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# Experiences among U.S. Students of Color, Travel Background, and Cultural Attunement to Intersectionalities in Study Abroad Programs.

Jessica Norman

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NATIONAL LOUIS UNIVERSITY

Experiences among U.S. Students of Color, Travel Background, and Cultural Attunement to  
Intersectionalities in Study Abroad Programs.

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO  
THE GRADUATE SCHOOL IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF  
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

COMMUNITY PSYCHOLOGY DOCTORAL PROGRAM  
IN THE COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

BY

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**Community Psychology Doctoral Program**

## Dissertation Notification of Completion

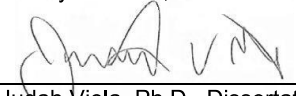
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Certification: In accordance with the departmental and University  
policies, the above named candidate has satisfactorily  
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Doctor of Philosophy degree in the Community  
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## Dedication

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## Abstract

This cohort and event-based case study sought to evaluate the cultural experiences and development of cross cultural intersectionalities in U.S. students of color participating in a study abroad program to Argentina. Current study abroad outcomes consistently show travel abroad experiences lead to improved cultural awareness, knowledge, understanding and competency. Study abroad programming appears to be an overlooked opportunity for creating positive, long-lasting, transformative change, particularly for under-represented students (Milsen, 2005; Mondard-Weissman, 2003; Hadis, 2005; Van Hoff & Verbee, 2005). Over the last 30 years, international educators have reported positive changes in students after learning abroad; improved in self-awareness, respect for other cultures than their own, maturation, and global-mindedness (Hadis, 2005). Educators who have been focused on service-learning have advanced much in their social justice-related thinking. 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. Too often, since the inception of travel abroad work, the participants and the research on them have focused on more economically privileged white students from the United States. Yet the voices and experiences of underrepresented students, who arguably may even benefit more from broader exposure to different cultural systems, have not been hitherto looked at in the literature (Mitchell, 2012).



### Examining Cultural Experiences among U.S. Students of Color, their Travel Background, and their Attunement to Cultural Intersectionalities in Study Abroad Programs.

In 2016, there were approximately 313,415 college students who prepared for class by packing their bags and heading to the airport to meet their professors and other participating students, before flying off to their classroom, abroad (Institute of International Education, 2016). For students, this is an exciting, innovative way to learn. Students from institutions of higher learning have been traveling globally to enhance their educational understandings since at least AD 1190. In the United States, the University of Delaware established the first accredited study abroad program in 1950, with students traveling to Vienna (IIE, 2015).

For the first thirty years in the United States, students were to stay and learn abroad for longer periods of time, oftentimes times over a year or more. Since this period the participants of the programs have primarily been female European Americans with socioeconomic privilege. Today study abroad is still dominated by female participation due to the historical roots of American education which used to send women off for “finishing” by traveling to Europe after they completed their schooling (Brux, 2013). The costs of traveling and living abroad almost always falls on the student or the student’s family (IIE, 2016). For the last twenty years, however, colleges and universities have worked to expand those programs to be more inclusive of a changing student body – people wanting to study abroad, but unable to leave for a year at a time. Shorter-term programs developed, offering trip that lasted, sometimes, several days. This led to explosive growth in leading to U.S. students traveling abroad. The rates went from 3% in 1996 to 15% of all students traveling abroad by 2016 (Open Doors, 2016).

For students, the excitement of traveling abroad, interacting with one’s own cohort, professors, and those from another country have been the primary reason they chose to participate. Employers report that traveling abroad in college makes a candidate more desirable,

US Students of Color Abroad, Past Experiences, Cultural Attunement, and Intersectionalities with such candidates being assumed to be more globally-minded in a quickly globalizing world (Hadis, 2005). In return, college and universities have answered that demand, often with that explicit goal of helping their students become more competitive. Many prospective students and their parents have begun to see, compared to those without them, colleges and universities that have study abroad programs as more reputable and desirable (Sutton, 2004).

The rise in demand for short term study abroad programs in universities and colleges has naturally generated a field of research dedicated to studying the curriculum, programming, participants and outcomes. Many of the results of this research has shown positive outcomes: students have been found to be more confident in their skills as a student and employee, to increase their civic activity after graduation, to have greater cultural competency, and tend to be more social-justice minded (Castandea & Zirger, 2011). More recently research has begun to look at the negative effects of studying abroad on students and communities, finding that studying abroad may not be universally positive for all stakeholders in this process, and whether within cohorts or for citizens of the travel destinations, the challenges often intersect with culture, privilege, access and discrimination.

**Service-learning.** To better understand the effects of studying abroad on the student experience, it is important to look at service-learning, another experiential-related university intervention that brings students out in the community. The literature suggests that travel abroad and service-learning have many commonalities. While service-learning programs may require minimal traveling, study abroad programs may or may not include service work.

The roots of service-learning in the United States goes back to 1749, when Benjamin Franklin encouraged University of Pennsylvania to promote civic engagement and to be dedicated to helping community members. Colleges and universities have been implementing service work within the curriculum since. Two-hundred years later Dewey (1910) developed an

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experiential education framework as a pedagogical tool in colleges, which is still considered the most effective model that links learning and consciousness raising around social problems, much of the same pedagogy used in study abroad (Gibson & Hauf, 2011).

Service-learning is defined in multiple ways within the literature. The most universal definition equates service-learning to experiential education. Students have experience in engaging local people by providing a service to the community (Amerson, 2010). Some scholars use similar definitions to describe service-learning but feel a component of it involves being in a credit-bearing course during the service portion. Bringle and Hatcher (2009) describe serving-learning as a credit-bearing experience where students “(a) participate in an organized service activity that meets identified community needs, and (b) reflect on the service activity in such a way as to gain further understanding of course content, a broader appreciation of the discipline, and an enhanced sense of personal values and civic responsibility” (p. 38). Structured opportunities are used to promote development and learning (Amerson, 2010) in a way that attempts to integrate community service with an academic curriculum (Celio, Durlak & Emeprical, 2006).

While service-learning pedagogy has significant traditional elements it brings textbook material to life by extending into the community, giving students opportunities to apply newly learned skills for use in service, and hopefully, beyond (Gibson & Hauf, 2011). Education in service-learning can be accomplished in one-time experiences to semesters long. Colleges continually redesign the initiatives to answer student demand and availability while considering the community context. Typically, service-learning engages the student a few hours a week as part of a course, although outcomes can be as strong in one-time contact experiences as in longer programs (Eyler & Giles, 1999; Bowman, 2010). Service-learning, regardless of domestic or international location, tends to have similar objectives: 1. Making a contribution to the host

US Students of Color Abroad, Past Experiences, Cultural Attunement, and Intersectionalities community; 2. Raising consciousness around social issues through student participation; and 3. Improving ties between the university and the rest of the world (Baker & Boosmara, 2006).

The well-designed service-learning experience places students in positions of engagement within the community to benefit its stakeholders while meeting the educational learning outcomes of the course (Steinberg & Bringle, 2010). Reflective practice is a mainstay of the work, usually involving journals, group discussions and essay-writing in response to specific questions. These reflections are thought best if they are frequent and guided, allowing time for feedback on those reflections and space to examine and clarify values (Steinberg & Bringle, 2010).

For spreading social awareness and health disparities, service-learning has been used in programs ranging from undergraduate social sciences to MBAs (Amerson, 2010). Service-learning can provide a powerful vehicle for students to engage outside the classroom and often interacts with a greater diversity of people (Espino lee, 2011). Engagement in service-learning allows a student to go beyond superficial interpretations of complex issues toward more academic mastery, personal growth, civic engagement, critical thinking, and meaningful demonstration of learning (Eylers & Elyers, 1999). Similarly, the amount of time spent being in the community is positively related to subsequent civic responsibility, life skills, and post-college service activities; the longer and more intensive the service, the stronger the outcomes (Bowman, 2010). The main goal is to push students toward a better awareness and deeper understanding of the issues communities confront.

Many students observed that, despite the challenges they experienced, service-learning made a difference in their lives as well as in the lives of the individuals with whom they worked. Development of improved tolerance, social and political skills, and civic engagement showed greater gains in service-learning students compared to classroom-only learners. Furthermore,

US Students of Color Abroad, Past Experiences, Cultural Attunement, and Intersectionalities service-learning participation positively predicts students' "global understanding", "respecting the views of others", and "being tolerant of other people's differences", effectively decreasing in ethnocentrism (Holsapple, 2012).

Less attention has been paid to alternative models of service-learning characterized by brief (yet intense) community immersion. Such opportunities may draw students unable to participate in other forms of service-learning, and it may provide a more powerful means for engaging with community concerns in a sustained manner (Bowman, 2010). The limited discussion of immersion in the research may lead institutions and service-learning instructors to take for granted the positive outcomes associated with diversity and to ignore the potential for hostility, resentment, and perpetuated stereotypes to arise within a service-learning experience found in prior studies (Espino & Lee, 2011).

For service-learning to enhance academic outcomes, such as critical-thinking skills, it should be paired with critical analysis of issues; otherwise, it could be perceived as little more than charity work, which could encourage a more us vs. them mind frame of working to "help" the disadvantaged (Parker-Gwim, 2012). Charity-only help students little in understanding the historical and other systemic economic and racial factors that led to their current challenges. Community psychologists would argue, for instance, that the majority of service work is too focused on the recipients feeling grateful, and the students feeling good, rather than seeing service as an activity done *with* each other, across stakeholders, addressing social problems *together*. If students are challenged to use their service experiences to better understand social justice-related concepts, they better understand the causes of the problems that their service addresses (Parker-Gwim).

When the attitudes of diverse students were assessed and analyzed about their experiences of service-learning, there were consistencies in their responses, suggesting that all

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students can learn a great deal from such engagement. Moreover, the gains on service-learning outcomes are generally unrelated to students' race/ethnicity, gender, or family income; even in large-scale studies on service-learning (Bowman, 2010). Findings on student gains around numerous indicators of equality, justice, and social responsibility are consistent with the implicit mission of such programs to help bring about social change (Bowman, 2010). When students are knowledgeable about what they are there to learn about, they tend to be more mindful about internalizing the lessons learned. As an experiential event, service-learning allows students to apply what they are learning to "real life", and to cultivate a commitment to community service as well as the understanding of social processes (Parker-Gwim, 2012).

Intercultural exchange and dialogue across dyads are made possible by consciously developed international service-learning programs. Such exchanges can promote cross-cultural solidarity and global social change through the development of more compassionate imaginations (Baker-boosamra, 2006). This compassionate imagination "makes other people's lives more than distant abstractions" and encourages students to "see themselves as not simply citizens of some local region or group, but also, and above all, as human beings bound to all other human beings by recognition and concern: as citizens of the world". When students are able to transcend the boundaries of culture, class, and ethnicity, they become capable of seeing themselves and those whom they seek to "serve" as equal partners, and fellow citizens of the world. Through an equitable relationship of solidarity, the basis for social change becomes possible.

Consistent with the findings from multicultural training research, the diversity of participant cohorts is associated with positive outcomes. Heterogeneity of the participant group increases opportunities for intergroup cultural exchange (Baker-boosamra, 2006). In addition to "serving to learn," service-learning intentionally focuses on "learning to serve." Having

US Students of Color Abroad, Past Experiences, Cultural Attunement, and Intersectionalities numerous pedagogical approaches toward civic learning (e.g., classroom instruction on civics, moderated discussions of current events, student governance and community activities, and simulations) helps heighten attention to the nuances of the civic domain and social responsibility, making them intentional educational objectives to be addressed seriously in higher education (Steinberg & Bringle 2010).

Similar to study abroad, learning through service work is thought to be a catalyst for a wide variety of learning outcomes. Due to the element of reflection, taking students out of the classroom, immersing them in local community and culture, and surrounding them with local people who have a different SES and/or ethnicity than the student group, has been seen as most effective (Milosky, 2005; Chieffo & Griffiths; Mondard-Weissman, 2003).

**Defining Study Abroad.** The Institute of International Education (IIE; 2016) defined “Study Abroad” as participating in education outside one’s home country. The IIE recognizes the definition covers a wide array of programming, and usually encompasses non-credit, for-credit, short-term and longer term study abroad, as well as experiential learning at the undergraduate and graduate level (Institute of International Education, 2016). Studying abroad is simply, and literally, the act of learning in a place that is not one’s own home country (Institute of International Education, 2016, Open Doors, 2016) At the undergraduate level, approximately 15% or 313,415, students participated in study abroad through their college or university. Seventy-three of those students are white, 9% Latino, 8% Asian, 5% black, 4% multicultural, and .5%, Native American. 63% of the study abroad that took place across the nation in 2015 was in short term (summer, or 8 weeks or less), 34% were mid-length (one semester or two quarters, and 2.5% long term, one academic or calendar year (Open Doors, 2016).

In the job market, study abroad has come to matter – a lot. In one large-scale study, across 16 nations and 110,000 hiring managers, 60% believed an overseas educational

US Students of Color Abroad, Past Experiences, Cultural Attunement, and Intersectionalities experience was valuable in a prospective employee. Many industry jobs now call for candidates to have study abroad experience to be qualified or preferred for the job (Brux, 2013). Yet in order to have these overseas educational experiences, 66.5% of students will have to use personal or family income to participate, while only 17% receive help from their university (Institute of International Education, 2016).

**Study Abroad Outcomes.** In the last two decades, student study abroad has more than tripled in participants. Between 2009 and 2010 alone there was a 10,000 student increase; 270,604 in 2009 versus 260,327 (IIE, 2011). Similarly study abroad is quickly becoming more of a required than optional experience, required as part of graduation across many fields of study (Cisneros & Donahue 2012). Universities see travel as having a “high impact” effect, one that leads to more student involvement in school, creates global citizens, and improves retention (Kuh, 2008). Across studies, retention and graduation rates are highly correlated with the level of satisfaction reported by students in their travel abroad (Cisneros & Donahue, 2012).

Student sojourners have an increased ability to create and maintain social networks in the host communities; and these social networks matter – those who feel connected to their host destination ultimately end up with a deeper sense of community, and having more respect for different cultures (Portes, 1998; Isabelli-Garcia, 2006; Castenda & Zierger, 2001). Students report, in large empirical studies, that believing that studying abroad has personally enriched them in these ways that sitting in a classroom would never have (Van Hoff & Verbee, 2005).

Yet fewer than 5% students participating in study abroad programs will earn college credit for the experience: not all students graduate from college. Research on the benefits and opportunities of traveling and learning abroad have historically been focused on long term study abroad programs; only recently have researchers taken interest in short term models of abroad programming (Chieffo & Griffiths, 2004). There has been a rapid increase in short term



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participation, growing at a rate of 8% each year (Institute for International Education, 2006).

An empirical study out of the University of Delaware conducted a large scale study using pre-and post-testing of 1509 students who traveled abroad. Controlling for academic year, intended major, and GPA, students still show a significant development in their intercultural awareness and perspectives, a greater appreciation for the arts, and more functional skills for traveling abroad (i.e. using the phone, transportation, etc.). These represent 58% of respondents who also gained in areas of intercultural knowledge, tolerance, course material, foreign policy and trip related knowledge. (Chieffo & Griffiths, 2004).

One-way self-identity might be challenged is through social and political consciousness; the more students get to know the local community, its people, culture and ways of life, the more challenged they are to reexamine their own social and political identity (Milofsky, 2005). In travel abroad situations, students cannot escape as easily as in local service-learning, and are therefore are more captive audiences, leading them to more seriously confront any conflicting beliefs around community, politics and personal identity, particularly those that may produce tensions around their internal psychology of the experience (e.g. racism). These elements lead students to better understand societal issues like prejudice and privilege, creating a stronger sense of justice, and making a plan of action (Mondard-Weissman, 2003), as well as contributing to the development of self-identity as a responsible citizen (Porter & Rappaport, 2000). Another common finding is that being more independent and academic and open-minded (Hadis. 2005). For years, international educators have reported positive changes in students after learning abroad; improvement in self-awareness, respect for other cultures than their own, maturation, and global-mindedness (Hadis, 2005).

Access to native speakers and involvement in tight-knit communities are instrumental in learning about other communities and developing what is perhaps best called “cultural

US Students of Color Abroad, Past Experiences, Cultural Attunement, and Intersectionalities competency”. In programs where community members and/or host families are the primary source of contact, students benefit the most in gaining new cultural perspectives and foreign language acquisition (Castenda & Zirger, 2011; Chieffo & Griffiths, 2004). Furthermore, students who do not speak the host language will obviously face communication challenges. These struggles in turn, make students more empathetic toward non-native speakers in the US.

From the most optimistic perspective, within a society much in need of social justice interventions, the relatively vast body of research pointing to international immersion as a catalyst for creating social change requires deeper and more critical forms of reflection. (Mondard-Weissman, 2003). The ability of intentional and critical reflection to expand beyond the mere exposure of the experience is perhaps most important way, for the student to build a greater cultural awareness (Eyler & Giles, 1999). Therefore, despite the very immersive form of the travel abroad experience, any growth in positive cultural awareness may not last. Therefore, while students consistently report experiencing an immediate impact on their cultural views when abroad, lasting forms of intercultural awareness from traveling abroad could diminish quickly. Some studies, for instance, showing that positive outcomes may only last for four months after returning home (Chieffo & Griffiths, 2004). At the end of the experience, students return to their comfortable home lives and communities. The quick transition back to ‘safer’ environments may be particularly true of students who have come from more privileged or higher SES homes (Milosky, 2005).

**Economic Benefits.** Some may argue that the increased demand for study abroad is driven, at least partly, by consumerism. Universities know that the presence of a study abroad program increases student enrollment (Sutton, 2004). The number of students participating in a university’s travel abroad programs is now seen as an overall indicator of the institution’s quality, and universities are much be entrenched in student learning to offer so many rich

learning opportunities (Sutton, 2004).

Given that study abroad programs are usually independently financed by the student or family, universities see “customer service” as important. As in most of their activities, university administrations want to see parents happy, and they want students to have the best trip possible, while also taking care of faculty and staff. To this end; most study abroad data involve post-trip satisfaction surveys (like a hotel review) and sometimes perceived student gains – academically, socially, emotionally, culturally. Yet there is less tangible evidence of improved learning. Long-term continuation of new skills or gains while abroad are relatively unknown across this body of research (Sutton, 2004).

Georgia Learning Outcomes of Students Studying Abroad Research Initiative (GLOSSARI) is a large project that was launched in 2000 to systematically find consistent results across programs and participants. The study consisted of seven phases that used control groups of study abroad, while analyzing pre and post learning outcomes on graduation rates. Also examined are program features, including long term outcomes in study abroad alumni, 2-5 years after graduation (Sutton, 2004). The study included approximately 250 participants in the test group, and 250 in the control group. The demographics were consistent with other travel studies: mostly white (88%) students and with high GPA's. Across the study, findings between groups showed little gains over the control group. Out of seven learning outcomes examined, only functional knowledge, global interdependence and knowledge of geography showed significant gains against the control group. No main or interaction effects were found for verbal acuity, cultural sensitivity or knowledge of helping others (Sutton, 2004).

In a follow-up study of five domains, increases in functional, cultural and world geography knowledge remained consistent (Cisneros et al, 2012). Some scholars attribute the lack of consistent, positive, long-lasting gains to poorly defined terms, such as “global

US Students of Color Abroad, Past Experiences, Cultural Attunement, and Intersectionalities competency” and “campus community” (Reilly & Sanders, 2010). Unlike a Psychology or an Algebra course, study abroad has no standardized learning objectives; no controls or expectations for rigor (Reilly & Sanders 2010). It is common in qualitative surveys for students to describe the experience as transformative, life changing, and that it aided them in growing academically, cognitively, and socially. They state it increased understanding of other cultures and better prepared them for careers in an ever connected, global world (Stienberg, 2007; Cisneros et al., 2012; Hadis, 2005), despite the lack of long-term results.

Too often these international trips have low statistical power. The research tends to have a broad range of hypotheses, many of which are looking at similar constructs using varied terms: “Respect for other cultures.” and “Global minded” (Hadis, 2005), making it hard to paint a complete picture of study abroad outcomes. Researchers have mostly depended on instructor or researcher observations and student self-reports. Even in studies with moderate N-sizes (over 20 in cases of study abroad), attrition can be a serious threat to the study (Hadis, 2005).

Truly randomized studies are difficult due to student self-selection, and the interest of students who are already more globally and social justice minded. Academically, students already excel in school, as having a high GPA is a common study abroad application requirement. This can skew results to seem as though students are not making much progress when they might be; with an already high GPA it is difficult to advance much more, hence no statically significant change. In studies where students are self-reporting their gains, up to 90% state they are more globally-minded than prior to travel (Hadis, 2005). Despite a plethora of tools and scales to measure student outcomes (e.g. sense of community, cross cultural competency, etc.), there is no standard in quantification of outcomes across programs, and very rarely do studies include a pre and post-test or a questionnaire (Chieffo & Griffiths, 2004).

Because study abroad is a new field of research (Bolden, 2007) with trips ranging widely

US Students of Color Abroad, Past Experiences, Cultural Attunement, and Intersectionalities in size, purpose and location, more than subjective self-reporting or anecdotal evidence is needed. More empirical studies would help educators understand what learning abroad means for students, and provide substance for the positive outcomes believed to be produced. Empirical studies should include examination of student cross cultural competency, connectedness with the globe, and if transformation happens (Cisneros et al., 2012).

Current research has only recently begun examining the influence of race and privilege on immersion-type learning. Research lacks a critical focus on racial justice and ethnic differences (Mitchell, 2012). Some argue these programs even have the potential to do more harm than good in communities, particularly when participating students reinforce “whiteness” and other privilege and power dynamics. Privilege seeps into immersion learning through three domains: the nature of university settings, the language used, and the pedagogy of service-learning (Mitchell, 2012);

**How Privilege Influences Outcomes.** Privilege continues the construction of race, and sets the “common-sense” categories of life, thinking and reality (Delgado & Stefancic, 1997; Frankenberg, 1993; Tatum, 2008) by implicitly or explicitly re-creating the dominate narrative and principles of which the majority see as the baseline for “normal” (Delgado & Stefancic). The saturation of economic and racial privilege in higher education often informs university/college curriculum. Privilege decides what literature is canonical, which languages, methods and ways of knowing are scholarly, worth students’ time, and privileged (Milner, 2007; Parker & Lynn, 2002; Smitherman, 1985).

An extension of learning offered by the university, but in contact with people from other backgrounds, the intersectionality of privilege is at least as prevalent in immersion learning curriculum (Butin, 2010). In the United States, universities have long been dominated by been traditionally middle and upper class white students. In the eyes of the university the ideal service

student has time to volunteer, possesses cultural capital and will have positive gains from contact with the other. Even if implicitly, the culture of white, middle and upper class students who can and will carry out service work further reinforces the “Us” and “Them” paradigm (Mitchell, 2012).

Differing and often subtle signals of the exclusion of “the other” is taught. Those hidden, privileged aspects of the curriculum tend to saturates school life on a daily basis. In service-learning, the language itself sets students into a mode of “Them” and “Us.”; the host community becomes the people in need (Mitchell, 2012). The language used describing host communities enforces stereotypes by labeling the host community or its residents as “underprivileged”, “urban”, “inner-city” and “at-risk”; all coded language to talk about race without naming it (Mitchel, 2012; Boyle-Baise, 1998). Furthermore, because immersion learning is dominated by white, privileged students and faculty, it is too these stakeholders who determines what needs fixing, where and how to do it. Additionally, places in which to conduct service work (or where to visit) are frequently places that feel “safe” to white students; as Mitchell & Donahue (2009) argue—comfortable students are seen as unchallenged with less potential of exploring their white privilege.

Research on the influence of privilege in study abroad programs appears to be scarce, although more common in the service-learning literature. Yet given they are both immersion programs in other cultures, the two go hand-in-hand. In service-learning, the university decides where service will take place, rather than students and faculty, and this too is often conducted in a privileged, intrusive way within the community (Ward & Wolf-Wendel, 2000). Universities go into communities they feel need service, too frequently without asking the community how they feel about this. If a community is not even asked if they want service work, they are certainly not being treated as an equal partner (Ward & Wolf-Wendel). This approach taken assumes the

university knows what's best, which community needs help and how. Without collaboration with community partners and stakeholders, the community becomes a learning lab for privileged students (Baker-Boosamra, 2006).

One study attempted to teach students of color about the racial disparities in schools, which the researchers felt was a double edge sword: while the materials supported the outreach target of the service being provided, it also perpetuated stereotypes. The effects also went beyond the students – mentors began treating their students of color differently. European-American mentors admittedly profiled their students, reporting they felt pity for them. Other mentors expressed anger about the teachings, stating teaching about white privilege felt accusatory (Espino & Lee, 2011). One student stated: “Like, I’m sitting there, and I’m not from a low socioeconomic status, and then I’m white, so everything wrong is somehow my fault.” (Espino & Lee, 2011). The student felt defensive about her white identity, and was uncomfortable talking about race, suggesting that social issues are not as bad the in US as other countries (Espino & Lee, 2011). There were mentions of formulated stereotypes that the students would be unlikely to reach their (mentor’s) level of education. Negative stereotypes and sympathy changed the way mentors worked with students of color and students from low SES backgrounds (Espino & Lee, 2011).

Some service-learning pedagogy can deepen the impact of privilege through introducing power dynamics: students who serve others are not in need, and being helped or served, implies the visited group is “needy”. Without critically examining power relations created by serving or being served, privilege and paternalism is only further perpetuated. It can teach students to make the assumption that the privileged (them) are the haves who help the have-nots, thereby solidifying prejudices and creating an uneven power dynamic to those receiving the service (King, 2004).

Privilege, which has gone largely unexamined in service-learning (and travel abroad), must be addressed (Baker-Boosamera, 2006; Mitchell, 2012). The privilege and power dynamics that exist between those who are doing the service work, and those receiving, must be replaced with a relationship of mutual reciprocity and honesty between the groups (Baker-Boosamra, 2006). To continue to dismiss these issues can cause actual harm to communities; they become places where people are objectified as the “poor people” (Baker-Boosamra, 2006) in a live lab for the privileged students, regardless of their cultural identity.

Better pedagogy is needed to reframe the processes and settings of service-learning to avoid the lens of privilege. Others have argued we need to switch from a deficit model-- communities are presented as having problems, challenges; being unfortunate and underprivileged (Mitchell, 2012) and instead focus on strengths, assets and resources (Kretzmann & McKnight, 1997; Delpit, 1995). Deficit approaches leads students to stereotype others as less worthy and distant from their own lives, fragmenting how privileges and inequalities in society and blaming community members (O’Grady, 2000). Middle to high SES student participants report feelings of privilege, fear, condescension and guilt related to helping in a community not like their own (Espino & Lee, 2011). This historical influence of privilege in post-secondary schools has, it has been argued, effectively poisoned immersion-based learning, be it service-learning (Mitchell, 2012), and the same may be true of study abroad.

Students of color within these programs experience more complex reactions where one has experienced prejudice, but in other ways, may also have intersections with other forms of privilege. Some students of color feel their instructors can assume they are underprivileged or also from “troubled communities”. Students of color report micro-aggressions, such as when instructors and white students rely on them to explain cultural phenomena seen within the visited communities (Mitchell, 2012). While students of color may feel more safe showing sadness



US Students of Color Abroad, Past Experiences, Cultural Attunement, and Intersectionalities when stereotypes are perpetuated; they have also expressed anger, and fear being labeled as “angry” (Sue, Lin, Torino, Capodilupo & Rivera, 2009). Students of color can effectively experience oppressive silencing in the classroom before they even arrive at the host community. Abroad, some students describe this as a “double whammy” – they are a minority in the study abroad cohort, and a minority when they arrive in the host community; which, as mentioned previously, tends to be European destinations (Brux, 2013). Yet in study abroad programs, they too can equally be vulnerable to their own privileges, whether economic, or in the form of American exceptionalism.

To examine study abroad programming and its impact on students, programs might be more intentional in asking students to critically reflect on their own cultural identity and past experiences with social and economic inequalities, and to draw from those intersectionalities in their reflections. It is critical reflection that helps student assess and continue to address global problems, to understand inequalities, and accommodate the knowledge gained from these interactions (Espino & Lee, 2011; Baker-Boosamra, 2006; Baxter-Magolda, 2004).

If the pedagogy of privilege influences curriculum across university settings and programs in the classroom, it stands to reason it would also affect how students learn outside the classroom. The type of instructor and the language used, the type of students in attendance, exposure level of the country visited from past trips, materials used, and what has been taught about the community, are all affected by student privilege. Privilege may also influence the development of cultural competence in students, regardless of social or ethnic demographics.

**Defining Culture.** The idea of culture can be traced back to Cicero, a roman politician from 63 BC who first named the phenomena “cultura animi.” Yet the question of “what is culture” still eludes researchers across the social sciences. In 1867, Matthew Arnold’s book “Cultural and Anarchy” proposed that culture consists of special endeavors involving the arts,

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products and intellect that only small groups of people possessed; everyone else's endeavors were sources of anarchy. In 1952, Kroeber and Kluckhohn applied peer reviewed constructs and definitions of culture and found 164 different explanations. By the 1990s, a century of work, researchers have yet to arrive at an agreed upon definition (Apte, 2001). Since the 19<sup>th</sup> century this venture has become even more difficult as the term is adapted and used across fields.

One of the first answers to Arnold's definition of culture was Tylor's (1870) book "Primitive Culture." Here, Tylor argues that culture is not exclusive, but something that all people have within their social groups. Furthermore, culture could also be arranged on a developmental continuum ranging from Savagery, through Barbarism, to Civilization. His ideas of what culture is are critical in exploring the "What is culture" question; his work became the foundational one for anthropology, and it further prefaces the work of Kroeber and Kluckhohn that emerged in the 1950s. Tylor's definition of culture is "that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, arts, morals, laws and customs, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society" (Tylor, 1870). This definition is in opposition to Arnold; instead of culture residing in a small group within a population, all individuals in that population have culture, which is acquired by social grouping and society. The idea that culture is, indeed, a "complex whole" remains an important element in modern understandings.

In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Franz Boas emerges with a new idea about culture. Whereas culture had previously been defined first as high and low culture, or not for all people but only some, Boas emphasized the importance of uniqueness of value judgments. Instead of seeing inferior or superior cultures, Boas simply saw different cultures, each responding to both the environmental and cultural needs of the people (Apte, 2001).

Some elements of these definitions are incorporated in modern anthropology's understanding of culture. The importance of symbol use, ideas, and values can be seen in

Kroeber and Kluckhohn's 1952 definition: "Culture consists of patterns, explicit and implicit, of and for behavior acquired and transmitted by symbols, constituting the distinctive achievements of human groups, including their embodiment in artifacts; the essential core of culture consists of traditional (i.e. historically derived and selected) ideas and especially their attached values; culture systems may, on the one hand, be considered as products of action, on the other, as conditional elements of future action." (Kroeber & Kluckhohn, 1952; Adler 1997). Schwartz emphasizes the organization and coding of experiences (Schwartz, 1992; Avruch, 1998).

In 1994, Hofstede takes the stance of the computer age in his definition, "[Culture] is the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another". Instead of just considering the group, the individual is brought to the fore in Matsumoto's definition of culture as "... the set of attitudes, values, beliefs, and behaviors shared by a group of people, but different for each individual, communicated from one generation to the next" (Matsumoto 1996).

Finally, in 2008, anthropology's concept of culture as a complicated interplay of many different levels and layers of experience all interacting with each other can be seen in Spencer-Oatey's definition: "Culture is a fuzzy set of basic assumptions and values, orientations to life, beliefs, policies, procedures and behavioral conventions that are shared by a group of people, and that influence (but do not determine) each member's behavior and his/her interpretations of the 'meaning' of other people's behavior" (Spencer-Oatey, 2008). Culture as a meaningful whole cannot be treated simply as a definition, however. It is important to understand some key characteristics of culture in order to apply them. First, one must understand that culture is a set of interactions between groups, groups of groups, and individuals, and is therefore difficult to define (Spencer-Oatey, 2008). Second, culture both mediates and is mediated by the interaction between the individual personality and the group.

Culture can be thought of as a set of interactions between individuals, between groups, and between individuals and groups. Culture has different levels and depths; one can study culture through artifacts, values, and assumptions (Schein, 1984). Observable artifacts can be thought of physical manifestations of culture; everything from everyday dress to emotional intensity of a place can be observed. This cultural data is easy to obtain, but difficult for an outsider to interpret. A culture should be interpreted by the members of that culture, according to their values, and values are difficult to observe. In research, values are usually accessed through interviews and documents. This sets up a fundamental issue, that people are more likely to report the idealized values of the culture, not the real values actually followed, so that the real values remain obscure. To really understand a culture, the basic underlying assumptions must be used, but since these are often unconscious and are very hard to observe, this is difficult. If the assumptions can be accessed, then the underpinning of the rest of the culture is also accessible (Schein, 1984).

A person can have more than one culture and more than one level of culture at the same time. Hofstede refers to this as “several layers of mental programming” (Hofstede, 1991). Critical Race Theory (and this study) would label this as intersectionality (Delgado, 1994). A single person can easily have many and overlapping cultures, such as national, regional, gender, generation, or social class cultural levels, for example. This is why a culture cannot be entirely defined by its features, since individuals that belong to a culture are unique. “Culture is a ‘fuzzy’ concept, in that group members are unlikely to share identical sets of attitudes, beliefs and so on, but rather show ‘family resemblances’, with the result that there is no absolute set of features that can distinguish definitively one cultural group from another” (Spencer-Oatey 2012). In a single population, individuals can be sorted by cross-cutting criteria; the more complex the social system, the more cultural groups there are (Avruch, 1998). “Each of these groups and institutions

US Students of Color Abroad, Past Experiences, Cultural Attunement, and Intersectionalities can be a potential container for culture. Thus no population can be adequately characterized as a single culture or by a single cultural descriptor” (Avruch, 1998). It is important to treat culture as an integrated whole, and indeed, anthropology, psychology and the other social sciences are beginning to use systems theory to aid in this model.

**In Search of Cultural Competence.** This general terminology – Cultural Competence - been higher education’s buzz word for the last 10 years. While there are 100 years of research tying the phenomena of cultural competency development to traveling broad and service-learning (Dewey, 1916; Dwight, 1994), it was not until 2006 that the Higher Learning Commission invested in furthering research on study abroad and cultural competence outcomes. Since that time, the Higher Learning Commission has put pressure on universities and colleges to find out what, how and how much students are learning in study broad programs (Rexeisen, Anderson, Lawton & Hubbard, 2008).

But what is this “cross-cultural competence” that higher education is so interested in, and why? The continuous outcome in research showing that travel immersion (or service immersion) learning helps students to experience genuine and direct cultural engagement, and thus results in more culturally competent students has become increasingly important in an increasingly globally-connected world (Rexein, et al, 2008; Chieffo & Griffiths, 2004). For universities and colleges, student involvement in travel abroad programs means higher student retention, and a better reputation as a higher learning institution (Cisneros & Donahue 2012). Research indicates that for parents and students who are shopping for post-secondary schools to attend, a university’s reputation is considerably improved and seen as “reputable”, if they offer travel aboard programs; whereas they are more likely to be viewed as “questionable” if they do not offer global such opportunities (Sutton & Rubin, 2004). Study abroad is so common that it is now seen as a normal, common place offering of any college or university of credible status. For

US Students of Color Abroad, Past Experiences, Cultural Attunement, and Intersectionalities universities and students, studying abroad means more personal growth and global awareness for students, and an increase in esteem and revenue for the university (Sutton & Rubin, 2004; Cisneros & Donahue, 2012).

For the educator aiming to develop student cultural competency, the building of cultural competence can be difficult to define, and therefore developing learning objective is not easy. Given the lack of definite meaning of cultural competence, myriad terms are used to describe the recognizing and understanding of others whose culture is different from one's own (Suarez-Balcazar, 2001). The fields that use and measure cultural competence tend to be in the social sciences of: Community and other Psychologies, Education, Nursing, and Rehabilitation science. These fields of study use a myriad of terms when describing "cultural competency", some of which include: Multicultural competency, Intercultural competency, Global competency, Diversity awareness, Global awareness, and Cross Cultural Competence, to name a few. While there is no universal agreement on the plethora of terminology, there is also no agreement on the way these are all defined (Reilly & Sanders 2010). There are many definitions proposed and many terms have been promoted to better explain and sum up its meaning, but each has unique and slightly different definitions (Suarez-Balcazar, Balcazar, Taylor-Ritzler, Portillo, Rodakowsk, Garcia-Ramirez & Willis, 2011; Betancourt, et al. 2003). The idea of culture is not thoroughly described and the thought of cultural competence is not clearly understood (Engebretson et al. 2008; Harrowing et al. 2010; Jacobson et al. 2008). This paper will later explore the impact the lack of agreement in terminology has on the field.

Measuring cultural competency is even more difficult due to the number of scales across the multiple fields of research. A review of the literature revealed a total of 25 different models that attempt to define and describe cultural competence (Suarez-Balcazar & Balcazar, et al 2011). Because of a lack of common definition, researchers and practitioners struggle to compare

US Students of Color Abroad, Past Experiences, Cultural Attunement, and Intersectionalities study outcomes (Cox, 1983; Smith, 1983). Expectedly, this leads to an overload of scales created for each of those terms. If one cannot agree upon terminology and construct, universal measurement of such phenomena will be a challenge. There is no agreed upon scale or standard measure for any of these terms or constructs around cultural competence. Across the literature, 25 scales that measure cultural competence exist, and 13 of which have validated psychometric properties. While the common theme of these scales is looking at cultural awareness and knowledge, they lack cohesion (Suarez-Balcazar, 2001) and many of them are cost prohibitive, making access to them difficult for use for students, organizations and smaller institutions.

There are some common themes and theories used to describe cultural competency, which influence the scales that measure it. The commonly agreed upon theme among scholars is that building up cultural competence means continuously evaluating and evolving one's knowledge about a diverse population (Campinha-Bacote, 2002). Through continuous acquirement of awareness, knowledge and skills are gained in order to successfully apply those skills in working with diverse populations. To become culturally competent requires knowledge or deep understanding about the different cultures (Balcazar, 2009). Reflection is also needed: if we only focus on the knowledge, individuals might detach themselves from the culture by only highlighting other cultures and not learning on their own lives (Sue & Sue, 2008).

To understand the needs of others, one must understand the need of oneself (Giger et al., 2007). One must consider their own ways and practices, and have the ability to identify their own culture as different from the culture of others to develop cultural empathy (Sue & Sue, 1999). This is essential if we trying to avoid impressing our own ways on others (Campinha-Bacote, 1994). To able to work effectively with people of diverse backgrounds, the development of cultural competence has to be continuous and evolving (Chieffo & Griffiths, 2004). Literature

US Students of Color Abroad, Past Experiences, Cultural Attunement, and Intersectionalities generally explains cultural competence as a process of five constructs: Awareness, encounters, knowledge, skills, and desire (Campinha-Bacote, 2002). Awareness is about examination and identification of the individual's prejudice and biases. Knowledge focuses on the familiar health beliefs, practices and on how the society prevents common illness. Skill involves the cultural information and the cultural application. Encounters include personal interaction with people of diverse backgrounds. Desire is about the individual's motivation to work with people of different cultural backgrounds and with culturally competent people (Campinha-Bacote, 2002).

For the purpose of this research, the term “cultural competence” will be used when referring to the phenomena that is “The ability to value, integrate, and bridge multiple worldviews, cultures, and identities” (Hill, 2012). The definition for Cultural Competence in this research, was originally used in the field of Community Psychology, division under APA, to define Sociocultural and Cross-cultural competence (Hill, 2012). Although the terms and measure vary for the appreciation and skills for working with other cultures may vary, one thing seems to be agreed upon: It is through education, training, experience, and practice, that this competence is developed (Mio, Barker-Hackett, and Tumambing, 2006). Thus, in developing cultural competence, systematic training and practical experiences are essential (Sevig & Etzkorn, 2001).

### **Purpose of Study:**

The purpose of this mixed and multi-method study is to examine cultural experiences and the development of cultural competence in students of color participating in an international study abroad program to Argentina over a course of 19 days. The study seeks to bring voice and emotion to the experiences had by students who, as a group, have a complex intersection of background experiences from past travel, to personality and culture, as well as discrimination,



US Students of Color Abroad, Past Experiences, Cultural Attunement, and Intersectionalities privilege and access. It further examines the level of cultural attunement and intersectionality with one's self and the destination. The study will take place as the students participate in cultural activities, travel around the country, visit historic sites, and interact with local students, community members and with one another (see appendix D). Students are undergraduates from a large Midwest catholic university, all of which are diverse in ethnic minority status, working and traveling with faculty mentors locally and abroad, who are also diverse minorities of color. While other study abroad research has traditionally contained high numbers of mid to high income white students (Open Doors, 2016), this case study has no white students. As stated earlier, students of color often experience oppression in the classroom in the form of being silenced: there is fear in expressing emotions beyond joy and sadness due to feeling "white washed" in the classroom (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012). These students, as U.S. Americans at a private university, may also have various forms of economic privilege, and, in particular, implicit or explicit biases around American exceptionalism. Additionally, there appears to be very limited study abroad research centered solely on an underrepresented student group experience abroad, their cultural development or their unique voices being added to the research conversation. Therefore, this study used several methods to collect student stories about the process of developing cultural competence, and experiences with culture, discrimination, privilege and access in Argentina, from biweekly essays, and pre-and post-surveys while abroad, ultimately seeking to understand:

**Research Question 1:** What expectations and reflections do students have about Argentina before and after departing?

**Research Question 2:** What factors may determine student attunement to Culture, Discrimination, Privilege or Access while abroad?

**Research Question 3:** How did interacting with Culture, Discrimination, Privilege or Access while abroad, impact the students?

**Research Question 4:** In what ways does previous travel experience impact student views or behaviors?

**Proposition 1:** Students experience offer a unique voice of color in which to explore and share their experiences with culture, discrimination, privilege and racism in abroad settings.

**Proposition 2:** Immersion in culture and community abroad, coupled with organizational support provided by the SRSE faculty, will give students opportunities and support to gain awareness, knowledge and skills for cultural competency. It is expected that students will show improved CCAI scores after returning from Argentina.

## **Methods**

### **Methods: Study 1 Quantitative and Direct Observation**

The current research takes the form of an exploratory case study using mixed methods to analyze the data. The mixed methods approach uses quantitative surveys, student-written feedback, observations and reflection essays. While the mixed-methods portion of the design were collected concurrently, the quantitative and qualitative portions are described, for readability, as Study 1 and Study 2. An exploratory case study design was selected as the best approach in attempting to answer the “what” and “how” questions presented by the researcher. According to Yin (2003), case studies are best suited for research that asks “what” questions, is focused on current events, and involves participant behaviors that the researcher cannot manipulate. Case studies do not seek to generalize but rather to further understand a phenomenon or theoretical perspective, whereas experiments are best used when behavior can be manipulated by the researcher. Within the case study, the researcher is not looking to manipulate behavior but instead observe it using a variety of data points, such as interviews, surveys, and direct

US Students of Color Abroad, Past Experiences, Cultural Attunement, and Intersectionalities observation. This study seeks to use a mixed methods approach to the data analysis, to use quantitative data for the “how” questions that are best explained with statistical analysis (Yin, 2003)

A case study is an in-depth examination of lived experiences of participants or groups. Types of case studies vary widely; employing qualitative, mixed methods, exploratory, and narrative approaches to looking at the resulting data. Case studies aim to capture current experiences which larger-scale quantitative research cannot reflect in numbers; allowing researchers to stay open to what could develop or arise out of the experience, to consider it, and to include its relevant themes. Case study research offers more flexibility than experimental research, to explore what occurred and why. Experimental designs are more restrictive in adding unexpected data or results as part of the conversation about the outcomes. Further, case studies look at the set of decisions, within and between participants; they usually consist of smaller N-sizes.

Given that study abroad cohorts tend to consist also of smaller groups of people, it is possible to use the case study method to examine how decisions were made and what outcomes occurred (Yin, 2003). The study consists of 12 female undergraduate student participants, all of which are women of color, an underrepresented group in traditional study abroad programs. Study abroad programming encourages student exploration and engagement with local communities. What the student participants may or may not with their own intersectional identities, experience with race, access, discrimination and privilege, is exploratory. Cultural competence is never an either/or proposition, but is on a continuum. Therefore, while statistical analyses are run, the interest is less whether cultural competence building may or may not happen; either result will warrant more “why” questions around how that competence is built up.

The data points used in this study consist of primarily qualitative data: student reflections, direct observation, and interviews.

**Program description: SRSE.** This particular SRSE program was created for students of minority, first generation, or low economic states through programming put together by the US Department of Education. The name of the program is not identified in this research as to protect the participants' identity. The SRSE ran for a total of six weeks. Prior to departure students attended six weeks of research and cultural information seminars. The classes were two hours in length, one time per week. The seminars focused around three main subjects: Research skills, Argentina history and culture, and trip planning. The primary goal of the SRSE program, as set forth by the University, is to help develop students' research skills to aid in preparing them for graduate school while simultaneously giving them hands on experience that will make them more competitive candidates when applying to graduate schools. After attending six weeks of seminar, the SRSE travel portion was then coordinated by the university's faculty to take participating undergraduate students to an abroad location to a partner university for 19 days. During this time frame, students applied their learned research skills to carry out their research project while being immersed in the culture through daily learning activities in the community and interactions with local people (See Appendix D for complete events and activities schedule during the trip).

**Participants.** This study utilizes a convince population from an already existing group of students from a university program. Student ages ranged from 19 to 27, and are all females from an undergraduate student support services program that provided a study abroad experience that is specifically created for "under-represented students". The group is made up of the cultural and ethnic demographics as tabled below.

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<b>Ethnicity and Culture</b>	<b>N</b>
<b>Asian</b>	1
<b>Muslim religion &amp; Arab ethnicity</b>	2
<b>Latino / Hispanic</b>	4
<b>African American / Black</b>	5

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Students can also be grouped by their past international travel experiences - previous travel experience (N=8) and no previous travel experience (N=4). The importance of past travel experience is that it may be the best indicator of past privilege or simply ability to navigate the journey and the challenges of travel.

Given that it is not common to have exploratory case studies about travel abroad experiences involving only underrepresented, minority students whose travel is funded by the university and not the student, thus giving opportunities to people who may not otherwise have and providing unique voice on racism, discrimination, access and privilege from the point of view of those who experience these issues at home on a day to day basis. Unlike most case studies, the student voices won't be influenced or overshadowed by the white experience.

**Quantitative CCAI.** The CCAI, Cultural Competence Assessment Index, created by Suarez-Balcazar and Balcazar et al., (2011), examines cultural competency by measuring development across three domains: Cultural awareness and sensitivity to personal biases, organizational support for multicultural practice, and skills. This measure was first used for assessing cultural competency in rehabilitation professionals and has since been used across a variety of studies and fields, including study abroad research (See Appendix A). The survey used in this study was modified by the researcher and includes 3 new pilot questions. The

US Students of Color Abroad, Past Experiences, Cultural Attunement, and Intersectionalities modification was to the words of the survey. Rather than referring to “employment” and “employers”, verbiage was changed to “studying” and “school”. The Cultural Competence Assessment Index-modified was given to all student participants before departure and upon returning from Argentina (See Appendix A).

The university posted an announcement about the study to participants by distributing the survey link via an anonymous university list-serv. For the quantitative portion, students were invited to complete an online survey. Students completed the survey on their own time; no class hours were used to collect surveys. After informed consent was completed, participants completed 25 quantitative survey questions, the CCAI-modified. Responses are scored on a 5-point Likert scale (1=Strongly Disagree, 5=Strongly Agree). The University used Qualtrics, an online survey program, and did not collect IP addresses of participants. Data given to the researcher was de-identified prior to analysis.

The CCAI scores and participant demographics were examined using descriptive statistics. The CCAI was given pre-departure and post arrival; the resulting data measuring how much cultural competence a student has gained (or lost) after participating in this cultural study abroad experience. For this analysis, student scores will be examined in groups: SES and previous travel experience. The CCAI (modified) will further serve as a means to support the rich qualitative data found in reflective essays and opened ended questions by also examining student’s individual CCAI scores before and after departure. The CCAI scores will also be a point of reference to discuss the researcher’s biases, prejudices and assumptions before, during and after conducting this research.

**Direct Observations.** Also included as part of Study 1 is the observational data that was collected throughout the trip. The researcher looked for specific behaviors or experiences while abroad and used tallies to count certain types of behaviors or experiences witnessed by the

US Students of Color Abroad, Past Experiences, Cultural Attunement, and Intersectionalities researcher. These tracked experiences or behaviors (Appendix C) corresponded to the CCAI survey measures and the reflection prompts, that explore student experiences with culture, discrimination, access, privilege and emotional expression.

### Study 1 Results

**CCAI Pre-Post Surveys.** This case-study is an in-depth look at the lived experiences of 12 female students to explore the process of developing cultural competency in abroad settings, the comfortability of expressing emotion in a non-white group, and how experiences with past travel experience, race, privilege, discrimination and access abroad impacted the students. Of the 12 participant students, four report this trip as their first time abroad; eight students report traveling abroad 4 or more times prior to this.

The CCAI-modified scale was given pre and post trip as a means to triangulate any signs of growth in cultural competency with observations, reflections and survey responses about culture appreciation, knowledge and skills. The pre and post CCAI scale scores were computed as a group average score. To determine if significant change occurred over time, a paired samples t-test was conducted. The results indicate no significant change; the pre-trip CCAI average was 4.27 (out of 5) and post-trip score was 4.28 (out of 5),  $p = .91$ .

A bivariate correlation analysis was done on individual items on the CCAI-modified to assess correlations between student responses. Results indicated that those who rate themselves as seeking out *risk taking* and *self-exploration* opportunities also feel more confident in their abilities to learn about different cultures (.592) and to discuss culture different with others to raise one's awareness (.792). Students who report learning about culture through school and life experience also report being more sensitive to valuing and respecting differences between one's own culture and cultures that are different. (.710). Considering that participants who travel abroad are self-selected to begin with (perhaps indicating a higher level of "openness" as a

personality trait among sojourners), it comes as no surprise that the students seem themselves as people who seek out risk. And, in this study, risk taking is associated with being able to discuss and learn about other cultures. Likewise, students who report that they learn about culture through life experience also value differences between cultures, as well. On an institutional level, this may suggest that students who are more extroverted or open in personality, may learn best in programs that include immersion-style learning, such as study abroad. Study abroad has great value for these students; it is an opportunity to leverage new experiences and immersion learning as a catalyst to start conversations about topics of discrimination, access, privilege and culture for one's self and for the host country.

Another observation of risk-taking in some students but not others, could be through attachment. Years of research from Bowlby and Ainsworth point to the need for infants and children to have secure attachment to a care-giver; without it, children grow up anxious or fearful of new experiences and doubtful that they are important enough to be cared about. If uncorrected, this can play out in to adult relationships, where attachment to a secure figure is still very much needed. Over thirty years of attachment psychology research in adults tells us that adults need secure attachment too, to not feel anxious or avoidant of their loved ones, and of new experiences. Adults who find secure attachment with another person, even if they did not have secure attachment with their parents, will feel more able to go and “explore” life and take risks and are more responsive, trusting and expressive in the sharing emotions (Johnson, 2014. Feldman, 2015). In these new situations for students studying abroad, those who are more likely to take risks may have a more secure-feeling attachment with the staff going on the trip and perhaps, a more secure attachment with their parents or caregivers, than non-risk-takers. Attachment before the program (in childhood, for example) and it's impact on student risk taking



US Students of Color Abroad, Past Experiences, Cultural Attunement, and Intersectionalities is an extraneous variable that may impact why some students engage in the culture when traveling, and why others, avoid it.

**Observations.** Privilege, culture, discrimination and emotions were the behavioral events that were being tallied during the trip. One of the challenges in the observational portion of the study is determining which behaviors should be recorded, and which should not. Before departing, operational constraints were developed to define how each category of behavior might present itself in words, actions and emotions. The researcher description of personal biases can be found in the appendices. Behaviors recorded include Privilege, Discrimination, Cultural Appreciation, Cultural Knowledge, Cultural Skills, and Emotional Expression.

Table 1 – Observational Tally

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<b>Behavior</b>	<b>Tally</b>
Privilege (Having Access)	32
Discrimination	9
Cultural Appreciation	228
Cultural Knowledge	41
Cultural Skills	96
Emotional Expression	16

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**Privilege.** Privilege (Access) as a behavioral tally is defined as the student or someone else the student witnesses, having a special right, advantage or immunity granted or available only to a particular person or group of people. Among the students, the mean number of observations where the student has or talks about special access for themselves or others around them.

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*Observational example 1:* When the IRE group (students) visited historical sites; we were given special access to see exhibits and access people that we would otherwise not get to, had we been regular people walking in off the street.

*Observational example 2:* Students were also observed as expecting to have certain privileges, such as access to WiFi. Students expected WiFi everywhere they went, and toward the end of the trip, some became irate when there was no WiFi in the hotel or in a restaurant. While it was a running joke among everyone that it Shannon's job to immediately find someone to get the WIFI password for every place we entered, if no WiFi was available or all people couldn't get on, several students would become visibly upset and irritable. This irritability showed up at historical sites about the dirty war, during in class teachings by our hosts, and during off time when the students were free to go explore on their own.

Interestingly, observations show that despite students being aware of their own American privilege and the impression we give to other countries (as seen in pre-departure questioning), they helped to reinforce those impressions by expecting certain amenities, treatment and access.

**Discrimination.** Discrimination is defined as a behavior when a student talks about experiencing discrimination locally, or engages themselves, in unjust or prejudicial treatment of different categories of people or things, especially on the grounds of race, age, or sex. Students experienced discrimination in different ways. During the trip, participants reported in group discussions feeling they were accepted in Argentina, more so than in the US.

*Observational example 1:* Participant 10 stated to this writer that she felt she had more privilege in Argentina, "like whites must have back in Chicago". On the other hand, students also discussed at length the issues with discrimination they learned about when talking to native persons from the Mapucha community, relating it back to their own experiences with oppression and racism in the US.

*Observational example 2:* Participant 11 called her experience a paradox; being a black Argentinean results in oppression and racism, but being a black American visiting Argentina feels welcomed – almost as if she’s not actually black.

In their day-to-day interactions with local people, participants reported feeling less discriminated against, and in some cases, like they should or do have special privileges because they are American. Discrimination also came up as a nightly topic around the dinner table; students were meeting people daily that were from different groups that were experiencing marginalization by the majority; local tribes, immigrants, women, victims of the war, people of color, children and the poor. Discrimination as of action was coded less than culture due to action-related qualification – the behavior was tallied when students personally saw discrimination or experienced it, while in Argentina.

**Cultural Appreciation, Knowledge and Skills.** Cultural competence is built up through cultural appreciation, knowledge, skills and organizational support (Balcazar, 2011). Observational tally sought to witness the development of deeper cultural competence in the students, as it occurred. Cultural appreciation is the act of the student willingly experiencing the culture and is appreciative of the experience or observation they had.

*Observation 1:* One major cultural difference students encountered was the day-to-day Argentinean life. Specifically, Argentineans tend to not eat breakfast or if they do, it is coffee and cookies. They also eat later in the day and consistently eat with their families; a dinner at 9 or 10pm is common. Another difference is less processed and fast foods. Students came to appreciate these differences; they noticed it right away when we tried to go eat dinner and all the restaurants were closed during typical US dining hours. They embraced it (rather than complaining and trying to circumvent) and talked frequently about how they wished American food was less processed and was more focused on having community around the table. Students

tried new foods they had not before, even if they didn't know what it was or if it was cooked in a way they may not agree with. e.g. not kosher.

Cultural knowledge is tallied as a behavior when the student simply repeats accurate information about the host country's cultural workings. This was often seen in the form of students interacting with local people, asking them to expand on questions they had about the culture. In this way, students are coming to the table to gather more information on top of what they already know. When students had learned something new about the culture, they were able to recall it and teach it to someone else, even each other. For example, when student were grouped together, to be sent to different activities, they would share with each other, at dinner, what they had learned that day, the impact of it on the culture, and how it's different from American culture.

Cultural skills are seen (and counted) when students take the knowledge and appreciation they have formed and attempt to use those to interact with people different than them. Skills may include attempting to speak another language one does not normally speak; eating dinner with local persons; engaging with others from the culture. Students who did not speak Spanish are a great example of cultural skills in action. Two students carried around travel books with translation in the back; they attempted Spanish with the help of the book when they approached local people. Other students observed the Spanish language being used, and eventually just took a chance on the pronunciation – they attempted to use what Spanish they knew in the moment, and if that did not work, they used hand signals and body language to communicate.

A group-wide example of cultural appreciation, knowledge and skills occurred with Tango dancing. Our group went to a public park where the community is free to show up to learn or dance, Tango. None of the students knew how to Tango, and to learn, they would have to ask someone there to show them – a total stranger, and for most of the participants, one who may not

speak the same language. For a while, students only watched; they commented on the skill and beauty of the dancers (appreciation), and how everyone there seemed to be an expert at dancing the Tango. After watching local people dance openly and freely with each other – including other strangers – the students decided to try the tango...with each other (cultural knowledge).

Everyone paired up and attempted to dance the Tango. It was not long before students became comfortable enough to use their appreciation and knowledge of the culture to go out and engage the local community (skill). First, Participant 2 attempted her skills. A non-Spanish speaking, Muslim woman wearing her Hijab approached a local Argentinean man and asked him to show her how to dance the tango. It was surprising, culturally, to this researcher and many of the other students, as most of us expected (based on preconceived stereotypes and biases) that her culture would not allow her to touch another man, much less dance an intimate dance such as the Tango. Her exploration and use of cultural skills to learn the Tango pushed the other students to give it a try and simultaneously lead the rest of the cohort to question our assumptions about her culture. Within the hour, all the students had gone out to the community dance floor and attempted to learn the dance from someone local. Nearly a week later into the trip, the students decided to use their free time, as a group, to go to a Tango dance club. There, they engaged again, more confidently than before, in asking people to dance or teach them.

These interactions are just a few of the 365 cultural tallies that occurred over the time of trip. From the observations made, it is determined that the students frequently and willingly opened themselves up to learning about and appreciating the local culture. This knowledge and skill seeking behavior expanded to learning about their peers' culture. In both instances, the students attempted to deepen their understanding and navigate a variety of cultural differences, through-out the trip.

**Emotional Expression.** Emotional expression is often difficult for students of color in primarily white settings, such as universities. Given that the research indicates there are fears among students of color of seeming “angry” or scary by white people, emotional expression is a center piece. Emotions were tallied if they were discussed by the participant or obviously observable by the researcher – e.g. tears. There were emotional moments on the trip, ranging from happiness to disgust. Overall, the most common expression was sadness, which would be expected due to the nature of the experience. Students cried when they saw sites where people were tortured during the dirty war, when they missed home or fought with one another. Of interest to this study was expression of feelings outside sadness and joy. In this regard, students did have times of expressing anger, and openly so.

*Observational example 1:* Participant 6 was walking along the sidewalk with the rest of the group, toward the back of the line, as we toured through the city park. As we walked, a local man ran right in to her – hitting her shoulder to shoulder. She yelped in pain and grabbed her shoulder, and the man walked on without a pause or looking back. She became angry; she explained to the researcher that this was the second time today that someone just walked into her like this; like they do not even see her or they do not care if they hit her. She stated she was pretty sure that being black was part of the reason she was run into. Her anger turned into tears before too long. We paused for a few seconds and let the group walk on. She was shaking. She took a few deep breaths in and out, and when she noticed the group was getting ahead of us, she just stood up as if nothing happened and said “Ok, I’m fine. Let’s go.”, as she walked quickly to catch up. She didn’t speak of it again to me until days later when she and I went out to lunch.

*Observational example 2:* Participant 1 stated she was sick one day, and asked to stay back in the apartments while our group would be out for a full 12-14 hour day of touring and learning. While the participant was said to be sick, she was apparently spotted out shopping, by

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some of the people in our group. The students were mad at her for lying and reported to staff later that they yelled at her for it. They felt it was rude she cut out on activities, some of which the students were mandated to attend, and then she apparently lied about why. More or less, they were upset she had a day of leisure to herself. The next morning, it was brought to the staff's attention by other participants, that Participant 1 had stuck out at night and allowed three men she did not know, to take her to a bar, in their truck, for food and drinks. They returned her the next morning, and that is when her roommates found out what she had done. They were furious with her, they had a screaming match with her apparently, and they reported it to the director. Prior to this, they had been keeping their interpersonal conflict private, only come to the grad students (myself and Shannon) with issues, as to not get the director involved. The rest of the trip, Participant 1 was somewhat ostracized from the group. No one wanted to eat with her, sit next to her at dinner or on the bus, or wanted to work with her. She felt the pain of this; her reflections later reflect personal dread about having to share an emotionally vulnerable moment with this group she no longer liked.

Emotional expression occurred on the trip for a variety of other reasons as well. It is recognized that some emotions were held back from staff and the researcher, as the students reported they attempted to keep interpersonal conflict and frustration with each other or other staff, under wraps. Students were also aware that their behaviors were being observed for the purpose of research, which may have made them reluctant to be as emotionally expressive. Even with these possible barriers, students were impacted and moved emotionally by culture, discrimination, privilege, and conflict.

## **Study 2: Qualitative Procedures and Analysis**

### **2016 Argentina Questionnaire**

The qualitative portion of this study, Study 2, shed light on the student experience of racism, discrimination, access and privilege while abroad. Participation in the study was voluntary so students could have refused to take the survey and/or answer open-ended questions, without penalty. All 12 students participated in the study. The quantitative portion of the study involves the use of the Cultural Competency Assessment Index, a modified, 25 question survey that was given pre and post trip. The survey served as a baseline of cultural competency before the trip and as a measure to assess growth and change within individual students, before and after the trip.

Before and after the trip students were asked write a written reflection in response to provided prompt(s). Before and after departure, students were given three open-ended questions, (known as the 2016 Argentina Questionnaire), which seeks to capture students' opinions, expectations and experiences about studying abroad and cultural growth to support or refute the students' CCAI results. Qualitative, open ended questions that prompt reflective practice were used to explore student and group experiences specific to culture, discrimination, access, and privilege in Argentina. Specifically, how experiences with those issues influence with the building of cultural competence. Respondents will be told that they are free to refuse to answer any question they may feel unable or unwilling to respond.

## **Reflections**

During the trip each students was to give six written reflections, consisting of no less than 250 words each. The questions asked the students to discuss current experiences in Argentina with culture, access, privilege, and discrimination. These reflection assignments were intentionally scheduled to occur after visiting cultural sites or community interactions, and after the students have had three days to explore their surroundings on their own. There will be three



US Students of Color Abroad, Past Experiences, Cultural Attunement, and Intersectionalities reflections after cultural/community interactions, and three reflections after personal exploration days. Students may also write more often (See Appendix B).

### **Proposed Analysis of Reflections and Survey Responses**

Using weekly reflections and qualitative responses from questions 1-6 on the 2016 Argentina Questionnaire, data will be divided into pre-and-post responses and inductively coded using grounded theory to uncover dominant themes that are frequent within the experiences told by students. These themes will then be used as a theoretical framework for reporting and explaining the students' experience as a whole and across groups.

This research is not intended to make generalizations about the outcomes of study abroad and cultural competency, but rather to explore the phenomena of this group of students. This sample is special, in that it has only under-represented students; while it would be impossible to check all scholarly sources available across the spectrum of studies conducted on travel abroad, this study appears to be the only study which there are no European American students in the sample size. This is important because 88% of travel abroad students are: 1) European American, and 2) Mid to High SES (Open Doors 2016).

Analysis of the data begins with using a semi-grounded theory approach, allowing the exploration of the experiences of the students while abroad, and yet themes related to the CCAI were also sought. Because the researcher is keeping in mind theme similarities between the CCAI and student experiences, coding is only partially "open". Through this partially inductive and deductive approach, the group's experiences will be used to examine, explain and discuss the researcher's assumptions which are presented in the form of research questions and propositions. This process starts with data reduction, focusing on the data most relevant to the research and proposition questions that are posed. This data is extrapolated for step two of the analysis process, close reading and meaning-making. Close reading of the text will be conducted by the

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### Data Matrix

Questions	Instrument	Coordinating Data
Research Question 1: What expectations do the students have about Argentina before and after departing?	2016 Argentina Questionnaire.	Questions 1, 2 a-d, and 5 a-d.
Research Question 2: What factors may determine student attunement to Culture, Discrimination, Privilege or Access while abroad?	2016 Argentina Questionnaire.	Question 4, 5 a-d, and 6. Reflections (x6)
Research Question 3: What has influenced their experience of Culture, Discrimination, Privilege or Access while abroad?	2016 Argentina Questionnaire.	Question 4, 5 a-d, and 6. Reflections (x6)
Research Question 4: In what ways does previous travel experience impact student views or behaviors?	CCAI, Reflections	Reflections (x6). CCAI
Proposition 1: Students experience offer a unique voice of color in which to explore and share their experiences with culture, discrimination, privilege and racism in abroad settings.	2016 Argentina Questionnaire.	Questions 1 & 2, 4-6. Reflections (x6) Observational tally.

Proposition 2: Immersion in culture and community CCAI-Modified. Questions 1-25.  
abroad, coupled with organizational support provided  
by the SRSE faculty, will give students opportunities  
and support to gain awareness, knowledge and skills for  
cultural competency. It is expected that students will  
show improved CCAI scores after returning from  
Argentina.

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**Table. 2 – Data Matrix**

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<b>Constructs and Measures</b>		
<b>Construct</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Data Source</b>
<b>Development of Cultural Competence</b>	Continuously evaluating and evolving one's knowledge about a diverse population (Campinha-Bacote, 2002) through continuous acquirement of awareness, knowledge and skills are gained in order to successfully practice those skills in working with diverse populations. To become culturally competent, it requires knowledge or deep understanding about the different cultures (Balcazar, 2009).	CCAI.
<b>A. Awareness</b>	"Developing a critical view of cultural differences, people's experiences of oppression and marginalization, class	Subscale 1 – CCAI: Questions 1-8. 2016 Argentina Questionnaire, question 4.

	<p>differences, discrimination, racism, and becoming aware of ones' cultural biases. " (Balcazar, 2009).</p>	
<b>B. Knowledge</b>	<p>"Learning about the cultural practices of specific racial or ethnic groups." (Campinha-Bacote, 2002)</p>	<p>Subscale 1 – CCAI: Questions 1-8, 2016 Argentina Questionnaire 5, a &amp; b.</p>
<b>C. Skills</b>	<p>"Developing practices and behaviors designed to improve service delivery to diverse populations." (Balcazar, 2009).</p>	<p>Subscale 3 – CCAI: Questions 17-24.</p>
<b>D. Organizational Support for Practice Desire</b>	<p>"Experiencing other cultures and learning to appreciate diversity in society." (Balcazar, 2009; Campinha-Bacote, 2002).</p> <p>Wanting to learn about other cultures; seeing value in diversity. (Balcazar, 2009).</p>	<p>Subscale 2 – CCAI: Questions 9-16. 2016 Argentina Questionnaire: 5 c &amp; d. Pilot Questions – CCAI: Pilot 1-3. 2016 Argentina Questionnaire, question 6.</p>
<b>Emotional Range</b>	<p>The ability to express self in ways other than "sadness" or "empathy".</p>	<p>Reflections (x6), Observational field notes.</p>
<b>Experience with Culture, Discrimination, Privilege or Access.</b>	<p>Student experience with local culture, and themselves or others having lack of or increased access, privilege or discrimination.</p> <p>This can be for themselves or others, such as local persons or other students. I.e. student</p>	<p>Reflections (x6). 2016 Argentina Questionnaire: 1, 4 and 6.</p>

discriminated against, student has prejudices  
 about the community they are visiting, or  
 student sees someone who is denied access  
 due to lack of privilege, etc.

**Table 3 – Constructs and Measures**

### **Study 2 Results and Discussion**

Students were asked by the program director to provide six reflections over the course of the trip, occurring on Mondays and Fridays. Mondays would be to capture the students' reflections after having three free days (Fri-Sunday) to explore and interact with the culture on their own, and Friday's to capture M-Th. of planned cultural activities and studying. Students reflections were compiled and divided two groups: Group A, students with no previous abroad experience (N=4), and Group B, students with previous abroad experience (n=8). The reflections were open coded to reflect students' knowledge and interactions around privilege, discrimination, privilege, emotion, and culture in Argentina during their trip.

Students were given the following reflection prompt for all six expected entries:

*“Reflect on the activities or social interactions you’ve participated in over the past few days while in Argentina. Did you gain any new knowledge or skills, or have any strong emotional reactions to experiences or social interactions? What was the experience, knowledge or skills you are writing about, and describe its development and/or impact on you?”*

The entire group's reflections were first used to identify themes across time and participants, although for purposes of comparison, group responses were then tallied separate. All of the responses were read through thoroughly several times. In order to find general psychological ideas, responses would fall under the same category regardless of which question

elicited a particular theme. Themes were further formed by codes that occurred at least 4 times across the data.

The following themes arose from open coding, from the group as a whole.

Table 4- Reflection Theme

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Occurrences: Group as a whole</b>	<b>Occurrences: Group A (no travel).</b>	<b>Occurrences: Group B, (prior travel).</b>	<b>df</b>
Unprepared for Culture/Setting	6	0	6	1.0 *
Privilege	7	2	5	.428*
Social Justice	12	6	6	0
Cultural Appreciation	35	16	19	0.085
Impact on Identity	38	20	18	0.052
Emotion	43	14	29	.348*
Cultural Skills	40	20	20	0
Cultural Knowledge	57	24	33	0.157
Total				1.0 *

In addition to privilege, discrimination, emotion and cultural themes found in student reflections, additional themes arose: Social justice, impact on identity, unpreparedness. In addition to reflections, participants also filled out the 2016 Argentina Questionnaire which consisted of six pre and six post questions. Those results yield similar, overlapping themes that were also found in the reflections.

Student responses to the open-ended on the 2016 Argentina Questionnaire were separated by time, from directly before the trip to right at the end. They were then open coded to reflect students' knowledge and interactions around privilege, access, discrimination and culture in

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Argentina, before and after their trip. They attended six weeks of trip preparation seminars, and were then asked to reflect on their knowledge of Argentina's culture, or issues with access, privilege, and discrimination. Students were asked to name their perceptions of positive and potentially challenging aspects of the communities in Argentina they would be visiting. Some of the questions included:

- 1.) Describe a few strengths or positive aspects of the communities in Argentina that you'll be visiting?
- 2.) Based on what you learned so far, reflect on any new knowledge you have about on the topics of: Culture, Discrimination, Privilege or Access:

(the full interview protocol can be found in Appendix).

Both pre and post responses were used to identify themes, although for purposes of comparison the pre and post responses were kept separate. All of the responses were read through thoroughly several times. In order to find general psychological ideas, responses would fall under the same category regardless of which question elicited a particular theme.

Themes were further formed by codes that occurred at least 4 times across the data. Fifty-five codes were created from the pre-departure questionnaire, which were eventually reduced to eight main themes. The number of occurrences of those themes were then kept separate from the pre and post-test.

As can be seen in Table 5 reflecting the pre-test themes the number of times they occurred. The students generally perceived Argentina as having many of the same problems as America when it comes to access to education, political corruption, and crime. However, as Americans, students expect themselves to be seen as lazy, culturally incompetent, selfish, rude or

US Students of Color Abroad, Past Experiences, Cultural Attunement, and Intersectionalities otherwise generally embarrassing as tourists. Students report expecting to be discriminated against while in Argentina, specifically, for being American. Students paint a picture of a country that is rich in culture, whose people find relationships and sense of community to be of greater importance than we Americans. However, the biggest strength of Argentina and its communities, reported by students, is the personal gain a student may receive as a result of the trip.

Table 5. Pre-test themes and number of occurrences

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<b>Theme</b>	<b>No. of occurrences</b>
American Reputation	12
Discrimination among Argentines	11
Culture	9
Sense of Community	6
Discrimination of Americans	5
Equivalent Social Problems in Both Countries	4
Connecting with Others	4
Self-gain	4

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After returning from their 19-day trip to Argentina, students were asked again to reflect on their knowledge and experiences of Argentina's culture, or issues with access, privilege, and discrimination. As seen in table 7, themes from pre-departure responses remained consistent in post-trip responses, with only one theme no longer continuing (Equivalent Social Problems.



Themes were further formed by codes that occurred at least four times across the data. 36 codes arose from the post-departure questionnaire. From these 36 codes arose eight main themes about student's experiences and knowledge while abroad.

Students' responses for self-gain as a strength offered by Argentina more than doubled after the trip, while culture and sense of community are recognized less often. Students as a whole experienced and witnessed less discrimination than they had reported they had expected in the pre-departure questionnaire. 100% of the students who stated Argentina shared the same educational, crime and political problems with the US, no longer report that, post trip. One student further went on to explain how she gained so much from the trip personally, that she no longer sees anything negative about Argentina. The themes, and their occurrences within the data, are as follows below.

Table 6: Post-test themes and number of occurrences

<b>Theme</b>	<b>No. of Occurrences</b>
Self-gain	9
Connecting with Others	8
Discrimination among Argentineans	7
American Reputation	5
Culture	5
Discrimination of Americans	1
Sense of Community	1
Equivalent Social Problems in Both Countries	0

A before and after comparison of the themes, occurrences, and changes, across time can reflect which views changed for the better, and which views may have further perpetuated students' stereotypes or biases.

Table 7: Combined themes

Theme	Pre-Trip	Post-Trip	% Difference
American Reputation	12	5	-.58
Discrimination among Argentines	11	7	-.36
Culture	9	5	-.44
Sense of Community	6	1	-.83
Discrimination Against Americans	5	1	-.80
Equivalent Social Problems in Both Countries	4	0	-1.00
Connecting with Others	4	8	1.00
Self-Gain	4	9	1.25

Students' who had traveled before had a higher rate of noticing and interacting with incidences around discrimination, culture, and reputation. Overall, they accounted for \_\_\_\_ % of the discussion about these topics, indicating that having travel prior experience correlates to finer attunement to these social issues and perhaps, one's surroundings in general. We see in questionnaire responses and reflections that students without previous travel experience (Group A) wrote 4,637 words about culture, discrimination, privilege and emotion, whereas students with prior experience (Group B) wrote 13,248 words, or 280% more. Qualitative codes from

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 student reflections, questionnaire responses and surveys from Group A and Group B were tallied for an independent samples t-test.

Give the differences in the number of students and responses, the numbers were standardized, and then averaged across the three. Group B (students w/ prior travel experience), showed more attunement – or awareness - to issues happening around them in regard to privilege, discrimination, personal identity, emotion, culture, and unpreparedness. Results show a significant awareness difference between the groups when comparing privilege (+ .0399), emotion (+ .482), and unpreparedness (+ 1.0). Overall, attunement to these social and emotional issues named above, while studying abroad is significantly higher in student who have traveled before, vs students who have not:  $t(16)=3.05$ ,  $p=.008$ .

Some of examples of these themes and their definitions are:

**American Reputation.** All of the students before the trip reported that they felt the reputation America has with other countries, and in this case, Argentina, is not all that positive. After returning, several students commented that not only did Americans in general have a bad reputation abroad, we further perpetuated it.

Participant 7, Pre-Departure: *“People in Argentina generally are not fond of Americans. They think Americans are rude and unfriendly. When Americans come to Argentina and act that way, it only reinforces those ideas.”*

Participant 11, Pre-trip: *“There is a negative stigma of Americans in Argentina, and oftentimes Americans are seen as rude and closed off and not willing to learn or try new things.”*

Participant 11, Post-trip: *“I personally believe that people’s perception of Americans varies from person to person but overall I believe that as Americans we were always perceived to be impatient, especially when it came to getting our checks, food, wifi password on time.”*

Interestingly, students reflected prior to departure that knowledge that Americans have an image issue when traveling abroad; yet, students report post-trip that despite knowing this, they perpetrated those stereotypes by acting in the way American's are known for: privileged, demanding, impatient and rude. Knowledge of culturally insensitive behaviors were known before trip, but had seemingly no impact on behaviors during the trip.

**Culture.** Before the trip, students were more aware of and looking forward to the culture of Argentina. However, after the trip, there is less talk about culture in Argentina and more talk about what visiting Argentina did for them (the student). Both pre and post trip responses indicated that students view culture and cultural preservation as important aspects of the Argentina people.

Pre-trip, Participant 12 discusses briefly what she understands about the culture of Argentina, and the social issues that are intertwined within that culture:

*“Privileged groups are able to have access to more resources than those who are minority groups.”*

After being immersed in another culture for 19 days, the same student had an expanded, deeper understanding of culture and felt the experience was the reason for her deeper understanding, stating:

*“I have learned so much about Argentina’s culture. Things that I would have never known if I had not gone there myself. I did not know about the Dirty War, what lead up to it, and how the Argentine people are trying to bring these injustices to light. Even now, in terms of privilege, there seemed to be a divide when it came to this subject. From what we learned, it seems as though those who are higher in power and have more money want to keep the Dirty War in the past and forget about it. Those who are not in power or are not wealthy seem to be*

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*the ones fighting to keep the programs that support the excavations of the concentration camps, as well as finding the children and grandchildren of those affected, funded.*

*In terms of discrimination, when speaking with an Afro-Argentinian who provides services such as food and education to the poor, it seems as though there is still a divide between poor immigrants and the rest of the country. This Afro-Argentinian woman, Mara, spoke about having to flee the country when the Dirty War was just beginning. She, being married to a man with access to help her flee the country, was able to avoid being kidnapped, tortured and killed. When speaking with her, Mara mentioned that while giving a presentation on the work she does in the shanti towns, she felt uneasy about the crowd to which she presented. After the presentation a man came to her and said that she should be careful about the things that she says, which she then told us was one of the first signs she had seen before people began disappearing during the Dirty War. When asked if she thought that the new (Argentinean) president had anything to do with this divide between the poor and the well-off, she responded “yes.” Mara believes that the same thing that happened in the late 70s could be happening again. I can only hope that it will not be to the same extent....”*

Responses from student questionnaires pre-and post-indicate that students’ knowledge of, and the importance of, culture increased post-trip. According to the students, living the experience made a big difference in cultural knowledge and appreciation; as the student above points out “I would have never known (about Argentina’s culture) if I had not gone there myself.” These results are congruent with the literature; across studies student report the study abroad experience as transformational, and as a catalyst to become more civically involved.

**Discrimination.** Students discussed discrimination in various forms in their survey responses. Before departure, students talked about the discrimination that immigrants and women experience in Argentina, and their expectations to experience some form of

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discrimination while abroad. Post-trip, students discuss incidents where they felt discriminated against, or witnessed someone else being discriminated against.

#### Participant 9

*“Culture, discrimination, privilege and access is related to specific characteristics or conditions based on the country, for example these topics are different from Argentina and United States. In the U.S., these topics are related more to the skin color and ethnicity while in Argentina and certainly in Latin American, discrimination privilege and access is based more in socio economic status but skin color and ethnicity is still related.”* Pre-trip

*“In Argentina as someone from Latin America, I did not feel discriminated compared to the many experience of discrimination in Chicago. This is my personal experience and I have learned that there is many different experience compared to mine. I learned that couple decades ago, there was more discrimination against modern migrants compared to now. This doesn't mean that discrimination against this population doesn't exist but this has happened due to extensive community organization on trying to integrate and trying to be accepted by Argentina. By looking at the topic of discrimination narrative against migrants and indigenous population, I was able to see Argentina's reality in terms of accepting other cultures and being a country of immigrants.”* Post-Trip

**Self-Gain.** When asked about some of the positive aspects of communities in Argentina the student were visiting (and had just visited), the biggest shift was an increase in self gain as a response. References to the gains one will or did make because of the trip more than doubled from pre to post trip. Before departure, students discussed what they had learned about their destination's culture and community, and how it relates to their research project. Post-trip student excitement about Argentinian culture and community seemed to change in to excitement about what the trip did for the student; hence, self-gain as a theme among student reports.

*“Positive aspects include that I will be able to experience ways of life that may differ from those in the U.S.”* Participant 2- pre-trip.

*“One of the positive aspects is how welcoming and friendly they were to us. The compliments and friendly gestures and hugs was something I really appreciated because that is not something I often receive in the US...”* Participant 1, Post-trip

Overall, student self-gain responses capture the bigger picture of the study: Appreciation for the cultural learning experience they were about to have, and did have, while studying abroad. Students found personal value in the experience, while realizing the cultural and ethnic differences between the US and Argentina. While immersed in culture, students also faced personal and external discrimination and privilege, which served as a catalyst for discussion about social issues, emotional expression, and reflection on personal identity. Throughout the trip, students reflected in discussion and writings on new cultural knowledge and experience and its impact on their cultural identity as a person. Students worked through biases about the host country and about each other and they gained cultural skills and competency because of the program. Conversely, students may have furthered stereotypes about American privilege by acting in ways that demanded special access or treatment and at times, and endured conflict with one another as they navigated a new cultural landscape.

Looking at data across study 1 and 2, several common and relevant themes were found across student reflections, surveys, observations and scales:

**Table 8 - Themes across data points.**

Theme	Occurrences	Data Points	dif.
Culture	483	2016AQ pre/post; Observation; Reflection	.772

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Discrimination	54	2016AQ pre/post, Observation, reflection	.076
Emotional Reaction	48	Observation, reflection	.065
Privilege	42	2016AQ pre/post, Observation, reflection	.066
TOTAL	627		1.00
Total Percent 100%			

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As shown in the table above and across tables in this study, culture is by far the most important theme for students; and these same themes that arise from qualitative data, also correspond to quantitative measures as found on the CCAI - cultural knowledge, appreciation skills and organizational support (Balcazar, 2009). The semblance across the trip data was that of culture being important to students; they appreciated the learning, they reported and reflected knowledge of the host country, and turned that knowledge into skills that were used to communicate with people different from themselves.

Students who did not speak Spanish were attempting to talk to others, anyway. A few of the students who maybe did speak Spanish but could not dance or were too shy to normally put themselves out there, appreciated the culture and pushed themselves, through learning to dance the Tango with total strangers. There were many moments over the trip where students were presented with cultural challenges, ones that required them to use the knowledge and skills they had to overcome those personal or group challenges. Another challenge three students talked



US Students of Color Abroad, Past Experiences, Cultural Attunement, and Intersectionalities about involved interaction with staff. They noted that it felt odd, one evening, when they discovered their “professor is a real person!”, after having a casual dinner that included beer. Later in the trip, the students reported feeling more connected to the professor, and stating they now saw her as a person with culture (Jewish –Argentinean). They had not noticed before and they were interested in knowing more about her. In the context of navigating a new setting, students navigated not only culture, but relationships with each other, emotional reactions, privilege and discrimination. Furthermore, the results of this study indicate that students who have traveled before are more attuned to their surroundings and these social issues.

Student engagement in culture might be reflected in the amount of writing a student does around these topics. For example, both groups wrote substantially more about Argentina’s culture, social issues and their expectations, post trip than pre-trip, with Group A writing 47% more, and Group B writing 40% more.

Table 9- Total word count

<b>Data Source</b>	<b>Word Count- Group A- pre-trip</b>	<b>Word Count Group A- post-trip</b>	<b>Dif.</b>	<b>Word Count – Group B – pre-trip</b>	<b>Word Count – Group B – post-trip</b>	<b>Dif.</b>
2016 AQ Questionnaire	824	1748	.47	1214	2985	.40
Reflections	2065	n/a		9049	n/a	

### **General Discussion: Lessons Learned, Limitations, and Connection of Findings to Past Literature**

**Lessons Learned.** Study abroad is a worth-while, high impact method of learning that universities and colleges should be investing in. As discussed previously, there are consequences of sloppy study abroad programs; however, this study shows the great gains that a well-structured, collaborative and culturally focused program can offer students are worth continuing study abroad programming. Excellent study abroad programs such as this are a great asset to the university; they draw in and retain students (and tuition dollars), they give the university more credibility to the general public, and provide students with a high impact, effective method of building cultural competence and setting them on a course to be agents of social change.

From these combined results, lessons from this study arise in the creation and maintenance of a high impact study abroad program. For programs seeking to help students be more competitive in academic and work place settings through creating globally aware culturally competent students, the following recommendations are made:

**1. Focusing the Mission on Cultural Differences and Competence.** The IRE program has an admirable goal of working to make students of color more competitive for graduate school. Given the biases faced by many students of color, emphasizing the competitive nature of this program makes sense. Nevertheless, it should not be assumed that simply because these are students of color that they fully understand issues around privilege and culture, particularly cross-cultural experiences. The focus on a broader cultural competency emphasis would also make students more competitive for higher degree programs, but a greater emphasis on culture competencies may serve the students' personal growth best.

**2. Prior Travel Attunement.** One of the primary findings in this study suggests that not all students who engage in travel abroad programs are the same. The students differ on many

US Students of Color Abroad, Past Experiences, Cultural Attunement, and Intersectionalities variables that impact their ability to cognitively and emotionally absorb and observe their surroundings. Paying close attention to who has traveled in the past and how many times may not always predict who will react how in different circumstances. Yet the current data suggest this variable is important. It is unclear whether the differences found were attributable to past trips abroad, or other correlated educational experiences. Nevertheless, even within a group of students of color, there is great heterogeneity in how they prepared and reacted to events during their trip. Those with more past travel experiences seemed to be better able to notice privilege and discrimination in themselves and in others.

**3. Preparedness.** While the preparation involved in the IRE program was extensive, more could be done to help prepare students for what they were about to see. One of the reasons the students with prior travel experience may have been more attuned during the trip is that they had more familiarity with what they should expect on the trip and therefore they were better able to soak in the tremendous amount of stimuli on the trip. There were even instances where it seemed that the excessive immersion into social media via cell phones on the trip may have been due to the attempt drown out all the stimuli of cultural change that they were experiencing. There is no way students could be fully prepared for the trip, or else there would be little reason for them to go. But it is possible that, particularly for the students who have never traveled before, they could take more in during their experience if they had been better and more culturally prepared.

**4. Balancing Adventure Taking While Reducing Risk.** In any travel abroad program there are challenges around risk taking, and with at least one of the students, this was not an exception. However, in other instances, students did not go off on their own to explore enough when they were encouraged to do so. The primary goal of the trip for the students was clearly a form of cultural or Intellectual gain. Yet more could have been gained if there had been a greater

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balance between reasonable risk-taking and greater exploration. Research indicates one of the greatest downfalls of effective study abroad programs is not having a challenging setting for students that forces real reflection of oneself. In trips where there are experienced travelers, perhaps “advanced” community interaction or study abroad trips could be offered, bringing students closer to experiencing and living day to day life of another culture. In a program such as this one, an example of this might have been to forgo use of the internet while abroad; eliminating the ability to easily escape new cultural stimuli that may be challenging for the student to process.

**5. Sense of community and Empowerment.** A major part of community psychology is on the interaction of sense of community and a collaborative form of empowerment. Despite the past experiences these students had, they still ran into cliques among themselves and in group-outgroup divisions. After one participant had interpersonal conflict with other students, she reflected that she didn’t want to participant in Socio-drama “not with these people” – meaning her group. Students who find themselves “out grouped” this may not benefit as greatly in learning from other people’s culture and experiences as someone who was “in group” and accepted enough to have open conversations about race, culture, discrimination and privilege. In terms of preparation, more could be done to prevent out grouping. This could be in the form of keeping travelers separate from each other based on experience; having non-travelers separate from previous travelers. Alternatively, since experienced sojourners are more attuned to their surroundings, it might be better suited to pair them with a non-traveler, in a mentorship-like position, this empowering the pair to learn from each other and facilitate discussion about culture and self-identity.

**6. Intersectionality of Ethnicity and Class.** While cultural competency was an important focus of this research project, the way in which ethnicity and class interacted for the

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students seemed more and more important as this project proceeded. While the students had faced micro-aggressions and other challenges being people of color in the United States, how one reacts to very different situations in other cultures complicates the picture. Therefore, even if the student may have had some lack of privileges in the United States, several of them it appeared expected economic advantages in Argentina. A common reaction for instance was for the students to be surprised that the prices were not as low in Argentina that they expected them to be. The implications may be that that more of the preparedness prior to travel may focus on the intersectionality of ethnicity and economics and other differences, encouraging the students to always avoid acting in privileged ways even when the situation seems to offer that opportunity.

**7. Data collection.** Too few programs emphasize the importance of research and evaluation to the effectiveness of travel abroad programs. One of the many ways in which the IRE is unique is its complete embrace of research and evaluation. This included the research projects in which the university students consistently engaged in, and their openness for this current study. While the current study had some limitations, there were a number of lessons learned that may benefit IRE evaluation going forward. One of these lessons may be to continue conducting similar evaluations every year, so that the N sizes can be higher and differences can be examined from year to year, determining whether growth in desired variables are occurring over time.

**8. Pre- and Post-Trip Focus Groups.** The IRE program engages in a great deal of trip planning, discussions during the trip, and post-reflection. The current study, it appeared, increased the intentionality of student reflection at every step, and the data has led to practically useful conclusions. The more this work happens intentionally, not only for purposes of reflection, but also data collection, the more the travel abroad program can be improved over

US Students of Color Abroad, Past Experiences, Cultural Attunement, and Intersectionalities time. The more the students engage in researching their own reflections around privilege and cultural competency, in a type of empowerment evaluation approach, the more there may be mutual benefits all the way around.

**Limitations.** There were several challenges in collecting the data and carrying out the study, along with extraneous variables, that may have negatively impacted the results of this study. The first challenge found was in the distribution of the CCAI; the questions that were to be given pre and post were not given in full, and not correctly worded in accordance with a standard likert scale. The CCAI contains three subscales that examine the roots of cultural competency: Knowledge, Appreciation, Skills, and Organizational Support. The subscale with questions about how much support the university and the IRE program offered students in before and after the trip, were excluded by the program staff when they made and distributed the scale to students. Item 11b was give pre-trip but left off the measure, post trip. The likert scale options given to students consisted of “Very well” to “Not very well”, rather than “Strongly agree” to “Strongly disagree”. These mistakes were not seen until after the scales had been distributed to students. (was originally reported by a student who didn’t understand the scale). Despite the scale not asking about organizational support, students had a voice about it anyway; one of the themes that arose in the reflection essays was Unpreparedness. Interestingly, the students who report feelings of being unprepared by the institution, was all done by students with prior travel abroad experience. None of the first time traveling students indicated feeling unprepared.

Due to these errors, a true pre and post analysis of students’ cultural competence using the CCAI, is not possible. The CCAI has not been used in pre- and post-testing in studies prior to this one; the use of the CCAI as a pre-post measure was purely experimental; literature indicates that pre-post measures on study abroad are rarely given, and access to affordable, study-abroad related cultural scales, was limited to instruments that didn’t require a large institutional purchase or training, or a clinical license to obtain.

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Another consideration in using the CCAI may be that students who self-select for study abroad programs, typically already have higher self-reported levels of cultural awareness and higher GPA's to start with (GLOSSARI citation here); thus if attempting to measure student growth, such as using a GPA, there isn't much 'change' since study abroad students tend to already be good students, with the average sojourner GPA's at 3.6 (IEI, 2016). In the results of the CCAI, a similar phenomenon occurs: students rate their cultural competence at 4.27 (out of 5) to begin with, with all but three of the questions being answered by students at a 4 or 5, pre and post. The students self-report indicates that they are already high on the scale to begin with; there isn't a lot of change or improvement left. The post-rating was group average was 4.28.

### **Conclusion**

The cultural immersion that occurs when involved in the social, political, cultural and environmental sides of that society, is the foundation of the culturally focused community-centered learning (Burnett, Hamel, & Long, 2004). Hagan (2004) further explained that experiencing immersion in another culture opens an opportunity to experience and appreciate diversity, to examine the success in a multicultural relationships and organizations, to challenge biases, and to become civically involved, global citizen who has explored personal their cultural identity. Cross-cultural interaction helps participants to learn from each other and made them feel confident to work in a diverse society (Burnett et al., 2004; Hagan, 2004; DeRicco & Sciarra, 2005). The study by Jeffreys (2000) shows that trans-cultural confidence has the influence to the development of cultural competence. Considering the current (2017) political climate, one might argue that this is a critical time for higher learning institutions to ensure the students are culturally aware, or "competent".

Currently, cultural competence is currently being taught and built via two mediums – text books and readings focusing on multicultural learning in the classroom, or text-book readings

US Students of Color Abroad, Past Experiences, Cultural Attunement, and Intersectionalities plus the element of experience based learning, in the form of travel. The first method taught through book-learning alone lacks the element of exposure and praxis. It leaves students at a disadvantage by not having direct exposure to people from different cultures than their own; there is no opportunity in which to immediately apply the knowledge or to work on one's cultural skills. The element of praxis is something that researchers across disciplines believe to be instrumental in promoting cultural competence (DeRicco & Sciarra, 2005; Pope-Davis, Breaux, & Liu, 1997 Clarke & Clarke, 2010). In the field of counseling and psychology, students report cultural awareness alone may not be enough in real life and may not relate to cultural competence (Tomlinson-Clarke & Clarke, 2010). In the field of professional counseling, students tend to be taught awareness and knowledge about culture differences learned through studying, not through direct exposure; as a result, students report feeling unprepared, and a need for more effective training in the form of direct exposure rather than book-learning alone, to work with a diverse society (Arthur and Achenbach, 2002). Learning about culture without exposure stagnates the lessons learned - staying at the intellectualized level, not reaching actualization. Students in text-book only courses report that without the exposure to real life situations, they feel unprepared in applying the course material when working with diverse populations (Clarke & Clarke 2010).

The second method teaching about culture uses immersive experiences in conjunction with teaching about cultural, is currently considered the "gold standard". These programs aim to teach multiculturalism both cognitively and practically, adding additional elements of training (Mio, Barker-Hackett, and Tumambing, 2006), advocacy and prejudice reduction (DeRicco & Sciarra, 2005; Pope-Davis, Breaux, & Liu, 1997). Cognitively, students should have a wider range of knowledge about different cultures and the practices and beliefs of those cultures (Jeffers, 2000). In practice, students use that knowledge to work with others in a way that is



US Students of Color Abroad, Past Experiences, Cultural Attunement, and Intersectionalities accepting of cultures and traditions outside their own (Jeffreys, 2000). In the experience based learning, a well-planned program will place students in positions of engagement with the community, will be something of benefit to the community's stakeholders and people, and meets the educational learning outcomes of the course (Steinberg & Bringle 2010). Reflective practice is incorporated, using involves journals, group discussions and essay writing to specific questions. These reflections should frequent and guided; allowing time for feedback on those reflections and space to examine and clarify values (Steinberg & Bringle 2010) In this framework, cultural competency is effectively taught through non-classroom context such as immersion learning modalities involving homestays and study abroad programs (Bacon, 2002; Ducate, 2009; Ingram, 2005). Cultural immersion provides experiential reality compared to a common academic training (Sue & Sue, 2008). While programs vary widely in scope, topic and learning objectives, cross-cultural awareness and understanding continues to be a staple outcome recognized by virtually all universities and across literature (Rexein, et al, 2008; Chieffo & Griffiths, 2004) Cultural immersion training helps participants to personally interact with people of diverse backgrounds and experience the reality of a society with different cultures (Ridley, Mendoza, & Kanitz, 1994).

Continuing study abroad programs is important for a myriad of reasons. For students in general, it helps participants to discover their own stereotypes and biases, and deal with prejudice and racism (DeRicco & Sciarra, 2005; Pope-Davis, Breau, & Liu, 1997). Cultural immersion could lessen prejudice, when new information was learned and old beliefs and theories were confronted (Rothbart & John, 1985). And, in addition to the medium in which cultural competency is taught, the social networks in which students are work within will serve as a vital role in developing cultural competence. The primary networks that students work with while immersed in a host community include the host family, community and local school/university.

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The sub-networks are helpers, relatives, family friends, professionals, vendors, school staffs, medical staffs and parents (Tomlinson-Clarke & Clarke, 2010). Secondly, the small body of research that has looked at student of color in study abroad programs argue that student of color have a very different experience than that of a Caucasian sojourner. Specifically when students of color travel abroad, they feel the effect of being a double minority (Brux, 2010) plus the effects of American privilege while aboard; the effect of both is said to have an impact on racial and cultural identity – students examine their lack of privilege in the US, and the newly found privilege abroad, while testing their biases and prejudices about both settings and the people in them. That is; the student processes race and prejudice on more than one cognitive level. When study abroad programs include heritage work (specific work on culture and heritage of the destination and one's self) students of color report the trip had a deep impact on knowing themselves and their heritage better and this having a long last impact on their motivation to be involved in social justice and their communities (Brux, 2010).

Complete cultural competency is arguably unachievable (Scott & Wolfe, 2015) because one cannot possibly master any one culture, since culture is still yet to be defined. Even within an agreed upon definition, culture varies and has many intersectionalities, making the attempt of having one idea a “a culture” to perfectly describe any one set of people, is a fool's journey. Yet, across disagreements about culture, competency and what should or shouldn't be used to measure student travel experiences, one outcome has remained the same for over 100 years: Immersion experiences, such as study abroad, makes a bigger impact on students than classroom learning. Specifically, it can serve as a catalyst to help push students to become globally-minded change agents; to help students identify and appreciate their own and a different, culture. And perhaps for some students, the positive changes around skill development and civic engagement

don't remain long term; but the memories about the interactions people had with "the other" do.

Thus it is critical that study abroad experiences not only be preserved, but expanded and standardized to be made rigorous in learning objectives, measuring growth and dissemination of results, good and bad.

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## Appendix A: CCAI-Modified. (5-point Likert Scale)

1. I feel that I can learn from other students in my ethnic group, in abroad settings.
2. It is hard adjusting my communication strategies with different ethnic minority groups in:
  - a. Local settings (e.g. the USA).
  - b. Abroad settings (e.g. Argentina)
3. I am effective in my verbal communication with people whose culture is different from mine
4. I do not consider the cultural backgrounds of others when food is involved
5. I feel confident that I can learn about other people's cultural background.
6. I am effective in my nonverbal communication with people whose culture is different from mine.
7. I feel that I have limited experience working with ethnic minority people in:
  - a. Local settings
  - b. Abroad settings.
8. It is difficult to practice skills related to cultural competence.
9. I am sensitive to valuing and respecting differences between my cultural background and cultural heritages different than my own.
10. I do not feel that I have the skills to communicate to students abroad.
11. I examine my own biases related to race and culture that may influence my behavior as student locally.
12. I examine my own biases related to race and culture that may influence my behavior as student abroad.
13. I seek out an atmosphere that promotes risk-taking and self-exploration
14. I would find it easy to competently work abroad with students whose ethnic backgrounds differ from mine.
15. I openly discuss with others issues I may have in developing multicultural awareness.
16. I learn about different ethnic cultures through schooling and/or life experiences
17. It is difficult for me to accept that religious beliefs different from my own, may influence how ethnic minorities respond to illness and disability, cultural and ethnical backgrounds.
18. IRE helped me to improve my cultural competence.
19. IRE does not support student participation in cultural celebrations of non-white culture.
20. IRE does not support using resources to promote cultural competence
21. I have opportunities to learn culturally responsive behaviors from fellow IRE students and staff.
22. The way the destination country is presented in lectures and homework, makes it difficult to identify the cultural values of the people.
23. The IRE lectures and field trips allow me to experience new cultures.
24. I receive feedback from supervisors, mentors or faculty on how to improve my skills with people from different ethnic minority backgrounds.

Pilot question 1: Gaining more cultural competence is of interest to me.

Pilot question 2: There is a benefit to learning about other people's culture.

Pilot question 3: Learning cultural competence is an important aspect of participating in SRSE.

## Appendix B: 2016 Argentina Questionnaire – Pre/Post

1. Pre-Departure Cultural Essay, 500 words min:  
Based on what you learned so far, reflect on any new knowledge you have about on the topics of: Culture, Discrimination, Privilege or Access:
  
2. Pre-Departure Cultural Impressions:  
Based on what you know today about Argentina:
  - a. How do people in Argentina view Americans?
  
  - b. In what ways do you think day to day life in Argentina is the same or different, from your day to day life in the US?
  
  - c. Describe a few strengths or positive aspects of the communities in Argentina that you'll be visiting?
  
  - d. Describe a few not so good or negative aspects of the communities in Argentina that you'll be visiting?
  
3. M/F Reflection Prompt, min 500 words:  
(Feel free to journal as often as you would like!)  
  
 Reflect on the activities or social interactions you've participated in over the past few days while in Argentina. Did you gain any new knowledge or skills, or have any strong emotional reactions to experiences or social interactions? What was the experience, knowledge or skills you are writing about, and describe its development and/or impact on you?
  
4. Post-return Cultural Essay, Min 500 words:  
  
 Now that you've returned from your abroad you've learned about on the topics of: Culture, Discrimination, Privilege or Access.
  
5. Post-Return Cultural Impressions:  
Now that you've returned from your abroad experience



- a. How do people in Argentina view Americans?
  - b. In what ways do you think day to day life in Argentina is the same or different, from your day to day life in the US?
  - c. Describe a few strengths or positive aspects of the communities in Argentina that you'll be visiting?
  - d. Describe a few not so good or negative aspects of the communities in Argentina that you'll be visiting?
6. Describe your impressions of the people and culture in Argentina.

## Appendix C: Observational Tally Sheet

NOTE: Special access is related to the local context – whether they'd have that access in the local country if they were not from the U.S.

Privilege (Having Access): a special right, advantage, or immunity granted or available only to a particular person or group of people.

- Student shows having special access
- Student talks about seeing others having special access
- Student talks about own special rights to privilege
- Student talks about others special rights to privilege

Culture: (CCAI measure)

- Student shows appreciation for local culture
- Student shows understanding of local culture
- Student shows understanding of personal biases in relation to local culture
- Student takes interest in experiencing local culture
- Student makes effort to appreciate local culture
- Student attempts communication with people of local culture
- Student talks about attempts in communicating with people of local culture

Discrimination (Not Having Access): the unjust or prejudicial treatment of different categories of people or things, especially on the grounds of race, age, or sex.

- Student enacts unjust or prejudicial treatment against others
- Student experiences unjust or prejudicial treatment
- Student speaks about witnessing unjust or prejudicial treatment of others
- Student speaks about being treated in an unjust or prejudicial way

Emotional: Obvious emotional outbursts:

- Anger
- Happiness
- Fear
- Surprise
- Disgust

## US Students of Color Abroad, Past Experiences, Cultural Attunement, and Intersectionalities

- Contempt
- Sadness

## Appendix D: Schedule of Events/ Experiences in Argentina

Location	Day	Activities
9 night in BA apt: <a href="http://www.4rentargentina.com">http://www.4rentargentina.com</a>	Saturday 11-Jun	Welcome to Buenos Aires city → Apt.
		First meeting with Fabio 11am to 1pm (at the Apartment) – walk around Recoleta --
		8pm Group Dinner
	Sunday 12-Jun	9am to 1pm Tour: Bs. As. Zona Norte hasta Tigre (tigre museum and city tour).
		1:30pm boat trip to island, lunch + Tigre: Mercado de Frutos (back to Apt. at 5pm)
		6pm back at Apt. – 7pm 7:30 group departurs to Santelmo- free time walkin in San Telmo fear
		9pm Group dinner San Telmo restorant + night out (Murga y Tango)
	Monday 13-Jun	Free morning
		11am to 6 pm Tour Bs.As (Centro y Zona sur/ Oeste- almuerzo y merienda)

	Tuesday	14-Jun	Debriefing --- free night
			Free morning
			10am departure to CAEPS: 11 to 1pm Seminar with Fabio (Topic: Historia Argentina: "Derechos Humanos/92pt92me sucia")
			2pm -4pm Visita "El Garage Olimpo" – Walk 92pt92me9292: --- Debriefing --- Free time for dinner in Ethnic place (bolivian restaurant) ---
			Free night
	Wednesday	15-Jun	9am to 11am Plan day Visits
			11am to 1pm Group site visits (ESMA)
			2:30pm to 6pm Recorrido: Comunidades y Etnias de Ciudad de Buenos Aires (Azziza: at 3:00pm at their office)
			Free night or group night out/tango + Palermo
	Thursday	16-Jun	Free morning

		10am; Group travel on public transportation: 11am to 1pm: Seminar with Fabio (Topic: Historia de Inmigrantes Comunidades y Etnias de Argentina)
		2pm Marcha 3pm + 5pm: Madres de plaza de Mayo. Plaza de Payo, Catedral, Cabildo, Microcentro
		Free night
	Friday 17-Jun	9am to 11am Plan day Visits
		11am to 1pm Group site visit, Barrios for :DATA COLLECTION+MUSEOS + Religious Ins. + Community organization + sites + interviews
		1pm to 5pm Free Afternoon --- Students Plan to visit research site
		Free night
	Saturday 18-Jun	Free morning
		FREE TIME; recommended 11am to 1pm: Recoleta cemetery and fear
		2pm a 6pm: Free time

## US Students of Color Abroad, Past Experiences, Cultural Attunement, and Intersectionalities

		Free night
	Sunday 19-Jun	OPEN
		OPEN, potential visits and tour base on students interest: ferias, Tigre, Tandil, Moreno Lujan, more museums
		OPEN
	Monday 20-Jun	Morning and Afternoon --- Students Plan to visit
Night in Bus		6pm at Hotel for →travel Roca by Bus (9pm)
4 night in General Roca	Tuesday 21-Jun	Get to Roca by 10am - Go to Apt. ---free time-- - Quick Group Meeting in Lobby/ Lunch
		3:30pm Radio Universitaria Antena Libre: el programa "Radio Acústica"
		4:30pm a 7pm Universidad Nacional de Comahue: Campus Visit
		Free time
		Dinner with EPSP
	Wednesday 22-Jun	Day tour all day (10am to 6pm) Rio Negro / chacra

		Day tour all day (10am to 6pm) Rio Negro / chacra
		8 to 10pm Universidad Nacional de Comahue; Catedra Libre Lengua y Cultura Mapuche. (Faculty: Lucas Curapil y Elisa Tripailao)
	Thursday 23-Jun	Free morning – museums --
		1pm to 2pm (Topic: Psicodrama y Psicologia Social Argentina)
		3pm ---Free Afternoon --- Students Plan to: Neuquen/ visit museums/ ---DATA Collection --- Back at 8pm
		Free time
	Friday 24-Jun	Free morning
		11 am a 5pmTourRio y 95pt95me95 with Mariza
		Dinner at EPSP –DATA COLLECTION--
	Saturday 25-Jun	Free morning
		11 to 1pm Empanadas at EESPS



## US Students of Color Abroad, Past Experiences, Cultural Attunement, and Intersectionalities

		Sociodrama de Patagonia (Tema: Psicodrama y Psycologia Social Argentina)
Night in Bus		Night Bus back to BA -
3 night in BA apt:	Sunday 26-Jun	Arrive to BA – Free morning
		Free Afternoon --- Students Plan for group visit
		Free night
	Monday 27-Jun	Debriefing breakfast
		10am to 2pm Visit to Centro de Adicciones y Salud Mental Ramon Carrillo with Fabio (Topic: Mental health Issues of Minority Groups + low 96pt 96me communities)
		Free Afternoon --- Students Plan for group visit
		Free night
	Tuesday 28-Jun	Free morning
		Back to 96pt by 3pm
		Departure to Chicago

**Appendix: Researcher Biases**

I have several biases around this research and the people involved in it. First, I attended a conference session hosted by Randy Stockard, PhD who presented research about the issues in service work. He was talking about issues I had not yet, in the multitude of articles I had already read, seen or heard about. These issues included the notion that service work actually does a lot of harm to communities, and that we are doing a pretty shitty job, actually, of building community relationships before we arrive with students, ready to do “service.” He talked about how service is a partnership; both the community and the institution benefit from work done together. Not FOR the community, together with the community. I started to investigate the research on service and privilege and came across not only this issue he spoke about and the lack of partnership with community stakeholders, but whiteness, privilege and the negative affects rooted in students by participating in service-learning. This was like opening Pandora’s box for me; I would say it sparked a bit of anger in me – every time I see a group of people shipping off to do service work in their little church shirts, it angers me off. I imagine them going off to Thailand or Guatemala (I’ve seen both recently at the airport) to convince these “poor people in need of salvation” they need Christ for all their problems to go away. That’s what I hear when people say they are going off to do “ministry work” – I hear “I’m going off to give food and services in exchange for you saying you’ll follow Christ.” That’s not service nor partnership, that colonization.

Secondly, when I start writing about these issues and share those thoughts with others, I feel silenced by white people. Primarily being told to “tone it down”. But does it need toned down? Or rather, is it that I’m not making it a comfortable conversation, which, when it comes to talking about race, is typically how white people like that topic served. When I discuss these

writings to non-white persons, the response is positive, and in general disagreement that it should be made softer. And in this way, I can use my whiteness to address privileged people in the moderate or left, in sometimes what may be, a confrontational way. My experience, and thus my bias stems from, when it comes to having two or more white people discussion racism, privilege or discrimination, long as the conversation about white privilege does not, at any time, turn into anything that suggests that any of the parties is part of that oppressive system, everything is fine – the world is unjust and we must do something to help.

My next biases are that based on the research on new student travel abroad and transformational learning; the research on this indicates that first time travelers are more likely to report their travel abroad trip was “transformational”. I expect that the students who are new to traveling will be the inquisitive ones, who learn the most and become the most culturally competent of the group. They will be exploring, asking questions, and immersing themselves in the research. I feel that the more travelled students, if any, (I believe one or two have traveled before) will be tuned out. They’ll be the ones sleeping on the van; using the iPhone to be on social media instead of being in the moment.

I also expect students to automatically use and enjoy their new found American privilege in ways that may not be positive; such as perceiving that they should get better service at a restaurant or feeling like they are “better than” the people who are living in Argentina. Perhaps even forming prejudices that “these people” can’t be trusted; I’m thinking about how I’ve seen my friends who are new travelers, traveling with me, act in markets when buying items. They start to assume the people are attempting to rip them off because they are American. I would expect new traveling student to do the same. Perhaps being more demanding as well; expecting services quicker, prices to be lower for them, taxi’s to arrive on time, etc. – to expect and want to enjoy, the privilege they don’t get at home as students of color, in the same way that whites

expect all those things all the time. Based on my previous travels, Americans may not be well liked, but our money is; that perceived wealth buys a lot of access and privilege abroad. The students are going to experience this as Americans, some for the first time, and they will likely enjoy it – who wouldn't? I don't blame them for that; they don't get that kind of privilege in America but they'll get to experience it abroad.

My expectations of the people of Argentina are based on my experience in Brazil (Rio). It seems that, in hearing about Argentina from travel books and lectures, that this is a party country – dinner starts at 10pm, and people stay out and drink until 6am. My guess is that everyone is chronically tired, too. I expect that local people will be drunk pretty much all the time – that seems like a lot of drinking and night life to me. Rio felt like a party scene all the time, just walking through the street trying to find fries and sprite. Argentina's advertisement of BA being "the city that never sleeps" translates to me as "the city that never stops partying". I expect the people who are in service work (restaurants, store fronts, etc.) will be exceptionally nice to me because I'm white and American, but that may not be necessary how they feel about an American in their shop. On another level, I also wonder if that won't be the case – as there is the conflictual identity on Argentinians being white or Latino (identity differs from person to person), those who see themselves as white will treat me the same as anyone else. It's been my general life experience that people tend to be nice and good hearted; I would expect that my style of popping into a crowd of people to introduce myself and make some new friends, to will be warmly received as it always is.