



# TRANSLATING STUDY ABROAD

From classes to career

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## TODAY'S GOAL

Learn how language skills and other soft skills that you gain abroad can help you professionally



# THE BASICS



## Global = global

- Directly or indirectly, the U.S. population is affected by how the world works
- Affected in education, legislation, boardrooms, media, environment...
- Country/economic borders can protect but walls/'safety' measures will not stop this



## Today's undergraduate = tomorrow's leader

- U.S. competitiveness and influence will depend on a globally-aware U.S. population
- Today's Freshman class part of the workforce in 2020



## Leadership attributes

- Ability to work in or lead a team of diverse thinking styles, beliefs, cultures
- Adaptable and flexible in unfamiliar situations / Initiative / Entrepreneurial / Risk-Taker
- Aware of economic systems and politics
- Effective communication across cultural and linguistic boundaries

# 'I STUDIED ABROAD, BUT...'

- How are you articulating this experience as you prepare for the workforce?
- *Study abroad* or *foreign language fluency* do not top the list of desired skills
  - Caveat: [Foreign language skills - US Job Market \(Mar 2017\)](#)
- **How do I**
  - elevate 'I studied abroad' beyond a bullet point on my resume?
  - make this more interview-relevant than 'it was life-changing'?

# 'HOW DO I TRANSLATE *STUDY ABROAD* TO A JOB?'

- Think of specific aspects of your experience abroad which could be a direct benefit to an organization or company
- Take all aspects into account: housing, academics, travel, student clubs, volunteering, internship
  - Who did you meet? What did you learn? How did you impact?
- Consider career implications
  - starting from 'now' when you decide on an international program
  - ...to challenges overcome while abroad, your applied learnings
  - ...to job interviews where you're asked to describe your skills or attributes
- **Tip:** highlight desired skills or attributes in jobs or industries that interest you after graduation



## EXAMPLE: TRANSLATING MY EXPERIENCE

- FRENCH MAJOR / SPANISH MINOR
- FRANCE AND SPAIN SEMESTERS ABROAD
- GAP YEAR OF WORK BETWEEN JUNIOR AND SENIOR YEAR

Take personal risks;  
act independently

Self-confident, yet  
able to listen and  
learn from people  
whose value systems  
are different

Flexible and  
adaptable to rapidly  
changing work  
environments

Contribute to an  
ethnically diverse  
team

Forecast or address  
business situations  
from a different  
cultural frame of  
reference

# 'I CAN'T STUDY ABROAD...'

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

# YOU'RE IN AN INTERVIEW...

## Your global thinking skills

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

## Your language / communication skills

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

## Your knowledge of culture (traditional & popular)

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



# YOU'RE IN AN INTERVIEW...

Your knowledge of business employment practices

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

Your ability to adapt

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

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

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

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

# TRY THIS...

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

Global mindset

Language /  
communication skills

Culturally aware

Business practices / norms  
outside US

Adaptive

Other skills or attributes\* relevant  
to a job that interests you

\* See tip slide 5



# THANKS FOR YOUR TIME!

TODAY'S GOAL: Learn how skills gained abroad can help you professionally

I hope the session was helpful!  
All the best to you



# NEXT STEPS

If you have  
already gone  
abroad

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

If you are  
interested in  
going abroad

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