired her to look more closely at herself and her own biases and also to think more seriously about her life possibilities. All interviewees used words like open, freedom, discovery and independence to describe how study abroad in China impacted their understanding of themselves (i.e. their likes, dislikes, thresholds, personality traits) and some students even felt more able to take risks (i.e. experiment, challenge their comfort zone), reach greater personal potential (confront self-limiting beliefs, break patterns, exercise resilience) and their visions for their own future were expanded (i.e. introduced to other career possibilities, capable of doing amazing things).

Students expressed that they experienced a deeper understanding of their own potential as a result of studying abroad in China. Henry, for example, explained that the China program helped him to better “know what I am able to do. It helped me understand that I can do more than I give myself credit for.” Oftentimes, young people understand themselves primarily based
on messaging from their peers and society. Social media plays a powerful role in telling young people who they are. This messaging is oftentimes negative and creates feelings of inadequacy and self-limitation. Negative messages from social media can become internalized and then reinforced out in the world. Like Ingrid who noted that she wouldn't have believed this opportunity would have been possible for her, because of “where she grew up” and “how society had made us believe that we wouldn't go so far in life”. Study abroad provides the time and the space to step away from the predictable routines of the home campus with a deep immersion into a new culture and environment. The experience presents invigorating challenges that provide the conditions in which fresh perspectives on oneself can occur. Deep reflection - particularly when the study abroad program requires reflective writing of the student - can help her identify and then examine how she thinks, perceives, reacts and feels. When coupled with new adventures filled with different sensorial experiences, the students’ cognition can actually expand and deep learning can occur. 

_We know what we are, but not what we may be_ - Shakespeare, Hamlet. Awareness of our own identity “enables one to move with purpose and direction in life and with a sense of internal coherence and continuity over time and place. (Kroger, 2017, p.2)” Learning is a social and empirical phenomenon. In other words, we learn in relationship and connection to others and when our senses are engaged. In this case, students were in a travel group of ten students and three faculty, all of whom traveled from New York City to Beijing to Shanghai and back, as a collective tour group. The interviewee’s descriptions of what they learned were complex with indicators of personal growth. Students described physically, mentally and emotionally challenging and inspiring moments on the trip that impacted their understanding of themselves, their peers, Chinese people or society at large. Students described new and different sights,
sounds and tastes that pushed them to expand their perspectives on their opinions and notions of their own capacities.

5.3 Theme 2 - Being More Open to Connect with Others

Students discussed that being abroad provided an external motivation to connect with others with whom they might not communicate on a regular basis. All 5 interviewees used words like trust, comfort zone, boundaries, collaborate, comfortable and interact when asked about their level of engagement with others during the program. Leonard remarked that, “Seemingly awkward social situations can actually be liberating because you realize that you are capable of emerging out of shell and connecting when you may have thought you couldn’t.” Oftentimes, because the students were required to engage social activities like icebreakers and collective research, they were ‘forced’ to push themselves socially. One student noted that, “because of the research requirements of global course I was actually forced to go deeper with people.”

Sometimes the anonymity of travel makes us feel uninhibited and can allow us to connect with others who we might otherwise avoid. As students reflected on their patterns of engagement with others in China, they often identified habits and patterns that isolated them and which might have actually been missed opportunities to learn something new or, better yet develop their professional network. This is significant when we consider the social skills needed for the 21st century global workforce. A task force organized by the National Association of Colleges and Employers identified a list of the competencies required to succeed in today’s work environment including skills like work ethic, leadership, critical thinking, problem solving and global fluency. NACE (2018) describes global/intercultural fluency as the ability to “value, respect, and learn from diverse cultures, races, ages, genders, sexual orientations, and religions. The individual demonstrates, openness, inclusiveness, sensitivity, and the ability to interact respectfully with all
people and understand individuals’ differences.” Clearly, participation in study abroad is an opportunity to exercise this very important skill. It is imperative that all college campuses across the country provide opportunities to exercise global fluency and what better way than study abroad program. If global skills increase employability as reports suggests, then access to global learning experiences should be equal for all.

5.4 Theme 3 - Family/community as inspiration/impetus for studying abroad

There were various notable findings about how family and community affected the students’ inspiration to pursue study abroad. Very few studies have discussed the role of family in the context of study abroad programs and no research exists about the role of family for first-generation community college students who study abroad. As Ingrid noted, “her goal to travel the world is her family’s goal to travel the world.” For students who are first-generation, the college experience of the individual does not exist in a vacuum. Ingrid’s admission to and experience in college affects and is effected by her family members, none of whom had the same opportunity at her age. All of the Global Guttman in China students discussed how their social environment influenced their desire to apply. In referring to Bandurianan’s model of agency (See Figure 3), the environmental influences around an individual are inextricably linked to their degree of agency. Findings from this study suggest that family is a powerful agentic factor for students. This finding merits deeper study and suggest implications for recruitment and training that involves the student’s family.

5.5 Theme 4 - Self in Relationship to the Global World

There were some notable findings about students’ understanding of their relationship to the global world. All five of the students struggled to answer the interview question that asked about how their daily lives connected to global forces. At age 19, it can be argued that this is
developmentally appropriate. For an ‘emerging adult’ question of self-awareness tend to expand to friends, peers, co-workers, family and regional community. A more global understanding of one’s positionality in the global sphere is a burgeoning skill. While interviewees did not report complex global insights, they did report hopes for greater global understanding. Henry for example, said his “ideal goal is to learn about ways to make the world a better place.”

The AAC&U Global Learning VALUE Rubric (2017) includes a “Global Systems” learning outcome that asks of students to “understand how these systems 1) are influenced and/or constructed, 2) operate with differential consequences, 3) affect the human and natural world, and 4) can be altered” (See Appendix B). The findings of this study suggest that students are navigating with how global systems are influenced and constructed as a result of studying abroad. There are visceral learning experiences during travel that cannot be experienced by reading an article or even during a lively class discussion back on campus. For example, Ernest noted that while trying to navigate basic day to day functions, like buying a soda at the store, he realized that language was a significant barrier. Ernest knows that English is the dominant language across the globe, yet in China it had not permeated all sectors of society. He made note that this must be connected to either communism or a lack of English language education, or both.

Three of the five students explained that as a result of their experience in China, they are strongly considering a career in international business. This is an unforeseen outcome of the program. Sarah “hopes that a career in international business will be the pathway to achieving her goals” to travel the world, make a lot of money and most importantly make her family proud.” This finding has implications for ways to better support students as they pursue 4-year colleges, internships and jobs. Partnerships with campus offices that provide work and internship
opportunities is just one of the ideas for policy suggestions as a result of the findings of this study.

5.6 Implications for Research

The findings of this research study suggest that students’ global awareness is profoundly impacted by study abroad. More research is needed about the impacts of study abroad for community college students. Research should address impacts on global learning, retention to graduation, the psycho-social impacts on students’ personal lives and professional identity development. All students in this study explained that their family members were incredibly supportive and in some cases, living vicariously through the student. The student felt that they were participating in this adventure on behalf of the family and they felt they “owed” the family something.

Research about the nature of learning that occurs for a student from a very connected family and collectivist culture must be considered. Too often study abroad programs expect the student to be disconnected from their families and thus having a personally isolated experience. Students often describe study abroad as “life changing,” yet insufficient research based evidence exists to explain this phenomenon. Some studies suggest that as a result of study abroad participation, students are more open to diversity, more curious about the world, have greater cultural proficiency and their self-awareness is expanded.

Directions for research can also focus on the ways in which the learning that occurs during study abroad is neuro-biologically aligned with the developmental stage of an emerging adult. CDDT is a new model of experiential learning grounded in current neuro-science perspectives. The theory - presented by J Schenck and J Cruikshank (2014) - is a reaction to and evolution beyond Kolb’s Experiential Learning Theory (KELT) which Cruikshank argue
lacks dimension and statistical validity and is not aligned with the actual neuro-biology of the learning process which does, in fact, contain some universality, thus can be adapted relatively universally to multiple teaching environments. Unlike KELT, CDDT is grounded in epistemology, neurobiology and model analysis. It is a self-adjusting, fractal-like cycle of teaching, rather than learning which makes it more adaptable to diverse teaching environments. CDDT is a neuro-biologically driven model in that it sequences the steps of learning based on the neuronally-based learning processes that occur in the brain while we have learning experiences and obtain new knowledge. Experiential learning integrates different neural networks during the global learning event, resulting in multiple memory pathways and connections between abstract concepts. So, when designing a global learning program we must ground it in neuro-biologically supported data about effective teaching approaches that contribute to lasting learning (memories). Memory-forming events might include novel experiences that are salient and therefore commit to memory. Research can also focus on the ways that attention is stimulated or the limbic/emotional systems are activated.

There is a dearth of research about the study abroad experiences for first-generation, students of color from low income communities which is concerning given the disproportionately low numbers of participation. Norma (2017) explains that, “research focusing on the intersectionality of U.S. students of color, with different levels of travel experience, going abroad to countries with very different cultures has been almost non-existent.” The diversity of America’s college students is not accurately reflected in the study abroad statistics. For example, Hispanics represent 18% of the college population, but only 9.7% of the study abroad population, and 14% of the US college population is represented by Black or African American students, whereas only 5.9% of study abroad students are Black or African American. (See
Figure 1.1 and 1.2) This presents a concerning disparity in participation in study abroad. If there is an international call for greater global competence for a global world and a national call for greater global skills so Americans remain competitive in a global marketplace, then global education is a necessity not a privilege. All students on all campuses should have access to a rich array of global experiences in college. Given that global competencies are mandated to be a competitive player in the global workplace and studies show that global education - and specifically study abroad - significantly improves global competencies, then access to study abroad programs is an equity issue that must be addressed. In the 21st century, administrators must not approach study abroad as a luxury. Investing time and resources into study abroad serves the individual and the college significantly. The impact of study abroad ultimately serves a vital public good that is essential for the future success of the country at large.

5.7 Implications for Teaching

There are many pedagogical suggestions that can be offered as a result of the findings of this study. The Global Guttman in China experience was embedded across various courses, but also the students engaged in a variety of pre, during and post travel reflective assignments. Students noted that their family, community and/or society had a strong impact on their application and pre-travel experience. Study abroad administrators and teachers can incorporate reflective writing assignments about the student’s personal lineage, including interviews and surveys to various family members. During pre-travel workshops and classes students could present their family history and share all the reasons their family is integral to their study abroad experience. During travel, students are asked to document their experiences on a blog, including writing, video and photo submissions. The blog should be shared with the students’ families and the family members should be encouraged to comment.
Students also noted how their capacity to engage with new people and ideas really surprised them while traveling in China. Educators should be prepared with games, activities and collective research project assignments that push students to not only work with others but to also reflect on what is challenging, surprising and interesting about working with new ideas. The findings of this study suggest that students’ notions of the boundaries of themselves expanded. In other words, they had previously set limits as to who they were, what they were capable of and the direction of their lives, whereas during and after travel all of these limits were challenged and in some cases de-constructed. This finding suggests that educators should invest robust programming in the post-travel workshops, seminars and assessment activities. Oftentimes a single post-travel workshops and a quick survey is administered. Instead, educators should see the post-travel space as a unique and time-sensitive opportunity to encourage students to dive deeply into examining their learning and growth. In the weeks, months and even years after travel, students should be asked to re-visit their written, video and photo reflections, stay connected to their travel cohort through social media or reunions as they continue to unpack their personal and intellectual development.

The AAC&U Global Learning VALUE Rubric is an excellent way to not only assess learning after the fact, but as a framework for constructing learning experiences. The ultimate milestone in the Global Self-Awareness Rubric (AACU), states that a student should “effectively address significant issues in the natural and human world based on articulating one’s identity in a global context; articulates one’s identity in a global context and from that, able to address significant issues in the world.” Based on the findings about the importance of family in the study abroad experience, educators should consider revising the definition of global self-awareness. The current AAC&U definition that emphasize the individual as a separate entity
from family which means that the assessment and evaluation of this particular learning outcome is lacking a comprehensive lens.

As young people have greater exposure to transformative learning experiences, their ability to assess their own strengths and limitations improves. They are more likely to develop the confidence and optimism that leads to a positive perspective on themselves and their capacities to construct their own lives. Educators must keep this in mind as they design syllabi, construct assignments and conjure up interesting experiential opportunities for their classes. This study suggests that the agency students experienced while participating on study abroad, expanded the students’ sense of their own abilities and deepened their global learning. One can only hope that this is an enduring learning experience that extends to the rest of their academic, personal and professional life.

5.8 Implications for Policy

The nature of work is changing, the economy is global and in watching the news and social media outlets it appears that the world is becoming even more riddled with nativism, xenophobia and prejudice. Global learning programs have the capacity to reinforce tolerance, integration of a multiplicity of viewpoints and an appreciation for diversity. Campuses across the country can bolster – or introduce if one does not already exist – their global learning programs and policies. The findings from this study make a case for study abroad policies that reflect the diversity of the student population and to ensure that opportunities for global learning are equitable across campus.

This study examined the learning experiences of five students of color who are first-generation college students from low-income communities attending an urban community college. More research is needed about the experiences for this particular demographic of study
abroad student. Some studies suggest that the learning curve for students who have not
previously studied abroad is often significantly greater than for students who have previously
studied abroad. Various studies suggest that students who lack meaningful exposure to global
education appear to benefit most. (Kuh, 2010; Mckeown 2009) In other words, their learning
curve is steeper than students who may have previously engaged in international travel or study.
For students of color from low income communities who are the first in their family to attend
college this is no exception. Their learning curve is often remarkably steep.

This phenomenon whereby students who are previously underexposed to a particular
high-impact learning modality are suddenly immersed in it, is referred to as the “compensatory
effect” by educators like George Kuh who research high-impact practices and learning. Kuh
explains that high-impact practices have a significant effect on the experiences of underserved
students with data showing “generally positive relationships between high-impact or engaged
experiences and different measures of student learning and achievement, such as self-reported
gains, grade point averages, and retention…..these effects were more pronounced for students in
identified groups: African American, Latino/a, and students with relatively low ACT
scores.(Kuh, 2009)”

It can be argued that students who participate in short-term, faculty-led study abroad
programs learn more about themselves, the world and even the course content they are studying
as a result of even a short-term immersion in a foreign country. In an increasingly globalized
world it is essential that higher education administrators reform their policies in an effort to
diversify both the student demographic and study abroad locations. Programs should be designed
with a framework that accounts for diverse paradigms and that encourages global learning
outcomes. Student and faculty training prior to travel should include culturally-sensitive training
materials and should consider the role of family in the preparation workshops. Upon return, students should be given ample time and resources to reflect and assess their experiences. The post-travel workshops should be scaffolded over many weeks or months, so that the full breadth of the learning experience can be de-constructed by the student. Given the stark disparities in study abroad representation across race and ethnicity (IIE, 2017), it is imperative that study abroad programs market to and recruit all students and particularly students of color.

5.9 Conclusion

Proust suggests that the true adventure of life lies in seeing new places with new lenses. We must first understand our own lens on the world before developing new ones. Developing self awareness is a key component in cultivating a global lens. A global lens allows us to see the interconnectedness of people and issues in the global community. A global lens emphasizes the locational, cultural, and global while highlighting the intersection of problems that transcend borders. Students should be encouraged to test new identities, and make new commitments to the world. Whether in a study abroad program or in a “globalized” classroom, students must be exposed to situations and ideas that ask them to think outside their accustomed experiences and think critically about cultural diversity, their own perspectives and how their ‘self’ fits into the wider schema of their local and global environments.

While rife with interesting and revelatory findings, this study also presented a few notable limitations. The interviewees were not in the interviewer’s class, so the power dynamic of dispersal of grades was removed, but there was a pre-existing relationship. The interviewer was a leader on the program in China and also a study abroad administrator, therefore a casual relationship existed. While in some cases this might have meant more honest answers, in other cases the student may have altered responses in order to not disappoint or otherwise distress the
interviewer. On the other hand, the interviewees may have been less than honest simply because of a perceived position of authority at the college. The interviewee may have perceived that a potentially negative insight might have unknown consequences for him/her. Lastly, while case studies provide a deep look at a few individuals, generalizations for all community college students cannot be drawn.

Study abroad is an incredibly effective global learning pedagogy, yet it is not equally accessible to all college students in the United States (US). Study abroad is not a common experience for community college students. The obstacles to participation are often due to financial, employment and familial responsibilities. Yet, other barriers like bureaucratic tangles, fear of failure or difficulty with perceiving themselves as the ‘type’ of student who studies abroad also present challenges. Meanwhile, the impact of study abroad for community college students can be, in some cases, even greater than for their 4-year college counterparts who are more likely to have had global education experiences. Community college students often lack prior exposure to formal global education programs, so when immersed in study abroad, the learning curve can be remarkably steep. Additionally, in the case that a student’s family is from somewhere outside the US, they are already attuned to global learning competencies, like perspective-taking and cultural awareness. An often-overlooked benefit of study abroad for first-generation community college students is the positive effect it has on the students’ family members. Families often have immense pride in their student and this support can augment learning. One student explained that, “my goal to travel the world is my family’s goal to travel the world.” The study abroad student often serves as an inspiration for the younger generations in their families to not only travel, but to pursue college so they too can participate in study abroad.
Programs like Global Guttman offer students meaningful opportunities to analyze and explore complex global challenges, collaborate respectfully with diverse others, apply learning to take responsible action in contemporary global contexts, and evaluate the goals, methods, and consequences of that action. But, Global Guttman is the exception, rather than the rule. At 1.7%, community college student participation in study abroad is still strikingly low (IIE, 2017). This inequity is alarming, particularly given that community college students make up approximately 34% (NCES, 2017) of the undergraduate students in this country. Demonstrable global competencies are required to succeed in a global workforce. Study abroad programs must be more accessible to all students. From community college to graduate school - study abroad should be a norm, not a luxury.

Travel to a new place - especially an entirely different country - is eye-opening for most people. Travel in the context of a study abroad can be not only eye-opening, but transformational. For emerging adults, ages 18-25, questions of identity and place in the world are already ripe in their minds. College students are immersed in classes that ask of them to derive meaning of the world around them. Emerging adults who are in college and who participate in a study abroad program can experience intellectual and psycho-social transformations. This study suggests that as a result of participation in a short-term, faculty-led study abroad program in China, all five interviewees learning outcomes were significant and ranged from improved self-awareness and self-confidence to an increased willingness to take informed risks and increased knowledge of the world and other societies.
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## STUDENT INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEWS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. What were your goals for this program?</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. What did you learn about yourself that you could not have learned if you hadn’t traveled to China?</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. We were faced with very different worldviews and lifestyles while in China. Talk about a time during our travels in China when you interacted with individuals/communities/cultures whose perspectives were very different than yours and how you navigated that difference.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Describe the ways in which your understanding of your own identity has been shaped by global forces. Please provide an example.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. What are the three most positive learning experiences from the Global Guttman China program?</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. What are the three most challenging experiences from the Global Guttman China program?</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Do you have any suggestions about ways to improve learning outcomes for future Global Guttman China students?</td>
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## APPENDIX B

### AAC&U Global Learning VALUE Rubric

**2016**

![AAC&U Global Learning VALUE Rubric](image)

**Global Learning VALUE Rubric**

for more information, please contact value@aacu.org

**Definition**

Global learning is a critical analysis of an engagement with complex, interdependent global systems and legacies (such as natural, physical, social, cultural, economic, and political) and their implications for people’s lives and the earth’s sustainability. Through global learning, students should 1) become informed, open-minded, and responsible people who are attentive to diversity across the spectrum of differences, 2) seek to understand how their actions affect both local and global communities, and 3) address the world’s most pressing and enduring issues collaboratively and equitably.

**Evaluations are encouraged to assign a zero to any work sample or collection of work that does not meet benchmark (cell on) local performance.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competency</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>Milieu Alignment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Global Self-Awareness</td>
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<tr>
<td>Perspective Taking</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cultural Diversity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Personal and Social Responsibility</td>
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<tr>
<td>Understanding Global Systems</td>
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<tr>
<td>Applying Knowledge to Contemporary Global Contexts</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

- **Global Self-Awareness**: Effectively addresses significant issues in the natural and human world based on articulating one’s identity in a global context.
- **Perspective Taking**: Evaluates the global impact of one’s own and others’ specific local actions on the natural and human world.
- **Cultural Diversity**: Analyzes the ethical-social, and environmental consequences of global systems and identifies a role of actions informed by one’s sense of personal and intercultural responsibility.
- **Personal and Social Responsibility**: Examines the historical and contemporary roles, interactions, and differential effects of human organizations and actions on global systems within the human and natural worlds.
- **Understanding Global Systems**: Examines the historical and contemporary roles, interactions, and differential effects of human organizations and actions on global systems within the human and natural worlds.
- **Applying Knowledge to Contemporary Global Contexts**: Examines practical yet elementary solutions to global challenges that are appropriate to one’s current context using interdisciplinary perspectives (such as cultural, historical, and scientific).

- **Benchmarks**
  - Identifies some connections between an individual’s personal decisions and certain local and global issues.
  - Identifies multiple perspectives while maintaining a role for one’s own positioning (such as cultural, interdisciplinary, and ethical).
  - Describes the experiences of others historically or in contemporary contexts primarily through one cultural perspective, demonstrating openness to valued cultures and worldviews.
  - Identifies the role of some global and local influences, ideas, and processes on the human and natural worlds.
  - Defines global challenges in broad ways, including a limited number of perspectives and solutions.

- **Milieu Alignment**
  - Analyses other perspectives (such as cultural, disciplinary, and ethical) when investigating subjects within natural and human systems.
  - Synthesizes other perspectives (such as cultural, disciplinary, and ethical) when investigating subjects within natural and human systems.
  - Linkes and applies diverse perspectives to complex subjects within natural and human systems.
  - Synthesizes other perspectives (such as cultural, disciplinary, and ethical) when investigating subjects within natural and human systems.
APPENDIX C

COLLECTION OF INTERVIEWEE NOTES
Interviews collected throughout May 2018 at Stella and Charles Guttman Community College

Evidence of Theme 1
Expanded Notions of One’s Capacities

SARAH
- grow as a person going on this trip
- possibilities that exist for her future as a result of studying in China
- made her “look at herself more closely, somewhat.”
- acted in a more direct and bold way than she does regularly at home in NYC.
- had this sense that her “time there was limited, so (she) felt more compelled to try new stuff, take risks and even be more confident”.
- able to be resilient in the face of adversity - made her “feel more courageous.”
- because she was somewhere so famous and she was struggling alongside her peers, that she found herself being more confident and positive than ever.
- “it inspired me to think about what the possibilities are for me; like, I ve been so close minded about what business means. There’s so much more I can do than I previously thought!”

INGRID
- she wouldn’t have believed this opportunity would have been possible for her, because of “where she grew up” and “how society had made us believe that we wouldn’t go so far in life”.
- “I am choosing to belong to the future.”
- I’m not really a risk taker so to even apply was one thing, and then to actually get selected really blew me away! I was like, woah this really shows me what I am capable of.”
- knew it would benefit her to step outside of her “usual habits that were more closed-off.”
- “find ourselves in what we thought would be awkward social situations and then it turned out, I was totally fine! I was totally capable of coming out of my shell.
- “learned that I am able to do amazing things that are out of this country and that there are many opportunities for Americans like me overseas. I want to do more.”

ERNEST
- “wanted to step out of (his) boundaries”.
- His aspiration in applying was to leave China as a different person….that this experience would “transform (his) life forever.”
- he was a relatively adventurous eater while in China and discovered that when he has limited options, he actually pushes himself to try new dishes.
- “ if I have rigid ideas about what’s ‘normal’ breakfast food, but if I am like, totally self-centered about what normal means, then in what other parts of life am I doing this?
- “It weirdly made us closer and more open, even though we all found the experience really uncomfortable and not as fun as the leaders thought it would be. Its so funny how that happens.”
- Amazed how socially aware he’s become after the trip

HENRY
- wanted to expand the boundaries he had placed on himself
- notions of his own capacity for independence and also his ideas of trust.
- Henry said the trip helped him to better “know what I am able to do. It helped me understand that I can do more than I give myself credit for.”
• He realizes that he is connected to others in a way that is deeper than he wanted to admit.
• “I can be myself and function anywhere
• discovered this inner freedom and as a result, greater self-confidence

LEONARD
• wanted to learn something completely new and to challenge himself.
• help him discover what he wants in life and ultimately, who he is.
• traveling in China taught me that with some people, I could actually go deeper.”
• “(i)n China I felt more comfortable; maybe because nobody knew me, I could do and be whatever I wanted to some extent.”

Evidence of Theme 2
Being More Open to Connect with Others

SARAH
• knew it would take her out of her comfort zone
• closed her application stating that she genuinely feels like she will grow as a person going on this trip.
• surprised how open she was to meeting new people.
• explained that being asked to work with new people - both her Guttman peers and Chinese college students - you are forced to get creative about how to build relationships.
• If you have to work together to reach a common goal, “then I had better not be close-minded to new ideas which I could sometimes be.”
• As a result of her openness to others, Sarah actually opened new doors of possibility for herself and her own life trajectory.

INGRID
• forced herself to connect with others in the group and the Chinese students.
• knew that this was a once in a lifetime opportunity and she should really try to grow outside of her usual habits of mind.
• “I know I should be more open, but its like I just get stuck in certain social situations. But, the trip leaders forced us to talk. They forced us to find ourselves in seemingly awkward social situations and then it turned out, I was totally fine! I was totally capable of coming out of my shell. It was pretty cool.”

ERNEST
• “felt forced to collaborate with others.”
• explained that in classes back in NYC “there was so much group work and it was very hard for (him) because (he) really doesn’t like to depend on others and have to interact with people (he) doesn’t know.”
• learned about expanding the boundaries of his own comfort zone and was “forced me to open up to people from a totally different culture and not only do small talk, but actually interview them about real life issues.”
• Before traveling to China, it felt very clear to Ernest that he was not one to open up and speak to random people.”
• Before travelling to China he felt like in order for him to socialize it was a pre-requisite that he be totally comfortable in his surroundings.
• “Before, it was like there was no way I was going to open up and speak but now I feel like, hey, you never know what can impact you by just opening up to someone.”

HENRY
• Actively worked to connect with his peers and create trusting friendships.
• realizes that he is connected to others in a way that is deeper than he wanted to admit.

LEONARD
• “before this trip I didn’t like working with people.
• I was in my own circle and just did my own thing.
• traveling in China taught me that with some people, I could actually go deeper.”
- he always considered himself shy, but that by traveling with the program he explained that he is “too comfortable in my comfort zone, I know now that I need to break that pattern.”
- the anonymity of travel provides the space to test comfort zones.
- “(i)n China I felt more comfortable; maybe because nobody knew me, I could do and be whatever I wanted to some extent.”

**Evidence of Theme 3**
*Family/community as inspiration/impetus for studying abroad*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family as Inspiration</th>
<th>Community/Society as Impetus</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>SARAH</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• first to attend college in her family</td>
<td>• she wouldn't have believed this opportunity would have been possible for her, because of “where she grew up” and “how society had made us believe that we wouldn't go so far in life”.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• responsibility to do well in school and take advantage of opportunities on their behalf.</td>
<td>• faces stereotypes in the US about Mexicans that she has had to really work to overcome….participating in an international travel program inspired her to prove people wrong.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• hopes that a career in international business will be the pathway to achieving her goals and making her family proud.</td>
<td>• She feels “proud of (her) Mexican heritage and knows that its actually a strength.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>INGRID</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Ingrid is the first to attend college in her family and clearly feels the weight of her family’s expectations on her.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• “her goal to travel the world is her family’s goal to travel the world.”</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>ERNEST</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• 2 younger siblings for whom he cares on a daily basis.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• He feels responsible to serve as good role model for his siblings.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• If he wants them to be their best selves, then he needs to push his own limits, so they will learn from him.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>LEONARD</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• inspired to travel because of his father’s global work.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• family members in NYC - with whom he lives - have not completed college and work long hours in tough jobs which inspired him to succeed in college and pursue every opportunity possible.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• knows they are proud that he traveled to China, representing his college.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>HENRY</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Family has expectations that I do something with myself and I feel that weight on my shoulders; studying in China was a way to make them feel like I am on my way</td>
<td>• environment in which he was raised as turbulent, with untrustworthy community figures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• describes that as he matured in this community, he learned to exclusively cater to himself and depend on no one.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
• knew he had to grow out of his negative instincts and that it was ultimately, unproductive and even damaging to his future success.
• Travel allowed him to connect with people in a way that significantly changed his assumptions about trusting others.

**Evidence of Theme 4**
*Self in Relationship to the Global World*

**SARAH**
• considering a concentration in international business after travels in China.
• hopes that a career in international business will be the pathway to achieving her goals
• businesses “are globally connected and I will have to be a player in that game.”
• learning about new and totally foreign perspectives actually made her reflect on her own

**INGRID**
• Ingrid believed that this opportunity would teach her more about how she can participate in the international business environment.
• she felt comforted that the elderly women in China were so happy and well-treated, just like her own grandmother will be someday when under care in Mexico.
• faces stereotypes in the US about Mexicans that she has had to really work to overcome….participating in an international travel program inspired her to prove people wrong.
• She feels “proud of (her) Mexican heritage and knows that its actually a strength.”
• Ingrid was curious what it would be like to live in China given that the stereotypes against Mexicans don’t really seem to exist.

**ERNEST**
• “explore something new about himself and the world”.
• his ideal goal to somehow contribute to changing the world for the better.
• by going to China and being exposed to new cultures and traditions, he might be able “to get an idea of what changes would (he) would want to make in this world.”
• When thinking about a traditional Chinese performance, “I guess an outsider wouldn’t really get it, cuz you would have to know the history and all the layers of culture and stuff.”
• started to understand the impact of difference and that if we don’t take things the right way, that it can cause greater confusion.
• this trip “really opened (his) mind and got him thinking about his own judgments.”
• when interacting with someone from the other side of the world, he so easily connectéd them and shared their stories.”

**HENRY**
• Trip allow me to broaden my global view.
• preparing me to know how to function in today's global business world.
• helped him to adopt a new paradigm, one in which he is more conscious of what other people are going through and where he tries to think beyond himself and only his needs.
• “I was brought up to be seriously, seriously independent, (but) in China, the self was not insular….like the individual was intertwined with those around them.”
• if I can function in China which is SO different from the US, then I feel like regardless of where I am on the globe - even if I can’t communicate, I am still capable of navigating it
• how much he takes English for granted and how awkward it was to not be able to speak Chinese.
• “once you start traveling the world and learning about new cultures and sharing your own, I guess there’s always going to be drastic differences and that’s the spice of life.”
- enhanced his global perspective” and helped him to better situate himself in “the global community because when you go to new countries, you get to see how other cultures perceive of you as an individual or as an American.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEONARD</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“it expanded the boundaries of (him)self.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>feels proud about being a global traveler now.</td>
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<tr>
<td>uncertainty about some of the lessons he drew from this experience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“know(s) that something changed, but for some reason, (doesn’t) yet know what it is.”</td>
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</tbody>
</table>