Global Ambassadors Returnee Program: Can We Change Campus Culture?

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Global Ambassadors Returnee Program:
Can We Change Campus Culture?

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PIM 71

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Abstract

The Education Abroad office at Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) is in a growing phase, quickly expanding and working conscientiously to increase the numbers of students studying abroad. In the midst of VCU’s transition from a commuter school to a residential campus, the administration seeks to internationalize the university, citing study abroad as one of its main goals. While VCU consistently works to create affordable program options for students of all majors, what VCU lacks is an institutional culture and awareness of study abroad. The Global Ambassadors returnee program seeks to create returned student programming that provides reflective opportunities and professional development for all returned study abroad students at VCU as well as structured activities in which to share their experiences with the VCU campus community and larger Richmond community. The program will provide constructive spaces to share stories, assist in readjustment to U.S. culture and to use low-cost methods to recruit prospective students using the stories and experiences already at the Education Abroad office’s disposal. The program endeavors to slowly affect change at VCU as on-campus student culture continues to grow and evolve in the coming years. There are countless students who begin their study abroad only after hearing about the experience from a friend. Knowing this, VCU will employ a word-of-mouth marketing technique to encourage study abroad to become an integral piece of the VCU student experience.
**Introduction**

Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) is a large, public university in Richmond, Virginia with approximately 31,000 students. The school is known for its urban locale in downtown, Richmond, diverse student population, and excellent medical, arts and music programs. Until very recently, VCU was a relatively unknown commuter school, but has transitioned to a residential campus and is recognizable for its diverse student body and commitment to providing an affordable education to Virginia residents. Much of the student population is made up of non-traditional students. In 2012, 45% of the students were minorities and (Facts, 2013) in 2008 nearly two thirds of the students awarded degrees were first generation college students (Kapsidelis, 2009). The diversity of the student body is what makes the university feel a unique place in which to grow personally and academically.

VCU experienced sweeping changes in the past twenty years in terms of infrastructure development, funding and the student body make-up. During the past two decades, the university nearly doubled the number of students, buildings, student residences and faculty. President Trani, in office from 1990 to 2009, is well-known for dramatically improving the reputation and size of the school by initiating $2.2 billion of investment projects on both the Monroe Park and Medical College of Virginia campuses (Smith & Tignor, 2008). He increased enrollment to 32,000 students — the largest of any university in Virginia, the number of freshman applications by 200 percent, the number of international students by 170 percent, and established fourteen international partner universities (History, 2012). Additionally, the investment in the basketball team and athletic facilities created a larger sense of community and school spirit.
Becoming a residential campus opens the pathway to creating more opportunities for student involvement on campus and the creation of a sense of school spirit and shared culture. The new dormitories attract a younger generation of students who have initiated the development of many student groups, clubs and campus traditions. The Education Abroad office has a unique opportunity to shape student culture while it is still developing and to make international education integral to every student’s academic career.

Program Context

The Global Education Office’s (GEO) mission is to “Help bring the world to VCU while promoting internationalization of the university” (Global Outreach, 2013). Education Abroad seeks to carry out this mission by increasing the numbers of students studying abroad and providing a broad range of program options for students. Approximately 500 students study abroad each year in a wide variety of programs including over thirty faculty-led programs, the International Student Exchange Program (ISEP), nine partner universities, six affiliated third-party providers and any program that will provide the student with a transcript from an accredited university. Students are eligible to study abroad during fall and spring semesters, the summer session, and one or two-week programs during winter and spring break. The returnee program intends to increase awareness of study abroad and will assist the Education Abroad office in meeting the department’s mission.

The current president, Michael Rao, publicly supports the Education Abroad office’s goal of increasing the numbers of study abroad students in the May 2011 strategic plan titled “Quest for Distinction” (2011). The plan identifies internationalization of the university as a strategic goal for VCU in the coming years and specifically calls for an increase in the number of students participating in “high impact learning experiences” which the plan defines as service-learning or
study abroad. To facilitate this objective, the Education Abroad scholarship fund doubled to $100,000, GEO provided grants for service-learning study abroad initiatives, and VCU invested in two new living-learning communities that require service-learning and global education to be an integral part of the students’ curriculum. Along with the new communities, the administration hired an outside consultant to measure and evaluate the impact of the international programming in relation to the goals of the Quest for Distinction. There is significant pressure from VCU’s higher administration to show higher numbers of students studying abroad each semester.

**Program Rationale**

The Global Ambassadors returnee program seeks to improve the recruitment of study abroad students while also providing re-entry opportunities for returnees. The rationale is that re-entry programming can be planned in a strategic manner so that not only does it allow students to reflect and grow from their study abroad experience but also create awareness of the opportunities to study abroad and its benefits amongst peers and professors. By sharing their experiences, returnees will reflect, process and create greater awareness about international education on the VCU campus. With continued support from faculty and students, the study abroad program has the potential to become an integral part of VCU student culture so that every student who steps on campus believes study abroad to be a realistic option and necessary to their academic career. Given the current transition to a residential university and the focus on internationalization, the timing is conducive to shaping campus culture.
Literature Review

Experiential Learning and Returnee Programming

American education theorist David Kolb posits that the most effective form of learning is experiential, learning in which students participate in a concrete learning experience followed by reflection, processing, and application to real-life. It is particularly applicable to adults who are better able to choose their interests and direct their learning. Kolb (1984) says, “Learning is the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience” (p. 38). He describes the learning process as a cycle having four parts: concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization and active experimentation. The cycle “shows how experience is translated through reflection into concepts, which in turn are used as guides for active experimentation and the choice of new experiences” (Experiential learning, 2013).

Students may start in any of the four parts but should continue sequentially in the cycle. After having a concrete learning experience such as study abroad, Kolb believes it is important to reflect on the experience and process it. Students will then be guided to make generalizations and apply theoretical models to explain what they learned. In the last part of the cycle, students learn by doing; they will learn by testing models and experimenting (See Appendix A for an example of the Experiential Learning Cycle).

Many students end the study abroad learning process upon arrival back on campus, but Kolb believes it is important to complete all four parts of the learning cycle. Students must be guided through reflection and implementation of what they learned. Returned student programming seeks to ensure that students grow, learn and apply to their daily lives what they learned while abroad as opposed to compartmentalizing the experience as something entirely separate from their college career. La Brack (2013) warns of “shoeboxing,” essentially putting
the entire experience into a mental “shoebox.” When students return to the U.S. and are facing the pressures of being back at their home university, reconnecting with friends and family, and new academic or professional interests, “study abroad memories fade into the hazy past, mentally filed away under ‘Surreal, Once-in-a-Lifetime Experience’” (La Brack, 2013). As this happens, the study abroad experience becomes a topic to reminisce about occasionally in a social setting, but the growth and learning gained is infrequently applied upon readjustment to life in the U.S. Citron and Mendelson (2013) argue, “This weakens the power of your study abroad experience; without serious thought about what you have learned and gained from your time overseas, it is all too easy to minimize the impact of the experience on your future academic, professional, and personal lives and stifle your own growth” (para. 20).

When students return from study abroad almost all are challenged with issues of reentry and readjustment to life in the U.S. Turkowski and Wielkiewicz’s (2010) study discovered students experiencing emotional dissonance, feelings of isolation or alienation, a feeling of uniqueness or autonomy, and almost all experienced feeling critical of their home culture. Often relationships have changed with family members, friends and significant others. Students will be excited to share their experiences with friends and family who will only lend a sympathetic ear for a certain amount of time, leaving the student feeling lonely and out of step with their home culture. These problems may manifest themselves in academic performance or withdrawal from social situations. Re-entry programming is purposely designed to assist students with readjustment, so that there is a friendly and communal atmosphere where they can find other students experiencing similar feelings of readjustment.

Universities differ in how they restructure re-entry programming but most share the common goals of recognizing the value of study abroad, integrating new skills or interest into
one’s academic career, reflecting on new worldviews, providing emotional support and camaraderie, and providing professional and career development (Citron & Mendelson, 2006). Citron and Mendelson (2006) outlined a series of activities that allow students to accomplish all of the goals listed above. First, focus on letting students tell their story. A group of returnees provides, “a built-in empathetic audience for students’ storytelling” (p. 65). Next, encourage critical thinking in which students must analyze their learning more carefully and understand their personal growth. Critical thinking leads directly to personal assessment which, “gives students the chance to take stock of new abilities they have achieved while abroad” (p. 65). Lastly, encourage students to focus on future plans and incorporating education abroad experiences into future career goals. Citron and Mendelson emphasize that each university should find the best way to incorporate these goals into their reentry programming depending on their students and the level of comfort it is possible to create at returnee events.

**Internationalization and Changing Campus Culture**

Knight (2004) defines internationalization as “the creation of a culture or climate on campus that promotes and supports international/intercultural understanding and focuses on campus-based activities” (p.15). To analyze the process of changing campus culture, Knight (1994) describes a model called the internationalization cycle that includes six steps: awareness, commitment, planning, operationalization, review and reinforcement. Given the new strategic plan and increased funding for GEO, VCU appears to be in the planning and operationalization stages of the internationalization circle. The upper administration at VCU publicly supports the growth of study abroad. They increased funding, the number of staff members and are continually striving to create affordable programs that integrate study abroad into the VCU core
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It is a top-down approach originating from the President’s office and implemented by the Provost and GEO.

Truman University followed a similar top-down path toward changing campus culture to support study abroad. At Truman University, much like at VCU, “study abroad was considered a privilege of a student elite and associated mostly with the type of experience that one could expect only at a private college” (Lecaque, 2005, p. 13). The challenge was to convince students that, “A study abroad experience could be an integral part of studying at a public institution,” (Lecaque, 2005, p. 13) and that it does not have to be costly. Truman University followed a path very similar to what VCU has done. They had the support of the president, offered many program options, encouraged popular professors to lead programs and provided students with affordable exchange program options to keep costs low. Additionally, all of the offices worked harmoniously to create as little administrative red-tape as possible, making the process of studying abroad and transferring credit easier for students. Over a period of fourteen years, the program grew from sixty-two to 544 students studying abroad (Lecaque, 2005, p. 24). Their campaign to create a culture of study abroad was highly successful.

The current strategic plan does not provide the Education Abroad office with fourteen years to make significant changes in the culture at VCU and to increase numbers of study abroad students. As Lecaque (2005) explains, “It is a very ambitious task to set out to make significant changes in the culture of an institution” (p.15). VCU needs the continued support of the upper administration while also working from the bottom-up. Students need constructive ways to share their stories with their peers, to change campus culture by making their peers aware of their experiences. Marketers believe the best way to do this is through word-of-mouth marketing, “the most effective form of promotion” (Study abroad marketing, 2010). The Education Abroad
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office will need returned study abroad students to discuss the experiences with their friends, classmates and professors in order to create a culture that encourages other students to take advantage of the international opportunities offered by the Education Abroad office.

Goals and Objectives

Program Goal

To provide creative and engaging programing that facilitates reflection and re-entry for returned study abroad students as well as promote the development of a study abroad culture on campus.

Program Objectives

• Implement constructive reflection activities to develop student reflection, manage reverse culture shock, and enhance career

• To increase the numbers of returnees participating in GEO sponsored events.

• To increase the number of VCU students studying abroad

• To create a study abroad culture at VCU and increase the “word-of-mouth” marketing of study abroad to students

• To identify and collaborate with other departments in VCU to increase understanding in the importance of Education Abroad

Participant Goal

Students will reflect on study abroad experiences and adjust comfortably to their home community by participating in structured activities with other returnees and engaging prospective study abroad students.

Participant Objectives
• To reflect and analyze their experience abroad and articulate what they have learned in professional and informal settings
• To engage the VCU community by sharing their experiences and the benefits of study abroad to classmates, advisors, professors and student groups
• To understand job opportunities and options for international experiences following graduation

Needs Assessment

While the efforts from the President, Provost and GEO Executive Director’s offices are important for internationalizing the university, what is missing is the enthusiasm and support from students who understand the importance of education abroad from their own experiences. The current returned student program is a volunteer program in which students who received a scholarship from the Education Abroad office must complete one hour of volunteering for every $100 they received. Students have the option of choosing from a wide variety of activities including helping at promotion tables, attending panels at freshman orientations or assisting at the study abroad fair. The program works well in that there are always volunteers available to participate. However, students are not always successful in clearly or enthusiastically articulating their experiences and may only be present to fulfill scholarship requirements. The result is occasional poor quality advice when they are meant to be promoting the office. Another deficiency in the current program is that opportunities are only offered to scholarship recipients and many returned students who were not eligible for scholarships are never given the opportunity to share their experiences. When students return from study abroad, “some students may seek additional opportunities to share their experiences; others may need assistance in processing their emotional reactions to their return,” (Anderson & Murray, 2005, p.185) and it is
difficult ahead of time to know which students these will be. Advisors have a responsibility to provide these opportunities to all returned study abroad students.

Four stakeholders will benefit from the implementation of a well-designed returned student program. First, returned students will be provided with a support network for readjusting to life at VCU as well as reflection and professional development. This program will provide a constructive space to tell their stories and continue a relationship with the Education Abroad office. Second, the diverse student body at VCU will benefit from hearing about study abroad from their peers, someone relatable that can make the experience seem tangible and realistic. Third, staff in the Education Abroad office, like most education abroad offices find it difficult to manage the heavy workload; the staff will benefit from having the support of students in marketing and general advising. The newest advisors will benefit from building close relationships with the returnees as they continue to increase their knowledge of study abroad programs and their appropriateness for various types of students and majors. Lastly, the administration will be successful in achieving their strategic plan internationalization goals.

Given the wide variety of students and study abroad programs available, the returnee program must be kept broad to meet the needs of all students. VCU students tend to be very career-oriented and balance work, school and internships throughout the semester making it difficult to require attendance at any particular event. The most appropriate returnee program for VCU is one that provides a variety of activities at different days and times throughout the semester and emphasizes professional development opportunities. While many universities offer returned student programming, the Global Ambassadors program design includes a dual-focus of supporting returnees while also promoting study abroad to prospective students. The small number of staff members in relation to the number of students at VCU necessitates that
everything the Education Abroad office does is a strategic and deliberate step towards improving VCU students’ study abroad experiences and generating increased interest.

**Program Description**

The Global Ambassadors program is a semester-long returnee program intended to enhance and develop students’ learning from study abroad experiences as well as promote study abroad to the VCU community. It is designed to facilitate three student-learning outcomes: reflection and analysis of the experience, articulation of what they learned and integration of the learning into their daily lives. Each of the activities that students attend will work towards at least one of the three learning outcomes. An additional expected program outcome is the growth of a study abroad community on campus that will generate awareness of the opportunities for study abroad at VCU.

The Education Abroad office will invite all study abroad students to participate in the program during their first semester upon returning to VCU. The program includes two required events that will introduce and conclude the program and a required multi-media reflective writing assignment. In addition, students will participate in three events or activities of their choice from a wide variety of options throughout the semester such as peer mentoring, storytelling, art projects, social media projects and research opportunities. At the completion of the program, students will attend a celebratory dinner and receive an Education Abroad tee-shirt and certificate. Not only will students learn and improve skills such as public speaking, several of the activities offer students the chance to have leadership responsibilities and will be a great addition to a resume.

The program will begin in the fall 2013 semester and will coincide with the dates of the VCU academic calendar. The potential participants are the students abroad during the previous
semester. For fall 2013, Education Abroad will invite students that were abroad during the spring and summer 2013 academic terms. All applicants will submit a registration form to the returned student advisor. The maximum enrollment is fifty participants all of whom will be selected in the order that the registration forms were received. The program will meet the needs of diverse students while also working with a limited budget, resources and time from the Education Abroad staff. The curriculum is flexible and sustainable so that it can be repeated and modified each semester as an institutional study abroad culture begins to grow and new programming ideas develop (See Appendices B and C for examples of the registration form and program timeline).

**Curriculum and Theoretical Foundations**

To complete the program, all participants must attend two required events (the returnee conference and the returnee mixer) and participate in three events or activities of their choice. In addition, all participants will complete a multi-media writing project that will be posted on the Education Abroad website. The returnee conference and mixer will provide a defined start and finish each semester to the Global Ambassadors program. They will focus on student reflection and the development of a sense of camaraderie amongst the returnees. The three choice activities will require returnees to engage with the VCU community and generate awareness of the benefits of study abroad to their peers and professors. Returnees will have a wide variety of options to choose from such as peer mentoring, an international research conference, a storytelling event, an intercultural fashion show, and a video project to complete the requirement. The curriculum takes into account best practices for returnee student learning outcomes, adult learning theory, learning styles, and the stages of readjustment that returnees will be working through.
The Forum on Education Abroad (2012) cites three student learning outcomes as best practices for returned student programming: reflection, articulation and integration. All activities in the Global Ambassadors program will fulfill at least one of these three learning objectives. Reflection should be intentional and require students to analyze their experiences from abroad, the learning they gained and what it means to return home. The multi-media writing assignment and the returnee conference are mandatory events that will require deep analysis and reflection of the study abroad experience. Second, students will learn to articulate their learning. In order to convey the extent to which study abroad affected them, students must able to articulate their new perspectives, skills and competencies in various settings from the classroom to job interviews. The returnee conference will teach students the vocabulary needed to articulate their experiences and new skills professionally. Activities such as peer mentoring and giving classroom presentations will provide students the chance to practice articulating their experiences to the VCU community. Lastly, students should integrate their learning into their professional and personal activities both as a student and in the future. Returnees will have the chance to use their intercultural skills as a student ambassador or share their new clothing style in the intercultural fashion show.

The Global Ambassadors participants will primarily be North American young adults between the ages of 19 – 22. The curriculum incorporates Adult Learning Theory and recognizes not only content but also the design of learning is important to adult students. Lara (2013) summarizes adult learning theory explaining that, “Adult learning…is self-directed, problem-centered, experience based, and more often relevant to life” (para. 5). Participants are provided with many options in the Global Ambassadors program to encourage self-direction and independence. In addition to the required events, participants will choose the activities
Global Ambassadors Returnee Program

throughout the semester that are best suited to their interests, work/school schedules, and levels of comfort. It will also require students to understand and fulfill the requirements of the program within one semester to receive the certificate.

The activities and events in the curriculum reflect the four learning styles in Kolb’s Learning Cycle: accommodators, divergers, assimilators and convergers (1984). The Global Ambassador program includes activities designed to incorporate all learning styles so that each returnee may find events in which they feel comfortable and others that may challenge their comfort zone. Accomodators prefer real world application, talking and discussing. They will enjoy being a peer mentor, giving classroom presentations and telling their best stories at the storytelling event. Divergers tend to be imaginative and are comfortable with discussing emotions. They will enjoy the returnee conference reflections on adjustment, putting together a Pinterest board and brainstorming ideas for the study abroad video. Assimilators are analytical, love theory and thrive in traditional classroom settings. In the Global Ambassadors program, they will likely enjoy the international research conference and career services/Peace Corps informational lecture. Lastly, convergers are common sense learners that enjoy practical application and doing projects. The convergers will be frustrated by some of the reflection activities but enjoy projects such as the video, Pinterest, and the intercultural fashion show (See Appendix D for chart describing preferred activities according to learning style).

Lastly, participants will be in various stages of processing readjustment throughout their first semester in the U.S. The curriculum will assist students in reflection and processing, taking into account the W-curve of reverse culture shock (La Brack, 2012) and the stages of readjustment according to Kepets (1999): disengagement, euphoria, dampened euphoria and gradual readjustment. Upon return to campus, students may be in the euphoria stage in which
they are excited to be back in a familiar place with close friends. This stage generally leads into dampened euphoria in which students realize that relationships have changed, and they may miss friendships or habits they formed while abroad. The Global Ambassadors program seeks to ease the transition from dampened euphoria to gradual readjustment back to life at VCU. The returnee conference will require students to reflect and discuss their personal experience with culture shock and readjustment so that they will find support from peers experiencing similar feelings. The multi-media writing project will require thoughtful, independent reflection that will help students better understand the readjustment process and how to move through the gradual readjustment phase (See Appendix E for the culture shock W-curve model).

The following are descriptions of the required activities and events in the Global Ambassadors program. Students must attend each of the following activities to complete the program. The activities focus on student development and the creation of a sense of camaraderie amongst the participants:

**Returnee Conference**

The returnee conference brings returned students together to discuss and reflect on their experiences abroad, readjustment to U.S. culture, international career development and implementation of the skills students gained while abroad. During the two-hour event students will reflect on how they have changed, develop vocabulary to discuss their study abroad experience in a professional setting and learn how to include study abroad in a professional resume. The conference is mandatory for students participating in the Global Ambassadors program, but all returnees are welcome to attend (See Appendix F for Returnee Conference Agenda and Workbook).
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The conference will begin with an introduction and an ice-breaker to encourage students to get to know their peers, begin reflection and create a comfortable, safe atmosphere. Students will share their high point, low point and one thing that surprised them the most about their host culture. The facilitators will encourage a lively and engaging discussion followed by a short description of reverse culture shock. The facilitators will give a short description and examples of each of the stages of readjustment using well-known social media sites. For example, tweets with the hashtag “studyabroadproblems” or the tumblr “The Time I Studied Abroad” can create a sense of camaraderie and a sense of belonging amongst the returnees. Students will be encouraged to discuss their progress in readjustment.

During the career development segment, students will learn how to discuss their study abroad experience in a professional setting. Rather than describing the experience in vague terms such as “amazing” or “life-changing,” they will learn to discuss specific skills they gained through their study abroad experience such as adaptability and problem solving. The students will practice talking about their experiences by developing a thirty-second professional “elevator” speech in which they must describe how their study abroad experience enhanced their professional development.

Next, students will discuss opportunities to continue to engage with GEO and integrate the skills they gained abroad into their life at home. Students will learn about international opportunities following graduation such as teaching abroad, interning abroad, and attending graduate school abroad. Students will also learn about all of the activities available as a part of the Global Ambassadors program. Interested students will sign-up for an interview for the peer advisor and student ambassador programs. The conference will end with a resume critique workshop that describes how to best showcase a study abroad experience on a resume.
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Multi-Media Writing Project

Students will be required to submit five blog posts with a photo and three to four paragraphs each reflecting on their study abroad experience. The posts will be featured on the Education Abroad “Students Gone Global” blog page. Students will be given the following prompts:

Prompt 1: Initial impressions

What immediate differences have you noted between your home and your host culture? Have you had opportunities to use the language, and have you been successful? How do the living conditions differ from home? Describe new or different foods that you have tried or seen. Who have you met?

Prompt 2: Culture Shock

In what ways have you experienced culture shock in your time abroad? Have you felt frustrated or homesick at any point, and how did you overcome those feelings? What particular difference between your home and host culture has been the biggest shock? Is the host culture different than what you expected?

Prompt 3: Academic Experience

What classes are you taking and what have you learned? How are classes different from VCU? How are they the same? Who have you learned the most from? What experiences outside of the classroom did you learn from?

Prompt 4: High Point - Low Point and Your Cultural Identity

Describe both the high point and low point of your time abroad. How has your cultural identity as an American changed, if at all, during your time abroad? Do you have a better sense of what it means to be an American? What have you learned about your own home
 culture as a result of studying abroad?

Prompt 5: Letter to Next

Write as if you are speaking to the next group of participants in the program. Tell them what you wish you had known beforehand, what to expect, how to prepare, what to pack, how much money to bring, etc.

Returnee Mixer

The culminating event of the semester will be the returnee mixer following that semester’s pre-departure orientation. Returnees will be invited to attend the last hour of the pre-departure orientation so that students who are about to leave for their study abroad programs will have the chance to meet students who previously participated. Following the orientation there will be refreshments and all students will be encouraged to continue to socialize with the new study abroad students. To end the mixer, returnees will participate in a final activity and reflection period. Students will participate in a simulation titled Barnga, a game that makes students aware of the need for an open attitude and recognition of different cultural values and norms in intercultural settings. The purpose of the game in the final Global Ambassadors event is to leave a lasting reminder of the intercultural skills students gained while studying abroad and the importance of keeping an open mind to differing cultural values (See Appendix G for Barnga instructions).

Students will choose three of the following activities of their choice to complete the Global Ambassadors program. These activities promote study abroad to the VCU community and create awareness of the opportunities available to students.
VCU Student Ambassador Program

The Student Ambassador program will provide returned students with an opportunity to gain professional experience in advising, mentoring and marketing for Education Abroad. The program will enable enthusiastic and articulate returnees to act on behalf of the Education Abroad office at promotional events. Education Abroad will select and train five returnees to act as ambassadors by giving classroom presentations and attending promotional tables and other outreach activities with the VCU student body.

To apply, students will sign up for an interview at the returnee conference. The interview will be informal but will require students to give a creative presentation in any format about their experiences. The program will be advertised as competitive and as an honor for students to be selected to create a sense of responsibility and enthusiasm for those selected. The Education Abroad staff will have the flexibility to interview as few or as many applicants as they prefer to find the most appropriate ambassadors.

Once selected, ambassadors will attend training sessions that cover the staff’s expectations and the students’ responsibilities as ambassadors as well as the basics of study abroad at VCU. The advisors will help the ambassadors perfect the presentations they will give to classes throughout the semester. By the end of the trainings, students will be able articulate the rationales for study abroad, the types of study abroad opportunities at VCU and how their own study abroad experience affected them. Students will be observed during their first classroom presentations and promotional tables, but will operate independently after receiving approval from the Education Abroad staff. Following training and approval, students will be scheduled to attend classroom presentations, tables, the study abroad fair, pre-departure orientations, and information sessions.
**African American Peer Mentoring**

Peer mentors that reflect the diversity of the student body have the potential to recruit a more diverse group of study abroad participants and increase the overall numbers of study abroad students. The study abroad mentoring program is designed to increase the number of African American study abroad students at VCU. Given that African Americans represent the largest minority group at VCU and one of the most under-represented groups in study abroad, creating a support and information network for African American students interested in studying abroad will be an integral part of creating awareness and advertising the benefits of study abroad on the VCU campus. The Peer Mentoring program encourages returned participants to discuss their experiences with other African American students and properly prepare them for situations they may encounter overseas from first-hand experiences. It also provides prospective students with the chance to ask sensitive questions in a setting they may find more comfortable so that each student will be prepared for their study abroad experience. For many minority students, family members, mentors and peers are less likely to have ever studied abroad and having a peer mentoring program may prove invaluable in creating a culture of study abroad amongst the African American portion of the student population.

Mentors will register to participate in the program at the returnee conference. Each mentor will attend an orientation at the beginning of the semester in which they will learn how to advise a student one-on-one. Mentors will be responsible for arranging the time, date and location of each meeting with prospective study abroad students and will hold two office hours each week. The mentor’s name, contact information and host country will be available to all prospective African American study abroad students. The contact information will be distributed during classroom presentations and general information sessions. Mentors must be
knowledgeable about the resources available to African American students. They should be very familiar with the Education Abroad website and resource center. Mentors should be able to discuss funding opportunities for prospective study abroad students, answer questions regarding diversity issues within their former host country and distribute approved study abroad literature.

The returned students will benefit from having the opportunity to connect with like-minded peers and to support the development of an international campus culture at VCU. They will have the chance to share their personal experiences, develop communication and interpersonal skills and build their resume through this program.

**School of World Studies Student Research Conference**

The School of World Studies along with GEO and the history department sponsor a Student Research Conference held every October. Each year the organizers of the conference select a theme and invite students to submit a research paper and a presentation proposal relating to that theme. Returned study abroad students will be encouraged to submit research papers influenced by their personal experiences and what they learned while abroad. The School of World Studies arranges a schedule in which students present individual 15-minute presentations or sit on panels regarding a specific subject. This past year’s research conference celebrated the 150th anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation and invited students to submit papers regarding freedom and independence. The conference allows many students to discuss and reflect on their experiences in an analytical format in which theory is applied to personal experiences. It also provides a professional setting for students to practice public speaking skills and articulate their study abroad experiences to the VCU community. Study abroad students that are not presenting are still encouraged to attend and may find that they are able to add their own
input or ask informed questions during the panel and round table sessions (See Appendix G for an example of the 2012 marketing flyer).

**Globally Y’all – A Storytelling Event**

Inspired by a local storytelling event titled “Secretly Ya’ll,” the Education Abroad office will host its own storytelling event specifically for study abroad and international students. Many students will enjoy the casual and engaging atmosphere in which students will be asked to share their best and funniest stories from their time spent abroad. Studies have shown that some students may have difficulty motivating themselves academically after returning from study abroad, and they may benefit from opportunities to discuss these issues; encouraging study abroad returnees to attend informal groups may be helpful (Turkowski & Wielkiewicz, 2010). It is meant to be a night of fun and enjoyment through the sharing of experiences and stories and not one to intimidate those who are afraid of public speaking. The event will include popcorn and will take place in a common room of the one of the dorms that has comfortable seating and a fireplace to make the storytelling comfortable and relaxed.

The event will be organized into two sessions. The first session will include six speakers who have prepared stories on a particular theme. The theme may change from event to event depending on the requests of the students and the number of participants. Topics can be very general such as “international stories,” or “airport stories,” or they can be more specific such as “most bizarre cultural event,” or a story about “a time that tested a student’s problem-solving skills.” The six speakers will submit a brief summary of their story before the event, to ensure the material is suitable for a group event in which the Education Abroad office is the sponsor. Each student will have seven minutes to share his/her story. Following the six speakers, willing audience members will have the chance to share their stories. The event will be very inclusive
Global Ambassadors Returnee Program

and any VCU student will be welcome to attend (See Appendix H for an example of a Globally Y’all marketing flyer).

**Pinterest**

Pinterest is a virtual pinboard that saves links or bookmarks to websites in a visually appealing format. Returnees will create a Pinterest board of their program, country or city in which they studied to be used as a resource guide for prospective students. Students must include links to university information, public transportation, vocabulary, restaurants, shopping areas, customs and etiquette, excursions, and local events and a picture of themself. The students will follow guidelines and must add at least forty pins between twelve categories. Students are encouraged to be creative but also strategic. They are instructed to think of what they would tell a friend going on the program now, what websites and information they found most useful while abroad as well as creating a resource of budget friendly places.

The purpose of this program activity is to provide a creative way for students to think critically about their experiences and what they would like to share with prospective students. For students that are shy or not articulate, this is an excellent way to share their experiences without having to give a presentation. It is also a very visually satisfying approach that may tap into the creativity of the many art students at VCU who wish to share their experiences.

Prospective students will find a wealth of information on this Pinterest page. Most importantly they will be able to see their peers who participated in study abroad programs before them. Browsing through the returned student boards and seeing what the universities look like, where they may be eating while abroad and budget friendly pointers may make study abroad appear more realistic and affordable. Students will be able to imagine what their daily life will
be like while abroad and what they can expect to gain from the experience (See Appendix I for guidelines).

**Benefits of Study Abroad Video**

Many professors are reluctant to give up class time for a fifteen-minute presentation about study abroad, but are more than willing to show a five-minute video in class or post a video to their class’ Blackboard page. To communicate the benefits of study abroad to a wide audience, returnees will be invited to create a five to seven minute video using the office’s iPad highlighting their experiences and how they benefitted from their study abroad. Given parameters and the guidance of a staff member, three 1-hour meetings will be organized to facilitate the brainstorming and production of a study abroad video that can be shared with the VCU community. Participants will be encouraged to use humor and creativity to share their experiences. They will be encouraged to find alumni or other successful figures on campus that support study abroad to be in the video. The video will be distributed to academic departments and the daily news bulletin each semester. The students will organize all additional meetings.

**International Buddy**

The International Buddy program pairs exchange students, at VCU for a semester or a year, with an American student to provide assistance in adjusting to academic and social life at VCU. The buddy is responsible for picking up their exchange student from the airport and providing support such as practicing English, taking students to the grocery store and inviting students to social activities through. Buddies are encouraged to attend the many social activities and trips organized by International Student Services throughout the year. Returnees understand from experience how it feels to be the foreigner at a new university and may be successful at easing the transition for an exchange student at VCU.
Life After Study Abroad Conference - Washington, D.C.

Returned students will be encouraged to attend the Life After Study Abroad Conference hosted by George Washington University and other universities in the D.C. area. The conference is a half-day event that includes students from the many Washington D.C. area universities and other parts of Virginia allowing students ample time to meet and network with study abroad participants from all over the region. The conference includes a resume workshop, informational panels with representatives who have worked, taught and volunteered abroad, reflection exercises and an interview skills workshop. The conference excels at putting together panels of experienced professionals working in international fields that are willing to share their experiences and provide career advice. Education Abroad will pay students’ entrance fees, provide transportation using the GEO vans, and will cover the cost of a dinner in Washington, D.C. for VCU attendees. During dinner, students will be asked to share their reflections on what they learned and found most useful at the conference.

Intercultural Fashion Show

Education Abroad and the VCU Fashion Department will organize an Intercultural Fashion show. Returned students will be paired with a fashion student to design and make an outfit that represents the country in which they studied abroad. The students will design an outfit to be presented on the runway as well as a poster depicting the details of the outfit and the origin of the design. Returned students will model their outfits during a short runway show, then stand by their posters for a round robin informational session in which they will discuss their study abroad experiences and fashion design in a short, five minute presentation.
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Career Services/Peace Corps Information Session

Education Abroad will invite the VCU Career Services office as well as the VCU representative for the Peace Corps to give an information session on opportunities to work in an international career field. Career Services will discuss opportunities for working, interning and teaching abroad. The Peace Corps representative will describe life as a Peace Corps volunteer, the responsibilities, the benefits and the application process. Students will be encouraged to ask questions and arrange independent appointments following the information session.

Staffing Plan

The Education Abroad office consists of a director, program manager, two advisors, two program assistants and a returned student advisor. The returned student advisor will be responsible for planning and executing all returnee events and the administration of the Global Ambassador program. The director will oversee the direction of the program and approve expenditures. The advisors will coordinate and train the student ambassadors and peer mentors to ensure a smooth progression from general advising to individual advising for prospective students. The program manager and program assistants will assist in planning, set-up and facilitation of events as needed by the returned student advisor. All members of the Education Abroad staff will engage with returnees at events so that they are able to better understand what current students are drawn to, what programs to recommend, and to have a wide variety of student experiences to share with prospectives. The returned student advisor will coordinate with the School of World Studies, other academic departments and community organizations for larger events. All staff members will have driver’s licenses and be approved to drive the GEO-owned passenger vans.
Like many universities, VCU does not lack for creative programming. Instead the biggest fear is low participation numbers. For this reason, marketing will be particularly important for any of the activities to be successful. Marketing will be intentional and strategized to attract increased attention and build a thriving returned student group. Because VCU students tend to be very career-driven, opportunities for professional growth will be emphasized in marketing materials. The Education Abroad office will utilize poster campaigns, flyers, the daily VCU TelegRam bulletin and list-servs to advertise events. The returned student advisor will coordinate with GEO staff to implement all of the marketing strategies. She will email all of the potential participants information about the program while they are abroad and prior to the beginning of the semester. She will work with the GEO communications team to create posters, flyers and graphics for the Facebook page. She will coordinate with the Education Abroad advisor in charge of social media to promote returnee events via Facebook. Student Ambassadors will disseminate posters around campus (For an example of a Global Ambassadors marketing flyer, see Appendix J). The following are specific strategies Education Abroad will use to market the Returnee program:

**Mid Point Video Message**

At the mid-point during the semester, students will be emailed a video message from Education Abroad that will include a greeting from the Education Abroad staff, an update of current events on campus from the popular Dean of Students, and a message from the Provost regarding the importance of international education. The message will conclude with an introduction from the returned student advisor who will discuss the returnee conference, the Global Ambassador program and her anticipation of hearing about students’ experiences when
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they return. The purpose of the video is two-fold. First, it strengthens the relationship between
the future returnees and Education Abroad. Second, it makes students aware of returnee
programming before they return to campus. The hope is that if students are aware in advance
and believe returnee programming to be a standard procedure, they will be more likely to
participate. Messages of support that keep students connected to VCU may go far in cultivating
relationships and support of returnees.

Social Media

Social Media has become an important means of communication and marketing to
undergraduate students. In efforts to keep up with the latest trends, Education Abroad currently
operates Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Pinterest accounts as well as a blog. To increase
participation at returnee events, a strategic social media strategy will be implemented with
Facebook being the primary social media tool. The Twitter, Pinterest and Instagram accounts
will each link to the Facebook. Posts will be timed at least three hours apart to allow enough
time for each post to filter through students’ newsfeeds. Fewer posts will be made on
Wednesdays, the least active day on Facebook, and other posts will be planned in advance to be
posted on the weekends, specifically important posts on Sunday evenings, a high traffic time on
Facebook (Wasserman, 2012). In addition to posting about upcoming events, scholarships and
programs, there will be a Friday “study abroad inspiration” campaign that will include one post
each week of either a picture or quote that encourages students to travel and study abroad. It
serves to both encourage prospective students to create their own experiences but also reminds
returned students of their time abroad. Through “liking” and commenting on the inspiration
posts students can find other returnees experiencing the same phases of readjustment they may
be going through.
Academic Departments

Education Abroad will seek to build and develop relationships with academic departments at VCU. Faculty members will be encouraged to share study abroad events with their students as well as allow student ambassadors to give short presentations in each of their classes. Specifically, the School of World Studies which houses all of the foreign language and international studies majors will be a great resource to advertise programs due to the large number of study abroad students that are international studies and foreign language majors.

Cameron on Camera Web-Series

Cameron on Camera is a weekly web series designed by Education Abroad to promote study abroad as a fun, exciting, and sometimes ridiculous adventure for students. It highlights the current gregarious, program assistant, Cameron Noel, a VCU graduate who studied abroad three times throughout his undergraduate career. The web series is advertised as the following:

Cameron Noel, our beloved Education Abroad Program Assistant, is a VCU alum who studied abroad not once - not twice - but three TIMES during his undergrad years at VCU! In addition to his three study abroad experiences (an ISEP semester in France, an ISEP summer service-learning program in China, and the VCU Faculty-Led Program on Rural Development in Guatemala), he has traveled extensively on four continents.

Cameron’s stories are legendary, so each week, we’ll be asking him to regale you with a favorite tale of something international. (K. Chroninger, personal communication, March 24, 2013)

The web series will include episodes on funny stories such as drinking yak’s milk for breakfast in inner Mongolia, showering in a public bath houses around the world and participating in student protests at a French university. The web series will be posted every
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Sunday night on the Education Abroad Facebook page. It engages the visual learners and those that enjoy creative storytelling as well as the auditory learners that enjoy the listening and learning from the experiences of others. The hope is to create a following of supporters who will watch the latest episode each week creating publicity for study abroad via Facebook and the continued growth of a study abroad culture at VCU.

**Student Recruitment and Admissions**

Any current VCU student that has studied abroad will be eligible to participate in returnee events. Students that choose to participate in the Global Ambassadors program must register with the returned student advisor at the beginning of their first semester back on campus. The returned student advisor will invite eligible students via email to participate. The maximum enrollment is fifty students. Participants will be selected in the order that they submit their registration forms. All students that receive an Education Abroad office scholarship will be automatically enrolled in the Global Ambassador program as a stipulation for accepting the award.

For certain events, such as the returnee conference, only students who have studied abroad in the last two cycles (fall, spring or summer) are eligible to participate. Exceptions may be made for other returned students depending on space available. Other local study abroad students from Virginia Union University or the University of Richmond will also be eligible to participate in returnee events such as the storytelling event, or the Career Services/Peace Corps information sessions. To be a Student Ambassador requires a certain amount of responsibility and students will need to complete an interview process to be selected. Details of the process are included in the curriculum section.
Logistics

Classroom Space

The majority of events will take place on the VCU Monroe Park campus. The Education Abroad staff is located in the Franklin St. Gym and will utilize the office space for planning, meetings and preparation for returned student events. Each semester, the Returned student advisor will determine the most appropriate location for the Returnee Conference, Globally Y’all and other on-campus events. The returned student advisor may choose to reserve space in the following locations:

Franklin Street Gym: Space is free and returned students are already familiar with the building, given that this is where the Education Abroad office is located. Space is limited but can be reserved on a case-by-case basis. There are varying sizes of classrooms and are equipped with Smartboard technology.

Student Commons: The Student Commons is easily accessible and offers many rooms available for reservation as well as tables for advertising in high-traffic areas by VCU student groups and departments. There are many different rooms of varying sizes as well as outdoor plaza areas. Any organization affiliated with VCU may reserve space at no charge.

ASPiRE: Space is free in this brand new living-learning community, but it is relatively unknown to VCU students. The classrooms include the latest AV technology and all desk, tables and chairs are on wheels making classroom set-up easy. There is also a lounge available for use that includes couches and chairs arranged around a fireplace. This space is ideal for the storytelling event.
Global Ambassadors Returnee Program

**GLOBE**: A new international living-learning community will open in Fall 2013. In the future, this will likely be the best place to hold returnee events because room reservation preference will be given to GEO offices. The building will be identical to ASPiRE and include classrooms, workspace, and conference rooms.

**Refreshments**

The Education Abroad office will provide refreshments at returnee events purchased at local grocery stores. In the future, the Education Abroad office may consider using VCU Catering services for larger events such as the Returnee Conference in which other schools are invited. Alcoholic beverages will not be provided at any returnee events.

**Transportation**

The majority of events included in this program will be on the Monroe Park campus and within walking distance of the Education Abroad office. For off-campus events, Education Abroad will reserve one of the GEO vans. The fleet of vans owned by GEO includes three 7-passenger vans and five 12-passenger vans. The vans are free of charge, but drivers must be pre-approved and have completed the required VCU driver’s training before reserving the vans. Prepaid gas cards are included with the van reservation.

**Health and Safety Plan**

**VCU Health Services**

VCU provides all students comprehensive health and safety support through a health clinic, travel and immunization clinic, pharmacy and mental health counseling. Particularly helpful to returnees hoping to travel again is the travel and immunization clinic in which students are able to receive all the health and safety information particular to a specific country as well as any required immunizations. All returnees will be made aware of this service at the returnee
conference. VCU Counseling Services provides support for mental health issues to all students on both campuses. The counselors can assist students by providing individual therapy, group therapy, couples counseling or refer students to other qualified professionals in the regions. All counselors are trained in intercultural communication and are well equipped to assist students that may be struggling with adjustment issues and reverse culture shock following a return from a study abroad experience.

Education Abroad will partner with the Wellness Center to publish an issue of the Stall Seat Journal, a student-oriented monthly poster campaign that provides students with health and safety information posted in all public restrooms on campus. This issue will target prospective study abroad students and returnees that may want to travel again. It will include “do’s” and “don’ts” of traveling, information about the travel clinic and State Department country safety warnings/advisories. This issue will hopefully be a pleasant reminder for returned study abroad students of their experiences and that support services are available if they are having trouble with adjustment. In particular, the humorous photo of a student dressed as the “typical American” is likely to remind many returnees of their first days traveling abroad before learning to blend into the local communities. The issues will be drafted by the Education Abroad staff, then edited, published, and distributed by The Well (For an example of the Education Abroad issue of the Stall Seat Journal see Appendix K).

Safety at VCU

VCU is located in an urban area and expansion in the past ten years has been accompanied by a revitalization phase in many surrounding neighborhoods. Given that it is a public university, the campus and many buildings are open to the general public throughout much of the day and early evening. In order to combat crime that occurs frequently in the area
and ensure student safety, VCU developed one of the largest university police departments in the country. The VCU Police Department includes 82 sworn officers, more than 200 security personnel and an accredited training academy (Annual security and fire safety report, 2012). Given the locations of the two campuses and the varying nature of crime that occurs, VCU Police Department has developed, “community-based crime prevention strategies and initiatives in conjunction with traditional law enforcement and progressive community policing practices” (Annual security and fire safety report, 2012) to provide extensive safety services to keep students, faculty and staff safe while on campus and commuting to work or class. They have coordinated with the Richmond Police Department and local community leaders to aggressively expanded their outreach efforts in the neighborhoods that surround VCU’s two Richmond campuses. Among the many safety and security improvements on campus are 320 emergency telephones immediately connecting the caller with VCU Police, limited access to buildings using campus identification cards, and escort ride services to accompany students home or to class.

If students participating in the returnee program are victims of crime or witness any suspicious activity, they should act quickly to notify VCU Police of the situation as well as the director of Education Abroad. Students should report incidents to the Emergency Communications Center at nearby 938 W. Grace St. or call (804) 828-1234, (dial 8-1234 from a university phone) the emergency line for the Police Department. Off-campus, students should dial 911, and they will be connected with either VCU Police or the Richmond City Police Department. Students should remain aware of their surroundings at all times to avoid crimes of opportunity while commuting to and from VCU (Emergency phone numbers and resources and resources can be found in Appendix L).
Crisis Management Plan

In the event of an emergency on campus, VCU Police will be responsible for responding to and mitigating the situation. A threat assessment team assesses and responds to any threatening behaviors and dangerous incidents involving students, faculty or staff. The team includes representatives from VCU Police, Human Resources, Counseling Services, Division of Student Affairs, University Counsel’s Office and other units as determined necessary. The team convenes monthly and on an as-needed basis to maintain the security of the VCU community.

In the event that a threat is confirmed, the VCU Chief of Police will alert the Vice President of Finance and Administration who will determine if it is appropriate to activate the Emergency Notification System, a multi-channel communication system, to alert the VCU community of the threat. If the notification system is activated, students and employees will receive text alerts, the ten warning sirens on both campuses will sound, alarms will sound in classrooms, dormitories and high-traffic student areas, and digital signboards throughout campus will provide safety information. The VCU Alert website will continually update with information and instructions for students, faculty and staff. Social media such as Facebook and Twitter may also be utilized to provide immediate updates to the community regarding the situation. During an emergency, VCU Police will carry out the pre-determined Emergency Preparedness Plan and the appropriate operations plan according to the situation. The plan is designed to be flexible to allow for appropriate actions depending on the type of emergency. The nature of emergencies is that they are unpredictable; therefore, the procedures are vague and operating units will prepare for many different scenarios. Only the VCU Police and VCU Media and Public Relations will have the authority to report to the media if it is necessary (Emergency notification, response and evacuation policy, 2011). Any situations involving Education Abroad
Global Ambassadors Returnee Program

students will be reported to the Director of Education Abroad and the Associate Director of the Global Education Office (See Appendix M for the Emergency Preparedness Plan).

**Budget Notes**

The total cost of the program is just over $1750. The program is designed to be low cost and combine harmoniously with the currently existing programs at VCU. Consequently, little extra costs will be required beyond the current annual funding of Education Abroad. The budget is divided into direct and indirect costs of the Global Ambassadors program. The vast majority of the direct costs will be for meals and refreshments at planned events. Small meals or snacks will be provided at the pre-departure orientation, returnee conference, and the storytelling event. The peer mentors and student ambassadors will be treated to lunch as a show of gratitude for their efforts at the end of the semester. Additionally, Education Abroad will pay for a celebratory dinner and reflection period following the Life After Study Abroad (LASA) conference in Washington, D.C. Global Education Office passenger vans and the gas credit cards linked with the van keys will be used for all transportation. The vans will be used to transport students to and from the LASA conference and may be used to purchase refreshments prior to events. The Education Abroad office will cover the entry fees for any students that choose to attend the LASA conference. Meeting space will be reserved at no cost in the Globe building and in the Student Commons. However, any events reserved in the Student Commons that requires use of AV equipment will require a fee for having an AV tech’s assistance. A miscellaneous section is included in the direct costs for any unexpected costs that may occur. Virginia Commonwealth University includes fifteen percent of the total direct costs of the program as indirect cost. This fee covers the salaries of employees, facilities, supplies and
communication and outreach of the program (For the Excel budget sheet, please see Appendix N).

**Evaluation Plan**

Education Abroad will strive to monitor the effectiveness and relevancy of the program throughout the semester. Specifically, the returned student advisor will continuously monitor the program participants in order to identify potential successes or failures as early as possible and to facilitate timely adjustment to program activities and interactions. Informal communications, observations, and formal reporting will be used to determine if goals and objectives are being met.

Participants will be asked to reflect on their learning throughout the program as well as at the end of the program. The Education Abroad office will use the data to evaluate the impact of returned student programming on VCU students and determine what improvements can be made to sustain and replicate the program. Both formative and summative evaluation will be used to monitor the progress and impact of the program as well as to determine any unintended side effects from the program in the VCU and Richmond community. Assessment of the program will rely on qualitative and quantitative measurements in order to gather accurate data for program stakeholders. Basic indicators will include the number of students that choose to participate in the Global Ambassador program, the attendance numbers at returnee events and traffic on social media pages. Flip charts with space for students to mark positive, negative or neutral will be placed at the exit of every event to provide immediate, but simple, feedback. The multi-media project blog posts will provide detailed information as to the extent of the analysis and reflection the programming is facilitating for students participating in the Global Ambassador program. Additionally, each participant will complete a pre and post skills
development survey. This self-assessment tool will measure participant intercultural communication competencies. Following a semester of implementation, the number of students that sign up for study abroad as well as the numbers of students that are attending general information sessions and signing up for the list-serv will be a reflection of the returnee program’s impact on generating increased support for study abroad (Examples of the program evaluation and pre/post skills assessment can be found in Appendixes O and P).

**Conclusions and Implications**

The Global Ambassadors program will capitalize on the enthusiasm of the returned students and make them a part of evolution of campus culture. The program participants will be more globally aware and prepared for a globalized workforce. It is important to note that it takes time to change campus culture. Dramatic increases in the numbers of study abroad students are unlikely to happen in one semester or even in one year. Study abroad requires planning months or years in advance. Efforts may be effective in reaching freshman students, but the effects of that outreach effort will not be seen in the numbers of study abroad students until perhaps two years later when the students are juniors. The returnee program will remain flexible to change with the needs of the Education Abroad office and what the students hope to gain from returnee events. VCU is in an excellent place to push forward with its internationalization efforts during the transition phase of student life, and the Global Ambassadors will be a large part of the establishment of an international campus culture.
References

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Global Ambassadors Returnee Program


APPENDIX A: KOLB’S EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING CYCLE
Global Ambassadors Registration Form
VCU Education Abroad

Name: ____________________

V#: ____________________

Where did you study abroad? (country and city)
_____________________________________________________________________

What academic term did you study abroad? (Spring 2013, Summer 2013, etc.)
_____________________________________________________________________

Which of the following events/activities will you be most likely to participate in during the program?

- Student Ambassador
- African American Peer Mentoring
- International Buddy
- Pinterest board
- LASA Conference
- Research Conference
- Photo Contest
- Study Abroad Video
- Globally Y’all Storytelling
- Intercultural Fashion Show
- Highschool presentation
- Career Services/Peace Corp Information Session
APPENDIX C: TIMELINE OF EVENTS

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<td>Returnee Conference</td>
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<td>Blogging</td>
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<td>Student Ambassador</td>
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<td>African American Peer Mentoring</td>
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<td>International Buddy</td>
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<td>Pinterest</td>
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<td>LASA Conference (DC)</td>
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<td>SWS Research Conference</td>
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<td>Study Abroad Video</td>
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<td>Globally Y'all</td>
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<td>Intercultural Fashion Show</td>
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<td>Career Services/Peace Corps</td>
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<td>Returnee Mixer</td>
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APPENDIX D: ACTIVITIES AND PREFERRED LEARNING STYLE

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<th>Global Ambassador Events by Learning Style</th>
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<td>Returnee Mixer</td>
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APPENDIX E: LA BRACK, CULTURE SHOCK W-CURVE
APPENDIX F: RETURNEE CONFERENCE AGENDA & WORKBOOK

Returnee Conference Agenda

Introduction and Agenda
Who you are, where you went, high point and low point of experience

Reflection on Experience
Reverse Culture Shock Discussion
Adjustment Issues

Career Development
Explanation of the credit transfer process
Developing your 30 second “elevator” speech or commercial
Graduate School, Intern and Work Abroad Information

Continued Engagement
Develop action plan for ways to stay involved on campus

Resume Review
If time permits, we can review individually. If not, we will just give resume tips and have follow up meetings with individual students.
Returnee Conference Workbook
VCU Education Abroad
Part I: Brainstorm the high point and the low point of your study abroad experience. What made it great? What made it bad? Think of a story that you would most like to share about your study abroad.

High Point:

Low Point:

Best Story to Share:
Part II: Stages of Re-Entry

Stage one: Disengagement
While abroad and your departure date looms near, you begin to move away from your abroad experience and start concentrating on your return. It is a feeling of having one foot in your host country and putting the other foot in your home country. You start thinking about wrapping up your time abroad and making plans for what you will do when you get home.

Stage two: Euphoria
In this stage, you get very excited about the prospect of going home. You think about how happy you will be to see your friends, eat your favorite foods and speak your native language. This may occur before leaving your host country or just upon arrival home. It may be quite brief, especially for those who were very well adjusted to their host culture. It is longer for those who were less attached to the host culture. Students who were unhappy while abroad may not experience return shock beyond this stage.

Stage three: Dampened euphoria
This stage occurs after a short time back in your home county and is characterized by feeling like a foreigner. You may feel frustrated, alienated and critical of your own culture. Things that were previously completely normal to you now stand out. For example, upon return, American returnees are often frustrated with their peers’ lack of knowledge or concern for international issues. You feel like no one really wants to hear about your experience and can’t relate to it. This is a good time to seek out other study abroad returnees. They can provide support and sympathy as you readjust to life back in your home country.

Stage four: Gradual readjustment
Things are no longer so shocking and you are less critical about aspects of your culture that bothered you during the dampened euphoria stage. You begin to analyze what you learned abroad and decide how you will apply it to your life in your home country. You may decide to adopt certain host culture characteristics or habits into your daily life. You will begin to think about how to apply what you’ve learned both academically and professionally.

Summarized from “Back in the USA: Reflecting on your study abroad experience and putting it to good work,” by Dawn Kepets
Part III: W-Curve Model

Everyone experiences culture shock differently. What does your culture shock curve look like? Draw on the graph below:
Part IV: Resources

VCU Counseling Services:

Monroe Park Campus
University Student Commons, Room 238
907 Floyd Ave.
(804) 828-6200
Monday - Friday: 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.
http://www.students.vcu.edu/counseling/

Work/Intern/Volunteer Opportunities Abroad:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alliance Abroad</td>
<td>Work, teach, volunteer or learn a language in Argentina, Australia, Chile, China, Costa Rica, Ecuador, England, France, Italy, Peru or Spain.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BUNAC</td>
<td>Work/internship/volunteer opportunities for students and recent graduates in UK, New Zealand, Australia, Peru, Cambodia, South Africa and Canada.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Club des 4 Vents</td>
<td>Jobs, internships and volunteer opportunities abroad.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connect-123</td>
<td>Internship programs in Dublin, Barcelona, Cape Town, Shanghai and Buenos Aires</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross-Cultural Solutions</td>
<td>Well-respected organization offering volunteer and internship opportunities in 12 countries for one to 12 weeks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fulbright English Teaching Assistantships</td>
<td>Fulbright grant to become an English teaching assistant in a foreign country.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Go Intern Abroad</td>
<td>Go Abroad site with information about internships abroad.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Go Volunteer Abroad</td>
<td>Go Abroad site with information about volunteering abroad.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>InterExchange</td>
<td>Au pair, professional internship, teaching English, volunteering, language schools and work-travel programs in 13 countries.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internships Abroad</td>
<td>UMN site containing information about internships abroad.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-to-1</td>
<td>Volunteer and TEFL opportunities around the world.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Internship Directory</td>
<td>Reference guide to help match students with international internship opportunities offered by universities, governmental agencies, non-profit groups, private organizations and corporations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JET Programme</td>
<td>Program for recent graduates to assist in international exchange and foreign language education in local governments, boards of education and elementary, junior and senior high schools throughout Japan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operafestival di Roma</td>
<td>Operafestival di Roma is a non-profit educational institution that offers opportunities for musicians from all nations to study and perform opera in Italy in the summer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teach English Abroad</td>
<td>UMN site containing information about teaching English abroad.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteer Abroad</td>
<td>UMN site containing information about volunteering abroad.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work Abroad</td>
<td>UMN site containing information about working abroad.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX G: BARNGA INSTRUCTIONS

Barnga
A game about inter-cultural awareness
Description by Andrea MacGregor

Grade Level: 10-12
Time Requirement: 60-80 minutes
Outcomes:

• Realization that different cultures perceive things differently, and/or play by different rules.
• Students must understand and reconcile these differences if they want to function effectively in a cross-cultural group.

Introduction: In Barnga, participants experience the shock of realizing that despite many similarities, people of differing cultures perceive things differently or play by different rules. Players learn that they must understand and reconcile these differences if they want to function effectively in a cross-cultural group.

Overview: Participants play a simple card game in small groups, where conflicts begin to occur as participants move from group to group. This simulates real cross-cultural encounters, where people initially believe they share the same understanding of the basic rules. In discovering that the rules are different, players undergo a mini culture shock similar to actual experience when entering a different culture. They then must struggle to understand and reconcile these differences to play the game effectively in their "cross-cultural" groups. Difficulties are magnified by the fact that players may not speak to each other but can communicate only through gestures or pictures. Participants are not forewarned that each is playing by different rules; in struggling to understand why other players don’t seem to be playing correctly, they gain insight into the dynamics of cross-cultural encounters.

Set-up: Set up (approximately) 6 tables (about 4 people per table), depending on the number of people participating. On each table there should be a copy of the rules for that table per player plus a deck of cards (use only A-10, no face cards). To start, let the participants play a few rounds with the rules and with talking allowed. Next, EVERYTHING is removed from the playing tables. Play continues with everyone at his own table. From now, talking is prohibited. Winners will receive one popsicle stick (see below for how to win). After allowing a few rounds without talking at the home table, participants must switch tables—the person who won the most tricks moves clockwise to the next table, the person who loses the most tricks moves counter-clockwise to the next table. What the players do not know is that each table has learned a different set of rules (see below).

The rules: Depending on the number of players, rule sheets can be altered or discarded for the number of tables being used. Some samples of rules are as follows:

• Table 1: Ace high, no trump
• Table 2: Ace low, diamonds trump
• Table 3: Ace low, clubs trump
• Table 4: Ace high, hearts trump
• Table 5: Ace high, spades trump
• Table 6: Ace low, no trump
• In all cases, other cards will be worth face value—10 high, 2 low.

Each table shares the following rules:
• Players are dealt 5 cards each
• Whoever wins the most tricks will move clockwise to the next table
• Whoever loses the most tricks will move counter clockwise to the next table
• Everyone else stays at the same table
• Ties are resolved by paper rock scissors
• Each round will be about 5 minutes long (longer if time allows) and each round will consist any number of games that the time allows.
• After the initial round, players will not be allowed to see the rules or speak to each other. Gestures and pictures are allowed, but players are not allowed to use words.
• The game “winner” will be the person who has won the most tricks in total. (Of course, once game play starts, winning will likely take a back seat to trying to figure out what everyone else is doing, as they are playing by different rules.)
• Players can keep track of scores with popsicle sticks (one stick per trick won).
• The dealer can be anyone at the table, the person who plays first will be to the right of the dealer.
• The first player for each trick may play ANY suit. All other players must follow suit (play a card of the same suit). For each round, each player plays one card.
• If a player does not have that suit, a card of any suit must be played. The trick is won by the person with the HIGHEST card of the ORIGINAL suit (players will begin to become confused when some players believe their card is trump, and others disagree or contradict this).

Debriefing: After playing a number of rounds—either use a set time limit, or allow the number of rotations according to the number of tables in play (6 rounds for 6 tables). Students should be aware that they were playing by different rules, and the following questions should be discussed. Students can stay in the last group they were in, or return to their home groups at the teacher’s discretion.

Questions:
• If you could describe the game in one word, what would it be?
• What did you expect at the beginning of the game?
• When did you realize that something was wrong?
• How did you deal with it?
• How did not being able to speak contribute to what you were feeling?

http://socrates.acadiau.ca/courses/educ/reid/games/Game_descriptions/Bangal.htm
18TH ANNUAL

VCU World Studies

Student Research Conference

Co-Sponsored by the VCU Global Education Office and Department of History

Friday, November 9, 2012
Richmond Salons, VCU Student Commons

CALL FOR PAPERS AND PANELS
Deadline October 25

Emancipation, Freedom, and Independence

Commemorating the 150th anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation, we invite graduate and undergraduate students to submit proposals for 15-minute presentations on topics related to the concepts of Freedom and Independence in both their local and global manifestations. Proposals may be for completed research papers/projects, or roundtable discussions. The Conference is open to the public, and there is no cost or registration fee to attend or present research.

Proposals should include your name, email address, phone number, title of your presentation, your academic major, times you would be unavailable to present, and an abstract of no more than 150 words describing your work. Conference presentations may include visuals (pictures & video), but electronic audio is not permitted. The deadline for submissions is Thursday, October 25th. Email submissions to wsrc@vcu.edu. For more information, please contact wsrc@vcu.edu or call the School of World Studies at 804-827-1111.
APPENDIX I: GLOBALLY Y’ALL FLYER

GLOBALLY Y’ALL
A STORY TELLING EVENT

APRIL 9TH, 7 – 9PM
ASPIRE FIREPLACE LOUNGE

VCU Education Abroad is hosting a night of hilarious hijinks, ridiculous shenanigans and dramatic stories of VCU students’ study abroad. Come to listen or share your own! Snacks will be provided!

VCU Education Abroad

global.vcu.edu/abroad
804.827.7882
facebook.com/StudyAbroadVCU
twitter.com/StudyAbroadVCU
APPENDIX J: PINTEREST PROGRAM GUIDELINES

Create a Pinterest Board for VCU Education Abroad

Pinterest is a virtual pin board that allows you to save images linked to websites to revisit at a later time. Education Abroad hopes to use Pinterest as a resource guide for students interested in going abroad as well as a space for return participants to share their favorite sites, restaurants, or travel tips from their experiences abroad.

We would like you to create pin boards for different programs, cities and countries that future students will be able to use much like they would a guidebook. We want you to pin everything from excellent places for weekend trips, how to use public transportation, the most helpful vocabulary websites, packing tips to even your favorite travel luggage. Be creative! What would you want someone to know before they head to your favorite international city? What resources did you find most useful while you were there?

For this project you will be creating a pin board on your own Pinterest account. When you have finished pinning, you will need to make an appointment to come into the office where a staff member will review the board and re-pin onto the Education Abroad Pinterest page. We are looking for high quality, well-organized boards, and we prefer that you spend some time on this to create an end-product that will be useful to future participants. Be creative but strategic about what you pin! You may want to search for the Pinterest pages of “Clemson Abroad” or “UNC Honors London” to see how other university abroad offices are using Pinterest.

Volunteer Hours

If you are seeking volunteer hours, you may receive up to two hours for creating the board as well as an additional hour for your board approval appointment in the Education Abroad office.
Guidelines

1) Contact Lynn Butler ([lmbutler@vcu.edu](mailto:lmbutler@vcu.edu)) at VCU Education Abroad to propose the board you would like to create. It can be a specific program such as a VCU Faculty-Led program (Memory and History in Istanbul), a city (Madrid), or even a whole country if you did quite a bit of travelling (England). Wait for approval from Education Abroad before beginning so that we can avoid creating duplicate boards.

2) After receiving approval, log-in to [Pinterest.com](http://Pinterest.com) – You will need to create an account if you do not have one already. Creating an account is easy, and you can choose to log-in via Facebook.

3) Click on “Add” then “Create a New Board.” Name the board the location for which you have been approved

4) Post at least 40 pins to your board that provide an introduction and resource guide to future participants visiting these locations
   - Be sure to find the original source of the information and create your own pin. While you may use pins you find on other boards, click on the link to find the original website that the image came from. Create your own pin from the website as opposed to “repinning” from someone else’s board.
   - Include at least 1 pin from each of the following categories:
     - Educational Institutions (Campus maps, libraries, course directories and any other links you found useful for your courses)
     - Local Sites
     - Excursions
     - Transportation Information (metro, bus, taxi, bike or walking maps)
     - Useful Vocabulary
     - Cuisine
     - Shopping Areas or Markets
     - Favorite Restaurants
     - Student Groups and Volunteer Activities
     - Local Customs and Etiquette
     - Local Life and Events
     - A photo of yourself while abroad - So that we can give you credit for making the board

5) Make an appointment with Lynn Butler ([lmbutler@vcu.edu](mailto:lmbutler@vcu.edu)) in the Education Abroad office to have a staff member review your Pinterest board. A staff member will review each of your pins and re-pin the board to the Education Abroad Pinterest page. We’ll be sure to give you credit for creating the board!
Global Ambassadors Returnee Program

Where did you study abroad? Share your study abroad stories, network with other study abroad students and research international careers in the Global Ambassadors program!

Events include storytelling, research conference, resume critique, and opportunities to share your experience with the VCU community.

Eligibility:
• Must have studied abroad in the last two years
• Must be a VCU student

Interested? Contact Education Abroad 804-827-7882 / abroad@vcu.edu
Best Practices for Your
Bon Voyage

First Stop
Student Health’s Travel Clinic
Planning a trip this summer? Make sure to stop by the VCU Student Travel Clinic before you go. The travel clinic can provide medications, immunizations and health/safety advice specific to the region you will be visiting. Two appointments are necessary: the first to review your itinerary and medical history, and the second to administer the immunizations. It’s best to make an appointment 6-8 weeks in advance so that any immunizations you receive will have time to take effect. To make an appointment, call Student Health Services at 828-8628 (Monroe Park Campus) or 828-9200 (MCV Campus). For more information, check out www.studenthealth.vcu.edu/health/precautions.html or visit www.cdc.gov/travel/travel.html.

STEP: So Smart
Free and Easy
Before you step on a plane or train, remember to STEP (Smart Traveler Enrollment Program). STEP is a free service provided by the State Department that will send you up-to-date safety information and travel alerts about your destination in case of emergencies. Registering with STEP also will ensure that you have full support from U.S. embassies and consulates while abroad. Registering is a hassle, right? Nope. Enrolling could not be easier; just make sure you have your passport information handy. Enroll today at https://step.state.gov.

Also check out the U.S. Department of State site just for students going abroad where you can find out everything you need to know about preparing to go abroad as a student, whether it’s planning your trip or dealing with a lost passport. Find out more at www.studentabroad.state.gov.

Are you insured?
Be Prepared
If you’re traveling abroad this summer, you should be able to answer this question: Are you insured? Your insurance here in the states may or may not cover your emergencies overseas. Some traveler’s insurance policies cover everything from medical and dental to trip delay and cancellation, to not to mention personal belongings in case you get pickpocketed or lose your passport.

The VCU Global Education Office (GEO) is an official issuing office of the International Student ID Card (ISIC), which is an easy and inexpensive way to cover your basic international insurance needs. The ISIC is good for one year and provides students with travel document replacement, medical and dental insurance, 24-hour emergency hotline services, and concierge services while abroad.

The card also offers student discounts on airfare, accommodation, sightseeing, food, shopping and more. There are more than 40,000 discounts available in the U.S. and abroad. Apply for your ISIC today by visiting the VCU Education Abroad website, www.global.vcu.edu/abroad, and clicking the “ISIC cards” icon.

What to Wear

Dress Smart
Traveling overseas this summer? Dress to blend in — and not as a glaringly obvious tourist target for pickpockets. Pack for safety as well as comfort.

Leave these at home
• White athletic sneakers and white socks. They may be comfy, but they scream, “I am an American tourist!”
• Same with a baseball cap.
• Baggy T-shirt and cargo shorts. Multiple pockets are handy, but they’re hard to keep an eye on.
• Backpack. It’s hard to watch your stuff when it’s behind you.
• Camera around neck.

Blend in wearing these
• Dark sneakers or comfy dressier shoes help you blend in.
• Sunglasses are a sophisticated way to shade your eyes. (And don’t forget sunscreen!)
• Collared shirt, fitted pants
• A shoulder bag can be carried in front or under your arm.
• Small wallet in front pocket — carry only the basics: one ID, a credit card, and small amount of cash. Make a copy of your wallet contents and leave it at home so you can cancel cards easily if anything is lost or stolen.

VCU
The Stall Seat Journal is published by The Well
804-289-9355  •  815 S. Cathedral Place
University Student Health Services, Division of Student Affairs
For health research and resources, visit www.thewell.vcu.edu
For student health clinic information, visit www.students.vcu.edu/health

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APPENDIX M: VCU EMERGENCY NUMBERS

Police/Fire/Emergency
On campus................................................................. 828-1234
Off campus............................................................... 911
To report a crime.......................................................... 828-1234
Text a tip to Crime Stoppers........................................... 274637; keyword VCUpip

Other VCU Police Numbers
Escort ride service ........................................................ 828-9255
Non-emergency Dispatcher ......................................... 828-1196
Crime Prevention.......................................................... 828-1214
Monroe Park Campus Crime Prevention Specialist ........... 828-4395
MCV Campus Crime Prevention Specialist ...................... 828-8730
Investigations................................................................ 828-6409
Victim/Witness Coordinator ........................................... 828-8696
Hospital Safety and Security ......................................... 828-4300
Lost and Found.............................................................. 828-7071
Text a service tip (customer service feedback) ................. 274637; keyword service

VCU Police Offices
938A W. Grace St. (open 24 hours)................................. 828-1196
938B W. Grace St./Patrol Operations .............................. 828-6199

Other Public Safety and Service Resources
University Counseling Services
Monroe Park Campus.................................................. 828-6200
MCV Campus.............................................................. 828-3964
University Student Health Services
Monroe Park Campus.................................................. 828-8828
MCV Campus.............................................................. 828-9220
Environmental Health and Safety ................................. 828-6347
Residential Life and Housing ........................................ 828-7666
Substance Abuse Services Coordinator ......................... 828-2086
Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence Services Coordinator 828-2085
Dean of Student Affairs ............................................... 828-1244
Safety Case Manager.................................................... 837-8753
Title IX Coordinator for Students ................................ 837-8753
University Safety Committee ....................................... 828-6200
YWCA rape crisis hotline ............................................ 643-0888

* Phone numbers throughout this publication are area code (804).
APPENDIX N: EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION, RESPONSE AND EVACUATION POLICY

Activation of emergency notification system will occur immediately upon confirmation of a significant emergency or dangerous situation occurring on VCU’s campuses involving an immediate threat to the health and safety of students, faculty, and staff, so that they may take reasonable precautions for their safety. The decision is made by the Vice President for Finance and Administration, in consultation with the Chief of Police. In situations where the Vice President for Finance and Administration or Chief of Police are not available, or where any delay to brief these officials would significantly increase the risk to the VCU community, the on-duty Police Commander is authorized to activate the emergency notification system.

Notification and Response Processes

Since an emergency may be sudden and without warning, these procedures are designed to be flexible in order to accommodate facts, institutional needs and other contingencies of various types and magnitudes and to allow a response in a manner designed to protect the VCU community. The VCU Emergency Preparedness Plan (EPP) addresses several types of potential emergencies with respective Response Plans and Unit Plans.

1. The VCU Police are responsible for responding to incidents and confirming that a significant emergency or dangerous situation is occurring or is imminent on VCU’s campuses which constitute an immediate threat to the health and safety of students, faculty, staff and visitors.

2. The Chief of Police will immediately inform the Vice President for Finance and Administration of any such incident or situation. The decision to activate the emergency
notification system will be made by the Vice President for Finance and Administration, in consultation with the Chief of Police.

3. Each emergency notification will include:

   a. Specific information about the nature of the incident/threat;
   
   b. Directions about how faculty, staff, students and visitors should respond to the threat;
   
   c. Details on what to do to get additional information.

4. In situations where neither the Vice President for Finance and Administration nor the Chief of Police is available, or where any delay would significantly increase the risk to the VCU community, the on-duty Police Commander is authorized to activate the emergency notification system.

5. As soon as practicable, the on-duty Police Commander will notify the Chief of Police, who will brief the Vice President for Finance and Administration.

6. After reviewing the emergency situation, the Vice President for Finance and Administration (acting as Incident Commander) will decide whether to declare an emergency and activate VCU’s Emergency Operations Plan. A determination will be made regarding the level of the emergency declared.

7. Officials from VCU Police, Media and Public Relations will provide regular follow-up information to the community, as needed.
## APPENDIX O: BUDGET

### Global Ambassadors Fall 2013

#### Expenses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Direct Costs</th>
<th>Direct Costs</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cost</td>
<td>Unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Refreshments/Meals</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-Departure Orientation</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Per Person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Globally Y’all Storytelling</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Per Person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Returnee Conference</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Per Person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer Advisor/Ambassador Lunch</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Per Person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LASA Conference</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Per Person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Transportation</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEO Vans/Gas</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>per day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fees</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LASA Conference</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>per person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Meeting Space</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Globe</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>per day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Commons (AV Tech)</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>per day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Miscellaneous</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100 program</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Indirect Costs</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15% program</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Program Costs</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Global Ambassadors Evaluation

Please answer the following questions regarding the Global Ambassadors returnee program. The Education Abroad office appreciates your feedback and strives to continually make improvements to the programs offered.

**V #**
Optional

**When did you study abroad?**

**What type of program did you participate in?**

**What country(ies) did you study in?**

**Please rate your overall satisfaction with the Global Ambassadors program.**

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Not at all satisfied ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Very Satisfied

**Please check the Global Ambassador events that you attended.**

- [ ] Returnee Conference
- [ ] Blogging
- [ ] Student Ambassadors
- [ ] Peer Mentoring
- [ ] Life After Study Abroad Conference (DC)
- [ ] International Buddies
- [ ] Pinterest
- [ ] Globally Y'all Storytelling
- [ ] Intercultural Fashion Show
- [ ] Photo Contest
- [ ] Highschool Presentation
- [ ] Other: ___

**What did you like about these events?**
Do you have any suggestions for improving these events?

Please rate the extent to which the returnee events were effective in:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1 (Very Little)</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5 (A lot)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reflection of your study abroad experience</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Articulation of what you learned while abroad</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional and career development</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creating a support group of like-minded peers</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promoting study abroad and its benefits to the VCU community</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promoting study abroad and its benefits to the Richmond community</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Which three events/activities would you be most likely to participate in next semester?

- ☐ Returnee Conference
- ☐ Blogging
Global Ambassadors Returnee Program

☐ Student Ambassadors
☐ Peer Mentoring
☐ Life After Study Abroad Conference
☐ International Buddies / Conversation Partners
☐ Pinterest
☐ Globally Y'all Storytelling
☐ Intercultural Fashion Show
☐ Photo Contest
☐ High School Presentation
☐ Returnee Mixer
☐ Other: ____________________________

Do you have suggestions for returnee events you would like to see in the future?
________________________________________________________________________

[Submit]

Never submit passwords through Google Forms.

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# APPENDIX Q: SKILLS ASSESSMENT SURVEY

## Global Knowledge Skills Assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Based on your knowledge prior to study abroad, please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements.</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I understand how the cost of goods in the U.S. is affected by foreign manufacturing in at least one country outside the U.S.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know how to purchase, activate, and use a cell phone in at least one country outside the U.S.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>I know how to take a train, bus, or subway in at least one country outside the U.S.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I know how to talk my way out of difficult situations when interacting with others in at least one country outside the U.S.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I am aware of differences between cultures.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I know how to use foreign currency to purchase an item in a store in at least one country outside the U.S.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I know enough about one culture in a least one country outside the U.S. to compare and contrast it with my own.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I know the names of all seven continents.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I know the names of at least 3 rivers outside the U.S.</td>
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<td>I know how to order food in a restaurant in a least one country outside the U.S.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I know that leaving my comfort zone can be beneficial to meeting local people in a country outside the U.S.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I know what kids of jokes would be funny to a person from at least one country outside the U.S.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I know how to explain U.S. foreign policy to my peers.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I am sensitive to my own reactions to people from different cultural backgrounds.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I know how the political and personal freedom experienced by U.S. citizens compares and contrasts with the degree of freedom experienced by citizens in a least one country outside the U.S.</td>
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<td>I know how to lead discussions and conversations in at least one country outside the U.S.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I understand how world markets overseas can affect my intended career.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I am aware how my style of interacting with others may change in at least one country outside the U.S.</td>
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<td>I know how to identify a safe social environment in at least one country outside the U.S.</td>
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<td>I know how to be flexible when interacting with people in at least one country outside the U.S.</td>
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<td>I understand why U.S. troops are stationed in countries outside the U.S.</td>
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<td>I know how to locate useful information in a newspaper in at least one country outside the U.S.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I know enough about the essential norms and taboos (e.g. greetings, dress, behavior) to adjust my behavior appropriately in at least one country outside the U.S.</td>
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<td>I know how to find different ways to express an idea that I am having trouble saying to a foreigner.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I know the names of at least 5 countries outside the U.S.</td>
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<td>I know the capital cities in at least four countries outside the U.S.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I see myself as a global citizen.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

List up to five health and/or safety issues facing people who live in the country in which you are about to study/studied in?

1. 
2. 
3. 
4. 
5. 

List up to five social and/or political issues facing the country in which you are about to study/studied in?

1. 
2. 
3. 
4. 
5.