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The Gender Gap in Study Abroad

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THE GENDER GAP IN STUDY ABROAD

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PIM 72

A Capstone Paper submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a Master of
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Adviser: Raymond Young, Assistant Professor of International Education

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I dedicate this research to my wife Devon, without whom none of this would be possible.

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Abstract

This study investigates the gender imbalance in study abroad programming to see whether there are barriers specific to American college-aged men in the decision to study abroad and how men may overcome these barriers. The research question is viewed through the framework of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (1943), arguing that physiological, safety, and relationship needs must be met before a student can feel confident in their decision to study abroad. Data is gathered through an online survey of students and through interviews with male study abroad alumni at the University of New Hampshire. The surveyed students expressed interest in studying abroad by attending information sessions, but ultimately decided not to go on a program. Findings for the survey show that both men and women place equal importance on the biggest issues, namely program cost and a concern for a delay in their graduation. The only significant difference in the survey findings showed up through men's inability to study abroad due to disciplinary issues on campus. Findings for the interviews show that men's desire to fulfill Maslow's esteem and self-actualization needs trumping concerns over the physiological, safety, and relationship needs, and that these students had long held the desire to study abroad. The results reveal that the decision to study abroad is not governed by a clear progression up Maslow's pyramid, but rather a complex interplay of factors. By using this data, college and universities gain greater insight into what drives men to study abroad and can gain better knowledge on how to appeal to this specific demographic.

Introduction

I first encountered the gender gap in study abroad while I was conducting a study abroad pre-departure orientation in my role as the International Education Program Support Assistant at the University of New Hampshire (UNH). During this program, my colleagues and I separated the students into groups by their destination country, and due to the fact that Italy is one of UNH's most popular study abroad destinations, we had two full groups of twenty students going to various locations in Italy. It turned out that both groups were entirely female: all forty students. With such a large disparity between the sexes in mind, I quickly began researching if this was a common at other colleges and universities.

The National Center for Education Statistics (2013) shows that as of fall enrollment from 2012, just under fifty-seven percent of college students are female. While the fact that more women are enrolled in postsecondary educational programs is certainly a factor in the gender gap in study abroad, it cannot fully explain a forty to zero student difference in the pre-departure orientation. Therefore, I turned to the Institute for International Education's *Open Doors* report, the field of International Education's standard bearer for statistics in study abroad. The *Open Doors* (2013) report showed that sixty-five percent of study abroad participants are female, compared to just thirty-five percent for male. Furthermore, this gender gap has existed for at least the past ten years and within that timeframe the percentages have barely wavered from the sixty-five to thirty-five numbers.

This gender gap has persisted despite recent growth and interest in study abroad. *Open Doors* (2013) reports that from the 2001-2002 academic year to 2011-2012, total participation in study abroad increased from 160,920 students to 283,332. Not only have the participation numbers of study abroad grown, but a survey of just over 1,500 incoming college students in

2007 showed that fifty-five percent of students indicated that they were either “Absolutely certain that you will do all they can to study abroad” or “Fairly certain you will study abroad when the right time comes” A further twenty-six percent said they would be interested in study abroad but were not sure it would be possible (*Studentpoll*, 2008, p.3). Despite the fact that study abroad has grown and interest is high, the male to female ratio has remained the same.

The above numbers led to the question of what goes into the decision making process of deciding to study abroad, and if there were some obstacle specific to men’s minds or lives holding them back. According to Maslow (1943) humans are motivated to achieve specific needs, and once they have met those achievements, they move on to the next “tier” in a pyramid called Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs. There are five levels to this pyramid, starting with physiological needs such as food, shelter, and sex. The second level is safety needs, such as security, order, and stability. The third level is love and a sense of belonging, particularly from friends and family. The fourth level is esteem needs, which includes broad goals such as respect for self, respect from others, independence, and prestige. Finally, the fifth tier is self-actualization, which is fully realizing personal potential (McLeod, 2014). With this in mind, Maslow would view students’ decisions to study abroad as motivated by the fourth and fifth tier, so I posited that students who do not study abroad must not be having their base first through third tier needs met. With this framework in mind, my research question became: what physiological, security, and relationship barriers exist to study abroad that are specific to men? And how do men overcome these barriers and decide to study abroad?

Literature Review

Overview

This literature review will analyze previous research on the disproportionate number of men compared to women participating in study abroad. The two concerns covered in this section will be men's security needs and men's relationship needs.

Safety Needs

McLeod (2014) summarizes Maslow's safety needs as, "protection from elements, security, order, law, stability, freedom from fear." (para. 10) There are a number of ways these broad needs can be interpreted and the first one to consider is men being uncomfortable with leaving their comfort zone. Previous research has shown that males are fearful or reluctant to leave their comfort zone at their colleges or universities in order to participate in study abroad (Adkins, 2004; Mohs, 2009; Sideli, 2011). Adkins (2004) confirms this sentiment with a survey of male study abroad alumni where the most common answer to the question, "Why do fewer men decide to study abroad than woman" was because men were uncomfortable with leaving their comfort zone (p. 31). In general the idea is that men have a more difficult time in accepting the vast change in lifestyle that comes with studying abroad.

Language is also an issue when considering study abroad. This plays into Maslow's safety tier because students may be fearful of not being able to communicate, and losing the stability of being able to talk with someone. The *Studentpoll* (2008) survey discovered that men were more likely than women to indicate language deficiency as a primary reason on why they do not plan to study abroad. This may be related to the fact that women make up nearly seventy percent of language majors (National Center for Education Statistics, 2013). Regardless, this

unwillingness to use a foreign language is one more way that shows how men are reluctant to step outside of their comfort zone.

Another safety aspect that study abroad can threaten is a students' financial security. Financial security is certainly not a concern exclusive to men; it has actually been shown to be a universal concern to any student studying abroad (Cloughly, 1991; Carlson, Burn, Useem, & Yachimowicz, 1991, Lincoln Commission, 2005, *Studentpoll*, 2008). Study abroad in some cases is more expensive than a typical semester at a university, so students may have trouble finding the extra finances to make a study abroad program happen. But some more recent research has shown that men may be slightly more cost-conscious than women. For example, Kavakas (2013) surveyed 189 students and found that males more frequently responded that they would "go anywhere to get the lowest affordable price" (p. 22). Males may be more reluctant to give themselves an increased financial burden in order to accommodate a study abroad semester. Though it should be taken into consideration that most students who return from study abroad find the experience "worth it" (Peterson, 2003, p. 102). This idea that study abroad is "worth" the cost comes into play because oftentimes men find themselves being more pragmatic about the decision. Lucas (2013) shows that oftentimes men are more likely to consider a cost-benefit analysis of study abroad when trying to decide if the time away from campus will be worth the sacrifices. If men perceive that value will be added to them via a study abroad semester, such as the experience giving those better job prospects upon graduation, then they may be more likely to go.

Continuing off the perception of study abroad being "worth" it and males' pragmatism, there is a worry about receiving credits when studying abroad or that it will delay graduation (Cloughly, 1991; Carlson et al., 1991; Lincoln Commission, 2005). This is of particular concern

to students in the Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) majors, who typically follow a very strict academic schedule during their undergraduate degree (Henschel, 2014; Redden, 2008, Stroud 2010). This is more relevant to men than women because according to the National Center for Education Statistics (2013), it is mostly males who make up the student body of STEM majors. An example can be seen in considering degrees conferred in 2011-2012 academic year, almost eighty-two percent of computer science and engineering degrees, fifty-seven percent of mathematics degrees, and sixty percent of physical science degrees were given to men. It is thought that these students simply cannot study abroad, or that it is not relevant to their degree. This is in opposition to the increase in International Education of options for students of those majors. Despite the “barrier” of the STEM major towards studying abroad, it is still proportionally more women in these majors that end up studying abroad than men (Fischer, 2012; O’Shaughnessy, 2012; Redden, 2008, Roper, O’Quinn, & Thomas, 2010, Salisbury, Paulsen, Pascarella; 2010). William Hoffa, being interviewed by Redden (2008), states the issues about men in STEM programs succinctly when he states, “To some degree... it just can’t be curriculum.” (para. 9) While it might be because there are more men in the STEM degree programs, Shirley (2006) writes, “... 21% of males agreed or strongly agreed that studying abroad has significantly delayed their graduation while only 5% of females agreed with that statement.” (p. 30-31). This shows that men are either poor planners and fall behind due to not coordinating needed credits towards graduation during their study abroad experience or that the STEM fields really do have a more difficult time finding an appropriate match for a study abroad program causing students to fall behind. The Lincoln Commission (2005) suggests that STEM and other professional degrees such as pre-medicine programs must

change their willingness to equate foreign credits to US credit in order to encourage students in these tightly locked academically sequenced programs to study abroad (p. 16).

The perception of who goes on a study abroad program is also threatening to male students. Desoff (2006), in interviewing a director of education abroad, quotes the director as saying, "I think the perception by males in many cases is that it still is mostly just something for women to do." (p. 22) Men have a fear of being ostracized by their peer group for wanting to participate in study abroad. Stereotypes do exist that study abroad is a female thing to do (Redden, 2008). Redden (2008) also notes a peculiar situation at an all-male college. When speaking to the director of programs at that particular institution, the director said, "... his students seem liberated from the almost subliminal stereotypes about study abroad that he noticed at a coed college where he used to work." (para. 27) Men may feel the pressure to play into gender roles more strongly at coed colleges and universities, perhaps particular when related to the STEM fields.

A final concern for this Maslow tier considering study abroad is that the process itself is too difficult. This difficulty interrupts the stability and order that men have on campus, and in doing so means they are more likely to view the process as cumbersome and not worth going through. While not specific to male students, Spiering and Erickson (2006) write that, "Students choosing not to take advantage of study abroad opportunities ranked "complexity" as the number one reason they chose not to study abroad..." (p. 319) Certainly the process of applying to study abroad can be daunting, often requiring students to fill out any number of forms, meet with advisors, and acquire transcripts and recommendations. Mohs (2009) recognizes this, recommending that International Educators do their best to reduce amount of paperwork involved in the application process. Lucas (2013) takes this recommendation a step further,

encouraging International Educators to, “Make the process easy, straight-forward and non-threatening.” However, there comes a point in making the process easier that decreases the significance of the experience. Going abroad is a big commitment, and part of the application process is making sure that they understand the magnitude of the commitment.

Relationship Needs

McLeod (2014) summarizes Maslow’s love and belonging needs as “friendship, intimacy, affection and love, - from work group, family, friends, romantic relationships.” (para. 11). For the purposes of this study, this idea will be summarized as relationship needs. The decision to study abroad is affected by any relationship that a student has. There are many different relationships important to male study abroad participants.

The first relationship to be discussed is friendship. This can also broaden to consider peer groups on campus, taking into consideration sports, fraternities or sororities, and other student activity groups. In general, both male and female groups can show reluctance to leave friends on campus (Cloughly, 1991). But this leaving of friends on campus appears to hit male students to a greater degree, with a general feeling of not wanting to “miss out” on something happening at the home campus prevalent among men in previous studies (Fischer, 2012; Dessoff, 2006). Salisbury et al. (2010) show this significant difference between men and women, and how it can go back further to high school, when they write:

... while an increase in the peer interactions scale did not affect women’s probability of intent to study abroad, it had a negative impact on the probability of intent for men...

This research may suggest that some facet of the social environment – both in high school and during the first year of college – undermines male interest in study abroad. (p. 31)

This shows that the more involved a male student is on campus, the less likely he is to study abroad. BaileyShea (2009) writes that this is not always the case, showing that involvement in student government actually had a positive effect on male students deciding to go abroad (p. 155). Male study abroad alumni can also have a positive effect on helping other decide to study abroad. Fischer (2012), in interviewing a director of international programs, quotes the director as saying, “We can talk ourselves blue in the face, but they’re really going to listen to their friends.” (para. 20) This brings up the importance of involving alumni in trying to recruit new study abroad students, which many college and universities now use as a strategy (Dessoiff, 2006, p. 27).

Additionally, one must consider how a peer group can “group think” itself into deciding not to study abroad. Consider BaileyShea’s (2009) analysis of Renn and Arnold’s (2003) discussion of peer cultures. BaileyShea (2009) writes, “In other words, students’ major fields of study create an influential subculture that dictates the types of people with whom students frequently interact [sic].” (p 180) Essentially this means that the mostly male majors in the STEM fields, who are already convinced that it is more difficult to study abroad, are influencing each other by spreading the word of that difficulty. If one student in those fields adheres to the belief that the difficulty in going abroad is not worth the experience, the idea will spread because he is more likely to interact with others of his major.

Faculty and advisors also play an important role in influencing students to study abroad, with the collaboration of many offices on campus such as the study abroad office, faculty, and other student advisors key assets in convincing students to study abroad (Dessoiff, 2006; Booker, 2001). Having encouraging and knowledgeable faculty can reduce student stress about falling behind in their course of study on the home campus, as faculty and advisers can assist students in

planning which courses they should take while studying abroad (Carlson et al., 1991). Lucas (2013) encourages colleges and universities to, “Train staff and stakeholders to ‘counter’ negative or misleading ideas and reinforce common message.” (p. 24) While a unified message of support for study abroad can help a college or university to encourage participation, it is interesting to see that Lucas, writing in 2013, is still recommending a similar message that Carlson, Burn, Useem, and Yachimowicz wrote about twenty-two years earlier. This inability to create progress even when recommendations to treat obstacles in students paths have been similar for a number of years hints at the real complexity in the decision to study abroad.

The final relationship barrier that male students face is from their family. In a survey of study abroad participants and nonparticipants, there was a firm gap in the perception that parents would support the decision to study abroad between those who went abroad and those who stayed on campus (Peterson, 2003, p. 103). This shows that parental support is extremely important to students and it may be assumed especially so if the parents are providing the financial support to attend the college or university. Acknowledging that study abroad may increase the financial burden a student may put upon their family and the student being reluctant to even ask their parents about taking advantage of the opportunity. Shirley (2006) takes this concept further and shows a difference between the males and females when it comes to parental support when he reports that female students indicated that parents and other relatives had a greater influence on their decision to study abroad than men, suggesting that this lack of perceived support may indicate a parents willingness to finance a daughters study abroad opportunity but not a sons (p. 29). This suggests that parents may be an underutilized asset in encouraging male students to study abroad. Recommendations for resolving this issue call for educating parents on the benefits of studying abroad (Dessoff, 2006; Peterson 2003). In an ideal

world, International Educators would be glad to educate parents but considering how long these recommendations have been around it seems that time constraints and a lack of resources hold advisors back from being able to dedicate the full amount of time they wish to towards the subject.

It should also be noted here in the relationships section that the message or advertising of study abroad can be an obstacle men have to overcome. It belongs in this section because it pertains to the relationship between study abroad advisor and the male student. Redden (2008) points out that most advertising for study abroad programs have female face on it, with a token male thrown in here or there. She does acknowledge that this gender imbalance has potential to attract males as well (para. 1-3). Lucas (2013) furthers this message when writing, “Study abroad professionals are mostly white women and/or people who have gone abroad and made it their life’s work; most of our returners are also white women...” (p. 16). Lucas’ research discovers that male’s desire male and/or peer messages for study abroad, further emphasizing the need to male alumni participation but also for potential diversification of the International Education field (p. 10). Fischer (2012) notes a strategy taken by Michigan State University in order appeal to male students; men and women receive different marketing material for study abroad. Women get a message pushing the cultural experience and benefits of going overseas, while men get a message about how study abroad can distinguish them later on in life to employers or graduate schools (para. 24). This idea of a separate message for study abroad is grounded in the research of Salisbury et al. (2010) who write:

The findings of this study strongly suggest the need to craft targeting marketing strategies that recognize and account for key difference between women and men in terms of both pre-college and in-college experiences that affect the formation of aspirations to study

abroad... intent to study abroad among men seems primarily shaped by emerging personal values, experiences, and peer influence. (p. 33)

If more colleges and universities take the effort to create separate messaging about study abroad for men and women, they may be able to boost enrollment.

Summary

As indicated by the literature review, the question of why fewer men study abroad than women has been on the minds of those in the field of International Education for quite some time. Specifically since the mid-2000's the body of research has expanded greatly, but it must be noted that the majority of this work has been done in unpublished dissertations, with the studies generally encompassing research done at a single college or university or at best a small regional group of colleges and universities. This lack of published work means findings have not been officially acknowledged by journals in the field.

It should also be mentioned in this space that the decision to study abroad is clearly a nuanced one. BaileyShea (2009) summarizes this idea succinctly in stating:

This study showed that the study abroad outcome was influenced by the intersection of background, college involvement, and institutional factors. Similar to issues surrounding college choice, a student's decision to study abroad was influenced by an interplay of socio-cultural and institutional factors. (p. 177)

Clearly there are a wide number of factors involved into the decision to study abroad, which is why this research paper attempts to find out those specific to males by asking them directly. Many of the larger dissertations involve only survey data, while only the smaller projects actually asked male students directly. There is tremendous value in hearing reasons from the students face-to-face.

Research Design

The purpose of this study was to understand what barriers there are specific to men in studying abroad, to find out the reasons why some men end up studying abroad, and how they may have overcome any perceived barriers. This qualitative research will focus on information gathered through surveys and interviews with students, deriving potential answers to the research question through answers given and how they may fit into the theoretical framework discussed. There will also be an element of quantitative analysis in comparing answers to survey questions between the sexes, but the focus will largely be on the qualitative answers given during the survey and interviews.

Credit must go to Adkins (2004), a fellow School for International Training (SIT) Graduate Institute student who previously conducted research on the gender gap in study abroad in SIT Study Abroad programming. Adkins' survey and interview questions were used as the template for this research, with a few key changes made based on the transition from applying the questions from SIT Study Abroad to UNH and for applicability to this specific research questions. An update to Adkins' survey would prove valuable because it would provide an interesting comparison to a past study. Additionally I sought input from various parties at UNH, including staff members in the Center for International Education and the University Committee on Study Abroad, who suggested additional questions or different phrasing.

An anonymous online survey was created to distribute to students at UNH who had indicated interest in study abroad, but ultimately did not follow through with that desire. The survey was designed to provide a snapshot into the myriad of reasons the students have for not studying abroad, and reasons that could be easily categorized into Maslow tiers. The survey was created using the Qualtrics software, access being provided by being a university employee.

Potential students who fit in this category were found in databases controlled by the Center for International Education and the College of Liberal Arts Center for Study Abroad. For the Center for International Education, students were pulled who had expressed interest in study abroad during the 2013-14 and 2014-15 academic years and had ultimately chosen not to go. For the College of Liberal Arts Center for Study Abroad, it was an estimation of students who had indicated interest in study abroad, chosen not to, and were thought to still be students at the university. In total, 1,236 students would be emailed the link with an explanation that this researcher was a graduate student and employee of the university seeking information for my capstone project. The survey was kept open for twenty-three days, with a reminder email sent to students five days before it closed (See Appendix A for both emails). The survey had four questions: 1) Please indicate your gender 2) What factors influenced your decision not to study abroad? (Check all that apply) [20 options] 3) Which one from the list above was the biggest factor for you in choosing not to study abroad at UNH? and 4) What would have helped you most to change your mind about studying abroad? (for a copy of the survey, see Appendix B) Question four was added to the original Adkins survey in order to gauge what sort Maslow factor may play a large role in encouraging students to go abroad.

Male study abroad alumni from UNH were also interviewed. A list of fifty-five male students who had studied abroad in the spring of 2014 was derived using the Center for International Education's database and an email was sent to them requesting an interview in much the same fashion as the survey participants (See Appendix C). This included students from the three types of UNH programs. The program types are: 1) Managed, or programs that have been set up and are run by UNH itself, 2) Exchange, relationships that UNH has with other universities in the world for the swapping of students, and 3) Approved, programs that are run

by a third party provider that have been vetted by the Center for International Education. Interview questions were once again based from Adkins' previous study as the researcher had set up a baseline of questions that were would be relevant to this study. Questions were added concerning Maslow's relationships tier, including who supported the student on campus and whether they had the support of friends and family in their decision, and how they overcame obstacles they may have perceived prior to going abroad (See Appendix D). Before starting each interview, the students were asked to sign a consent and agreement form ensuring the anonymity in the reporting of results, and were reminded that at any time during the interview they could stop and did not have to answer a question if they felt uncomfortable doing so (see Appendix E).

These questions were designed to be open-ended to let the student do the talking. Ten responses were received by students who were willing to be interviewed. Each session was recorded using this researchers personal Apple iPad Air, with an application called "Supernote" created by Clear Sky Apps LTD. Interviews were later transcribed and deleted from the iPad. In the email to students, it was mentioned that the interviews would take between twenty to twenty-five minutes, but in reality they took less time ranging from five minutes to sixteen. In general, this researcher let the student control the flow of the conversation so they could best tell their story, only occasionally interrupting with follow-up questions so as not to lead a participant to an expected response. Follow-up questions were largely used to clarify or ask about an idea they had mentioned but not fully explored.

Limitations

The first limitation in this study is the small sample size. Only ten responses were received by male study abroad alumni who were interested in being interviewed and 110 responses to the survey, so while the students' stories and responses can provide great insight

into my research question it is difficult to argue that generalizations can be made about their experiences to a wider population. Despite this limitation, the qualitative nature of the study can be useful when taken into consideration with all of the information provided in the literature review.

Other limitations to the survey were that students may also have viewed the survey or interview as an opportunity to vent frustrations they may have had concerning the study abroad process. Additionally, since there was complete anonymity in the survey when a reminder was sent to the students to achieve a higher response rate there is a chance that a student accidentally filled out the survey twice.

It should finally be noted that this researcher's own study abroad experience, employment within the field at UNH, involvement as a Group Leader of an Experiment in International Living program, and the pursuit of a Master's degree in the field of International Education makes me biased towards what I believe are the positive benefits of study abroad. This researcher views the opportunity to study abroad as a vital aspect of the student experience and openly encourage all students to take advantage of the opportunity.

Presentation of Data

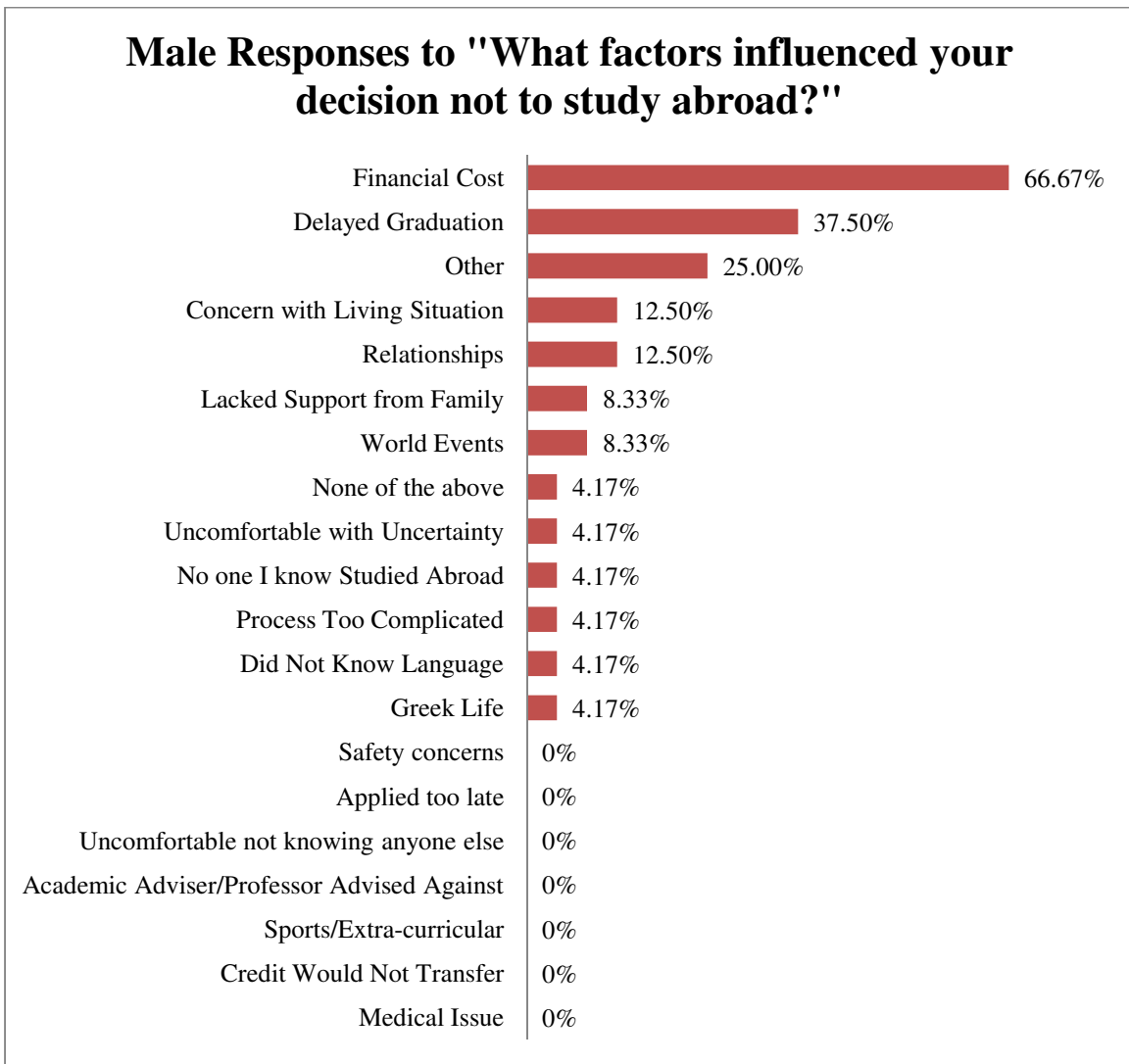
Survey Results

The online survey was sent out by email to 1,236 students. These are students who had expressed interest in study abroad by attending an information session held by either the Center for International Education or the College of Liberal Arts Center for Study Abroad, but had ultimately not decided to go by the date they indicated on their student information forms. Out of 1,236 emails, ten bounced back due to incorrect email addresses and three people responded saying they had studied abroad. A total of 1,226 students received the email, and of those 110

elected to respond by taking the online survey, giving a response rate of just about nine percent. Of those responses, twenty-four were male (22%), eighty-five were female (77%), and one student responded to gender as “Other” (1%). For the purposes of this study, the one “Other” student has been removed from consideration. For specific answers to the open-ended questions “Which one from the list above was the biggest factor for you in choosing to not study abroad at UNH?” and “What would have helped you most to change your mind about studying abroad?” as well as text answer to the “Explain” additions to both “Relationships” and “Other” selections broken down by gender please see Appendix F.

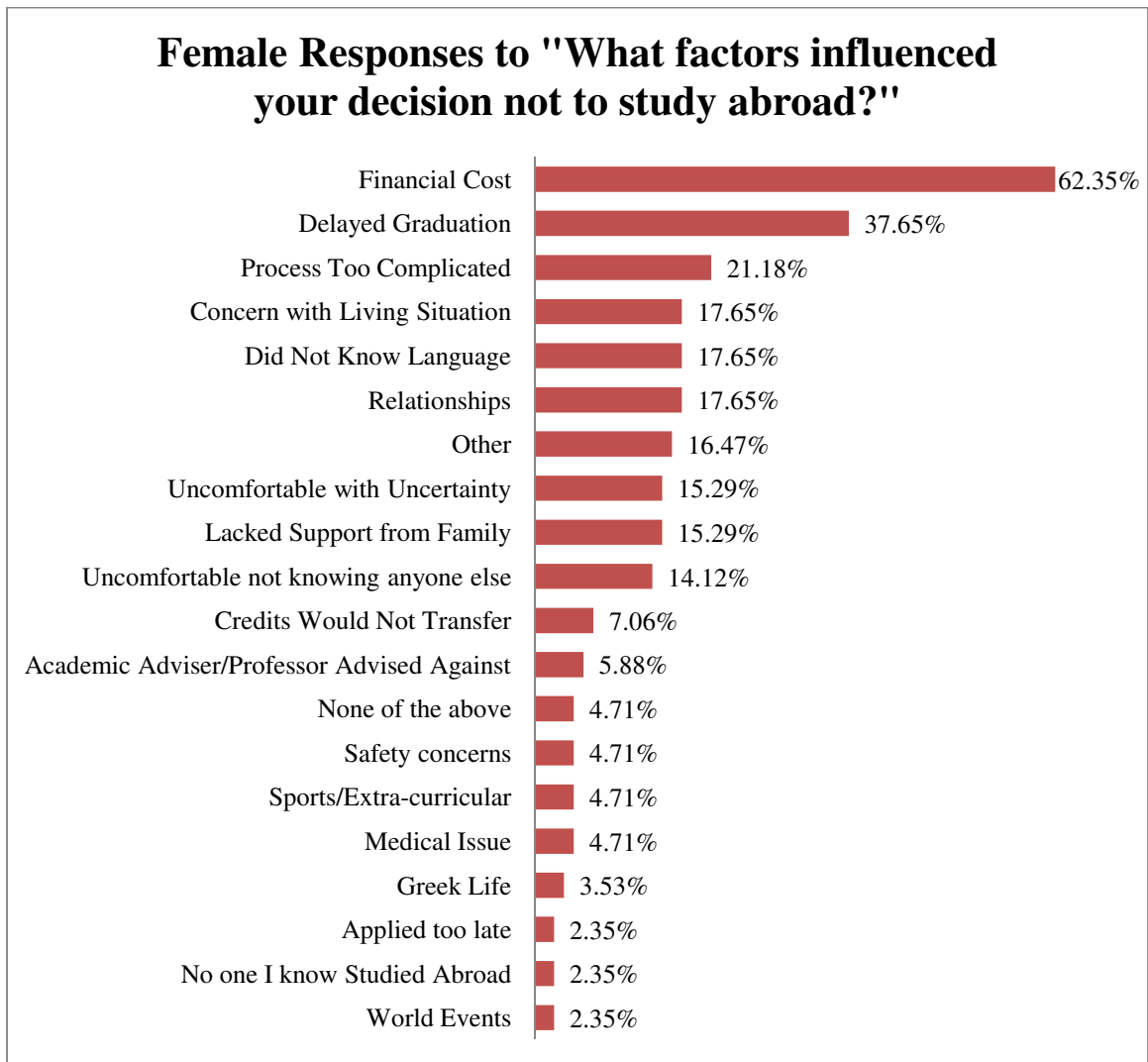
Figure 1 shows the male responses to the question, “What factors influenced your decision not to study abroad? (Check all that apply)”. Figure 2 shows the female responses to the same question.

Figure 1



Total Male Responses: 24

Figure 2



Total Female Responses: 85

Comparing Figures 1 and 2, there are clear cut concerns to students who did not end up studying abroad. First, both men and women strongly regarded cost as a barrier to study abroad participation, with only a slight difference between the two genders (66% for men, 62% for women). The second largest barrier for both genders was the potential that study abroad would delay their graduation, and this was an answer for both genders roughly a third of the time.

Figures 1 and 2 also show that men and women have similar concerns over seven obstacles. Given the small sample size, I rationalized that anything within 5 percent of each other constituted a close fit. So with this in mind, men and women displayed an almost equal level of concern for concern over living situation and relationships (13% men, 18% women), no one they have known studying abroad (4% men, 5% women), Greek life (4% each), and concern for their safety abroad, sports conflicts, or medical issues (0% men, 5% women).

Categories that displayed a significant gulf between the genders were lack support from family (15% women, 8% men), world events (8% of men, 2% of women), being uncomfortable with uncertain situations (4% men, 15% women), the process being too complicated (4% men, 21% women), language concerns (4% men, 18% women), being uncomfortable not knowing anyone else on the program (0% men, 14% women), having their academic adviser or a professor advise against it (0% men, 6% women), and concerns that credits would not transfer (0% men, 7% women). Generally men selected fewer factors in completing this survey than women, with seven factors not being selected at all. The group of women on the other hand selected each factor at least once.

There is one significant category for men that displayed disparity with women, and that was the selection of "Other" as a factor (25% men, 16% women). The answers here show quite a difference between the genders. Of the six men who selected this factor, three listed probation issues that prevented them from studying abroad, one mentioned an internship, one not having a high enough grade point average, and another military commitment. The fourteen women on the other hand mention an array of concerns like not wanting to miss out on friends or events on campus, academic schedules being too rigorous, not seeing the point, poor planning, or stated that they planned to study abroad at a different time.

These results do form a contrast to the results shown by Adkins (2004). In her survey of SIT students in 2004, cost was still a major factor between the sexes at an even percentage, but it was significantly less than the rate shown at UNH, down to 35% and 38% for men and women respectively (pg. 36-37). Although the wording was changed from Adkins' survey to this one from "Study abroad did not fit into my curriculum" to "Study abroad would have delayed my graduation" to fit the context of the survey better, there was also a significant difference in responses between the two student bodies here as well with only 9% and 8% of SIT males and females respectively saying it was a concern for them. This perhaps reflects the different student bases that each institution enrolls, with SIT students coming from a wide variety of schools versus just UNH. Also, it may reflect that SIT programs have a program-specific focus and greater prerequisites than the more general programs offered by UNH, thus making it slightly more difficult to find a specific "fit" for UNH students.

Of final note, the gender imbalance in answering the survey actually closely mirrors the gender imbalance of study abroad participation between the genders at UNH. While *Open Doors* (2013) reports a national average of roughly two women for every one male studying abroad, UNH as an institution is at three to one.

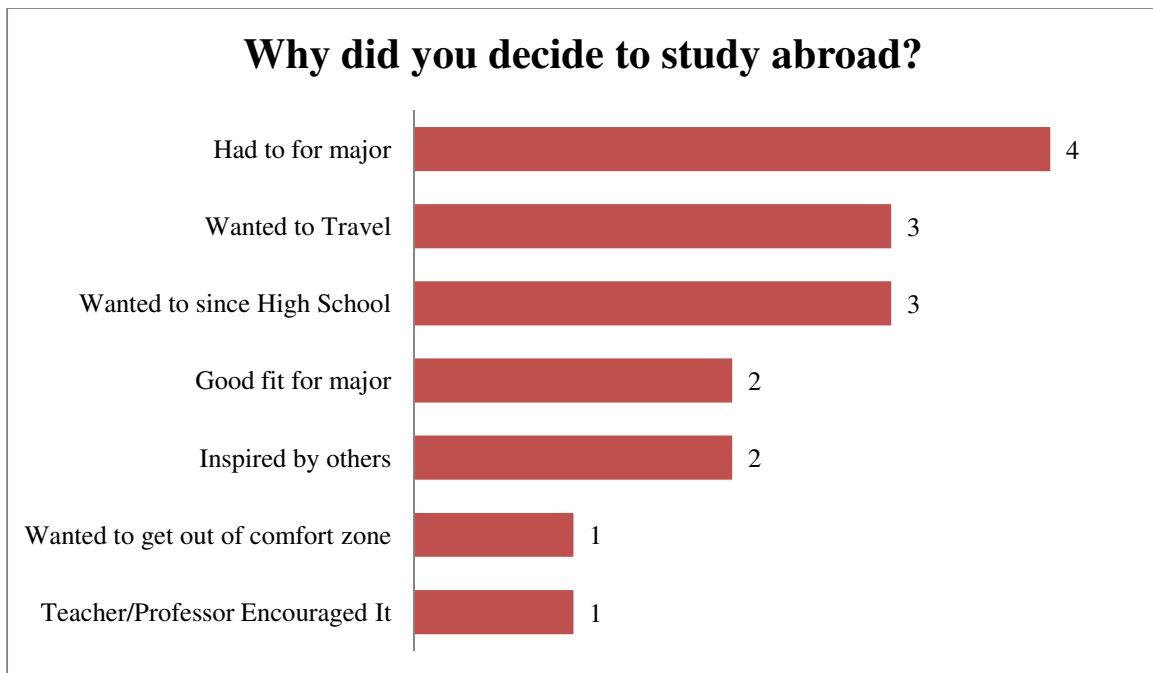
Male Alumni Interviews

Ten male alumni of study abroad at UNH were interviewed. Despite the low number of participants, there was good diversity in terms of destination and majors. There were representatives from the College of Liberal Arts, the College of Engineering and Physical Sciences, the School of Marine Science and Ocean Engineering, and the Paul College of Business and Economics, with the majority of the students being in the liberal arts and one representative from each of the other colleges mentioned. The countries the participants studied

abroad in were Spain (two), the United Kingdom (one in England, one in Scotland), Australia, France, Germany, China, New Zealand, and Kyrgyzstan.

When asked why the students had wanted to study abroad, the most popular answers were that it was required for their major, they wanted to travel, or they had wanted to study abroad since before they came to UNH. See Figure 3 for a breakdown of general trends in answers from the men, keeping in mind that some students had more than one answer. It should be noted that students with language majors or who are part of the International Affairs dual-major program are required to study abroad, which explains why four identified it as a requirement.

Figure 3



The next question asked of the male alumni was, “Why do you think fewer men decide to study abroad than women?” Five of the ten men cited that male students are typically in majors where the opportunity to study abroad is much more difficult to fit into their curriculum, often

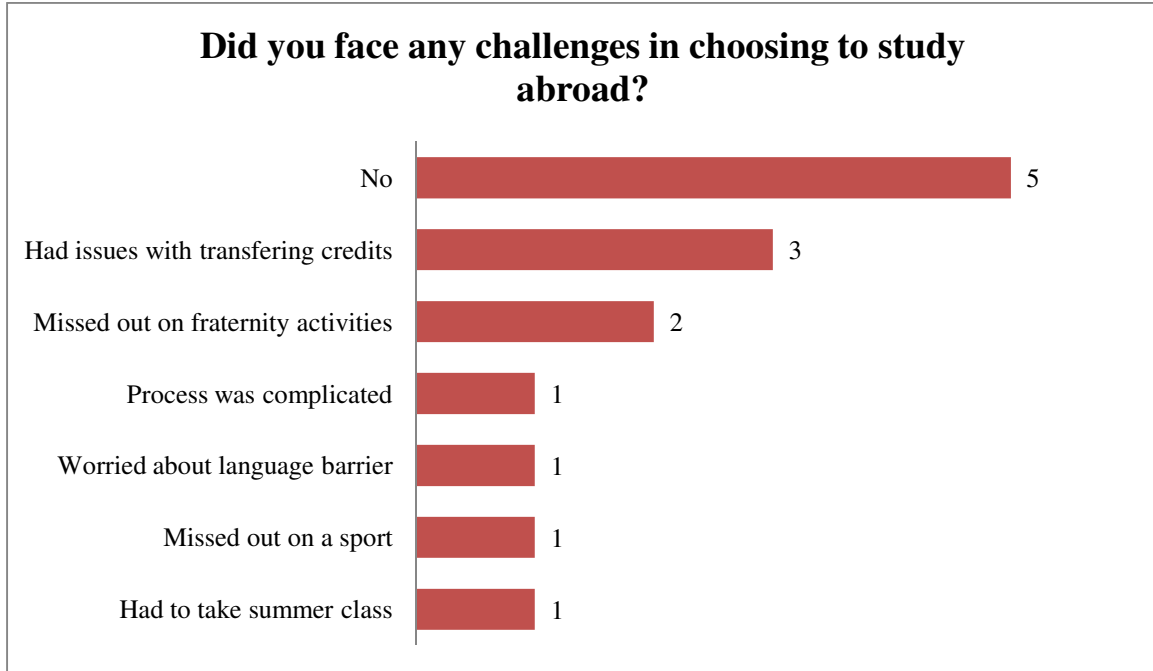
mentioning the STEM programs. Although Interviewee 10, while agreeing with the sentiment of the gender gap in majors, disagrees slightly with himself when he says:

I live in a suite with eight guys, and I asked them, cause [sic] I was the only one of those eight who decided to go abroad, and I kind of asked them before I came here why none of them had decided to. All the guys in my suite are engineering and sciences and stuff, and they were all saying that their schedules were basically too busy and that they didn't think that the credits were going to work out. But then at the same time I don't know how that... women are equally busy. And have the same issues.

This is a great insight into just how odd the gender gap in study abroad is. Many men and women face the same general challenges in the process, and yet it is women who are the ones who follow through and actually go. It was interesting to see this reflection from a Civil Engineering major who actually managed to go on a study abroad program and break away from an entire suite of eight peers who thought it was out of their reach.

The next generalized answer expressed in five of the interviews was the idea that men viewed study abroad as a waste of time, not directly related to their goals, or just not as appealing as it is to women. Statements on this included "I think that fewer men decide to study abroad because they are not as open to experience as women are," "Maybe because in society what we have going on still is this culture of, get your profession, become the bread winner... so maybe that might just seem like a waste of time..." and "... a lot of men are set on their degree. Four years, typical track, and then that's it." (Interviews 8, 9, 5)

The next question asked of the male alumni was if they faced any challenges in choosing to study abroad. For a generalized summary of their answers, see Figure 4.

Figure 4

None of the men expressed any significant challenges in their decision to study abroad during their interviews, nor did they express that there was anything that would be able to change their mind from their decision. The students who did face challenges accepted them readily and did not regret their choice. Note that some students gave more than one answer. A summary of the general feeling comes from Interviewee 5 when he said:

The challenges that came about were in transfer credit and I mean obviously the language barrier. I'd say I didn't have to give up anything, except for my involvement in organizations here. I mean like me being in a fraternity. But those weren't very costly... I'd choose study abroad over them any day.

Overall, five of the ten interviewees answered that they faced no challenges in studying abroad (Interviews 1, 4, 6, 8, 9, 10). Three reported missing out on extra-curricular activities, two missing fraternity events and one missing out on an unofficial UNH ski team (Interviews 3 and 5). Three interviewees expressed some concern over the transfer of credits, but expressed

that this issue only came into play once they had returned to campus from their study abroad experience (Interviews 5, 7, 9). One interviewee expressed some minor frustration in the approval process involved for his program, but appreciated the support he got from his major department and the study abroad advisers in getting it approved (Interview 7). It should be noted that two of the students expressed that they benefitted by overcoming the challenges in choosing to study abroad when answering this question. For example, Interviewee 2 said, “I had to take Physics 1 and 2 over the summer, which actually ended up being good because it was a lot easier during the summer.”

The next question asked the participants, “Were there any aspects about studying abroad that worried you before going? What was your biggest concern?” With this question nearly ten different answers were received, with some of the men bringing up multiple concerns. Two students expressed no worries before going abroad. The only worry that came up more than once was language (Interviews 1, 3, 7). Otherwise, the answers varied greatly and concerns included living with a host family (Interview 1), cooking due to the lack of a dining hall, being far away from home (both Interview 2), hygiene (Interview 5), air travel, local transportation (both Interview 7), safety, missing living in a single dorm, leaving a new girlfriend (all Interview 8), being independent enough with money to do what he wanted (Interview 9), and a general concern for finding housing due to a unique situation of one of UNH’s Exchange programs (Interview 10).

The previous question was followed up with asking how the students overcame these obstacles. This was asked to provide insight into coping mechanisms or types of personalities that study abroad students have that a nonparticipant may not, and how the study abroad students found ways to progress past the bottom tiers of Maslow’s pyramid. There were a few common

themes that emerged. The first theme was self-belief and seeing the positives. This can be best expressed by Interviewee 10 when he explains:

I just tried not to get too stressed out... Solider on through. And figure if I'm going to miss out on stuff, I'm going to miss out on stuff, but I'm also gaining six months in a whole different country so... it balances out.

The second theme in the answers was a personality trait of adaptability. These men were not antagonistic of their new surroundings and instead chose to adapt and accept the new situation. Interviewee 5 says, "I just kind of adapted because the culture's very welcoming... there's a stark contrast between US and Asian culture. So it's just a bridge you have to cross. But once crossed, it's worthwhile."

A last theme that emerged was the willingness to take initiative. Two of the men found themselves struggling at the beginning of their respective programs, but eventually overcame the difficulty by being more proactive with their time. Interviewee 6 shows this trait by answering:

So I think really what just did it for me was just me taking initiative and doing things that I knew I wanted to do going over there and that was what kind of changed me from being 'I don't want to be here anymore' to 'This is actually really awesome'.

The next two questions asked of the male students were "Did you feel that the campus community was supportive of your decision to study abroad?" and "Did you feel supported in your decision to study abroad by friends and family?" These questions were added to gauge support on Maslow's relationships tier among the men who had successfully gone abroad to see if there was any common thread among them. Almost universally, the men reported receiving great support from advisers, professors, friends, and family. Interviewee 3 jokes, "Sometimes the guys will give me a little shit, I guess you could say, about France in general. With the frat

brothers it's kind of a joke to mess with me." His tone of voice indicated nothing malicious behind the frat brothers, but that comment was really the only "negative" thing mentioned throughout the ten interviews. Interviewee 5 had some work to do convincing his advisers that studying abroad for a year was what he wanted to do, but he admits:

...I didn't receive too much either criticism or push back from it, I think they were a little more hesitant because they don't really know how to approach it that well when people want to go abroad for that long.

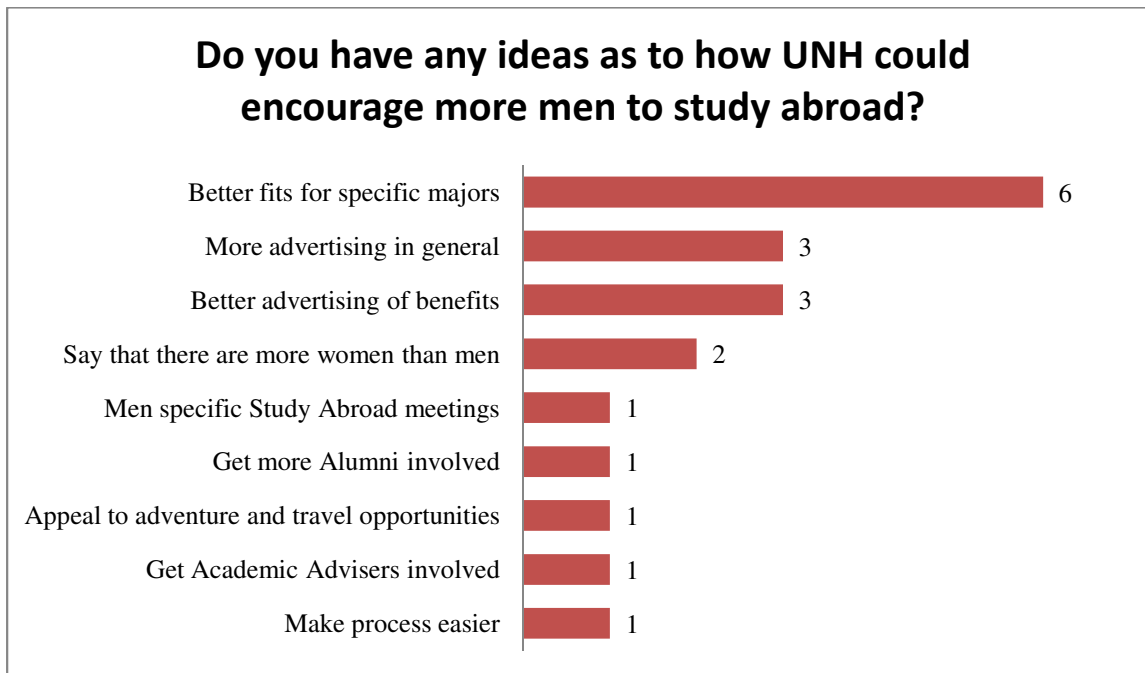
It is good to see in these ten cases that UNH shows campus-wide support for study abroad programming and cooperation among departments. Additionally the comments from the men suggest that support from parents can go a long way in convincing a student to take advantage of this opportunity. Interviewee 1 explains this support when he says, "Of course my family was a little nervous I mean, they knew I wanted to go for a long time so they helped me get the money."

Another addition made to Adkins (2004) line of questioning was asking the men, "Did you have goals set for your study abroad experience, either self-created or set with an adviser?" and subsequently, "Do you feel you met these goals, if you had any?" These questions were important to gauge pursuit of Maslow's fourth and fifth tier needs among students, as achieving any of these goals gives purpose to the study abroad experience and having a goal can be part of the decision making process of study abroad. None of the ten men reported creating any goals with advisers. There were three self-created goals that generally showed up in conversation, and those were language mastery, personal growth, and travel. Concerning personal growth, Interviewee 1 states, "I mean, it wasn't really a goal but I grew a lot as a person while studying

abroad too, which I didn't really realize would happen and I don't think anyone realizes will happen."

Finally, it was asked the men, "Do you have any ideas as to how UNH could encourage more men to study abroad?" Their answers are summarized in Figure 5 below. Note that some of the men provided more than one answer.

Figure 5



The majority of the men wanted to see increased options for the "male-dominated" majors, often specifically mentioning the STEM fields in their answer. Advertising was also a topic of discussion of the men, and with two schools of thought between more advertising of study abroad in general and better advertising of the benefits of study abroad. Interviewee 6 acknowledges that, "I'd probably just highlight all the positives of it but then again realistically I don't think all the highlights, I don't think the school here could be advertising." He goes on to explain that classes were easier than back at UNH, and doubts that UNH can recruit kids by telling them the drinking age in England is eighteen. There were two male students who

mentioned that it should be brought up that more women study abroad than men, and while Interviewee 9 said it slightly tongue-in-cheek, Interviewee 10 explains, “I think even just telling people the numbers, that’s surprising just that fact. I don’t know if that would encourage people to go, but it might encourage people to think about it.”

Two more insightful comments were provided. Interviewee 5, after suggesting increased alumni participation in the recruitment of men and potential male-only meetings, ultimately ties together the conversation by saying:

It’s just, it’s really hard to tell people how valuable the experiences is. It’s something you wish you could just, when somebody asks you, you could just give them a ticket somewhere and send them on their way forcefully... It’s something you can’t verbally express, you really need to just, you can’t even paint a picture you just really have to be with them or let them do it by themselves. It just takes a little maturity and independence to make that decision on their own.

Interviewee 8’s response was the other insightful comment when he explains, “I mean... I don’t think that they’re doing anything that wouldn’t encourage men. I don’t think that they’re doing anything pro-woman or anything like that. It’s just, it attracts those kind of people.”

Analysis of Data

Survey Results

These results suggest that the concern for cost and potential delayed graduation is universal among the genders, and at least at UNH this does not appear to be gender specific. This goes against the trend presented in the literature review, where previous studies had shown that men had greater concerns about finances and whether study abroad would set them back on the course to graduation. It also hints at the importance of achieving the base Maslow goals

before being able to progress onward, as both cost and the concern for credits or delayed graduation would fit into the second tier of “safety”.

Relationships were reported as a factor by a roughly equal percentage of male and female participants. When asked to explain further for “Relationships” a divide did appear. Of the three men who responded that it was a factor, two said that they did not want to separate from their significant other while one wrote that he was, “Tired of finding new friend group every couple of years”. On the other hand, seven of the fifteen women who selected “Relationships” mentioned a significant other and/or their family. This plays into the disparity between men and women who responded that they lacked support from their family, with 15% of women versus 8% of men saying they were concerned about it. But it is unclear just how students “lacked” support from their family, whether it was concerns for finances, concern for safety of the student abroad, or another reason.

There were a number of factors in the results of this survey that went against the information covered in the literature review. Of particular note, the gap in the process being too complicated is quite peculiar; perhaps explained by the fact that so many more women even go to the Information Sessions and look into the process of studying abroad that this becomes an issue. Language concerns being greater for women was also surprising because if more women are in the languages majors one would think there may be more confidence in their ability to use the destination language (National Center for Education Statistics, 2013). One woman reported wishing she could confirm her language skills before going, indicating why confidence may be an issue among the women language majors (#165). Women also reporting a greater discomfort with uncertain situations is the opposite of the reported trend of men being uncomfortable with leaving their comfort zones.

All of the factors that were available for choices in the survey could fall under one of Maslow's tiers, but there was one unanticipated exception. There turned out to be a correlation between the disparity of males and females when they elected the open-ended "Other" factor, which men chose at a slightly higher rate than their female counterparts (25% to 16%). Of the six men who chose "Other", three mentioned probation conflicting with their ability to study abroad. Of the fourteen women who chose "Other", none mentioned disciplinary problems. Disciplinary issues cannot be neatly placed into any of the Maslow tiers, and this disparity between the two sex's hints at a much deeper issue at American colleges and universities.

A comparison of the results of this study's survey to what was previously done ten years ago by Adkins (2004) is not particularly surprising. A major difference is displayed in that the number one factor chosen in Adkins survey for both men and women was "choose a different study abroad program", an option not listed for UNH students because it was not relevant to the situation. But the next major concern was financial cost and it again showed an equal concern as a factor among both men and women. A difference does show up between the concern in transfer credits or a fit into curriculum, but that can be explained by the more specific nature of SIT Study Abroad Programs as they generally have a programmatic focus that can fit nicely into some existing major while the UNH students are applying to a wider variety of program types. It should be noted that the men in Adkins' study did not select nine of the factors at all, mirroring this study's survey where men did not choose seven of the factors. The same was true for women, where in Adkins' two of the factors went unselected where in this study all factors had at least one selection. This perhaps indicates that women have a wider variety of concerns or are considering more factors when deciding to study abroad while men may focus more on a single obstacle that seems insurmountable.

Interview Results

The ten men interviewed, while a small sample size, provide insight into the research question of what obstacles exist for men and how they overcame them. Given that it was such a small sample size, the results should not be generalized to men as a whole, but the data still sheds necessary light onto what drives men in their decisions for study abroad.

In terms of why the men studied abroad, the largest factor was that it was a requirement for their major. That is not to say these students were coerced into going, many of them sought out opportunities for going abroad and/or did not regret choosing a major that required them to go abroad. For example, Interviewee 4 changed his intended major after a senior year high school exchange program to something that would give him an opportunity to study abroad. Interviewee 7 qualifies the requirement of having to go abroad by stating, “I looked forward to it, obviously!” It appears as if a majority of those interviewed had their hearts set on going abroad well before coming to UNH, as indicated by those who said they had wanted to since before high school, or were inspired by others. Particularly noteworthy were the two students who referenced their older sisters studying abroad being an inspiration for them doing so (Interviews 2 and 5). Speaking personally, this researcher was also inspired by visiting his sister during her study abroad experience. These experiences branch away from the tendency mentioned in the literature review of parents’ lack of support for male students studying abroad. While these men may be exceptions to the norm, it does show that in the case with a family member previously going abroad, that parents more familiar with the scenario may be more comfortable allowing their son or daughter to go abroad.

The answers given to the “Why did you decide to study abroad?” question in this study also formed a dichotomy to the way the men answered in Adkins (2004) interviews. The leading

answers in her interviews were, “the country attracted me”, “interested in a new culture, religion, politics”, and “wanted to learn a foreign language” (p. 29). The only correlation between the two studies is with the “wanted to learn a foreign language” answer and those who were required to study abroad because three of the four Interviewees who responded that way were language majors. Otherwise, Adkins’ respondents came up with entirely different major reasons for study abroad. This can perhaps be explained by the different type of student the SIT Study Abroad programs may attract, given the unique nature of their research-based, homestay required experience versus the more generalized type of experience a UNH student may be applying to. SIT Study Abroad likely attracts a specific kind of student, while the UNH variety of program choice applies to a broader base.

When the participants were asked why they think fewer men study abroad, the participant’s responses generally fell in with stereotypes mentioned in the literature review about what majors men and women tend to fall into and with the idea that men are supposed to be the breadwinner and get a job instead of studying abroad. Adkins’ (2004) results mirror this study, with the men in her interviews responding along the stereotypical lines (p. 30). These comments suggest that men are more rigid in their expectations of college, and view study abroad more as an add-on than a necessity during their time at school.

These interviews also explored the challenges the men faced in choosing to study abroad, and it is noteworthy that while money was such a large factor to those who ultimately elected not to study abroad, it was not even mentioned by these ten in this specific question. Only Interviewee 9 mentions finances at all, saying he was only worried about having enough money to do everything he wanted but had saved up enough prior to departure to know that he could at least have the study abroad experience. Money ended up being brought up in other questions,

specifically during the questions about family support for Interviewees 1, 2, and 8 with how their families helped them pay for the experience after knowing how much it meant to each Interviewee.

One crossover issue between the alumni and the nonparticipants was the issue of transferring credits. But in considering this issue, it seems as if the alumni had greater goals of having this study abroad experience and were not as concerned with the process of getting there. They knew it would take some extra work to make sure credits would count, and were able to cope with the amount of work required upon their return. Summarized, between the money and credits issue it was as if these ten male alumni knew they wanted to study abroad and did all they could to make the experience happen regardless of the barriers.

There was a strong correlation between the answers given regarding challenges that needed to be overcome in this survey with what Adkins' (2004) survey revealed. Both surveys had "no challenges" as the top answer, and concerns with credits and activities left behind rounding out popular choices when answering this question. This shows some universality between men in the challenges they face in choosing to study abroad, and that they have remained constant over a decade. That there are "no challenges" remains the top answer hints at decisiveness among male students who do study abroad, and their proper preparation for the semester they will be off campus.

When asked about what worries they had before studying abroad, most of the Interviewees concerns could be classified into one of Maslow's tiers, but to have so few overlapping concerns among the students is a surprise. Comparing what was said in the interviews to what Adkins (2004) found from asking the same question only adds additional concerns to the list, as the only crossovers from ten years ago to today were leaving a girlfriend,

learning the language, and concerns with living in a host family (p. 34). This shows that concerns about going abroad are truly a personal experience, and as much as International Educators try to generalize the experience to appeal to the most number of people, you can never quite tell what specific concerns a student may bring with them to an advising meeting. When considering the personality traits discussed above in self-belief, adaptability, and willingness to take initiative, it is perhaps that the alumni expressed these traits more than the nonparticipants.

The next two interview questions concerned support both on-campus and off from professors, advisors, friends, and family in order to gauge Maslow's relationships tier with the ten men. Overwhelmingly the men interviewed responded that they had nearly full support from all people they were in touch with. While once more it should be taken into consideration that this was a small sample size and perhaps an exceptional few, this support likely helped these students in their comfort level with going abroad. Having that base of the Maslow pyramid to build on assisted these students in their decision.

In regards to the question concerning whether or not the men had goals set for their study abroad experience, it was surprising to hear a resounding "no" when it came to goals set with an adviser. On the other hand, to hear how many of the men had aspirations for their experience, whether it was to increase their mastery of a language or the more vague goals of personal growth and travel, was of interest. These responses indicate that Maslow fourth level goals are driving these male students desire to study abroad, and in pursuit of these goals they all showed a willingness to overcome any obstacles in their way.

Finally, when asked what UNH could do to encourage more men to study abroad the ten came up with a wide variety of answers that could be used to address Maslow tier concerns. For example, the majority of the respondents suggested providing better programmatic fits for the

specific STEM majors where study abroad is perceived to be a more difficult option, and this was also suggested four of Adkins' (2004) students (p. 34). This appeals to the safety Maslow tier because of the concern in receiving credits for those majors. The suggestions to have male-specific study abroad information meetings, getting more alumni involved, and getting academic advisers involved plays to the third level of "relationships" by providing stronger connections in encouraging those unsure of the decision to study abroad. The suggestion of better advertising the benefits of study abroad in was particular interesting, because this would be classified in either the Maslow fourth or fifth tier. This hints at the importance of appealing to a students' sense of purpose for studying abroad, to have them aspire to a particular goal for the experience.

Discussion

Conclusions

This study used Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (1943) as a framework for finding physiological, safety, and relationship barriers that may be unique to men in preventing them from studying abroad. Ultimately, in the case of this small sample size from UNH, it was found that the two biggest issues for both men and women in a similar proportion was both cost and the concern that study abroad would cause a delay in the ability to graduate on time. The only significant factor that men put down as an issue more than women was issues with judicial problems on campus. Men's struggles on campus have not gone unnoticed, and in an article written recently entitled, "Take Male Students Seriously" Capraro (2014) writes, "In short, men are getting less out of their college experience and they are not taking it upon themselves to do something about it." (para. 2) The results of the survey hint at deeper issues and concerns that can be covered by Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs.

This is not to say that the findings of this study were insignificant. Over sixty percent of both men and women reported that cost was a significant issue to them, and over thirty percent of each said that they were worried that study abroad would delay their graduation. These are two basic Maslow needs that need to be addressed before any student can study abroad, and addressing these two issues is of critical importance if International Education wants to see continued growth in study abroad. Considering the focus on internationalizing campuses and the Institute for International Education's *Generation Study Abroad* initiative, these two issues should be at the forefront.

The second question asked by this study was how men who did end up studying abroad overcame the obstacles that may have been present. Based on the responses in the interviews this researcher believes the image has become clearer in the profile of a study abroad student. The ten men who responded to the request for an interview showed that their desire to study abroad was not a spontaneous decision, but rather something they had been planning on doing for awhile and oftentimes before they had even arrived at the university. Many of their goals fell into Maslow's top tiers of self-esteem and self-actualization, and these men overcame any perceived obstacles such as money, a lack of credits, or a concern over leaving a loved one behind because they saw the value the experience would bring to them and would not be stopped in their pursuit of their goal.

Ultimately, this study helps to corroborate what BaileyShea (2009) wrote about the decision to study abroad being a complex interplay of various factors. Maslow's needs are certainly a barrier that needs to be overcome before a student can feel confident about their decision to study abroad, but it is not a straight progression up the pyramid. It is also indicated

that a solid purpose or goal that the student desires to achieve with their study abroad program can be a bridge over those more basic needs that drives a student to achieve.

Practical Applicability

If UNH is serious about its efforts to internationalize the campus, which is one of the ten pillars of its current strategic plan (UNH, 2014), then the comments made by students must be heard. If such a high percentage of both male and female students are concerned with the cost of study abroad, it is time to take a look into what the university can do to alleviate the concerns. Other schools have shown great creativity in finding ways to help fund their students' study abroad programming, and a highlight of one of these solutions comes from Redden (2014) when the author writes:

North Dakota State has begun taking advantage of airlines' business mileage programs to help fund student travel: rather than using accrued miles to pay for employee travel, the university is redeeming those miles on behalf on study abroad students who demonstrate financial need. (para. 12)

It is these types of creative solutions that can encourage students to study abroad by showing them that they have the university's full support.

Additionally, it was often recommended in the course of this study that students need better fits for their major or simply do not know about the opportunities out there for their majors. It may behoove the university to reach out to the colleges and find out specifically what they are looking for in a match for credit transference from study abroad programs, and find out what sorts of locations both professors and students want for the more difficult STEM options. Full collaboration can go a long way in making sure the advising process goes smoothly.

Recommendations for Further Research

This study brings up a number of ideas for further research. In particular, the field of international education may find it useful to explore the parental factor in greater depth. It would be valuable to ask parents why they do or do not support their student in the decision to study abroad. This knowledge could help inform advisors how best to convey the message of study abroad to parents. It would also be interesting to see how much study abroad “stays in the family” Consider the two students who cited their sisters as influences in why they studied abroad, it would be interesting to see how much more likely a younger sibling is to study abroad if an older one already has blazed a trail for them.

That over sixty percent of UNH students saw finances as their greatest concern and only thirty percent did through Adkins (2004) survey also hint at institutional differences in study abroad. Given the importance of tailoring the message of study abroad to both men and women, To further explore this issue one could consider the difference between a public and private institution and the regional differences between schools. Although this would get to a rather micro level, this researcher could see there being significant differences in how one should advertise study abroad to a white, Southern male at a large public institution versus an Asian female at a small west coast liberal arts college.

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Appendix A: Email to Survey Students and Reminder

From: Alexander Lindsay (alexander.lindsay@unh.edu)

Date: Thursday, October 16, 2014 - 8:06 a.m.

Subject: UNH Study Abroad Survey

Dear students,

My name is Alexander Lindsay and I am the International Education Program Support Assistant in the Center for International Education and a graduate student at SIT Graduate Institute. I am researching why male and female students decide not to study abroad during their time at UNH.

You were selected to take part in a research study because you indicated interest in study abroad by attending a Study Abroad Information Session at UNH but either have yet to study abroad or ultimately decided not to. If you still ultimately hope to study abroad, disregard this email.

Otherwise, please answer this quick survey at this website (click on this link):

https://unh.az1.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_2blyGP4Lrk5tUy1. Your answers will remain completely anonymous and confidential. There are only four questions and it should not take you long.

Thank you for your help and I hope that you will take a minute to complete this survey.

Alexander Lindsay
International Education Program Support Assistant
University of New Hampshire
alexander.lindsay@unh.edu
603-862-0654

From: Alexander Lindsay (alexander.lindsay@unh.edu)
Date: Monday, November 3, 2014 – 12:51 p.m.
Subject: RE: UNH Study Abroad Survey

Dear students,

This is a reminder that if you were interested in taking part in my survey, you have until Friday to fill it out. If you already filled it out, **you can ignore this email!** In case you forgot, I am researching why male and female students decide not to study abroad during their time at UNH.

You were selected to take part in a research study because you indicated interest in study abroad by attending a Study Abroad Information Session at UNH but either have yet to study abroad or ultimately decided not to. If you still ultimately hope to study abroad, disregard this email. Otherwise, please answer this quick survey at this website (click on this link): https://unh.az1.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_2blyGP4Lrk5tUy1. Your answers will remain completely anonymous and confidential. There are only four questions and it should not take you long.

Thank you for your help and I hope that you will take a minute to complete this survey.

Alexander Lindsay
International Education Program Support Assistant
University of New Hampshire
alexander.lindsay@unh.edu
603-862-0654

Appendix B: Survey

1. Please indicate your gender: Male/Female/Trans/Other
2. What factors influenced your decision not to study abroad? (Check all that apply)
 - a. Financial Cost
 - b. Relationships
Explain:
 - c. Medical Issue
 - d. Study abroad would have delayed my graduation
 - e. Credits would not transfer to UNH
 - f. Sports/Extra-curricular commitment
Explain:
 - g. Sorority/Fraternity commitment
 - h. Did not know appropriate foreign language sufficiently
 - i. Process too complicated/stressful
 - j. World Events
 - k. Lacked support from family for study abroad
 - l. No one I know has studied abroad
 - m. Academic Adviser or professor advised against it
 - n. Concerned about living situation abroad
 - o. Uncomfortable with uncertain situations (not knowing what to expect)
 - p. Uncomfortable with not knowing anyone else on program
 - q. Applied too late
 - r. Safety Concerns
 - s. None of the above
 - t. Other (please explain)
3. Which one from the list above was the biggest factor for you in choosing not to study abroad at UNH?
4. What would have helped you most to change your mind about studying abroad?

Appendix C: Email to Male Study Abroad Alumni

From: Alexander Lindsay (alexander.lindsay@unh.edu)

Date: Wednesday, October 15, 2014 6:08 p.m.

Subject: UNH Study Abroad Alumni Research Request

Dear students,

Welcome back from your semester abroad. My name is Alexander Lindsay and I am the International Education Program Support Assistant at UNH, and also a graduate student at SIT Graduate Institute working towards a degree in International Education. I am conducting research on why fewer men study abroad than women. Currently at UNH, 75% of students who study abroad are women while only 25% who study abroad are men.

As you are a male study abroad alumni at UNH, I would like to know if you would be willing to be interviewed in person for 20-25 minutes. You might think you don't know much about this subject, but I am looking to learn about your experience in studying abroad and the process you went through at UNH. Why did you want to study abroad? What obstacles did you have to overcome? Who supported you in your decision? These are a couple of sample questions I will ask. There are no "correct" answers. Your interview will be kept confidential and your name will not be given at any time during this thesis paper. If you are willing to take part in this interview and are age 18 or above, please email alexander.lindsay@unh.edu or call 603-862-0654 to set up a time to meet.

Thank you for your time and I hope that you can take part in this important research that may help foster ways to increase the number of men studying abroad here at UNH.

Sincerely,

Alexander Lindsay

International Education Program Support Assistant

University of New Hampshire

alexander.lindsay@unh.edu

603-862-0654

Appendix D: Interview Questions

1. What is your major?
2. Why did you decide to study abroad?
3. Why do you think fewer men decide to study abroad than women?
4. Did you face any challenges in choosing to study abroad? For example, did you have to give up a sport or make changes to your academic plan?
5. Were there any aspects about studying abroad that worried you before going, such as your potential living situation abroad, speaking another language, or concern for your safety? What was your biggest concern?
6. How did you overcome these concerns, if there were any?
7. Did you feel that the campus community was supportive of your decision to study abroad? For example, your professors, study abroad advisers, etc.
8. Did you feel supported in your decision to study abroad by friends and family?
9. Did you have goals set for your study abroad experience, either self-created or set with an adviser?
10. Do you feel you met these goals, if you had any?
11. Do you have any ideas as to how UNH could encourage more men to study abroad?

Appendix E: Consent and Agreement Letter

Date TBD by day of Interview

Dear student:

I am Alexander Lindsay, the International Education Program Support Assistant in the Center for International Education and a graduate student at SIT Graduate Institute and I am conducting a research project to find out reasons behind the gender gap in study abroad. I am writing to invite you to participate in this project. I plan to work with approximately 10-15 participants in this study. You must be at least 18 years old to participate in this study.

If you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked to answer questions concerning your decision to study abroad during your time UNH, what, if any, obstacles you faced in your decision to study abroad, and what relationships on or off campus helped shape your decision to study abroad. This interview will be recorded so it can be transcribed later on. You will not receive any compensation to participate in this project.

The potential risks of participating in this study are anticipated to be minimal. Although you are not anticipated to receive any direct benefits from participating in this study, the benefits of the knowledge gained are expected to be useful in assisting UNH in increasing the amount of men who participate in study abroad programs.

Participation in this study is strictly voluntary. If you refuse to participate, you will not experience any penalty or negative consequences. If you agree to participate, you may refuse to answer any question and/or if you change your mind, you may withdraw at any time during the study without penalty or negative consequences.

I seek to maintain the confidentiality of all data and records associated with your participation in this research. I am also required by law to report certain information to government and/or law enforcement officials (e.g., child abuse, threatened violence against self or others, communicable diseases). Further, any communication via the Internet poses minimal risk of a breach of confidentiality. I will keep data on a password protected computer; only I will have access to the data. Audio recordings will be stored on my iPad until they are transcribed, and then they will be deleted. I will report the data using pseudonyms. The results may be used in my capstone paper and presentation.

If you have any questions about this research project or would like more information before, during, or after the study, you may contact me at 603-862-0654 or through email at alexander.lindsay@unh.edu. If you have questions about your rights as a research subject, you may contact Dr. Julie Simpson in UNH Research Integrity Services at 603-862-2003 or julie.simpson@unh.edu to discuss them.

I have enclosed two copies of this letter. Please sign one indicating your choice and return in the enclosed envelope. The other copy is for your records. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Alexander Lindsay
International Education Program Support Assistant

Yes, I, _____ consent/agree to participate in this research project.

No, I, _____ do not consent/agree to participate in this research project.

Signature

Date

Appendix F: Male and Female Responses to Open Ended Survey Questions

All responses directly quoted from Qualtrics survey.

| What factors influenced your decision to study abroad? Other – Explain | |
|---|---|
| Male Responses | |
| 1 | Probation, I've already saved up the money to study abroad in the spring 2015 but fucking probation can suck my ass. |
| 2 | UNH Probation |
| 3 | grade prereqs |
| 4 | Got an Internship |
| 5 | Arrested |
| 6 | Military Commitment |
| What factors influenced your decision to study abroad? Other – Explain | |
| Female Responses | |
| 7 | I plan on Studying Abroad, just not this year. |
| 8 | Did not want to miss out on what was going on here at UNH |
| 9 | Well, I would have had to celebrate my birthday without my family. And I just plain wasn't emotionally ready to go abroad for a semester. I also owed a lot of UNH Wildcat Marching Band members apologies, so I knew I wanted to stay in NH and clear the air with them. Further, I had never actually wanted to study abroad during my college years; I'd always desired to just stay in one place until I graduated; the only reason I'd planned to study abroad was because I wanted to be a French major; but I realized that I was never actually excited to study abroad; I'd never actually wanted to go. In reality, God was calling me to stay here and to not study abroad - and this calling was clear. |
| 10 | Current schedule too rigorous |
| 11 | Grades |
| 12 | Did not plan accordingly with course schedule to go abroad. |
| 13 | Was mislead and given incorrect information by study abroad office and advisor. |
| 14 | Decided to wait until a later semester |
| 15 | didn't want to be away from UNH for so long |
| 16 | Course load while abroad |
| 17 | Internship Commitment |
| 18 | Changed my major and can't fit everything in |
| 19 | I have traveled before and I often travel with my family to various countries, so I did not feel the need to spend a semester somewhere. |
| 20 | GPA it too low |
| Which one from the list above was the biggest factor in choosing not to study abroad at UNH? | |
| Male Responses | |
| 21 | Not graduating on time |
| 22 | Financial cost. |
| 23 | Financial cost |
| 24 | Financial Costs |
| 25 | Being on a 2 year probation term |
| 26 | Financial Cost |
| 27 | delayed graduation |
| 28 | It's too complicated. |

| | |
|---|---|
| 29 | MONEY! and class schedule |
| 30 | Financial Cost |
| 31 | Cost |
| 32 | Cost |
| 33 | I did not think I would get support from my parents for finances. |
| 34 | The cost was outrageous. |
| 35 | I'm studying abroad. |
| 36 | Getting put on UNH probation for an entire year. |
| 37 | the prereq with gpa, my academic standing went down in the last two semesters |
| 38 | Financial Cost |
| 39 | Internship |
| 40 | Financial Cost |
| 41 | I was arrested by durham PD and UNH wouldn't allow me to go abroad |
| 42 | Military Commitment otherwise I would have taken advantage of such an opportunity |
| Which one from the list above was the biggest factor in choosing not to study abroad at UNH? | |
| Female Responses | |
| 43 | I am a Freshman and went to the information session to get a good idea about all the options and which ones would be interesting to me. I still plan on studying abroad, just not this year. |
| 44 | Did not want to miss out on what was going on here at UNH |
| 45 | The fact that God was calling me to stay here. This had to do with the fact that He is calling me to show His love to the marching band. I did NOT want to leave the marching band members, nor did I want to miss out on Concert Band. There was also the fact that I never really wanted to leave UNH (I'm a homebody and get homesick easily); I'd never actually wanted to study abroad - I was just going along with the program. I also really couldn't have stood to be without my younger brother for five months. I was just nervous overall about going - I was neither emotionally nor linguistically ready to study abroad. |
| 46 | Not managing my time in order to take semester without labs. I would not want to take organic chemistry in another country. |
| 47 | Grades |
| 48 | Other: didn't plan it well enough |
| 49 | I was mislead and given entirely wrong information about studying abroad to the point where it cost me the trip. |
| 50 | Other |
| 51 | The main reason I haven't and won't study abroad for a semester is because I would feel like I was missing out on my already short time here at UNH |
| 52 | Financial Cost |
| 53 | My 2 year Internship commitment |
| 54 | "Other" |
| 55 | Other, which I explained. None of the other factors influenced my decision. |
| 56 | Relationships |
| 57 | I still want to study abroad, just over the summer |
| 58 | applied too late |
| 59 | Safety concerns and fear of being homesick while abroad |
| 60 | financial cost |
| 61 | Financial circumstances |
| 62 | financial cost |
| 63 | uncomfortable with uncertain situations |
| 64 | Nervous about being in an unknown environment |

| | |
|-----|---|
| 65 | Financial reasons and not enough time before I graduate |
| 66 | Relationships |
| 67 | Not knowing what to expect and being away for a long time |
| 68 | Financial Cost |
| 69 | Missing my family and boyfriend |
| 70 | Language |
| 71 | money |
| 72 | Process too complicated/stressful |
| 73 | Relationships |
| 74 | My family was against it and refuse to support m while I'm abroad |
| 75 | Living situation |
| 76 | financial cost |
| 77 | would have to appeal, my advisor didn't think it was a good idea, and my mother did not want me to go so early |
| 78 | Study abroad would have delayed graduation |
| 79 | Study abroad would have delayed my graduation |
| 80 | My classes are too hard and I would have not had the time to study abroad and graduate on time |
| 81 | i had personal factors that made it a better decision to not be so far from home and treatment |
| 82 | Family does not support |
| 83 | Financial Cost |
| 84 | Study abroad would delay my graduation |
| 85 | Study Abroad Would have Delayed my Graduation |
| 86 | Financial |
| 87 | Family support |
| 88 | financial cost |
| 89 | money |
| 90 | Financial Cost |
| 91 | Delaying my graduation |
| 92 | Financial Cost |
| 93 | Cost |
| 94 | Didn't fit well with my major. |
| 95 | Time commitment, have to train for my sport year-round |
| 96 | Delay in graduation |
| 97 | Delaying graduation |
| 98 | Study abroad would delay my graduation |
| 99 | Financial cost |
| 100 | Delaying Graduation |
| 101 | I didn't have time to go abroad and fit in all the classes I needed to take. |
| 102 | The fact that I am traveling abroad with a student organization; I don't feel like I am missing out on any experiences. |
| 103 | financial costs |
| 104 | Not being able to graduate on time |
| 105 | Delaying graduation |
| 106 | Delay of graduation |
| 107 | Cost |
| 108 | cost |
| 109 | Financial cost |
| 110 | Financial Cost |
| 111 | Didn't have classes I needed |

| | |
|---|---|
| 112 | Would not have graduated on time...took all my gen eds early so I only had my business major classes left to take and wouldn't have been able to complete them abroad so it would have delayed my graduation |
| 113 | would have delayed my graduation |
| 114 | I am changing my major and if I study abroad I will not graduate on time. |
| 115 | Study abroad would delay my graduation. It doesn't go well with my science major |
| 116 | Medical Issue. |
| 117 | Cost |
| 118 | financial aid |
| 119 | Financial cost |
| 120 | Financial cost |
| 121 | money |
| 122 | So far, financial cost is the biggest factor. Currently a part time student with a part time job. |
| What would have helped you most to change your mind about studying abroad? | |
| Male Responses | |
| 123 | If they accepted lab classes from abroad schools |
| 124 | A scholarship. |
| 125 | More financial aid |
| 126 | Having more money |
| 127 | If I didn't get probation for stupid shit I didn't even do |
| 128 | If I had more money. I would have had little to no spending money. |
| 129 | If I wasn't so unsure about it all. |
| 130 | More options for my major (Engineering) and lower cost |
| 131 | Financial Aid, and a study abroad that went with my major. |
| 132 | Lower cost, or a living option other than homestay, with which I'm pretty uncomfortable. |
| 133 | Having a program that cost less than \$17,000 for a semester |
| 134 | If I had planned for the financial costs of it, I would have done it. |
| 135 | More financial assistance from UNH. |
| 136 | I wanted to go just could not |
| 137 | If it had a more lenient or flexible academic prereq |
| 138 | If it cost the same as attended UNH with no additional costs. |
| 139 | if i hadn't gotten an internship |
| 140 | Financial Aid |
| 141 | Reforms in the "good behavior" requirements or an opportunity for an appeal |
| What would have helped you most to change your mind about studying abroad? | |
| Female Responses | |
| 142 | If I had felt God calling me to go. If He had said to me, "I want you to show My love to the French," instead of, "I want you to show My love to the UNH Wildcat Marching Band." Also, I'd asked if I could join a musical ensemble at the foreign university, and I was told no. I knew that if I'd gone, I WOULD have found a way. Because there's NO WAY I'm going to ever NOT be in a musical ensemble. |
| 143 | Being more prepared for the future and which classes to take when so that I could save discoveries for the study abroad. |
| 144 | An exception for special cases |
| 145 | Academic advisor telling me as a freshman to plan if you want to go abroad |
| 146 | Nothing, I was going to study abroad but the SA office could have done a better job at advising and helping me a lot more than they did, considering it was because of them that I cannot study abroad. |

| | |
|-----|--|
| 147 | More Financial Aid or less cost for studying abroad, especially since I would be unable to work while abroad. |
| 148 | If I had not received my internship |
| 149 | I want to go so badly, but there's no way I can because I'm already a junior and changed me major. I need to graduate on time |
| 150 | If I didn't already have the opportunity to travel. |
| 151 | Not as long of a time |
| 152 | Summer program information |
| 153 | planned my semester schedule ahead of time |
| 154 | More help in the process; felt that when I met with advisors they didn't listen to my thoughts and fears |
| 155 | the experience I would gain from it, and how well it would look on my resume. |
| 156 | If I had enough money |
| 157 | a shorter trip length option |
| 158 | talking to people who have and meeting people who would be interested in going on the same place as me so i wouldn't feel so alone |
| 159 | More information about what life is like abroad |
| 160 | If it was more affordable |
| 161 | I don't know |
| 162 | Having a close friend going with me |
| 163 | If my parents supported the decision and saw the value for the cost |
| 164 | knowing it would fly by |
| 165 | If someone could assess and reassure me that I could speak enough French to study there. |
| 166 | being able to afford it. |
| 167 | Information sessions at the middle or end of last semester to start the application/decision making ahead of time |
| 168 | Nothing |
| 169 | Financial aid |
| 170 | Talking to someone that went about living situation and money |
| 171 | if there was more financial support and more scholarships available that weren't so competitive |
| 172 | if it was easier to go as a freshman and if my advisor wasn't such against the idea |
| 173 | If I could still be biomed and graduate on time and go abroad I totally would have done it. Too many full-year sequence classes that I needed to take to apply to med school |
| 174 | If there was a specific program for my major |
| 175 | Maybe being able to take more major electives abroad instead of just discovery courses |
| 176 | being in a "different place" |
| 177 | Financial |
| 178 | More financial and familial support |
| 179 | Knowing what courses were available for each program |
| 180 | More aid |
| 181 | decreased cost |
| 182 | having more money |
| 183 | Being able to fit in the study abroad without delaying my graduation |
| 184 | If there wasn't so many specific classes I had to take for my major and I had more I would have thought about studying abroad more |
| 185 | Lower cost |
| 186 | More aid for studying abroad |
| 187 | If my major was more flexible |
| 188 | Nothing, I'm going this summer! |

| | |
|-----|--|
| 189 | If rmp courses were offered jterm and summer too even online |
| 190 | Nothing |
| 191 | being more fluent in a foreign language |
| 192 | Medical issue |
| 193 | Options for psychology majors in Italy |
| 194 | If i could have had all the credits I needed be available/transferable. |
| 195 | N/A |
| 196 | If it was cheaper |
| 197 | Decreased cost |
| 198 | Too much to explain |
| 199 | Not sure |
| 200 | Cost |
| 201 | having the cost of it be more reasonable |
| 202 | I think it's ridiculous how costly it is to study abroad. If there were better programs to support students financially when it comes to studying abroad- perhaps better scholarship options or advising in terms of financial decisions, etc- it might have been more possible. |
| 203 | If I had decided to go earlier, like sophomore year |
| 204 | starting to plan it earlier so I knew what classes not to take while at UNH so I could take them abroad and still graduate on time |
| 205 | if UNH would accept the classes abroad |
| 206 | If I had had the ability to begin the application process the semester before, I would have applied. |
| 207 | I want to do a short-term study abroad session, and still might, but they are quite an expensive price to add on to the bills from the regular school year |
| 208 | support financially |
| 209 | Given more money |
| 210 | I would've studied abroad if I could afford it |
| 211 | if it cost less |
| 212 | To have the majority of the cost covered by financial aid, preferably grant or scholarship, and easily having access to info on where and when to apply. |

Appendix G: Transcripts of Interviews

Interview #1

October 20th, 12:30 p.m.

Program – UNH Managed to Spain

1. What is your major?

Spanish and International Affairs.

2. Why did you decide to study abroad?

I really wanted to anyway since I was in high school but I had to for my major, for both my majors.

3. Why do you think fewer men decide to study abroad than women?

Just top of the head answer but, stereotypically guys tend to go for majors that don't, that study abroad doesn't fit in as easily like science or math. I mean obviously big stereotype going there but... that's a big reason I could see.

4. Did you face any challenges in choosing to study abroad? For example, did you have to give up a sport or make changes to your academic plan?

No, I didn't face any challenges at all. If anything it helped me!

5. Were there any aspects about studying abroad that worried you before going, such as your potential living situation abroad, speaking another language, or concern for your safety? What was your biggest concern?

I guess pretty much the same concerns anyone studying abroad have like living with a host family, a different family than you that does different things. And speaking the language obviously everyone worries a little about being able to speak and survive. Just speaking a different language.

6. How did you overcome these concerns, if there were any?

I just sort of told myself you know, oh and before I went I just told myself you know it'll work out, it'll be fine.

7. Did you feel that the campus community was supportive of your decision to study abroad? For example, your professors, study abroad advisers, etc.

Yeah. Yeah, my adviser helped me out a lot with study abroad and she helped me decide where to go, the benefits and cons of going to certain places, or going a UNH program versus a different program so... UNH helped a lot and the study abroad fair helped too.

8. Did you feel supported in your decision to study abroad by friends and family?

Of course my family was a little nervous I mean, they knew I wanted to go for a long time so they helped me get the money.

9. Did you have goals set for your study abroad experience, either self-created or set with an adviser?

I can't really think of anything specific, obviously I wanted to get better at Spanish but I mean there weren't any like bars set.

10. Do you feel you met these goals, if you had any?

Obviously my Spanish got a lot better! I mean, it wasn't really a goal but I grew a lot as a person while studying abroad too, which I didn't really realize would happen and I don't think anyone realizes will happen.

11. Do you have any ideas as to how UNH could encourage more men to study abroad?

I mean it's already pretty advertised, the study abroad opportunities, but I mean obviously if you could try to get study abroad to fit into more majors. I don't know just sort of advertise the benefits more I guess, I mean they sort of do already, but I don't know that's the only thing I could think of.

What do you perceive as the benefits?

I mean, obviously travel seeing new cultures, new places, I guess learning more about the world in general, making connections.

Interview #2

October 21st, 12 p.m.

Program – UNH Approved to Australia

1. What is your major?

Marine Biology.

2. Why did you decide to study abroad?

Well I knew that I, I went to Australia when I was in 8th grade cause my sister actually studied abroad in Australia, so I knew that's something I definitely wanted to do and my major is Marine Biology so it's like the perfect opportunity for me going to Australia so I'm right on the coast, right near the Great Barrier Reef so that's pretty much what made my decision.

3. Why do you think that fewer men decide to study abroad than women?

I don't think it's that the, I think every, most people coming to school, regardless of whether you're female or male wanting to study abroad but it's just the point of, I think females are generally more motivated. And I think with study abroad what I've realized is that there's a lot of paperwork and a lot of extra stuff you have to do. So I think that might have something to do with it. Other than that like I don't really know why there'd be such a, such a big gender gap. Yeah maybe the whole maturity aspect too? I think that females are generally more mature than males are too, so they can handle it better I don't know, something like that probably.

4. Did you face any challenges in choosing to study abroad? For example, did you have to give up a sport or make changes to your academic plan?

Yeah I had to, what I had to do was take a summer class. Which wasn't a big deal. I had to take Physics one and two over the summer, which actually ended up being good because it was a lot easier during the summer. But, so yeah I mean nothing really major.

5. Were there any aspects about studying abroad that worried you before going, such as your potential living situation abroad, speaking another language, or concern for your safety? What was your biggest concern?

I guess my biggest concern was just being on the other side of the world. Cause I mean I'd done traveling before but I never had been somewhere for an extended period of time away from someplace where I couldn't go back to my house within like half an hour to an hour. It was six hours to LA and then fourteen hours to Brisbane so you can't really just drive back or walk back to your house. So I mean that was the hardest, and also there was no dining hall where I was, so it was kind of the first situation where I had to cook on my own, and obviously I didn't want to spend money on food, like going out and eating all the time so I wanted money for other

things so, definitely cooking was probably the biggest other than being that far away from home was definitely the hardest thing for me.

6. How did you overcome these concerns, if there were any?

It was actually weird cause first the two, three weeks I didn't think I could get through it. I was like, this is, I can't do this anymore. Uh, this is really overwhelming. And then it, it wasn't that I really did anything, it was just kind of it, everything fell into place and I started booking trips to travel around and do things. And I mean I did a lot of stuff on my own, which is really good. So I think really what just did it for me was just me taking initiative and doing things that I knew I wanted to do going over there and that was what kind of changed me from being "I don't want to be here anymore" to "This is actually really awesome".

7. Did you feel that the campus community was supportive of your decision to study abroad? For example, your professors, study abroad advisers, etc.

Yeah I think that UNH has a really good study abroad program where everyone, I mean it's not that it's expected that you study abroad but I think a lot of professors, especially like my professors, they're like yeah you need to go and experience some other place than New England for like Marine Biology stuff so... I think everyone pretty much has a positive outlook on studying abroad, and I mean everyone I've talked to has said they've loved it. I've never talked to anyone that said they had a negative thing to say about it. And definitely all the like, Leo, and all them are very, very helpful. And definitely very supportive of the decision.

8. Did you feel supported in your decision to study abroad by friends and family?

Yeah. Well I actually, I live in Durham. I've grown up in Durham my whole life. I don't live at home but... so all my friends were like "Dude, you need to get out of, you need to get out of Durham." So yeah, I was, I definitely felt supported. And then my parents obviously wanted me to do it. Everyone knew it was going to be a lot of money but, I mean money's not really, money's just there so whatever. I did what I wanted to do, so I'm going to spend money if it's something like going to Australia.

9. Did you have goals set for your study abroad experience, either self-created or set with an adviser?

Like career goals? Or just...?

Yeah anything, did you talk to your adviser about what you were hoping to accomplish down there?

Yeah I didn't take any classes specific for our major because going there I knew I wanted to do, like I wanted to travel by myself and do a lot of things on my own. So I think that was my biggest goal going over there was like, try to travel as much as you can and do as much as you can while you're there. So I mean I didn't have any academic goals or anything.

10. Do you have any ideas as to how UNH could encourage more men to study abroad?

That's a good question. No I don't really know what else they could do besides, I don't know maybe making the paperwork a little less? And make the process a little bit, I guess you could, they could change the process. Like I said I think one of the major problems is all the paperwork we have to fill out cause you have to do the paperwork for UNH and the paperwork for whatever third party provider. So I think a lot of people actually just look at that stuff and are like "Aw I don't want do this anymore." I think that's honestly like the biggest problem. More advertising maybe? Or maybe people that come back from studying abroad if you do more things in the MUB where you have showings that they can say what they did or tell what they did. Things like that. Or maybe advisors, get advisors in it and be like yeah you should definitely do this, this is a good opportunity.

Interview #3

October 21st, 4:30 p.m.

Program – UNH Approved to France

1. What is your major?

I'm a Business Administration major with options in Finance and Management.

2. Why did you decide to study abroad?

Well the main reason was to kind of explore other places but I mean I specifically honed in on France because they had business school there so I could work towards my degree here and actually get credits for that. Then also it's in the Alps, I'm a skier, and I wanted to tour the world of skiing and that was a great place.

3. Why do you think that fewer men decide to study abroad than women?

Well I guess one reason possibly is that, especially looking at like that language school there, it seems like there might be more woman in those fields or schools in general. And I noticed a lot of people studying abroad were doing more cultural or language type things there but otherwise, that's a tough question. Do you have any more in depth questions I guess to ask? I might be able to think of a few more as we go along.

4. Did you face any challenges in choosing to study abroad? For example, did you have to give up a sport or make changes to your academic plan?

Well yeah I'm on the ski-race club. Although it's not officially affiliated with the school but I still did that in winter so I had to give up that to go. And I'm in a fraternity. I missed that so that could certainly be a reason for a number of people. Like I do know, specifically one of my fraternity brothers now is considering whether or not to go abroad, but he's also considering taking a leadership position in the fraternity so he doesn't know what to choose between the two.

5. Were there any aspects about studying abroad that worried you before going, such as your potential living situation abroad, speaking another language, or concern for your safety? What was your biggest concern?

I was never really concerned about safety although there was definitely a language barrier. I'd only taken one semester of French. I'd actually taken four years of Spanish, funnily enough, but only one semester of French. So there was certainly a little bit of that. Especially, like I wasn't going with a UNH Managed program so when I arrived in Paris there's no one who I knew probably within thousands of miles of where I was. So it was, kind of interesting.

6. How did you overcome these concerns, if there were any?

Well it helped that I had the program, API, there. So right away I was with a group people who were all together and we started doing stuff as a group with the organized person right away and then after that we kind of went on our own but still all together as a group so that definitely helped having like a support team with you with your friends. It definitely helped that they were all kind of the same mindset as you when you're studying abroad. It's probably one of the best parts in general in that everyone wants to have adventure and do things like that so when you go there, it's like "Hey I want to go to this city" and they're like "Yeah let's do it!" Instead of like, "Uh I don't know" and they like don't give a real answer which happens here. Or like "Aw I have this assignment I had to do, it's due at the end of the week" and then they don't even work on it until the end of the week but they can't do anything because they had that assignment.

What about the language? Was that ever a barrier?

I mean it made it more difficult at times, but there were times when it certainly made it more interesting. I was really happy at one point when I was at the market and I managed to like, speak fluently enough that they were complimenting me and like kind of thought I was fluent which definitely was not the case. But I could at least get on with what they were saying. Yeah that was one of my proudest moments.

7. Did you feel that the campus community was supportive of your decision to study abroad? For example, your professors, study abroad advisers, etc.

My advisors definitely were in study abroad. My professors, I'm not really sure if they knew. To be honest, I don't know if I really mentioned it too much. My friends, of course now that I'm back they say that I talk about it too often. But that's only to be expected I guess. But yeah generally they're supportive. Sometimes, yeah, sometimes the guys will give me a little shit I guess you could say about France in general.

8. Did you feel supported in your decision to study abroad by friends and family?

With the frat brothers it's kind of a joke to mess with me but, my family was definitely completely supportive. With it being support and jealousy at the same time from most people.

9. Did you have goals set for your study abroad experience, either self-created or set with an adviser?

I had no real like, smart goals that defined exactly what I wanted to do. But I knew I wanted to ski a lot and kind of explore around, which I managed to do. Yeah I came into it not completely focused on always studying as much as I can and I didn't and I'm completely happy with that decision, I think. I still did fine enough, and understand it, and passed. But yeah I think I wanted to go on this ski trip to ??? and managed to do a bunch of things.

10. Do you have any ideas as to how UNH could encourage more men to study abroad?

Maybe a lot of, like once you get used to being there you really appreciate the different cultural differences. And a lot of times they try to sell that to guys but I don't think maybe we

appreciate it as well until we are there and I don't know how other aspects look. For me, it was skiing, it was really big. And I know a lot of guys think about that stuff so maybe like, "Come watch a soccer match!", I don't know, but like things like that where the cultural stuff comes when you're there but not necessarily what you immediately think of. Maybe more on the adventure aspect when you're in another country. Travel around, go to all these places. Do you get what I mean? I'm still trying to think if there is anything else to do with why guys don't study abroad as much. I think what your question is maybe because they're more about like leadership or I don't know, sometimes it seems as if there's pretty high expectations that you... my family luckily they're fine about me going abroad but to get a good job and building toward your career, you know going and doing that. I know a number, or a high percentage of guys who in Engineering, I believe, and they typically have high workloads. They aren't able to spend the time to go and study abroad. You know a bunch of people I know said that they're interested just too busy with stuff. I don't know if it's convincing them that they can take the time or something like that. I was lucky cause I took a lot of AP classes so I had plenty of credits, like I'm still doing dual-option and I probably only have three classes next semester anyway or scuba class or something so. Maybe there's also a difference in that, if women tend to take more AP classes or come in with more credits. That would be an interesting thing to look at. That would make it easier for them to study abroad. Money is one thing people mention but I can't see that being a difference between the two, men versus women. Just getting them to think about it maybe. Maybe a lot of guys just haven't thought about trying to go there like girls who have their like romantic vision of going to Europe and European guys and maybe I'm a guy so I don't really know. Just my two cents.

Interview #4

October 22nd, 12:00 p.m.

Program – UNH Approved to Germany

1. What is your major?

German and International Affairs.

2. Why did you decide to study abroad?

Well I went, my senior year in high school on an exchange program. The town I was in had a sister city, and after my fourth year in German in high school I studied abroad. I was originally a Math Education major but after going abroad I came back, called up the university here, the University of New Hampshire, and asked them if I could change my major because after doing research into the major I saw that not only do I get to study that language but I have to study abroad. And I wanted, not an excuse to, but an almost, I wanted to solidify the chance to go abroad. So that's why, I really wanted, a personal need to go back to the country.

3. Why do you think that fewer men decide to study abroad than women?

From a UNH standpoint, the larger demographic study a lot of the sciences, mechanical engineering, civil engineering, and those offer lesser opportunities to study abroad. Also business is popular here and demographically more men tend to gravitate towards those majors and with fewer options or, not even options but more so I know the curriculum is very strict and like you have to take certain classes at a certain time. There is kind of no leeway, so at the university I would, that would be my guess why not many men study abroad.

4. Did you face any challenges in choosing to study abroad? For example, did you have to give up a sport or make changes to your academic plan?

No, I mean changes are obviously needed to make sure that it fits nicely in there so that you're not falling behind but I, there weren't any like obstacles that like stressed me out or anything it was just, "Oh I have to take this class here", not that I would, had a plan to take any other semester but this just what I have to do.

5. Were there any aspects about studying abroad that worried you before going, such as your potential living situation abroad, speaking another language, or concern for your safety? What was your biggest concern?

Nope, none at all.

6. Did you feel that the campus community was supportive of your decision to study abroad? For example, your professors, study abroad advisers, etc.

Yeah, yeah I mean obviously my professors and study abroad advisors were really good, they helped me narrow it down and listing out the pros and cons cause there were three or four different programs on which I could have gone. But they were, it was encouragement plus being it mandatory I mean, it wasn't like "You should do this" it was more like "Ok, this is how we're going to help you".

7. Did you feel supported in your decision to study abroad by friends and family?

Yes. A hundred percent yes. Especially because it, my family, my mother especially wanted me to but my mother was the one who was like "Don't go too far". But that's just a mother thing. But yeah I, huge support, I had support in high school to go abroad and having saved up for four years to do that they were supportive about that and coming back and making the decision of switching majors and my future at that age, a younger age, they were hugely supportive.

8. Did you have goals set for your study abroad experience, either self-created or set with an adviser?

Self-created definitely become fluent in the language. Which, which happily I achieved that or I like to think I achieved that. I don't have to translate in my head anymore it's more feeling, which is nice.

9. Do you have any ideas as to how UNH could encourage more men to study abroad?

Work with the departments where there are larger, like a mentioned before a lot of men demographics kind of there in the engineering schools so perhaps working with the department to, with other programs to find out, you know, what, you know, give them a semester where they can go somewhere and not fall behind and like really encourage. Because I think everyone, I honestly think everyone should study abroad because the world's a big place but it could be a small place.

Interview #5

October 22nd, 4 p.m.

Program – UNH Approved to China

1. What is your major?

I'm Political Science and International Affairs dual major.

2. Why did you decide to study abroad?

I decided, well my sister was a, she goes to school at Drew, or just graduated two years ago from Drew University in New Jersey. And she managed to study abroad like six times. She went to Israel, Peru, Ecuador, Italy, and then managed to get to other different parts of Europe. And then she had a bunch of research grants and she went to Cuba and she went to Colombia and everywhere really. So it just inspired me to get out there. And I've always had a fond interest of just international, the international world.

3. Why do you think that fewer men decide to study abroad than women?

I think the appeal for men is not as high, I think that something it could be like either how you, how it's been presented to you in your life. Cause my mom always emphasized studying abroad because my mom also went to Barcelona for her Master's degree. So she obviously studied abroad. But we're also from abroad, I was born in Colombia so she wanted me to get back out into the real world. I think it's like part of either your upbringing or your influences that just have that have been brought to you previously. I also think men's mentalities are a little more rigid, just like adventuring seeing what's out there. And a lot of people are just set on, a lot of men at least, I'd say both genders but a lot of men are set on their degree. Four years, typical track, and then that's it. Then they move on. They think they don't have time for it or it will push or pull them back too much. You know, hinder them.

4. Did you face any challenges in choosing to study abroad? For example, did you have to give up a sport or make changes to your academic plan?

The challenges that came about were in transfer credit and I mean obviously the language barrier. I'd say I didn't have to give up anything, except for my involvement in organizations here. I mean like me being in a fraternity. But those weren't very costly. I was, I'd choose study abroad over them any day. But, I think, the one thing that was a risk the most was the fear of not having credits transfer back. I knew from the start a year abroad was going to not help, at all, in regards to me graduating on time but I managed to get it done. Out of pure luck, I think.

5. Were there any aspects about studying abroad that worried you before going, such as your potential living situation abroad, speaking another language, or concern for your safety? What was your biggest concern?

I didn't know much about life in China, therefore I was... not nervous, but like a little cautious going into it. I didn't know what the food was going to be like, I didn't know what the culture was going to be like, mentalities towards Western people, especially people from the US. I was hesitant about my living situation because I had heard they had toilets in the ground and then I hear cleanliness isn't very emphasized over there. So it's a bit more lax aesthetically and hygienically but overall I think those are the main like, fears. Yeah, I'd say just hygiene.

6. How did you overcome these concerns, if there were any?

I kind of just, I adapted myself personally in better habits for hygiene, I began to cook better, didn't eat out as much. I certainly emphasized washing my hands more, don't smoke, tried to be as clean as possible all around. And then, I just kind of adapted because the culture's very welcoming, it's just very, there's just a stark contrast between US and Asian culture. So it's just a bridge you have to cross. But once crossed, it's worthwhile.

7. Did you feel that the campus community was supportive of your decision to study abroad? For example, your professors, study abroad advisers, etc.

They were hesitant about me going abroad for a year because it's just not done often first off and second off it was through an Approved program they weren't directly managing what I was doing and it's just an Approved program so at the end they were also hesitant about me graduating on time so it was all basically from my academics. But I didn't receive too much either criticism or push back from it, I think they were a little more hesitant because they don't really know how to approach it that well when people want to go abroad for that long. It's normally six months and you can manage that.

8. Did you feel supported in your decision to study abroad by friends and family?

They all called me crazy and they insisted that a year's too long, I wouldn't be able to do that, you're crazy it's China what are you going to do over there, did you hear about the toilets? Of course I heard everything! The whole nine yards. But my family specifically was very encouraging, my sister, my mom, my grandma. A lot of my friends that have more of my mentality really admired me for being able to take that step in going abroad somewhere I'd never been and don't know much about for a year. I've convinced several people to study abroad in their respective colleges so, you know just spreading the word. Overall, mixed emotions in the beginning but towards, like, pre-departure I got a bunch of thumbs up.

9. Did you have goals set for your study abroad experience, either self-created or set with an adviser?

I really wanted to redefine my character. So I decided to change habits, change mentality, perspective, and just absorb instead of declare. So I became way more responsible both fiscally, like money, with hygiene, with organizational habits. I just became not adult-like, not professional-like, but just a healthier me in a way. And I learned how to cook a bit, I learned how to be self-dependent, and I just became less fearful and hesitant about approaching other people and just approaching the world in general. I became a little more courageous and

confident through these processes. I was out there by myself, I met, all the people I met were foreign to me, I didn't know anyone both from the US and internationally. So I was just stepping into a different world and I needed to prepare myself physically in regards to like, I mean physically and mentally to like deal with the stresses that came with it.

10. Do you feel you met these goals, if you had any?

Yeah absolutely. I've definitely changed. If you were to compare me before China and after China I'm a very different person.

11. Do you have any ideas as to how UNH could encourage more men to study abroad?

Honestly, talks, speeches from personal experiences are always a plus. People that are successful after college that have a great study abroad background, maybe six months or a year, definitely have them come back and talk about it. People will see that hey, this guys is either making a lot of money or is very successful and influential, and he studied abroad, maybe that's something I can do that might expand my horizons, networking, contacts, all that. I don't know maybe focus specifically on men campaigns as opposed to unisex? You know, have like unisex campaigns for study abroad but maybe reach out in specific for men, like only men can come to this meeting and I'm going to show you why or break down the statistics and not many of you guys study abroad, it's a little strange, but there's nothing but positives involved with it, so you guys should really consider it. And maybe tailor study abroad programs to majors here, that way it's more friendly. Or it could be like a coop or collaboration with a major and a study abroad program. I don't know. Just something that would appeal, or something that wouldn't inhibit graduating on time because that's really the most important factor that came into my mind before I studied abroad. And I was all for it, it's just that was the one thing I was really nervous about. I know a lot of other people are too. They go abroad, they might be wasting time.

They're not!

I know! That's the thing! It's just, it's really hard to tell people about how valuable the experience is. It's something you wish you could just, when somebody asks you, you could just give them a ticket somewhere and send them on their way forcefully that way they realize what's going on. It's something you can't verbally express, you really need to just, you can't even paint a picture you just really have to be with them or let them do it by themselves. It just takes a little maturity and independence to make that decision on their own.

Interview #6

October 23rd, 4:00 p.m.

Program – UNH Managed to England

1. What is your major?

Business.

2. Why did you decide to study abroad?

Kind of like what you were saying, just ever since I heard about the concept of it I knew I wanted to do it and I had a little travel experience before that. I went to Poland, Iceland, Canada. So I've always liked traveling. And, from what I've heard from other people, it's like a semester vacation, the work was easy, yeah and all those kind of put together. Just a new experience, spice it up a little bit cause it'd be nice to travel for my job but realistically getting the chance to live in another culture and experience it while you still don't have too many worries really, like I was kind of just there chilling and worrying a little bit about schoolwork but just enjoying myself. Which, so I wouldn't really have that option probably for the rest of my life to just be able to take three, four months and just enjoy.

3. Why do you think fewer men study abroad than women?

I really have no idea. Like I was trying to figure that out myself, and from here, I don't think any of my guy friends are going abroad. Some of them were talking about it but, this year no one really went through with it. A good chunk of my friends from my hometown are actually going through with it though. So comparing those numbers to most of my friends from home are going abroad, maybe me going abroad and telling them about that has helped them do it cause I went as a sophomore, just a year earlier than most people go. Trying to figure that out myself.

4. Did you face any challenges in choosing to study abroad? For example, did you have to give up a sport or make changes to your academic plan?

No, not really, I don't participate in any sport or activities and like I said since I went as a sophomore I was able to get one Gen Ed out of the way and one of the requirements for all the business majors. So that was pretty easy but I still, like I only got credit for one Gen Ed and one prerequisite for business and the other three classes I didn't get specific credit, which is a little annoying but I guess two's better than nothing?

5. Were there any aspects about studying abroad that worried you before going, such as your potential living situation abroad, speaking another language, or concern for your safety? What was your biggest concern?

Not really cause like I said I've done some traveling before and I like to think of myself as a little adventurous. Like in Poland me and my cousin just met these kids in a park and they

took us to like a birthday party in the suburbs of this town, of like the capital city, like we didn't tell our parents cause we didn't have cell phones just wandering back at one in the morning to the hotel room. And I've heard good things about London. I knew it was a safe city, you know, pretty similar to this country. So yeah I didn't really have any worries, more just, excitement about the what if's. But yeah I was just excited about it not concerned.

6. Did you feel that the campus community was supportive of your decision to study abroad? For example, your professors, study abroad advisers, etc.

Yeah the whole process was really easy since it was Managed, I feel like, you know I just had to fill out some basic information, sign some forms, hand some checks in, and that was it. So I was really thankful for that cause one of my friends did a program where she had to do everything, the amount of work she did was crazy compared to the minimal amount of work I did. And then finding the recommendations from professors was really easy except I waited until the week of so that was a little difficult. And just, my friends were supportive. Half of them just didn't want me to go away for a semester cause then they'd just have one less friend I guess, and the other ones were like "Yay go have fun, we'll still be here when you get back". So just kind of a mix with my friends.

7. Did you feel supported in your decision to study abroad by friends and family?

Yeah my family was all for it, like I said my parents traveled a good amount before they had me and my sister and we've kind of been traveling as a family once a year, every other year, going somewhere else. So yeah they loved the idea of it. And my mom, well I didn't really like, have them involved in the decision process of where I was going but my mom kind of gave me some places where I couldn't go and gave her little input but she was happy with London.

8. Did you have any goals set for your study abroad experience, either self-created or set with an adviser?

I wouldn't say I had any specific, written down goals. Kind of just, experience a new culture. Also living in a city, I've never done that I've always lived in the suburbs or here in Durham. So I was also just interested in seeing what city life would be like cause I was always thought that city life was too busy, too many people, not for me but after living in a city I thought it was awesome. The public transportation, there's so much to do, and I really liked how densely packed it was. Yeah goals were just have a good time, gain some new perspectives through people from different countries and cultures, cause like I said I like traveling just meeting new people from other countries I'm always just so interested in seeing what they have to say about America or what I have to say about their home countries. I've had a few study abroad students in high school who I became pretty good friends with, it's just nice getting new perspective on things and everyone's got something to say about America basically, so it's always fun to see if I live up to their expectations of the classic American or not. Yeah, just have a good time.

9. Do you feel you met these goals, if you had any?

Yes and no, like I said I was a little disappointed because the program was, it had fifty or sixty UNH students and it had one dorm on campus and everyone in the dorm was American for the most part, and fifty of them were from UNH. So I was, I didn't really look into the program that much, had I looked into it a little more I probably would have had some second thoughts but then again it was just so easy that for how easy it was to set it up and everything it was worth it. But then, yeah I was just kind of bummed out about that, just, you know, the majority of my time just being surrounded by other Americans who were in the same exact position as me. It really wasn't that much of a, as much of a difference as I would have hoped. Thankfully the classes, the school as a whole was really international. But then another problem with that, I found, was, I don't know how to word it, per se... but they were all extremely wealthy and not, what I would say, the average people from those countries. And there was barely any English students there. And the ones who were there I felt like there was a divide in the school, it was people who go there full time and then the new batch of exchange students. They know that everyone is going to come and go and be gone in a semester, really don't put in too much effort to befriend them because they're just going to be gone in a month or two. So yeah I thought, I was a little disappointed by that but still some of the classes and class discussions, you got that different perspectives from around the world but ideally I would have loved to have gone to that classic English college in London, just get thrown in there, and not be a part of all these Americans and then students from everywhere. So, yeah it would have been nicer had it been more English students and you know, average, regular students.

10. Do you have any ideas as to how UNH could encourage more men to study abroad?

Hmm... I really, I don't know. Talking to my roommates and some of my guy friends, asking them why they aren't studying abroad or why they don't want to, the responses have been kind of like, you only have four years of college and I have the rest of my life to go travel around the world. Or they just enjoy their time here so much that they wouldn't want to risk doing something else. I'd say probably just highlight all the positives of it but then again realistically I don't think all the highlights, I don't think the school here could be advertising. Like cause honestly, the biggest highlights of it for me was basically school was like a joke compared to here. Even though I actually learned a lot, but the work load was a lot less there than here but I was surprised at how much I learned through the class discussions and just gaining all these, just with everyone from around the world, you just learn so much and then also just living in another country, not so much the academics but you learn a lot about yourself and kind of just the world. I don't know, street-smarts or whatever you want to call it. Like common sense. And things that will be really useful for me later on. But another big bonus was kind of , just I guess I just like partying, and traveling around, so then, like I was saying, I don't think the school could be like, "Yeah, take a vacation from school!" or like "18 to drink! Come study abroad!" So I don't know, I've thought about it a bunch and being over there, the group of people I'd hang out with would be one, maybe two guys and myself and me and just like a crew of girls and then, like it was alright at the beginning then there'd be times like "Wow, these girls are so annoying". And then I realized that it wasn't so much them but they just always acted like there wasn't any guys there. They were just in that like girl zone that girls get into and they just don't get out of it if there's one or no guys around. So then I realized that when I got back, and yeah I don't know, it would have been nice to have more guys over there. So then yeah... if I come up with anything I'll be sure to email you.

Interview #7

October 23rd, 4:30 p.m.

Program – UNH Approved to Kyrgyzstan

1. What is your major?

I was a Russian major with a Political Science minor. I came in to the university as a pre-vet major, so that's a little bit of a drastic change. I switched my major the last second I could, so I felt that I was a little behind in Russian to begin with. But I've always been interested in Russian, Russian history, Soviet Union... So, and I didn't like organic chemistry.

2. Why did you decide to study abroad?

Well, as lame as it sounds, you know it was a language major so study abroad was required, so I had to do it. I mean, it's kind of as simple as that. I looked forward to it, obviously! It was a good time to branch out.

3. Why do you think that fewer men decide to study abroad than women?

Well, I guess that my theory is, I was thinking about this after you emailed me, I noticed there just seems to be more women majoring in languages. And since languages usually require study abroad like I mentioned earlier more women do it in the end. But maybe for majors that are more male dominated, they think study abroad is going to screw up their graduating schedule so they don't or they don't think that study abroad could ever be related to their major. Which isn't necessarily true, I know there's plenty of majors that study abroad can be worked into but that's my theory at least.

4. Did you face any challenges in choosing to study abroad? For example, did you have to give up a sport or make changes to your academic plan?

Well, since my program was not UNH Approved I had to get it approved. And I had to, since I was a late major switch, I had to get all my classes figured out like really beforehand. And I had to get a lot of classes that I was taking abroad to get approved as UNH classes, which the process is longwinded to say the least. And it can be a pain. And it was a pain! But the Russian department was pretty good at getting things to work, you know to get this class to count as this when I get back and get all my requirements fulfilled. So it was mostly more like an academic hurdle I would say, administrative, but in the end it all worked out. They actually didn't, the Registrar didn't require me to do any further jumping through hoops like submitting tests or submitting assignments or blah blah, so I was very grateful about that. Frankly I just think they wanted me out cause I was kind of causing a ruckus about, "Am I graduated yet?" Cause I studied abroad in my last semester too, so I know they discourage us doing that and it did delay my graduation but not by much.

5. Were there any aspects about studying abroad that worried you before going, such as your potential living situation abroad, speaking another language, or concern for your safety? What was your biggest concern?

Well I'm pretty mellow I think overall. Frankly the biggest thing for me was air travel. I didn't look forward to flying because I don't really like flying. So of course I went on an eight hour flight to Istanbul and then a five hour flight to Bishkek. It was fine. I mean it was the second time I flew in my whole life. So frankly that was actually the most thing, my most worrisome aspect of it. I mean, the language I wasn't that worried about. I mean I figured my Russian ability isn't fluent, it still isn't fluent, it's hard to get fluent, you can't expect to be fluent even if you major in a language at a university, you know. But it improved and everyone seemed to understand me well enough to get by. Safety in the country I wasn't really that worried about. I mean, it's kind of a middle of nowhere country, I never had any issues basically. None with police or anything.

6. How did you overcome these concerns, if there were any?

I think it just organically worked out. Everything just kind of fell into place. I mean obviously getting over planes is, that's kind of unrelated to the research! You just have to get on the plane and go. Of course I was nervous the whole eight hours but that's alright. Another thing there is that the transportation is just a little weird. I was a little hesitant at first because I had a homestay and they lived like thirty-five minutes from the school I was going to. So before going I was a little nervous about, I got to take this, how am I supposed to take this, how am I supposed to get there, but it ended up being fine. It was a little bus that went back and forth. It wasn't as big a deal as I made it out to be.

7. Did you feel that the campus community was supportive of your decision to study abroad? For example, your professors, study abroad advisers, etc.

Yeah I would say so. My professors were all behind me. They thought it was a great idea to go somewhere other than Russia, even though they're Russian professors. Obviously Russian is speaking in other countries. So yeah they thought it was a great idea. My decision kind of helped another Russian major make their decision in studying in Kyrgyzstan so that was nice. And my advisor here was Leo, and she was, she thought it was a great idea too. To go somewhere that was a little different. Like I said all the administrative stuff ended up working out, it was a little annoying but it ended up working.

8. Did you feel supported in your decision to study abroad by friends and family?

Yup, certainly. I think my Mom was a little worried at first because it's like, where is Kyrgyzstan and that's, what is this country? I still have relatives that don't know where I went. So, yeah they all say he went to Russia. It's like, erm, no I didn't. I let it slide. But, I would say everyone was alright with it. You know once I got there and started communicating with them, and what was going on, how everything's going they really realized it's, you know, fine. And I kind of realized that studying abroad isn't that crazy. Some people might think that it's like, "Ooo it's going to be so different! I won't be able to survive there!" But I found that even in like

Central Asia, sort of middle of nowhere, everything's pretty much the same. People, humans, they're all the same.

9. Did you have goals set for your study abroad experience, either self-created or set with an adviser?

Well, not really. I didn't do anything research or anything. I did a blog when I was there but that was mostly for just my family members. It was, yeah I didn't have anything sort of goal-ish.

10. Do you have any ideas as to how UNH could encourage more men to study abroad?

Hmm... that's an interesting question. I don't know. They can certainly try to make it more understood maybe that you know, even if your major isn't, you don't think it's applicable to studying abroad that it can be. I mean, I know it already is there's an extensive network that UNH has in terms of pre-approved programs, I know I didn't go on a pre-approved program, but I know that there's a lot of them that are sort of not related to even language study, that you know engineering and stuff like that. Maybe just reaching out to different majors more but I don't know how much that's done already. Can't really give too much advice on that. Just encourage more people to study languages! Like I said it seems a lot of girls study languages but I know you said you were the only one, and I know the Russian program here is mostly girls and in the Russian major so...

Interview #8

October 23rd, 5:00 p.m.

Program – UNH Approved to Spain

1. What is your major?

I'm a Psychology major. And Honors Psychology major and a Spanish minor.

2. Why did you decide to study abroad?

I've always wanted to get out, go around, I used to always want to go to Australia... I still do... but I was just, Spain was just, you know, minor in Spanish, I've always wanted to see the culture, you know, see what it would be like over there and take a break from New Hampshire for a little while. Get out of here, get out of here for a little bit. You know I just wanted to like, I'm really someone who always has a plan, things need to go according, I usually have several backup plans to that plan but I, things need to go according to that, have a structure to it, every single day. To a week, a month, a year. And so I kind of wanted to get out of that a little bit, to just experience, just get out of my comfort zone and get into something else.

Note: I forgot to ask him why he thought fewer men study abroad than women. I followed up with an email asking, and his response was as follows.

I think that fewer men decide to study abroad because they are not as open to experience as women are. Maybe they are more stubborn and/or set in their ways, so they want to stay on their campus in the US. Women might be more willing to experience new things.

3. Did you face any challenges in choosing to study abroad? For example, did you have to give up a sport or make changes to your academic plan?

No, a Psychology major made it pretty easy to you know, move things around, I didn't really have any issues. No, not really any issues with that. While I was studying abroad there were some but not like, nothing to do with my major or the school actually at all.

4. Were there any aspects about studying abroad that worried you before going, such as your potential living situation abroad, speaking another language, or concern for your safety? What was your biggest concern?

I was mildly concerned about safety. I mean I got, my parents made me get the whole money belt thing which I used maybe twice, and then never used it again. Like I was kind of concerned about safety but, cause I come from twenty minutes from here so everything is pretty safe around here. So I mean I'm used to being able to handle myself so, you know, how to be smart and stuff. Took a while to get used to putting my wallet in my back pocket again once I got back here. Not, I mean, the one thing I was a little worried about towards the right before, was that I'm used to living in a single. And I didn't think that, when I was signing up, I kind of

just said no I'll save the hundred bucks, it cost like a hundred bucks or whatever, to reserve a single. And then towards the beginning I realized that I had lived in a quad in my freshman year, and a double my sophomore year, and then my junior semester last Fall I was in a single in an apartment and I'm in a single now and realized I just do better in a single. I like living with people, but I need to live in a single. And that for my benefit and for everyone's benefit because literally you wouldn't live with me, you'd hate me if we lived in the same room. So I got a little concerned with that but that didn't have anything to do with my program or anything. They offered me it and I blew it off, nothing thinking it would be an issue. I ended up getting a single the entire semester, the entire time, but not really any issues. I mean I was really excited and I got just nervous but I can't really point in any direction why I was nervous before. Although, I did, I started dating my girlfriend who I'm still with. I met her in December and we started dating in January so it was right before I left. So that I think gave me a little bit of a different study abroad experience. I mean, because one thing people do, like they can't wait to like hook up, and get plastered, and everything. I mean that's fun and all but at you know the same time I was totally over that. I didn't feel like I was missing out on it but I just had a different experience because that's all anybody was worried about and I was just, I had my own girlfriend back here and I wanted to get home. It's not that you know, if... I don't know. I started dating her because, I'm very happy with her, but I always wondered if I could have done it again and I had never met her, I just wanted to know what that experience would have been like but, so it was weird when everyone else was, "Oh I never want to leave here" and I am like well I could go home already. And it was nothing against the program or anything. But no... to answer your original question.

5. Did you feel that the campus community was supportive of your decision to study abroad? For example, your professors, study abroad advisers, etc.

Yeah, I'm a tour guide so I go... one of the reasons that I got into the idea of studying abroad was every time we stop at Hood House where I'm always like "Hey this is study abroad" well I'm like, maybe I should just do it. You know and I... that would be cool. And then you know you have a lot... I looked at the statistics over the summer when I was interning at the admissions office and I realized that twenty-five percent of students study abroad here and... I didn't have any barriers at all. It was just, you know, and the people here are great. Once you're like "Aw I'm going to study abroad" they're like "Oh really where you going to go, what are you want to do, blah blah blah" and it's never, you know, "Oh... really?" I've never heard a negative thing about studying abroad, honestly, at all, from anyone, at any school. I had a lot of help from here when you're telling professors whether or not you're, I had to get a recommendation for it and other professors are like "Well I'm going to study abroad next semester so I'll see you, you know, in a year or so" and they'll be like "Oh where you going?!" You know, never worried about the academics, they know that you'll figure it out so...

6. Did you feel supported in your decision to study abroad by friends and family?

Yes. My parents were, well my Dad who was paying for it, was first worried but then realized it would cost about the same. And then anything out of pocket was coming out of my money so... I now owe my Grandma three thousand dollars. Which unfortunately I do have already... but yeah they all supported me. They really, they thought it would be cool that I was

considering widening the horizons a little bit, looking and trying to experience different things rather than just, you know, being stuck here. So yeah I was definitely, then my friends, same reaction from my friends was all “Where are you studying abroad? It’s going to be so much fun, tell me about it, blah blah blah”. And then you know through that I, I think I’ve been able to indirectly, and with other experiences, convinced some of my friends to do it too. So I think one of my friends down at Washington and Lee is going to Italy next semester. Or over January term. I don’t know yet. But you know you just talk to people and you tell them what it was like and they want to do it too.

7. Did you have goals set for your study abroad experience, either self-created or set with an adviser?

I really was just focused on like, enjoying myself, getting, I wanted to really use the language but I didn’t really end up doing too much. And really getting into the culture. And in that case I got annoyed with the culture, a little bit, but I mean I still loved the experience and I wouldn’t take it back at all. I’m sorry what was the question again?

Did you have any goals?

I wanted, I wanted to do those things. To get immersed. And I wanted to, I didn’t really have this specific goal in mind but I wanted to get, I wanted to change myself. But not like force it, I kind of wanted to kind of see where it took me? And I knew that I was going to come back differently, even if it was just a little. And I did. I’m more and more patient even though people who just meet me don’t say that I am. People who’ve known me see it even though I’m still impatient they know that I’ve changed a lot. More patient, more just like, I know that whatever I have to do gets done and things like that so... but the goals were kind of just like to see where it took me. And take some time off because I’ve always been so stressed with everything that I do. I’m always on top of my work and everything and I really couldn’t wait to just have a semester where I could be a typical college student, the ones that you see, you know, drinking on a weeknight or whatever just cause they can, cause they don’t have to worry about anything in life. And I wanted to do that for just one semester and then get back to the grind, which is exactly what happened. That was nice.

8. Do you feel you met these goals, if you had any?

Yeah well, I didn’t, you know the whole language thing I didn’t use it as much as I wanted to but once I got there, I mean, I wish... I spoke Spanish with my host family, they didn’t speak English at all so... but I spoke English with my roommates all the time and I just, I didn’t really use it as much as I wanted to so when people say “Oh you’re a Spanish...” cause I just have this part of my brain that I have to activate when I speak in Spanish and it’s like sometimes it can take awhile. And in Spain it started to be like, you know I’d be speaking in English and then someone would speak in Spanish and I would, after like a month or so, I could switch instantly but now that I’m back here I... we got this guy working on our house right now and he’s from Italy but he speaks a little Spanish and he’s like uh, “Ooo me entiendes? Me entiendes?” and he starts going into it and I’m like “Oh Jesus”. Even though, you know, two years ago I couldn’t have a full blown conversation. So that didn’t exactly get met but that was

my responsibility. No one can really force that on you. So that was my responsibility. I definitely came back changed. And I was definitely able to take the time off and relax, do what I needed to do.

9. Do you have any ideas as to how UNH could encourage more men to study abroad?

I mean... I don't think that they're doing anything that wouldn't encourage men. I don't think that they're doing anything pro-woman or anything like that. It's just, it attracts those kind of people. Maybe, this could be totally stereotypical but maybe it's that girls, a woman, feel, can feel more, I mean I don't even know if this is true, but they can feel more insecure? So when they study abroad, you know they're not afraid to meet new people and everything because they always feel like... and I kind of got a sense with this from some of the people that never wanted to come back here and towards the end had serious problems with, like, serious problems with coming back to the United States. And I realized that it's not a bad thing that I wanted to come back home, because I have things that are waiting for me here. And I was, and it's maybe more men here or in general just feel more comfortable where they are and don't want to change that. Maybe cause guys are more stubborn, I don't know. But UNH in particular, I wouldn't say they're doing anything wrong. Maybe they could advertise it more in general. They don't really advertise it as much. They need to highlight the things, you know not just "you can do this and that" because a lot of people can't do it with their major. My friend who's in an engineering major was able to study and um, everyone knows how tough it is to deal with that. I mean basically, being a tour guide, I know that if you're Nursing or an OT you're not studying abroad. Maybe one of, maybe over J-term I think that there's programs that are geared towards... are there? For nursing or for OT? So I know there's those but basically during the school year it's not going to happen. Um, so some people kind of get in that mentality. But that's just in general I can't really, I don't think UNH is doing anything wrong with how they advertise it or anything. I think maybe just dispositionally females are more inclined to do it. I don't know, honestly. I think they're doing a great job and you can't force study abroad down people, you can keep suggesting it and suggesting it but really, you know, is the person individually comfortable enough to do it. You know risk-taking enough, open to new experience enough to do it. And no one can really change that, that's how that person is. So I guess to address that I would say find out how many people even know about, you know, what's available. Cause I know because I'm a tour guide, that we have over like four hundred program, and like people don't know that and they don't know that it can be cheaper in some cases to study abroad or at least the same price. They don't know that you can go for winter break or anything like that. Oh they just say "oh it's a whole semester, I don't have time for that." You know, so I honestly don't think UNH is doing anything wrong in that respect and they're definitely not gearing it towards, I never felt that it for a single moment, but I did notice that more, and that's true that for every school. And I just realized that when I said four guys in my program that it was more than that. There was API Sevilla, they went to University of Sevilla, that's the only negative thing about API is that they really sold me very quickly except they weren't completely fuller with how about the school I would be attending was. I really started hating my life when I had to take a twenty minute metro to and from school every single day. I really hated that. And they didn't really tell me that. So it was kind of like "Oh I have class at 12:30, I have to leave at 11:40, I have to leave my apartment to get there, walk to the metro, take the metro, get off the metro to class." So there API UPO and and API Sevilla and I think there were like ten guys total and there was like a

hundred and something girls. So... but I mean, you had the variety of personalities within, even with such small amount of guys and a large amount of girls I could see the variety, you know there's people who are clearly just there to party, and there are people there like me who are kind of more balance, like you're not there for schoolwork necessarily but you're also not there to get plastered every single night. And then you have the people that weren't really into that at all. And you had that within each group. And then once at my school, I think, there's definitely still more girls but, for studying abroad students, but there were more guys than in other programs I think. But I don't know. Do you have any like, hypotheses on to why this happens or anything?

Interview #9

October 28th, 10:45 a.m.

Program – UNH Approved to New Zealand

1. What is your major?

English Education.

2. Why did you decide to study abroad?

Cause I wanted to get out of New England. Yeah, specifically I wanted to get to a place that had a culture that was very outdoorsy. Potentially like Norway, or New Zealand, or yeah... those were the two places. I knew that since I transferred majors I could fit it into my schedule and make it work no matter what would happen.

3. Why do you think fewer men study abroad than women?

Maybe because in society what we have going on still is this culture of, get your profession, become the bread winner, something like that. And college is only made for making a profession. So maybe that might just seem like a waste of time to some people. I have no idea, who knows! Why are there more women teachers? You know? I don't know the answer to that.

4. Did you face any challenges in choosing to study abroad? For example, did you have to give up a sport or make changes to your academic plan?

Not really. Slightly, I had to kind of plan ahead, once I figured out about a year and a half or so that I was planning to study abroad. Kind of made sure I left some openings for Discovery classes and whatnot. Yeah I guess the biggest difficulty was just find the college that would... that the credits would count. But then I realized that specifically in the English major once I talked to the Dean, Carla, and I was just like, this is what I want to do, this doesn't line up perfectly but I want to go to this college, she was just like, "Go!". Just go. It doesn't matter, we'll count them. You know, you're still taking English classes. Yeah, that was the coolest part because at first I was going to go to sort of like a city school in New Zealand up in Wellington, which still would have been amazing, but it really wasn't what I was looking for. But those were the ones that on paper it fit with what I needed. It was nice to know that I could have person to person contact with the Dean, granted that it's a liberal arts sort of major, so...

5. Were there any aspects about studying abroad that worried you before going, such as your potential living situation abroad, speaking another language, or concern for your safety? What was your biggest concern?

No. I guess the biggest concern was would I be able to be independent? Cause I didn't really know what independence was really. I knew that I had saved up enough money but that was one aspect of it. So financially independent was one thing. Actually being independent, by

myself, I didn't really realize that when you are by yourself you're actually much more willing to accept others and you're actually a lot less by yourself. So that's pretty cool.

6. How did you overcome these concerns, if there were any?

Yeah. You just become really accepting, it's humbling. It's a good place to go to, New Zealand, to do that. Cause that's a really open culture. Much slower. But not necessarily slower like, in the way they move slower like in the South but just slower as in like, there's no need to rush. If someone needs help, you can help them.

7. Did you feel that the campus community was supportive of your decision to study abroad? For example, your professors, study abroad advisers, etc.

Yeah, Leo was awesome. Here, obviously, this place was a wonderful place to go to. For any questions. The Dean of the English department was all for it, which was the coolest. That was such a good thing to know that I had the back of the person that would be signing off on my classes. My English advisor was wonderful about it too. She would work with me and she would kind of figure out what, since New Zealand was this end goal, she worked the schedule well to sort of be like, when you're abroad you can take these classes and it will be a little bit easier to take these classes rather than these classes. My support system faculty-wise was phenomenal.

8. Did you feel supported in your decision to study abroad by friends and family?

Yeah.

9. Did you have any goals set for your study abroad experience, either self-created or set with an adviser?

No, there were no goals. There was the goal to travel, without any expectations.

10. Do you feel you met these goals, if you had any?

Oh yeah. Yeah. I pretty much know the South Island of New Zealand very well.

11. Do you have any ideas as to how UNH could encourage more men to study abroad?

Say that more women study abroad than men! I don't know. Maybe promote it more with, I don't know, maybe have men promote it more. I don't know how we could get more males to study abroad. That's such a difficult question. Is that what the interviews are to try and figure out?

Interview #10

October 28th, 3:45 p.m.

Program – UNH Exchange to Scotland

1. What is your major?

I'm a Civil Engineering major.

2. Why did you decide to study abroad?

I just kind of always, I was thinking about it, I just always have wanted to. I had been attending the meetings since like freshman year of college and ever since I was in high school I wanted to go abroad. Which just might have been part because my teachers, you know I was really into French at the time and I had a teacher who was really encouraging me to go abroad when I was in college so that might have been part of it. But I don't really know why exactly I decided to, I know just know that I had always wanted to. I don't know if that answers it appropriately or not?

3. Why do you think fewer men study abroad than women?

That's tough to answer. I live in a suite with eight guys, and I asked them, cause I was the only one of those eight who decided to go abroad, and I kind of asked them before I came here why none of them had decided to. All the guys in my suite are engineering and sciences and stuff and they were all saying that their schedules were basically too busy and that they didn't think that the credits were going to work out. But then at the same time I don't know how that... women are equally busy. And have the same issues. So I don't know why that would influence so much, why one would go more than the other. I really don't know honestly!

4. Did you face any challenges in choosing to study abroad? For example, did you have to give up a sport or make changes to your academic plan?

Not really, because the engineering program is an Exchange so that the credits were covered. It was all relatively smooth in terms of courses, balancing, and I don't play any sports here so I didn't have to worry about that. So it was all relatively smooth for me. But at least I think it could have been harder if I was making my own program.

5. Were there any aspects about studying abroad that worried you before going, such as your potential living situation abroad, speaking another language, or concern for your safety? What was your biggest concern?

Yeah so the Scotland program, the way the housing is, it's really really stressful. But I mean it was like, once you've done it, you're kind of glad that you did. Going over to a country without A) having been there, but not having any sort of housing of was kind of stressful. But then also on top of that everyone was kind of worried that they were going to be missing out on

stuff with their friends here. I've been living with the same group of guys for three years now and going away for an entire semester you're kind of like, of course you're worried about missing out on stuff. Language is, Scottish is, the Scottish accent isn't that hard to understand. So I wasn't worried too much about that.

6. How did you overcome these concerns, if there were any?

I was really stressed for like a week and a half while we were looking for housing. But we just had to be really proactive about it. And we knew that going into that we would have to look really hard and be proactive about the process, finding housing. I just tried not to get too stressed out. Remembering that always if worse comes to worst you can always fly back home but never get too stressed out about it. Soldier on through. And figure if I'm going to miss out on stuff, I'm going to miss out on stuff, but I'm also gaining six months in a whole different country so... it balances out.

7. Did you feel that the campus community was supportive of your decision to study abroad? For example, your professors, study abroad advisers, etc.

Yeah. Yeah I would say so. Every professor I talked to, before I left and after getting back, said it was great that I was going to go or that I went. All my friends were happy I went. My parents were really supportive.

8. Did you feel supported in your decision to study abroad by friends and family?

Yeah.

9. Did you have any goals set for your study abroad experience, either self-created or set with an adviser?

I didn't have any with an advisor. I know that I wanted to, I had locations that I really wanted to visit. That I wanted to kind of check off the list. Which was good that I was able to go, I got to go to Italy and go to France which I really were the really big places that I wanted to go. So besides just places to travel kind of goals, and finding housing...

10. Do you have any ideas as to how UNH could encourage more men to study abroad?

That's a good question. I think even just telling people the numbers, that's surprising just that fact. I don't know if that would encourage people to go, but it might encourage people to think about it. Besides that, just from my suite, the people that I live with were all pretty much under the impression that it would be very hard for them to study abroad and maybe making more apparent how easy it could be for the course to work out, especially at least for my major, engineering is very male dominated and if you wanted to get more people from science and engineering fields which are kind of more male dominant, making it apparent and obvious that the abroad thing can work out for people with really busy, difficult schedules, cause you know I mean it worked out fine for me. I try to maintain honors in a difficult major and was still able to

get abroad so... if somebody can do it then the rest of them should be able to. That's really all I guess!