

Study Abroad Trends

An Exploratory Investigation of Student Participation

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Abstract

Due to the increasing global market many business schools have integrated global studies and multicultural awareness into their curriculums. Schools have also welcomed international students and campus diversity has increased. Faculty-led study abroad programs have grown along with the population of students attending the programs. In the academic year 2014-15, study abroad participation grew dramatically with the highest rate of growth in 35 years (IIE) with 974,926 students participating. Though the numbers of students participating in study abroad is increasing there is still a small portion of the overall student population elects to participate. Industry is looking to higher education to ensure the labor market has an understanding of the various global cultures.

The purpose of this exploratory research is to determine some of the trends in length and focus of study abroad over the last few decades and explore the impact of these programs on cultural awareness and inclusion in curriculum.

Introduction

In the academic year 2014-15, study abroad participation grew dramatically with the highest rate of growth in 35 years (IIE) with 974,926 students participation out of approximately 20,000,000 American college and university students (NAFSA, n.d.) This is a significant increase over previous years as study abroad participation had been growing by about two percent each year (Department of Education, n.d.). The Institute of International Education (IIE) recently reports that the growth rate is on a steady incline over the three percent increase in the most recent year. U.S. student participation in study abroad programs have tripled over the last two decades (IIE, 2015).

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