Oral Defense Announcement  
University of Missouri – St. Louis Graduate School  
An oral examination in defense of the dissertation for the degree  
Doctor of Education  

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Academic Field Influence on Acquisition of Global Awareness in Undergraduate Study Abroad Students  

Date: Thursday, April 9th, 2020  
Time: 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.  
Place: Remote  

Abstract  
Very little comprehensive research has been done thus far examining the effects of academic discipline on study abroad outcomes. This study investigated potential differences between global awareness scores across different academic disciplines for students that participated in study abroad during their undergraduate academic programs. Five hundred and eight-five current and past university students took a short survey modified from a Chieffo & Griffiths 2004 study. Overall global awareness scores, as well as scores for four sub-characteristics: intercultural awareness, personal growth & development, awareness of global interdependence, and functional knowledge of world geography & languages – were compared across student majors and the discipline focus of their study abroad programs. A series of ANOVAs and Tukey-Kramer tests revealed that there were not statistically significant differences between many, but not all, majors and program discipline foci. In general, STEM disciplines (physical & life sciences, math or computer sciences, engineering, health sciences, and agriculture) scored consistently lower than many other disciplines; whereas, the foreign language & international studies major's and program focus's scores ranked consistently higher than many others. Business & management and humanities majors also ranked higher, but not as consistently. A multiple-linear regression analysis comparing all of the factors contributing to global awareness scores shored near significance (p= 0.0595); however, only two factors had a statistically significant impact on scores: academic major (p= 0.031) and number of countries included in program curricula (p= 0.030). This study's results suggest a heretofore unexamined factor – academic discipline – could have an important impact on study abroad outcomes, but, more importantly, universities interested in improving global awareness outcomes for their students should encourage and support all their students to study abroad regardless of major or program focus.  

Defense of Dissertation Committee  
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