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# Student Participation in Coil Programs and its Impact on Study Abroad Enrollment

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Running Head: STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN COIL PROGRAMS AND ITS IMPACT ON  
STUDY ABROAD ENROLLMENT

STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN COIL PROGRAMS AND ITS IMPACT ON STUDY  
ABROAD ENROLLMENT

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SIT Graduate Institute – PIM 74

Capstone Paper submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a Master of Arts in  
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## Table of Contents

Abstract	<a href="#">h.30j0zll</a>
Introduction and Research Question	<a href="#">h.1fob9te</a>
Conceptual Frameworks	<a href="#">h.3znysh7</a>
Literature Review	<a href="#">h.2et92p0</a>
<b>The Emergence of Cross-Border Education</b>	<a href="#">h.tyjcwt</a>
<b>Mobilization of “Internationalization at Home”</b>	<a href="#">h.3dy6vkm</a>
<b>Impact of On-Campus Internationalization</b>	<a href="#">h.1t3h5sf</a>
<b>Decision to and Appraisal of Studying Abroad Among Student Minority Groups</b>	<a href="#">h.4d34og8</a>
<b>Institution Appraisal of E-Learning and Education Abroad</b>	<a href="#">h.2s8eyo1</a>
<b>Problems with (and Potential Solutions of) Online, Collaborative Programs</b>	<a href="#">h.17dp8vu</a>
<b>The Benefits of Online, Collaborative Programs</b>	<a href="#">h.3rdcrjn</a>
Research Methodology	<a href="#">h.26in1rg</a>
Findings	<a href="#">h.lnxbz9</a>
<b>Survey</b>	<a href="#">h.35nkun2</a>
<b>Qualitative Data:</b>	<a href="#">h.1ksv4uv</a>
Discussion	<a href="#">h.44sinio</a>
<b>Limitations</b>	<a href="#">h.2jxsxqh</a>
For Further Study	<a href="#">h.3j2aam3</a>
<b>APPENDIX A: CONSENT FORM</b>	<a href="#">h.4i7ojhp</a>
<b>APPENDIX B: DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENT</b>	<a href="#">h.2xcytpi</a>
<b>APPENDIX C: ANALYSIS OF SURVEY – FIGURES AND TABLES</b>	<a href="#">h.1ci93xb</a>
<a href="http:// - Toc448592421">http:// - Toc448592421</a>	

## Introduction and Research Question

According to the Institute of International Education's Open Doors Report (2014), about one in ten students study abroad during their undergraduate career. Twenty-six percent of this population belongs to racial minority groups, and student interest in short-term abroad programs almost doubles that of semester-long programs (and even exceeds that of long-term programs by twenty times). There are a variety of reasons why a student may choose not to go abroad, such as their dedication to their sport, their major, their finances, their family, and/or their readiness for international travel. Institutions around the world have begun the process of internationalizing their schools by diversifying their student population through international student recruitment, reaching out to minority groups through marketing and advertisements, hosting intercultural activities on campus, and globalizing their curricula. Whether they are able to promote (or even provide) study abroad programs or not, many institutions along the east coast of the United States have begun to host alternative methods to study abroad. One such method - and the primary focus for this study - is the implementation of online, collaborative, transnational learning courses for post-secondary students.

In 2005, State University of New York (SUNY) founded Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL), an organization built with the mission to help institutions adapt their single-classroom courses to the online, collaborative format, and to establish strong partnerships with professors (with whom they would join classrooms and co-teach using the resources available in SUNY COIL conferences and website, as well as through pre-established partnerships between the international offices in American and international universities) from international universities abroad. This alternative method, while in use in various areas around

the world, has not yet been institutionalized into the post-secondary curricula. Much research has been done on the initiatives and perspectives of the institution's staff and faculty, but there is little available on that of the students, their appraisal of COIL programs, and what impact COIL has had on study abroad enrollment among students.

The types of courses in which COIL is used can vary from the obvious such as courses which are global or international in theme (example COIL courses of this nature are: Gender Roles Across Cultures, Theoretical Foundations of Teaching English as a Second Language, Contemporary World Literature, International Field Experience: Early Childhood and Adolescence Education, Global Workplace), to courses which are international in topic yet are specific in context (Turkish-American Relations, European Politics, Religion and Conflict in Europe, Propaganda of the 1930s: Soviet Union and America Compared), to courses which discuss topics that are not global in context, but allow cross-cultural conversation for the opportunity of sharing personal views and concepts (The Science of Cooking, Internet Marketing, Planet Hip-Hop, Voice and Movement for Actors, Engineering Ethics, Dairy Production and Management, Strategic Management in Sports Organization) (Examples of COIL-supported Courses, 2013). The majority of COIL courses are performed entirely in English, while select courses are taught in the language of the adjoining institution. For example, a course which is shared between an institution in New York State and an institution in Spain may be taught either in English, or partially or fully in Spanish with the intent of strengthening the language skills of one or both classrooms while discussing assignments. For all courses, institutions attempt to have an equal number of students in each classroom; additionally, students are expected to complete a language proficiency test so as to measure the language skills of

enrolling students and to ensure that the students of each classroom are of the same level of linguistic skill.

COIL is not limited to the development of language skills alone, however; COIL can also be used in art courses, in which students communicate their understanding of the material by sharing their completed artwork with the class. For some courses, the implementation of COIL is simply an ‘element’ of the course and not the course itself; rather than having an identical curriculum between the two classrooms, they may have assignments and discussions which complement the overarching theme, the inclusion of alternate worldviews enriching the course’s material for students. In smaller cases, COIL can be used as a ‘Bridge Course’, in which a COIL course is used as a preliminary experience to a specific study abroad program (Course Models, 2013).

Outside of the case studies performed by COIL on COIL programs, little is known about the movement from the student’s perspective, and what influence COIL has had on study abroad enrollment. For the ninety percent of undergraduate students who don’t study abroad (IIE), COIL may provide an alternative means for becoming globally aware and interculturally competent while remaining on campus.

This study is designed with the purpose of understanding the students’ experience with COIL programs and whether it impacted a student’s decision to study abroad. This study also seeks to gain a better understanding on the demographics of students who are enrolling in these COIL courses and why students are and aren’t studying abroad after partaking in a COIL course. The resultant data reveals the impact of COIL among students who have and have not studied abroad, the choices and opinions of specific groups of students, how COIL has impacted their decision to study abroad and, where applicable, their study abroad experience after

participating in a COIL course. This paper also provides a short discussion on what more can be done for these groups that don't study abroad.

The research question this study asks is, therefore: *What impact do COIL programs have on study abroad enrollment among undergraduate students?*

## Conceptual Frameworks

In COIL programs, interaction is not only a necessity, but a requirement; for, it is the interaction that propels the students' academic and global learning. Learning through interaction, therefore, implies that COIL's interactive element can play a significant role in the student's decision to study abroad. Below are the conceptual frameworks of three theorists, each with their own perspective on the impact interaction has on the student, and their relationship to the focal topic of this study.

Lewin (1936) offers in his person-environment interaction theory that intercultural learning can be fostered most cogently through student exposure to foreign environments or situations. According to Lewin, this theory is especially veracious when the environment or situation is designed with curricular/academic intentions. The purpose of this framework is to predict the behaviors of students who are experiencing these new situations, and how they will react as they continue to be exposed to new ideas and concepts inherent in intercultural learning. This theory can be applied to the purpose of this study, as this theory implies that learning can occur at home, in a cross-cultural classroom, and can lead to a change in perception on cultural worldviews. This, then, could foster interest in study abroad.

Allport (1954), meanwhile, suggests in his framework on successful intergroup contacts that through *firm enforcement*, positive contact between persons of a group can occur through the

consistent application of initiatives designed for student success. *Meaningful interactions* suggests that positive contact cannot be fostered through fugacious conversations, but through purposeful, intentional, and frequent interactions that are of the same intensity (as can be found in classrooms, and are the cornerstone of the COIL framework). *Cooperation* imposes that positive contact can be facilitated through environments or activities where students perform tasks using cooperative means, rather than competitive. Finally, *equal status* suggests that contact between groups or individuals who are of unequal status tends to reinforce prejudice and stereotypes. In COIL programs, these definitions are important to remember, as each of these can present an impact to a student's intercultural awareness and interest in studying abroad. 'Firm enforcement,' 'meaningful interactions,' and 'cooperation,' in particular, are perfect examples in which overall impact on and learning within a student is augmented through COIL programs, and may result in a heightened sense of respect for and interest in people of other cultures.

Finally, Deardorff (2009) suggests that interest in international courses and studying abroad is born through curiosity. According to Deardorff, curiosity often leads to respect and openness. These feelings are then molded and perhaps solidified by their experience with the culture, their exposure to the culture, and their interaction with people of that culture, all of which are provided through the institution via study abroad and COIL programs (along with intercultural activities on campus).

## Literature Review

A literature review on articles discussing the implementation of COIL into post-secondary courses revealed that there is very little information available on the COIL movement in scholarly articles. Many non-scholarly sources, such as briefs, conference letters, quantitative

statistics, news articles, and case studies, discuss the impact of COIL programs in today's curricula. However, much of these do not include the perspective of the student. Scholarly sources that mention programs similar to the COIL framework only briefly include it as another possible method for internationalizing the campus; however, the authors discuss these methods in their most superficial means with no data on success rates or methodology for adaptation. Each article used towards this study offers new and alternate perspectives on the subject, though none share any similarities except that of internationalization and the 'internationalization at home' movement.

### **The Emergence of Cross-Border Education**

By 2005, collaborative, transnational learning online had yet to be recognized as anything beyond a working concept among institutions. The budding of the concept stems from the evolving definition of internationalization and the various means by which internationalization could be attained or practiced in the academic paradigm of post-secondary education. As Knight (2005) expresses, internationalization can be defined in different ways by different people; thus, the definition itself has been constructed with the intent of being as objective as possible as it continues to change with each new venture. In Knight's (2005) first written piece on the subject of utilizing an online platform for internationalization, Knight correlates the online platform to cross-border education. In this article, however, Knight only skims the surface of how an online platform could be used, or be of any real benefit to an institution outside of affordability and mobility. As the years passed it appears that, like internationalization, the conceptual framework for cross-border education in post-secondary environments has grown vast and somewhat muddled as the definition of cross-border education varies with instance and technological evolution. In a more recent article by Knight (2012) on internationalization, she differentiates

between two newly-prominent arrivals to the conceptual framework of internationalization: ‘cross-border education’ and ‘internationalization at home’. Internationalization at home insinuates efforts enacted on-campus, while cross-border education fosters mobility of programs and services. As Knight (2012) notes, cross-border education can take place through virtual or distance learning (or e-learning), and it can also be implemented at home through campus activities, events, and/or the implementation of global/cultural/international themes in course curricula. The author also defines ‘cross-border’ education as a movement of people, courses, ideas, programs, concepts, services, providers, and/or policies, and can be enacted through partnerships, cooperative projects, or commercial trade.

Knigh poses ‘cross-border’ education as the new movement among institutions interested in commencing new initiatives for ‘internationalization at home,’ stretching one’s reach from their own campus to other campuses abroad while the majority of college/university students remain in a U.S. campus throughout their four-year career. While the author affords cross-border education in a positive light, any reference to *collaborative* online learning is omitted. The risks involved in utilizing cross-border education include commercialization and commodification of programs, and the emergence of low-quality program providers and foreign degree mills.

### **Mobilization of “Internationalization at Home”**

The concept of ‘internationalization at home’ has also been discussed while relating its broad definition (and intentions) to field theory, rhetoric, and curriculum. Too often, institutions attempt to ‘internationalize’ their curricula by using methods and concepts which are self-limiting and hinder broad, abstract understanding that should come with international education by over-implementation of theory and conceptual stagnation. By eliminating the mental

differentiation between “us” and “them”, and instead sharing knowledge using collaborative, community-based learning, more will have been gained from the endeavor that is international education in post-secondary education (Mestenhauser, 2003). Mestenhauser (2003) notes a fact among program evaluations which appears equally valid today: evaluations conducted on the strength of programs are non-comprehensive and *rarely* feature detailed qualitative input from students on the positive and negative facets of their abroad programs and courses which feature international education. Mestenhauser (2003) notes that, at the time that his article was written, the majority (around ninety percent) of students who studied international education do so because it was in direct relation to their field (international studies, for example); the remaining students didn’t enroll in courses relating to international education. Since that time, student interest in international themes has grown - as more courses have been adapted to include such themes as they relate to the given field of the course.

Today, internationalization (‘internationalization at home’, in particular), has become a concept frequently discussed in higher education. As the occupational and academic paradigms grow more competitive, students and institutions are looking for ways that could give them the edge they need to stand out among their peers. Cornell University, for example, has been working to facilitate new ways of enabling internationalization among their students, including providing new opportunities for cross-border education through online platforms and virtual discussions, on-campus research programs which work in conjunction with field experiences abroad, the recruitment of professors from institutions abroad, and university partnerships (Aoli, 2015).

In West’s (2015) article on collaborative, cross-border dual degree programs, select institutions have taken to partnering with a university abroad and providing students (of each

university) with dual-Bachelor's degrees. In this arrangement, students commence coursework for one degree on-campus at their home institution until the end of their freshman year; they then spend their sophomore and junior years at the campus of the institution hosting the second degree, and then return to their home institution for their final year. While an initial assessment of these arrangements by Cornell University and select institutions noted above may not lead one to consider them initiatives deserving of the 'internationalization at home' title (since it requires off-campus study), these programs promise more opportunities for international education than before, and in dynamic ways which attract the interest of more students than before. Such programs, unlike in Mestenhauser's time, are catering to more than just International Studies majors - Communications, Biology, and Architecture are but a few examples.

### **Impact of On-Campus Internationalization**

According to Soria and Troisi's (2013) study, on-campus internationalization efforts can have a far more significant impact on the intercultural competency and global/international competency on the student body of a post-secondary institution than study abroad. Soria iterates that the settings in which students are led to actively apply their intellectual and critical analysis skills as students (such as lectures, courses with global/cultural themes, speaking to international students in and out of class, etc.) results in rapid growth of intercultural competencies and global/international competencies, with study abroad providing a way for students to have experiential learning and fulfilling basic curiosities that come with traveling in another country. The vast majority of students surveyed reported higher growth in competencies through interaction with students not from the United States in and/or outside of class, with the smallest percentage represented in among those who studied abroad. The primary limitation of this particular study, however, is the fact that the researchers did not reveal the number of surveyed

students who studied abroad as opposed to those who did not; therefore, the small percentage of students who experienced growth in their intercultural competence may be due to the low percentage of undergraduate students who study abroad as a whole. However, the researchers suggest in their discussion for faculty to adopt a larger, more vigorous role in researching and providing ways for students to have cross-cultural experiences in classrooms, on campus, and even off-campus in locations across the United States.

### **Decision to and Appraisal of Studying Abroad Among Student Minority Groups**

By inquiring on who (demographically) enrolls in COIL programs, this study is curious to discover whether there are findings of significance discerning students who identify as a racial minority and their enrollment in ‘at-home’ internationalization programs such as COIL courses. Thus, attention is turned to literature which discerns the decisions students of ethnic and racial minorities share toward studying abroad. According to Kasravi (2009), the factors behind minority students’ decision to study abroad is, in many ways, correlative to the opinions of students who participate in COIL programs and decide not to study abroad. The top three factors most pertinent to the group surveyed when choosing a program was 1) language of study, 2) destination, and 3) program cost. When it came to sources of funding, the majority of students in this research study received much help from family when paying for school; in the situation of study abroad, the primary source of funding was themselves, with help from family and use of scholarships following closely behind (Kasravi, 2009). This suggests that the student is willing to take on additional debt and assume financial responsibility for their choice to study abroad. How much appeal would a COIL course then have on a respondent of this survey if COIL is, as it’s often titled, the ‘affordable alternative’? Unfortunately, ‘alternative’ options such as COIL was not issued for appraisal in this particular survey.

As might be expected, the top reason minority students didn't study abroad is the cost. Interestingly, the surveyed population reported that the primary sources of influence to study abroad were former participants, and friends/significant others. Academic advisers and professors, meanwhile, were the least influential (Kasravi, 2009). In terms of general awareness of COIL's existence in the field of international education, COIL is just beginning to exit its embryonic stage; few know of it, but it has *slowly* grown as more people speak of its existence, its appeal, and its drawbacks. As Kasravi's (2009) data illustrates, the existence (and worth) of a program is best spread by the mouths of people who have experienced it themselves.

The primary source of anxiety towards studying abroad was adjusting to language barriers (Kasravi, 2009). This then raises another question on the appeal COIL might have on students (minority or non-minority) who are looking to improve their language skills (perhaps either in lieu of studying abroad *or prior* to studying abroad) while also being cost-conscious.

### **Institution Appraisal of E-Learning and Education Abroad**

In a survey conducted in by the Forum on Education Abroad (Survey Results: E-Learning and Education Abroad, 2013), 151 institutions offered their input on the subject of e-learning and education abroad programs and their implementation, or intent for implementation, of it - a concept preliminary to the adaptation of COIL to post-secondary courses. E-Learning, as noted in the survey itself, includes multiple examples of tools on which an online platform can stand: virtual lessons/discussions, single-direction cross-border courses, collaborative online courses, etc.. In the case of the survey, E-Learning is meant to represent any means in which a student or professor utilize technology during their program - largely, respondents equated this to studying abroad rather than collaborative, online classrooms.

Of all responding institutions, 71.3% felt that it would be an opportunity for their education abroad programs. The remaining 18.2%, 6.3%, and 4.2% felt that it was a challenge for their programs, a problem for their programs, and a strength of their programs, respectively. This data clearly illustrates the under-implementation of e-learning for education abroad programs among institutions - and the sizable interest present in its implementation. Of those who employ technology in their abroad courses, the majority of institutions use technology to provide students learning resources while abroad. An almost equal number of institutions use technology as a means for: 1) conducting part of pre-departure and re-entry courses; 2) supporting student learning as a formal part of the program; 3) allowing professors to communicate with their students and help direct their learning while they are abroad; and 4) allowing students the option to take an online course while abroad.

While it is encouraging that those who utilize technology do so in a variety of ways, it appears that many institutions manage to only scrape the surface in terms of what can be done for their students in terms of utilizing technology innovatively. According to the qualitative responses offered to the survey, general distrust of technology as an educative tool is a common barrier among institutions. For other institutions, technology is best used for a portion of a program. When considering COIL and its relation to E-Learning, it appears that it would be a benefit to all professionals in education to know the definitions of each, so that the difference between the two is understood. E-Learning, for example, is rather nebulous in meaning, yet often considered as impersonal and a hinderance to the cultural learning expected of the student while abroad; COIL and COIL-like courses, meanwhile, are meant to promote purposeful and ongoing discussion on a topic and its relation to one or more cultures.

## **Problems with (and Potential Solutions of) Online, Collaborative Programs**

Among professors who facilitated COIL courses, adjustment can be jarring if attempting to construct or even adapt a course to the COIL framework; faculty will often not be apt to conduct another COIL course if the process and/or execution was particularly challenging or difficult. Lack of resources, identifying a partner class that is adequate (in intent and size) and reliable, mashing timetables, establishing partnerships with professors overseas, communication, harsh learning curves (such as pedagogical differences between classrooms), lack of institutional support, and language proficiency levels are examples of challenges which faculty often face when conducting (or attempting to conduct) COIL courses (Redden, 2014).

Institutional support is crucial to the success of COIL courses. Without instructional designers, for example, professors often struggle with how to properly construct an effectively-designed COIL course. Additionally, faculty who consider their COIL experience to have been too tremulous to attempt again will simply drop the idea when continuous practice, student input, partner-to-partner communication, diversification of online communication tools, and ample preparation and revision (of time, materials, assignments, deadlines, etc.) will result in smoother executions (Guth, 2014). As mentioned in an article written by Labi (2011), faculty have the opportunity establish partnerships and receive aid by attending COIL conferences, and pursuing COIL's Faculty Guide for COIL Course Development and their collection of course models.

Among students, learning is hindered primarily by logistical issues and general construct of a program. Time differences, methods for communication between students/groups, language proficiency, unclear guidelines, and time allotted to complete group assignments (around time differences) were some of the main issues students faced in their programs (Guth, 2014).

Disadvantages encountered according to major (such as STEM majors) is not yet exclusively discussed in literature uncovered on subject.

### **The Benefits of Online, Collaborative Programs**

Many institutions take advantage of the COIL framework when trying to improve language skills. Japan, for example, had been witnessing low TOEFL scores among their students since 2009, such scores making it difficult for Japanese students to enter into two to four-year institutions in the United States; institutions such as Kansai University and Osaka University partnered with institutions who practiced COIL overseas with the intention of helping students build their English Language skills and improve their scores before going abroad (Ikeda & Bysouth, 2015). In another example, Nishihori et al (2006) give the final results of an online, collaborative ESL course shared by classrooms in Japan, China, and Korea. This course included face-to-face activities, video conferencing, Chat 'n' Debate, Culture Box, and on-the-spot questionnaires. The article delivers detailed diagrams on how each classroom stayed connected, and statistical, quantitative data on the students' appraisal of the multilateral distance class format (broken down by country). According to the quantitative data, the course scored positively among all three involved ethnicities, with high marks delivered to its novelty, and the student's wish that the same format be used in other courses.

One of the primary advantages of COIL, to students and to institutions alike, is its affordability. To students who often encounter barriers to studying abroad, COIL courses represent the 'alternative' to study abroad. John Rubin, co-founder of the COIL initiative, iterates that while the word 'alternative' is almost always applied to COIL's relationship to study abroad among professionals and professors within the field, it is not exactly the most appropriate - that, instead, it should be considered a "powerful learning opportunity" for students who are interested

in deepening their intercultural awareness (Redden, 2014). John E. Fowler (the co-founder opposite to Rubin) also notes that, in terms of affordability, it provides a “strategic opportunity” and potentially-tremendous benefit to institutions who are willing to put in the time and effort to applying the few resources necessary for facilitating COIL courses (Labi, 2011).

The founders, students, and majority of professors who conducted COIL courses concur that the partnering of institutions in a course and the conversations made available between students of different nationalities adds that extra ‘something’ to the courses themselves (Redden, 2014). According to the course case studies provided by COIL, faculty confirmed that students learned “the true meaning of intercultural exchange” through active collaboration and ongoing group-discussion; though accomplished virtually, they were able to experience culture shock, and apply solutions to real-world problems and questions in internationally-mixed groups, encouraging the evolution of problem-solving and linguistic development in academics using technological formats (Guth, 2014). Faculty members who have facilitated COIL courses also report growth in terms of their teaching and adaptability after having their skills challenged in this new lesson model.

In a newsletter published by the American Council of Education (Rumbley, 2012), McAuliffe and Sutton discuss learning communities in liberal arts colleges, going into detail on how collaborative, online programs can create meaningful partnerships and engage faculty into creating internationally-focused courses and programs. In this same document, Lane and Kinser mention COIL-programs as an alternate route for students who are expected to study abroad as part of their program, yet encounter barriers which prevent them from studying abroad. They also discuss the necessary measures for adapting their programs to the COIL framework (effective communication between partners, goal-setting, etc.), while also listing the positive

outcomes for implementing COIL's framework to their programs, such as meaningful discussions between students, and intercultural awareness. Altbach also appears in this document, disclosing his concerns on the risks posed upon by institutions by turning their focus to internationalization initiatives. In his essay, he lists these concerns from a broad, historical, political and economics perspective - however, the implementation of virtual or cross-border programs such as COIL is not discussed in his essay.

The topic of 'internationalization at home' has grown popular in many recent articles. In these articles, however, COIL is never mentioned, though few might call attention to cross-border education or distance learning in postsecondary programs as opportunities for internationalizing a campus. In much of these articles that bear such themes as cross-border education, virtual or e-learning, or even collaborative curricula, the authors only go so far as defining the terms (and their variant titles) and perhaps illustrating the framework and basic purpose behind each movement. However, little is said about the success of these programs, their impact on the institution and its students, when and where they are implemented, or the perspectives of its stakeholders. Articles which discuss cross-border education only do so on the most elementary of levels, where the conceptualization of collaborative online learning is completely removed due to lack of awareness of the online, collaborative concept. For example, a fear that is often expressed of the ongoing practice of cross-border education is the commercialization and commodification of programs, and the emergence of low-quality program providers and foreign degree mills. Within the field of COIL, this would likely not be an issue since the practice requires the partnership of two accredited universities from two countries, and the formation of a shared course. On the topic of internationalization, scholarly articles devote

much of the discussion to frameworks for institutions and faculty, with very little information (quantitative or qualitative) among students who participate in these online, collaborative, transnational programs. In performing the literature review for the topic of online, collaborative, transnational programs, it has been revealed that the impact these programs have on students has yet to be considered for a detailed study for public dispersal.

## Research Methodology

For maximum output and data collection, this study performed a mixed quantitative and qualitative study - the participants were given a multiple-choice survey posing questions that were more quantitative in intent. (Appendix B.) This survey had a combination of “Yes/No” questions, multiple-choice questions, and open-ended questions in which participants could provide qualitative answers. Select multiple-choice questions allowed the participant to select multiple answers as they related to their experience; others asked participants to choose only one answer of the selection offered. The qualitative and quantitative elements of the survey are not divided into independent sections, but integrated into the survey entirely by way of employing ‘Other’ as a field for questions which inquired on their reasons for not going abroad, or for enrolling in the COIL course.

Willing participants were gathered through solicitation for aid from faculty and staff of SUNY institutions who facilitated COIL courses. Out of the twenty-six contacted, 8 responded with interest in assisting. About 5 of these were able to lend to the study by forwarding a letter to eligible students consisting a personal introduction, an overview of the study and its purpose, deadlines, conditions, a copy of the consent form, and a link to the electronic survey. To be

eligible to complete the survey, students had to have completed or were in the process of completing a COIL course, regardless of their experience with or interest in studying abroad.

The survey included questions which:

1. Inquired on their demographics (ethnicity, year, if they are a student-athlete, major, gender).
2. Inquired on their reasons for participating in the COIL course.
3. Inquired on their experience/perspectives on studying abroad.
4. Inquired on the impact COIL has had on their consideration of and decision to study abroad.
5. Inquired on the impact COIL had (if any) on those who studied abroad.
6. Final appraisal of COIL (as related to their study abroad experience).

Cumulatively, 25 students (representing four SUNY institutions) responded to the survey.

Cumulatively, 25 students (representing four SUNY institutions) responded to the survey.

For maximum access among students who may find themselves without the resources to print, sign, and return the hardcopy version of the consent form (Appendix A), students had the option to confirm consent within the electronic survey: A copy of the consent form was hyperlinked in the survey's opening, instructing respondents to read the consent form **IN FULL** and mark their awareness of the study's purpose and conditions prior to commencing the survey. The survey holds two primary 'sections,' the first of which included a series of questions which addressed *all* participants, regardless of study abroad experience while the second section posed questions to the sub-group of students who participated in COIL *and* studied abroad. A final, concluding question is then posed at the survey's end, which solicits the attention of *all* participants.

## Findings

### Survey

#### **Demographics:**

To professionals in the field of study abroad, it's been long-known that, in terms of study abroad enrollment, some demographics (such as gender, race, academics, etc.) favor the idea more than others. By gathering information on the demographics of students who enroll in COIL courses, we are able to discern potential patterns which may be parallel (or perpendicular) to the statistics we have on students who study abroad. Females represented 80% of total participants, while males represented the remaining 20%. Communication majors represented the highest number of students in this group (52%), followed by Public Relations (20%), then International Studies and Criminology (8% each), and equal-representation of Music, Language, and Social Sciences (4% each). In terms of ethnicities present for this survey, 72% identified as Caucasian, 12% as Asian-American, 8% as African-American, and 4% as Latino or Hispanic-American, with the remaining 4% preferring not to disclose their ethnicity and none identifying as Native-American, Middle-Eastern American, or "Other". Domestic students represented 96% of the surveyed population, the remaining 4% identifying as international students. Student-athletes, as a demographic, have also presented a challenge among supporters and marketers of study abroad programs due to their concern for traveling during their training season. COIL, however, completely eliminates this issue as they have the opportunity to have a cross-cultural experience at home without sacrificing their training season. Therefore, this study inquired on the percent of students who are (or were at the time of enrolling in the COIL course) a student-athlete, with the interest of discovering the existence notable representation in COIL courses. However, from this pool, 88% confirmed that they are or were *not* a student-athlete, while 12% confirmed that they

*are/were* a student-athlete at the time which the COIL course took place. At the point in time in which these statistics were gathered, 56% held Senior status, 28% answered as already having graduated, 12% held Junior status, 4% held Sophomore status, and none identified as Freshman. In terms of their year when they *took* the COIL course, 48% said that they were Juniors, 32% said that they were Seniors, 16% said that they were Sophomores, and 4% said that they were Freshmen.

### **Duration of Exposure to COIL:**

This study also held an interest in knowing whether the duration of time in which students were able to have interactive opportunities (such as collaboration or conversation) with students of another institution using online platforms such as Skype or Moodle (or, length of exposure to COIL), had any impact on overall experience in COIL, preparedness for study abroad, or confidence towards a potential study abroad experience (which might lead to a heightened probability of enrollment in study abroad programs). The data found is as follows: In terms of length of exposure to COIL in their courses, 28% said that the COIL element of their course lasted 8-10 weeks; 24% percent answered 6-8 weeks, and 4-6 weeks each. 12% of respondents said that the COIL element of their course lasted 10-12 weeks, while 8% said that theirs lasted 2-4 weeks, and 4% said that theirs lasted 1-2 weeks. Parallels found between this and other findings are discussed in the 'Discussion' section below.

### **Reasons for Enrolling in COIL Course:**

For this multiple-answer question on *why* they enrolled in a COIL course, 80% said that they did so because the topic interested them; 72% said that they did so because the course fulfilled a

major or minor requirement; 36% said that they wanted to have a cross-cultural experience at home before going abroad; 28% said that they were curious by what 'COIL' entailed; 24% said that they were not aware that the course employed 'COIL' at the time of enrolling; 16% answered that the course partnered with an institution in a country that has always interested them; 8% said that it seemed more financially-appealing than study abroad; and another 8% said that they took another COIL course and enjoyed it.

### **Study Abroad Experience and Decision to Go/Not Go Abroad:**

Of this group, 20% of respondents said that they studied abroad *before* taking the course and 20% said that they studied abroad *after* taking the course, while 4% said that they studied abroad both *before* and *after* the course. The largest percent of respondents (24%) said that they have not studied abroad, though they plan to in the future, while 20% of respondents said that they have not studied abroad and do not plan to in the future. Finally, 12% of respondents said that they had considered going abroad, but ultimately decided not to go. Among the participants who decided not to go abroad: 32% said they feel that they don't have the finances to go abroad; an equal number of students (12% each) said that 1) their major/minor does not require that they study abroad, and therefore don't see the necessity, 2) they don't have the time, or 3) felt concerned about timing in relation to graduation. Another equal set of students (4% each) said that 1) their being a student-athlete hindered them from going abroad, 2) there were no programs that interested them enough to participate, or 3) they had no interest in going abroad. None answered that they were a) nervous about going abroad (leaving family, traveling, specific dietary needs, etc.), b) were advised not to study abroad by their advisor, or c) that their institution does not offer abroad programs or lack an abroad office.

### **COIL's Impact on Decision to Study Abroad:**

After having participated in a COIL course, 56% said that their experience in the course made them want to study abroad. Conversely, 32% said that their experience had no impact on their decision to study abroad; while 8% said that their experience made them briefly consider studying abroad, 4% said that their experience made them not want to study abroad. When 12 students who studied abroad were asked on their confidence or preparedness towards studying abroad after having participated in a COIL course, 83% said that they felt more confident and/or prepared for a study abroad experience, while 17% said that it made no impact on their confidence or preparedness for study abroad. On the question on whether or not their COIL course influenced their decision on *where* to study abroad (answered by 11 students): 64% said that it **did not influence** their decision on where to go abroad, while 36% said that it **did influence** their decision on where to go abroad.

### **Study Abroad Experience After COIL:**

Regarding the impact COIL had on their overall study abroad experience: out of 10 respondents, 30% claimed that their COIL experience strongly impacted their study abroad experience; 30% said that COIL made little impact on their experience; 20% claimed that COIL made a sizable impact on their study abroad experience; and 20% said that COIL had no impact on their study abroad experience. Out of eight respondents, 75% said that they experienced the most growth in *intercultural awareness* through study abroad, while 25% experienced the most growth through COIL than study abroad. Out of nine respondents, 78% said that they experienced the most growth in their *intercultural competencies* through study abroad than through COIL, while 22%

experienced the most growth through COIL than study abroad. (None of the participants listed COIL as their answer to *both* questions. However, according to the data, COIL has equal representation for growth in intercultural awareness *and* growth in intercultural competency.)

**Qualitative Data:**

Of the students who studied abroad *before* taking the COIL course, six (out of seven) said that their course didn't have any impact on their decision to study abroad in the future, nor did they experience any impact in terms of cultural understanding and growth after having participated in the COIL course. However, one student noted in a qualitative answer that though they had studied abroad before taking the COIL course and, therefore, experienced little impact from it, they felt that the COIL course taught them how to speak and communicate more effectively.

In regard to students that studied abroad *after* participating in the COIL course, half of this group felt that the course made them want to study abroad, while the other half felt that the course made no impact on their decision to study abroad. However, all who studied abroad after participating in a COIL course felt that their experience with COIL made them feel more prepared/confident when deciding to study abroad. Additionally, to a qualitative inquiry on their study abroad experience after having completed their COIL course, all students remark that they felt a) more confident when communicating with others of a different culture, b) more cognizant of differences, and c) that their experience was more fulfilling after having participated in a COIL course.

One student who studied abroad before *and* after taking a COIL course remarked that while they experienced more intercultural growth through study abroad than the course, their course offered information which their study abroad experience didn't include, such as the existence and perspectives of the course's targeted populations. Three of the four students who said that they have not studied abroad before and DO NOT PLAN to in the future all express a desire to study abroad after having participated in a COIL course. The last of this group, however, mentions that their experience with COIL made them not want to study abroad; in the qualitative inquiry offered to those who gave this answer, the student remarked that communicating with the other students was difficult and made for an awkward group experience, and therefore decided that if they were to travel in the future, it wouldn't be for a course.

Half of the total pool of participants offered qualitative input on their appraisal of COIL as a tool for institutions (all from different standings in terms of interest in study abroad); all regarded COIL positively, suggesting that a) more students take advantage of COIL and study abroad, b) COIL courses teach skills that may not be learned abroad, such as becoming more cognizant and heightening one's awareness of cultures, cultural differences, and cross-cultural communication through structured assignments, and c) that COIL courses be advertised more so that more people can learn what COIL is and know that it exists.

## Discussion

In terms of demographics (Figure 1), the data yielded from this survey are of little cause for surprise - on the question of interest by gender, the data was especially predictable. In the

world of international education and study abroad, female students have long-presented a predominant presence among males. The 4-to-1 ratio women present against men in this survey is almost identical to the number of female students who enroll in study abroad programs versus men; students who identify as Caucasian in this survey (Figure 2) also present similar percentages as Caucasian students who study abroad (Strauss, 2015). This is an interesting finding: Caucasian students have been recorded as being a predominant demographic in study abroad; while this wide margin is, therefore, somewhat predictable, one would have imagined more ethnic diversity in the classroom due to COIL being the ‘affordable alternative’ to study abroad for *all* students. Though they represent a small percent of this survey’s responding participants, international students also add their voice to the data (Figure 2). It is rare for an international student to choose to have a cross-cultural experience within a cross-cultural experience such as enrolling in a COIL course or studying abroad during their extended stay in another country. Yet, it does occur. The small representation of athletes in this survey group (Figure 2) also carries the known stigmas of studying abroad and their predominant demographics. For example, athletes represented 3 out of 25 students in this survey - two females, and one male. One female athlete noted that they have had no experience with study abroad and DO NOT PLAN to in the future, feeling that their status as an athlete hindered her from studying abroad; another female athlete mentions a brief interest in studying abroad but ultimately deciding against it (for lack of interest in studying abroad); and the responding male athlete offers the single answer (to a multiple-answer question) as to why they enrolled in the COIL course: it was a requirement. Based on the answers provided by these athletes, the females appear to express greater interest in the themes which COIL courses facilitate than the male athlete. According to Stauss (2015), the majority of male students choose not to study abroad

because they feel that abroad programs carry very little weight in their fields, and therefore don't see the point in applying unless it serves a purpose. This sub-group, therefore, is a characteristic representation of the issues institutions face when it comes to encouraging athletes to study abroad.

According to the data (Figure 3a), the students holding Senior status are, in terms of academic standing, the largest percent of the surveyed group. Since the largest percent of students who took a COIL course enrolled in their course during their Junior year, it can be surmised that the respondents of the survey completed their course the previous year. (This hypothesis is proven by the fact that, according to the data, graduates held the second-highest percent of the total surveyed group, with the second-highest percent of students who took a COIL course did so during their Senior year.) The participation of students who are of Junior and Senior standing infers two possibilities as to why Juniors and Seniors are most-commonly enrolled in COIL courses: the adaptation of a course to the COIL framework takes a great deal of time and, thus, a COIL course may not have been made available to students until such a late point in their academic career; and COIL courses are, often, more frequently offered within Junior and Senior-level courses. However (as shown in Figure 3b), Juniors show most experience and interest in study abroad than other academic years' present.

In close examination of a given length of exposure to COIL in their courses (Figure 9a), results appear to be largely mixed, though students of all durations of exposure voice a strong interest in studying abroad regardless of intent to study abroad (Figure 9b): Students who experienced 10-12 weeks of exposure (12%) each say that they haven't yet gone abroad but PLAN TO in the future, and all agree that their experience with COIL made them want to study abroad. The students who experienced 1-2 weeks' exposure to COIL (4%), however, say that

while they haven't studied abroad and DO NOT PLAN to in the future, their experience with COIL made them want to study abroad (Figure 9b). The majority of students who answered that they DO NOT PLAN to study abroad or ultimately decided against studying abroad after briefly considering it say that their experience with COIL made them 'want' to study abroad. While a larger pool may have delivered more variant results on the effect of 1-2 weeks' exposure to COIL, it currently stands that length of exposure does little to hinder the likelihood of interest in studying abroad. A secondary (though no less significant) difference between those who experienced 1-2 weeks' exposure and the students who experienced 10-12 weeks' exposure is the sense of preparedness or confidence towards studying abroad: the students who had 10-12 weeks' exposure all express feeling more prepared and confident towards studying abroad, while the participants who experienced 1-2 weeks' exposure express experiencing no impact on their sense of confidence or preparedness. The results on 'mid-range' exposure, such as 4-6 weeks, 6-8 weeks, and 8-10 weeks, present larger populations of students who have had experience with study abroad before and/or after the COIL course (Figure 9a).

Of course, students don't typically have the option of choosing a course that contains exposure of a specific length; thus, the percentages of students who participate in courses of a specific length are purely coincidental. However, a significant pattern is found among students who have studied abroad before, and have studied abroad after their course: Students who studied abroad after their COIL course (a demographic which consisted primarily of Juniors at the time that they took the course, as evidenced in Figure 3b) express a heightened sense of preparedness and/or confidence in studying abroad (Figure 8). The majority of these students also express a heightened interest in studying abroad since partaking in the course, and that their experience with COIL positively impacted their overall study abroad experience (Figure 7). All

of the students who studied abroad after participating in a COIL course also offer more qualitative answers on how COIL impacted them as a learner and traveler. Students who studied abroad before participating in the course (a demographic which consisted primarily of students who were Seniors at the time of the course) largely express experiencing no impact on their decision to study abroad in the future. As mentioned under the Qualitative section of this survey's Findings, students of this category mention that though they had studied abroad before and therefore experienced little impact from the course in terms of studying abroad in the future, the COIL course allowed them the opportunity to learn how to communicate more mindfully.

The student's interest in the topic, and because it fulfilled a major or minor requirement stand as the two most-popular reasons for enrolling in a COIL course among this group (80% and 72% respectively) (Figure 4). In fact, these stand well above the other answers offered. On the whole, this finding isn't an unpredictable one. The popularity of enrolling because it fulfilled a major or minor requirement is cause for some additional study, some relief, and some alarm. The fact that the course was *required* implies that students (of specific programs) are unable to have the option of bypassing a cross-cultural experience, which may result in positive outcomes in regards to intercultural growth and communication skills. The reason for alarm is largely due to concern for complacency among students of post-secondary institutions, especially considering the low representation of other reasons for enrolling and the large gap between the most-popularly and least-popularly-chosen answers. For some of these answers, a low-representation is not surprising - the 8% that said that they took another COIL course and enjoyed it, for example, is relatively predictable since COIL is still a new concept to the world of internationalization in academia and, therefore, few courses are being practiced with this tool. However, the fact that only 8% of this whole group said that it posed a more 'financially-

appealing' option than study abroad is cause for interest and additional study, especially considering that professionals belonging to or familiar with SUNY COIL as a tool label COIL as an 'alternative' to studying abroad because of its financial appeal. This question becomes even more pertinent when we consider that 36% of the whole group answered that they took the course because they 'wanted to have a cross-cultural experience at home before going abroad.' These findings then suggest that COIL may not be so much an 'alternative' for students, but more likely a developmental and intellectual benchmark towards opportunities like study abroad.

As if set to entirely disprove the notion that students enroll in COIL courses because they cannot (or opt not to) study abroad, the combined percent of students who studied abroad before and/or after their COIL course presents a difference of only 12% against the combined percent of students who have not gone abroad (with favor going to the latter) (Figure 5). The largest percent of this particular inquiry - though it falls in the category of those who have not gone abroad but PLAN TO in the future - belongs to a group which voices the most, positive interest in going abroad (Figure 7).

Among those who find themselves unable to go abroad, the group offers the predictable problem of securing enough finances to go abroad as the primary issue (Figure 6). In such cases, one is led to consider how institutions could better inform their students of appropriate scholarships and fundraising methods, and how to construct and supply such resources to interested students. Another relatively-common problem (particularly among male students) is studying abroad needing to be a requisite for students to apply for abroad programs, as students of this survey note that because it's not required, it's therefore not a necessity. Considering that males represent such a small percent of the total surveyed group, it's clear that the issue stands among female students as well. This finding is equally as revealing as it is challenging to

remedy. Another enlightening find is the lack of representation among potential concerns such as anxiety about traveling abroad (such as family, specific dietary needs, traveling, etc.), being advised not to study abroad by advisor, or lack of a study abroad programs office. The latter two possibilities, in particular, raises two different questions based on the data gathered:

Considering that many of this surveyed group don't study abroad if it's not a requisite for their major or minor *yet* their advisors play no part (in this group) in their decision whether or not to go abroad implies the existence of areas in need of improvement. To dissect these areas would require a study all its own, but it's relatively clear that marketing opportunities to students - and encouraging advisors to partake in communicating these opportunities to their students - may help shrink a small portion of a gap present between students who go abroad and students who don't go abroad. In regards to the final concern on the lack of an abroad office, it has been argued that COIL programs are valuable alternatives for studying abroad in institutions which lack an office for such a purpose. The validity of the argument notwithstanding, according to the group surveyed, this concern is a non-issue. Clearly, in the case of this particular study, COIL programs are not restricted to institutions without study abroad program offices. Nor can any of the participants surveyed who did not go abroad argue that programs were not available to them. It can therefore be surmised that enrollment in study abroad programs wane largely because of ineffective communication between institution, study abroad office, advisor, and student.

According to the data, COIL lends a small hand in attracting interest in studying abroad. While this study cannot prove or accurately calculate growth of enrollment in study abroad programs due to student participation in COIL courses, it can be suggested that COIL courses can lend a hand in shrinking the gap: over half of the surveyed group (56%) confirmed that their experience in their COIL course made them *want* to study abroad (Figure 7). Those who were

made to briefly consider study abroad lend a small percentage (8%) to this predominant population. Those who felt that their experience had no influence on their interest to study abroad (32%), as mentioned, consisted largely of students who had already gone abroad. Students who were disinclined to study abroad because of their COIL experience, according to the qualitative data offered on the instance, was due in part to the course's construct and facilitation. The survey raised an interesting finding that, for 36% of the surveyed group **who studied abroad**, their COIL experience influenced their decision on where to go abroad (Figure 10). While this is a small representation of the total surveyed group, it raises a question on exactly how a COIL course influenced a student's choice in destination: if their experience influenced their decision positively or negatively, and/or how such findings could be of assistance to professors as they build COIL courses and possibly promote study abroad to their students.

The level of impact COIL had a student's overall study abroad experience presents itself as nearly even on all perspectives, which suggests that the level of impact that COIL has a student's overall study abroad experience is dependent on the student's study abroad experience and *when* their study abroad experience occurred. More students claim to have experienced more growth in their intercultural competencies and intercultural awareness through study abroad than through COIL (Figure 11). Among students who studied abroad *after* their COIL course, more agreed that COIL had more of an impact on their competencies (such as their intercultural communication skills and cultural adaptation) or awareness than those who studied abroad before their COIL course. This perspective could be linked to the qualitative responses given by this particular sub-group (as well as a select few of those who studied abroad before their COIL course), in which they state feeling more knowledgeable on how to communicate with people of

other cultures after completing the course, thus impacting their sense of confidence towards a future study abroad experience.

### **Limitations**

The limitations of the resultant data include: 1) the shortness of timeframe allowed to gather a large pool of students. Because this study was carried out in less-than a semester's time, only a single semester's worth of students (who most-recently participated in a COIL course) were available from the institutions willing to distribute the survey. The smallness of the pool, though it yielded answers on the study's questions, may not be a representative example of all students who participated in COIL courses. 2) Though COIL has been present within SUNY for over ten years, the majority of SUNY institutions are either not choosing to implement COIL due to lack of interest, or are just starting to implement COIL in their courses. Therefore, the availability of students who have participated or are in the process of participating in a COIL course was minimal. Many SUNY institutions that had conducted a COIL course for the first time within recent years tended to voice their concern on the number of students they could provide - years could pass between semesters that employed COIL in their courses as they periodically tested the tool in classrooms and their faculty grew more comfortable with the concept and its necessities. 3) Courses that employ COIL in their syllabus are largely reserved for students who hold junior and senior-standing. Therefore, establishing contact with students that completed a senior-level COIL course the previous year also proved difficult, often hindering the process of distributing the survey and all materials in a timely manner. 4) The more variant elements of the course (the professor's delivery of course, themes, frequency of American student to foreign student interaction, methods for interaction used, etc.) likely also played some role in influencing students' decision to or appraisal of study abroad and the COIL-

element of the course itself. 5) Knowing exactly how a student might have been ‘strongly’ impacted by their participation in a COIL course is, without detailed qualitative data, indiscernible at this time, though it could be presented as an opportunity for a detailed study on the students’ experience with COIL.

## Conclusion

The impact that COIL courses have on student enrollment in study abroad programs is, on the whole, positive - as long as one does not equate ‘positive’ with the promise of enrollment. It is impossible to tell from this survey just how many students were led to enroll in study abroad *because* of their COIL experience. However, more than half of the group surveyed expressed a feeling of ‘wanting’ to study abroad after having taken a COIL course. The majority of these included students who had not yet studied abroad (regardless of overall intent to study abroad), with a small few of those who studied abroad at some point after their course.

While COIL is considered the ‘alternative’ to study abroad for students who otherwise feel that they cannot study abroad, the data suggests that this is not always the case, as many (almost half) of surveyed students studied abroad *and* took a COIL course. Students who did not study abroad did not enroll in the COIL course because they considered it an ‘alternative’ to study abroad (as only 8% of all surveyed students claimed to take the course because it seemed a lower cost alternative than study abroad), but because it fulfilled a course or the topic interested them. As professionals of international education, we must consider a student’s lack of awareness on study abroad opportunities (and, most importantly, the personal and professional benefits they offer) as the prominent reason why such a large percent of post-secondary students don’t go abroad. From this survey, it’s relatively clear that the lack of enrollment in study abroad

programs is not due to them believing that they can't than it is not *knowing* that they *can* study abroad.

The findings in this study support Lewin's (1936) postulation that learning in an academic, structured setting makes students more cognitively aware of personal habits than a study abroad experience in which students are expected to guide themselves through new experiences and environments without the quisiite of personal reflection. Students surveyed in Soria's article also express experiencing more personal, professional, and intercultural growth through on-campus programs which facilitate the study of globalized topics alongside conversations made between people of different nationalities than study abroad itself. In an almost parallel fashion, participants who studied abroad prior to their COIL course confirm that while they felt they learned a great deal from their study abroad experience and, therefore, experienced little to no impact from the COIL course in terms of interest towards studying abroad in the future or significant, intercultural growth, their experience with COIL helped them to learn how to communicate more mindfully. Thus, students ultimately gain more from COIL (and study abroad experience) if the COIL course is completed *before* their study abroad experience.

As Allport (1954) proposes, 'firm enforcement', 'meaningful interaction', and 'cooperation' leads students to a heightened sense of interpersonal understanding which, according to Deardorff (2009), inevitably fosters respect. Understanding and respect, then, feeds a student's sense of confidence/preparedness if/when considering study abroad - a sentiment shared by all who studied abroad after the COIL course. The impact that a COIL course has on a student's interest in studying abroad lies largely in the course's execution - a well-designed, well-facilitated course will very likely result in a positive experience for students; students who

struggle may be less inclined to study abroad in the future as they associate their COIL experience to their potential study abroad experience.

Without a doubt, study abroad lends itself as a powerful tool for self-development and intercultural awareness among students of post-secondary institutions. COIL courses may not provide the cross-dimensional ‘culture shock’ that study abroad can, as in study abroad students are forced to learn and adapt on their own by experiencing the environment through physical presence. However, COIL provides a structured setting in which learning how to communicate interculturally is an essential expectation and intended outcome of all participating students.

Considering that only one-fifth of surveyed students studied abroad after their course, it is clear that, regardless of whether or not COIL acted as the primary influence to study abroad, COIL’s impact on direct study abroad enrollment is conclusively low. Among students who answered that they haven’t studied abroad but PLAN TO in the future, this survey doesn’t ask if their decision to study abroad in the future is the direct result of their participation in a COIL course. However, it can be concluded that participation in COIL courses results in a higher probability of marked interest in study abroad among post-secondary students, regardless of intent to study abroad.

## For Further Study

While Allport’s theory of ‘firm enforcement’, ‘meaningful interaction’, and ‘cooperation’ in intercultural learning exemplify the appropriate application of COIL in post-secondary courses for institutions looking to encourage students to study abroad, this study does not provide specific examples of occasions where this occurred among studied students and is, therefore, deserving of such study. Conducting a more comprehensive survey to deduce just how strongly a

student is influenced to study abroad after completing a COIL course would result in finding supplementary to this particular study.

One can also turn attention to underrepresented groups in study abroad and their presence in COIL. For example, student-athletes represent a small percentage of students who enroll in COIL courses - would a larger sample produce different results? And, could COIL assist in bridging a gap between student-athletes and foreign study?

Professionals familiar with COIL note that many students who enroll in COIL courses do so because their institution does not offer study abroad programs. For this particular group, one can inquire on the input of students who attend institutions that don't host a study abroad programs office. One can also do a qualitative study on what methods of virtual communication work best for students in COIL courses.

Another opportunity for study would be to measure, through case studies, how a student's experience in a COIL course influenced their decision on where to go abroad? Or - perhaps the most prominent of questions - what do institutions do to inform their students of study abroad programs, and what input can these students offer for improvement?

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## **APPENDIX A: CONSENT FORM**

### **PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM FOR RESEARCH STUDY: WHAT IMPACT DOES COIL HAVE ON STUDY ABROAD ENROLLMENT AMONG UNDERGRADUATES?**

Dear Study Participant,

You are being invited to participate in a research study on the impact student participation in COIL programs have on study abroad program enrollment. This study is being conducted by Ashley Reed from the International Education Master's Program at The School for International Training Graduate Institute (SIT) in Brattleboro, Vermont. Her goal is to use the data she collects from this study to further understand 1) how participation in COIL programs impact student interest in study abroad, and 2) the general demographics of students who participate in COIL programs.

You are eligible to participate in the research study if you so desire. Your participation will not take long and it only requires you, should you decide to participate, to answer survey questions regarding your decision to enroll or not to enroll in a study abroad program after participating in a COIL course. The survey consists of a short, preliminary set of questions requesting demographic data (gender, major, ethnicity, year, etc.). Following this will be a set of questions inquiring on if/when you studied abroad, and what influence your participation in COIL had on your decision. The final set of questions are directed to those who have participated in COIL *and* studied abroad, with the final question offering a space for *all* participants - regardless of participation in study abroad - to offer feedback and recommendations for the viewers of this report (professionals in the field of International Education, and SIT professors and graduate cohort members).

There are no known risks and no costs in participating in this study. Your participation is completely voluntary, therefore, you have the right to decline. If you want to withdraw at any point in the study, you have the right to do so and your information will be removed.

While the researcher (Ashley Reed) will ask for you (the participant) to write your name on the survey, the identities of all participants will be withheld from the final report; all answers - quantitative or qualitative - will be kept anonymous; the researcher (Ashley Reed) will not share your information or identity with any external contacts.

By signing this form, you are stating that you agree to participate in a study regarding COIL programs and study abroad.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study, please contact Raymond Young, Associate Professor of International Education at SIT at any time by telephone: 802-258-3131 or by e-mail: raymond.young@sit.edu.

Participant Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Participant's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Researcher's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX B: DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENT

### 1. Participant Consent:

The Participant Consent Form is available to view here ([hyperlink](#)). Please read through it if you have not done so already.

By selecting "Yes", you are:

- 1) Stating that you have read the Participant Consent Form (linked above) for this study IN FULL.
- 2) Agreeing to participate in this study.
- 3) Permitting the researcher to record, compile, and present all offered data in the aggregate.  
 Yes  No

2. First and Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Institution Name: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Gender:  Male  Female  Transgender  Other

5. Major: \_\_\_\_\_

6. Ethnicity:  Caucasian  African-American  Asian-American  
 Latino/Hispanic-American  Native-American  Middle-Eastern American  Other  
 Prefer not to disclose

7. Are you a:  Domestic Student  International Student

8. Are you (or were you at the time you participated in the COIL course) a student-athlete?  
 Yes  No

9. What year are you?:  Freshman  Sophomore  Junior  Senior  Graduated

10. What year were you when you participated in the COIL course? (If you are participating in a COIL course this semester, give your current year.):  
 Freshman  Sophomore  Junior  Senior

11. How much exposure to COIL were you given in your course?:  
 1-2 Weeks  2-4 Weeks  4-6 Weeks  6-8 Weeks  8-10 Weeks  10-12 Weeks

12. Why did you enroll in the COIL course? (Mark all that apply):  
 The topic interested me

- The course fulfilled a major/minor requirement
- I was curious by what 'COIL' entailed
- I wanted to have a cross-cultural experience at home before going abroad
- The course partnered with an institution in a country that has always interested me
- It seemed more financially-appealing than study abroad
- I took another COIL course and enjoyed it
- I was not aware that the course employed 'COIL' at the time of enrolling
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

13. Did you study abroad:

- Before taking the course
- After taking the course
- Before and after the course
- I have not studied abroad, but I PLAN TO in the future
- I have not studied abroad, and I DO NOT PLAN TO in the future
- I considered studying abroad, but decided not to go

14. If either of the last two options are checked: What is/was the reason for your decision not to go abroad?

- I don't have the time
- I don't have the finances
- I have no interest in going abroad
- There are no programs that interest me
- My major/minor does not require that I study abroad
- I am nervous about going abroad (leaving family, traveling, specific dietary needs, etc.)
- I am a student-athlete
- I was advised not to study abroad by my advisor
- I am/was concerned about timing for graduation
- My institution does not offer abroad programs / My institution does not have an abroad office
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

15. What impact, if any, did the COIL course have on your decision to study abroad?

- It made me want to study abroad
- It made me briefly consider studying abroad
- It had no impact on my decision to study abroad
- It made me not want to study abroad

QUESTIONS 16-21 ARE FOR STUDENTS WHO STUDIED ABROAD AFTER PARTICIPATING IN COIL  
THE FINAL QUESTION (#22) IS FOR ALL STUDENTS.

16. Did the COIL course make you feel more confident or prepared about studying abroad?

- Yes, I felt more confident/prepared
- No, it made no impact on my confidence/preparedness

17. Did the COIL course influence your decision on *where* to study abroad?

- Yes
- No

18. How much of an impact did COIL have on your study abroad experience?

- COIL strongly impacted my study abroad experience
- COIL made a sizable impact on my study abroad experience

- COIL made little impact on my study abroad experience
- COIL had no impact on my study abroad experience

19. How would you describe you describe your study abroad experience after participating in COIL?

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20. In which situation do you feel that your intercultural awareness grew the most? (Intercultural Awareness - The understanding of one’s own culture as it relates to others)

- Study Abroad
- COIL

21. In which situation do you feel that your intercultural competencies grew the most? (Intercultural Competencies - Skills which assist one’s ability to communicate effectively and appropriately with people of other cultures)

- Study Abroad
- COIL

22. Are there any final, constructive thoughts, comments, feedback, etc., that you’d like to share on this subject or your experience with COIL and Study Abroad? (If none, write “N/A”.)

## APPENDIX C: ANALYSIS OF SURVEY – FIGURES AND TABLES

Figure 1. Females, domestic students, and non-athletes represent the vast majority of student who enroll in COIL courses

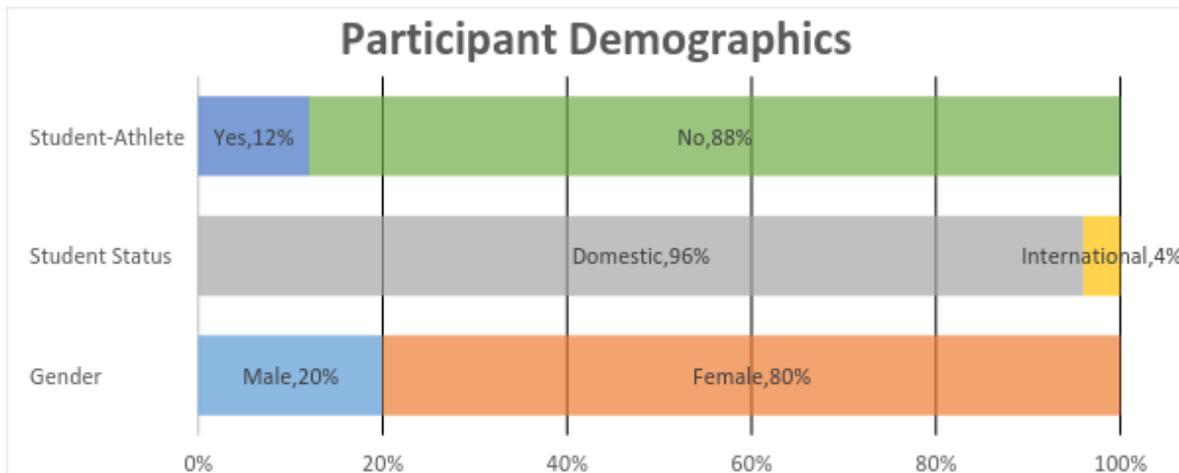


Figure 2. Caucasians represent the majority of participants.

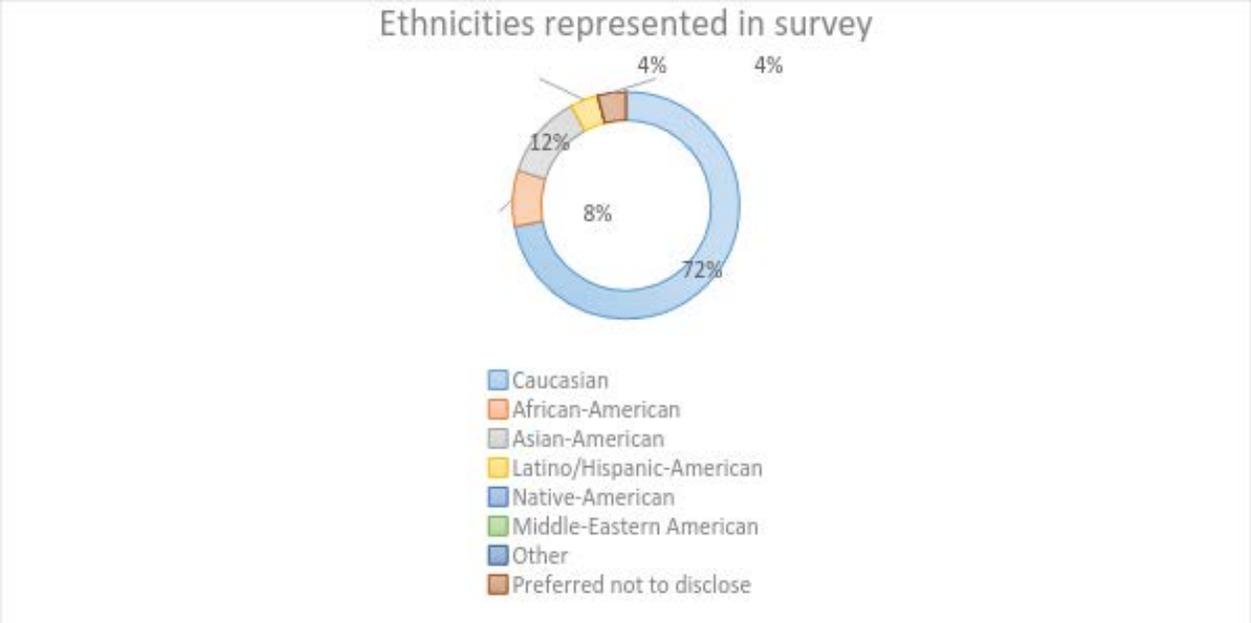


Figure 3a. Juniors and Seniors make up the majority of students who enroll in COIL courses.

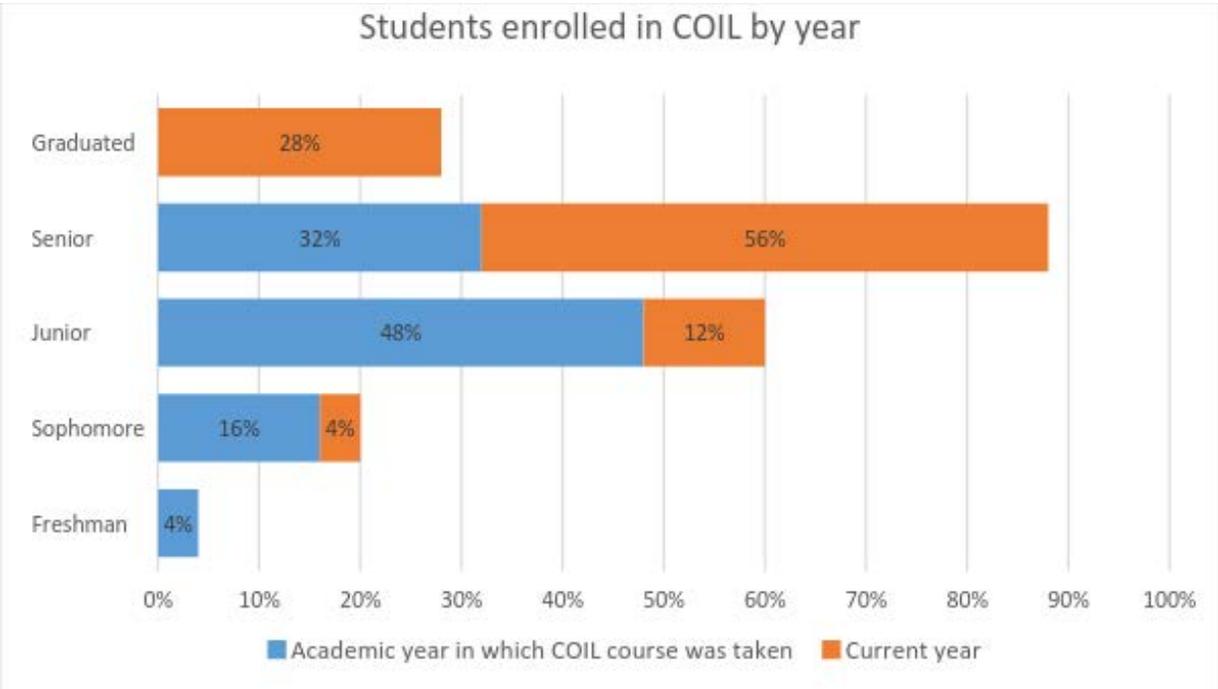
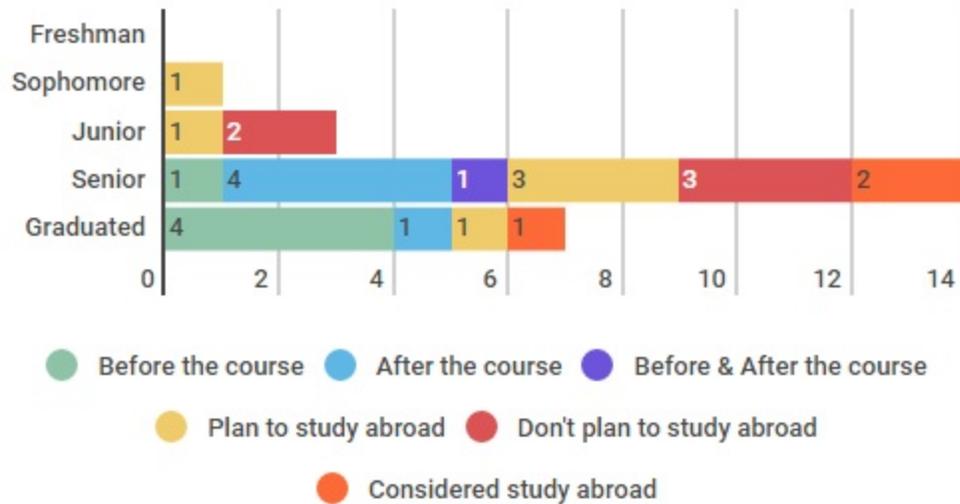


Figure 3b. Seniors show the most experience with and interest in study abroad.

# Students' experience/ interest in study abroad by year



*Figure 4.* The majority of students enroll in the COIL course because the topic interested them and/or it fulfilled a requirement. The least-chosen reasons for enrolling in a COIL course include: 'it seemed more financially-appealing than study abroad' and 'I took another COIL course and enjoyed it'.

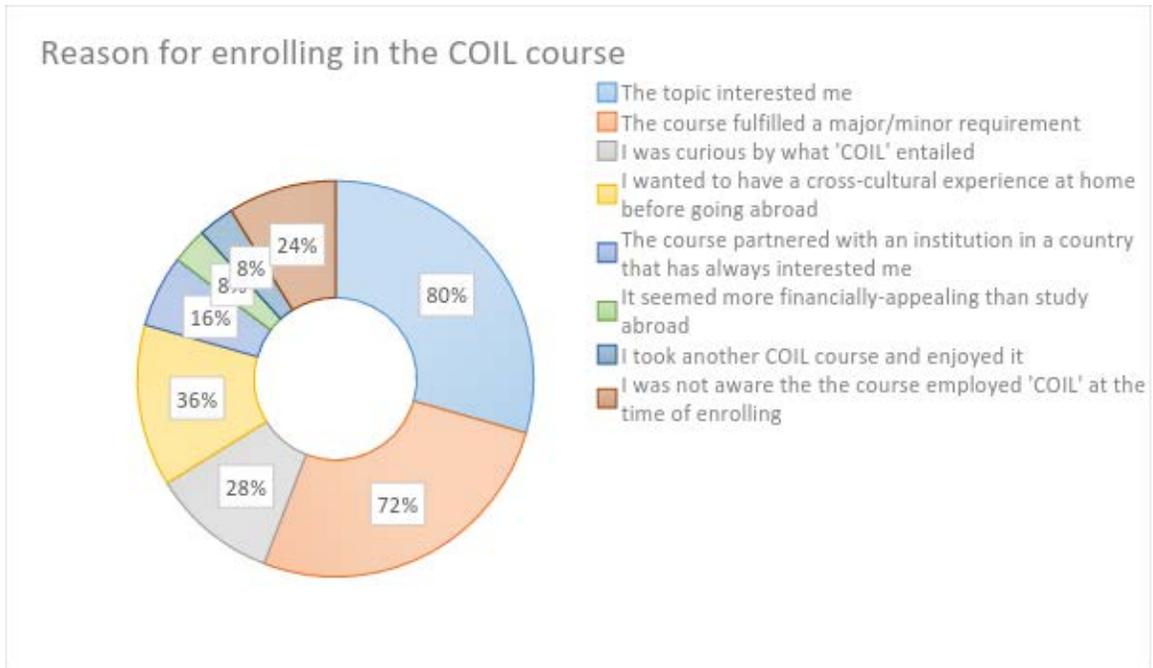


Figure 5. Students who have studied abroad *and* who plan to study abroad outweigh the percent of students who have decided against studying abroad.

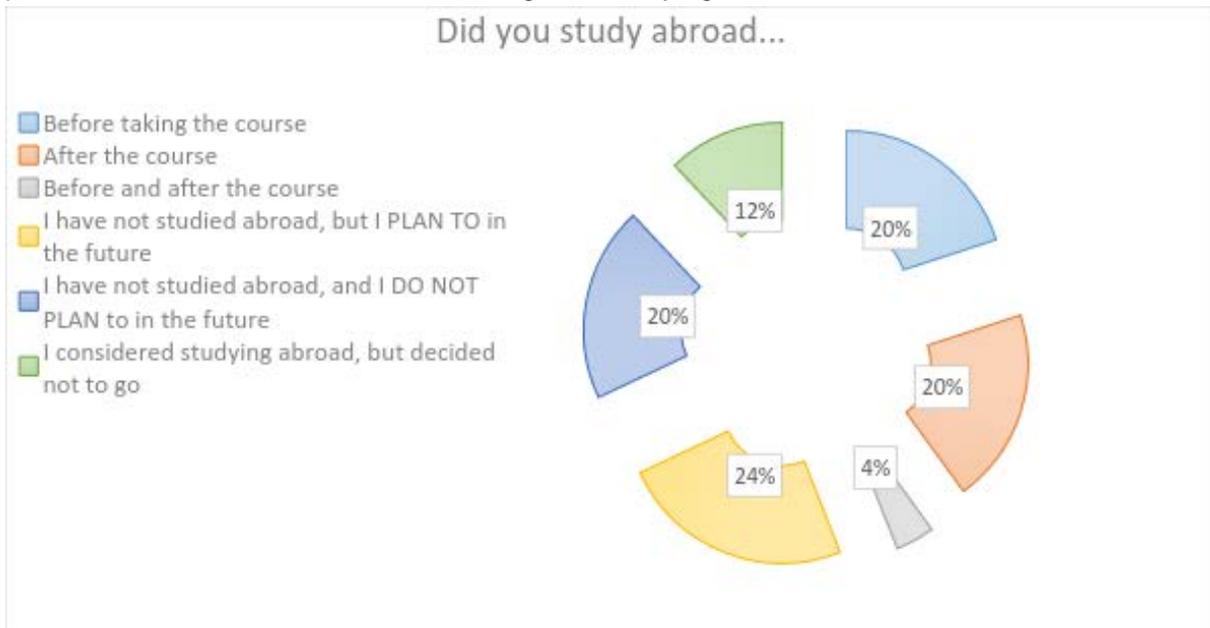


Figure 6. The majority of students agree that finances gets in the way of studying abroad.

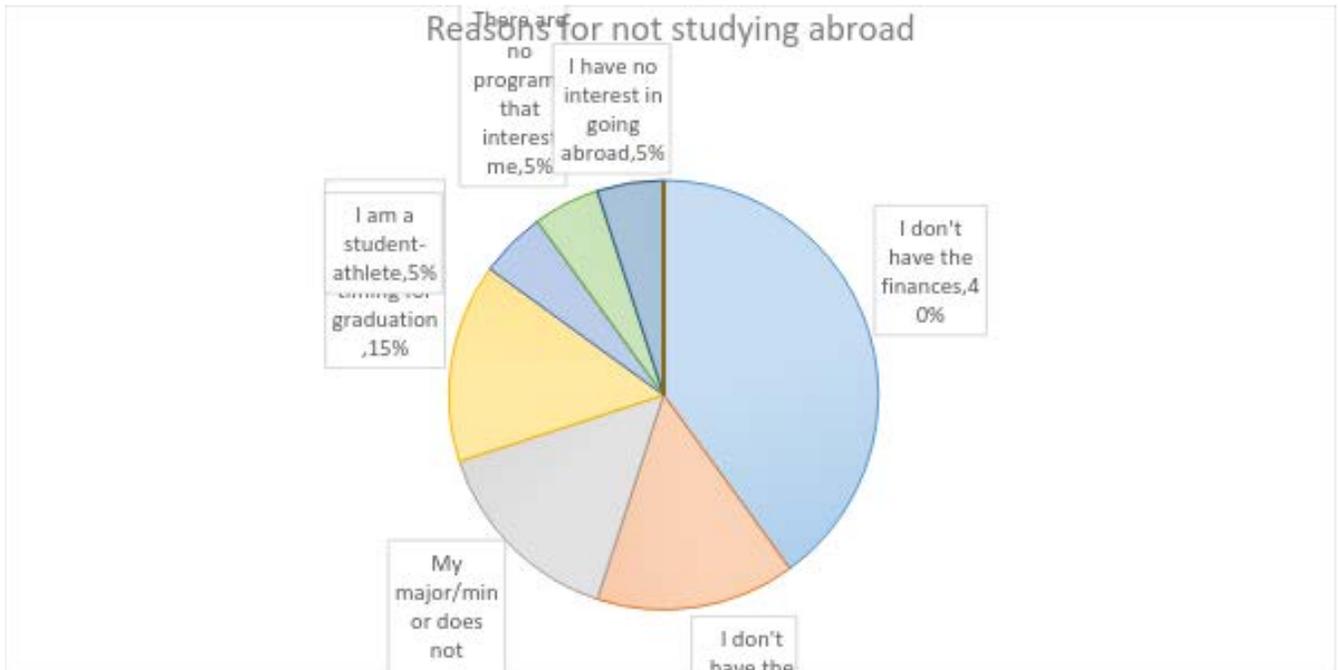


Figure 7. Most students express that their COIL experience made them 'want' to study abroad, even those who don't plan to study abroad. Students who express experiencing no impact are students who have, largely, studied abroad before the COIL course.

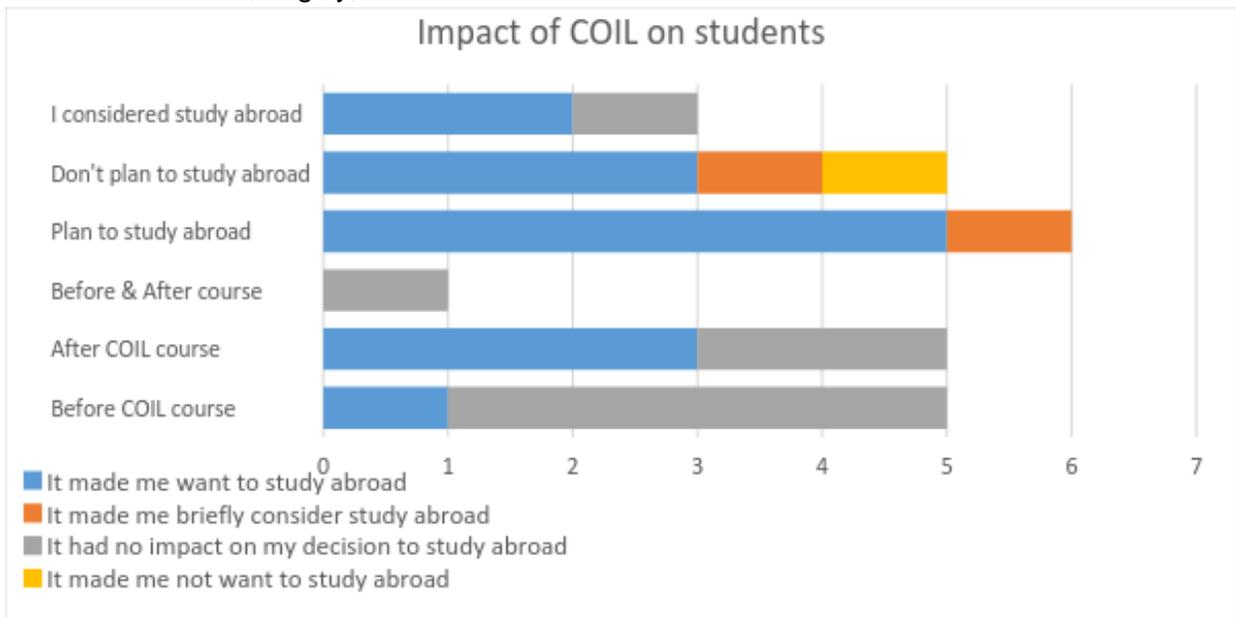


Figure 8. Out of 10 total respondents: All students who studied abroad after COIL express feeling more confident towards study abroad after participating in the COIL course.

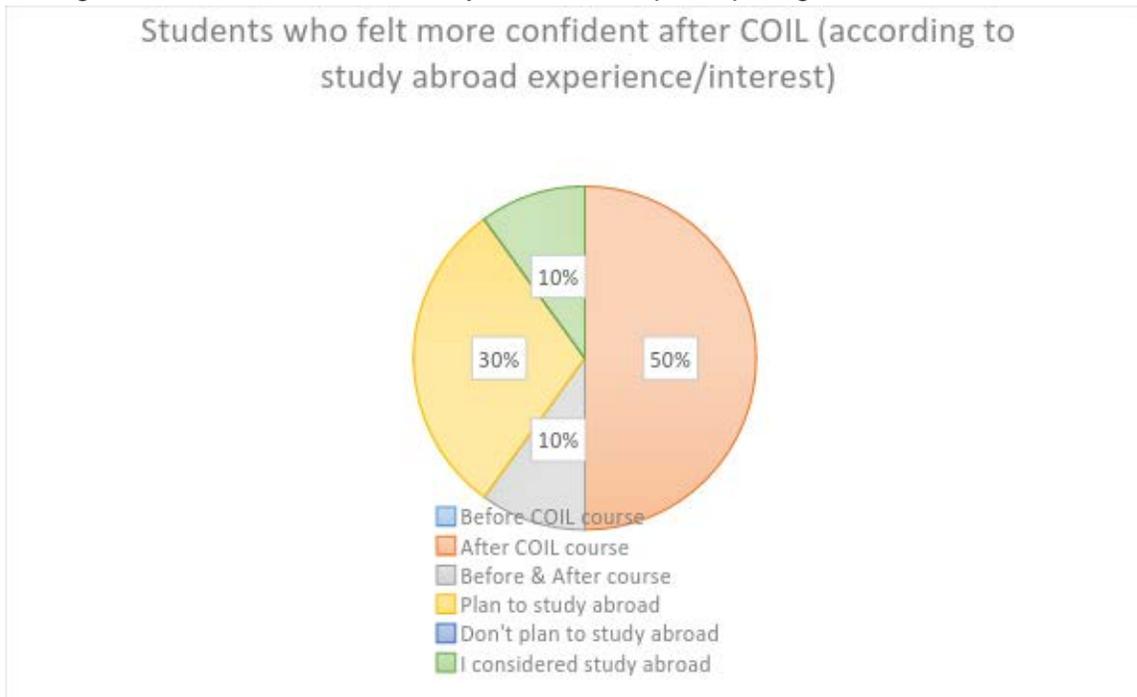


Figure 9a. The prominent durations of exposure to COIL in COIL courses last between one to three months in a semester.

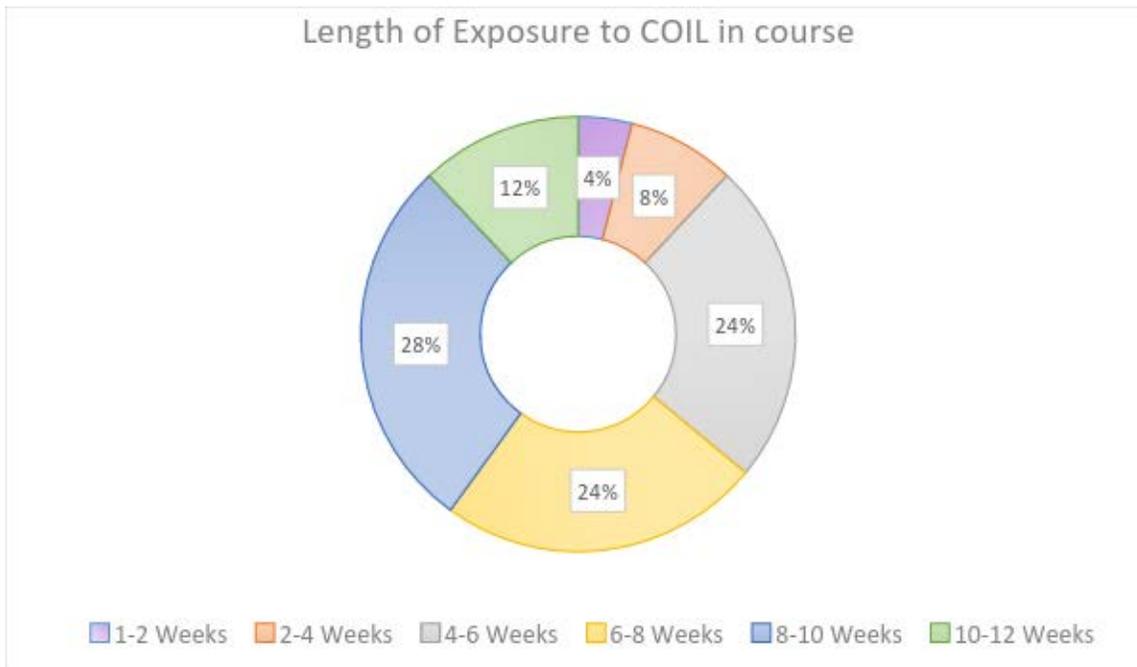


Figure 9b. An interest in study abroad is apparent from only 1-2 week exposure, and 10-12 week-exposure to COIL in a COIL course.

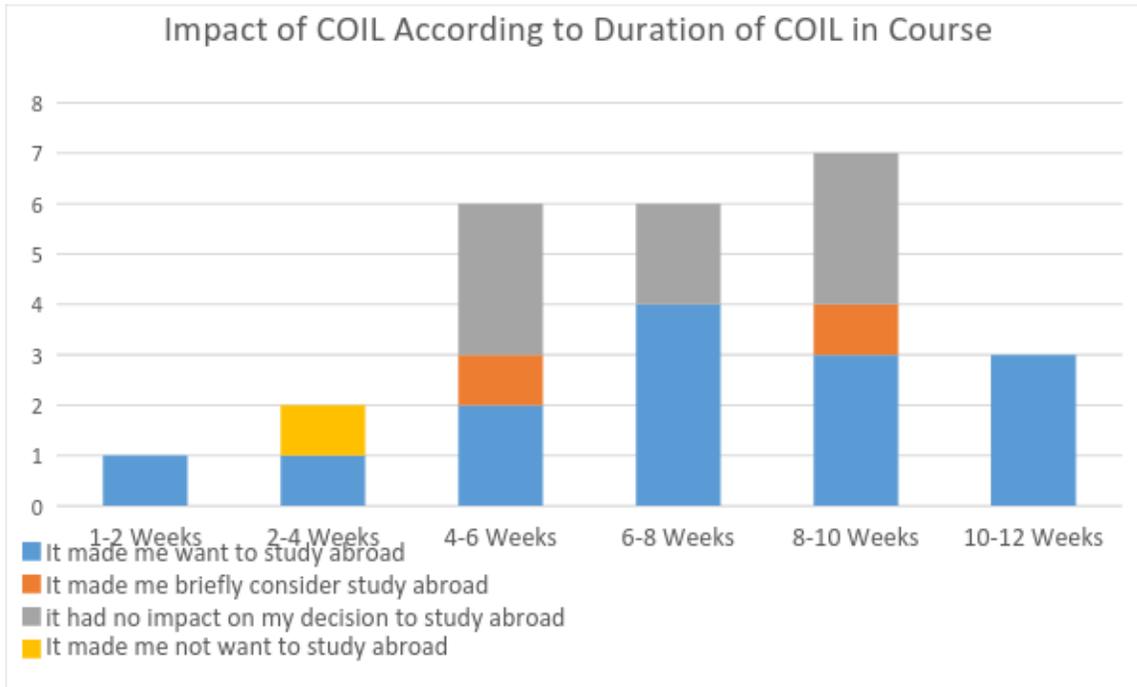


Figure 10. Out of 11 respondents, nearly 64% of students say that their COIL course *did not* influence their decision on where to go abroad.

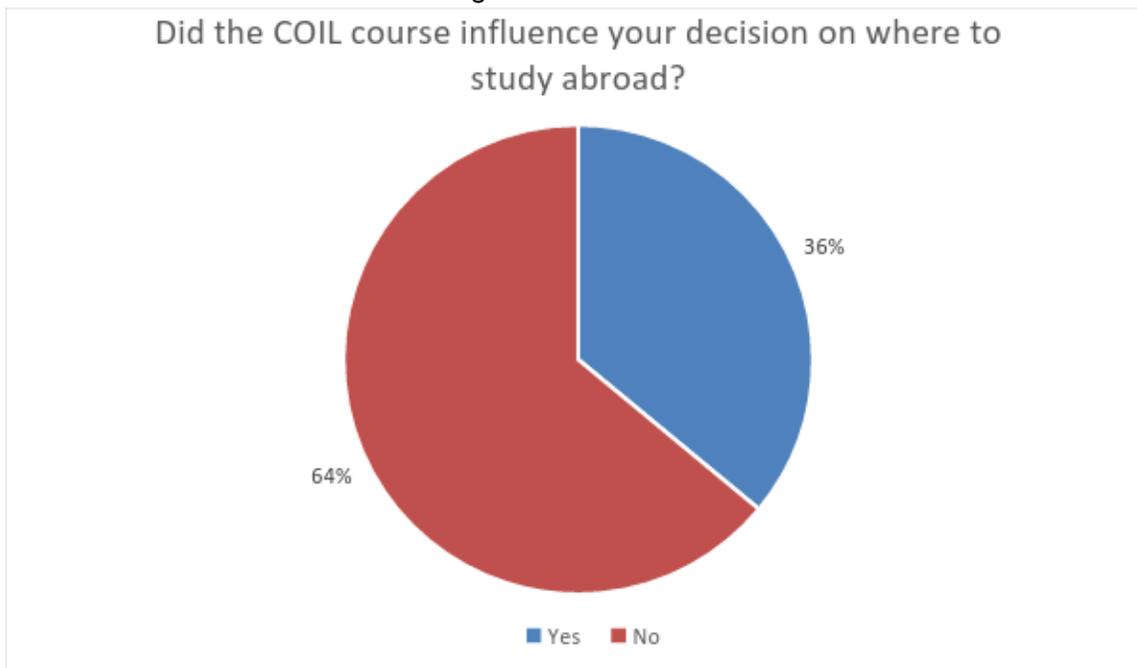


Figure 11. Of 7 respondents (out of the 11 that studied abroad), most students agree that study abroad had a greater effect on them in terms of personal, intercultural growth than what they experienced through COIL.

