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# Mandating International Experience: A Policy Analysis of The State University of New York (SUNY) At Geneseo Requirement for all International Relations Degree Seeking Students to Study Abroad

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MANDATING INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE: A POLICY ANALYSIS OF THE STATE  
UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK (SUNY) AT GENESEO REQUIREMENT FOR ALL  
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS DEGREE SEEKING STUDENTS TO STUDY ABROAD

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PIM 74

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of Arts in International Education at SIT Graduate Institute in Brattleboro,  
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## Abstract

The prioritization of international education is gaining momentum among higher education institutions. One specific testament to this fact is the steady growth in study abroad participation. As the overall percentage of students studying abroad for credit during their undergraduate career rises, policies are being created in a variety of contexts to promote international education experiences (Open Doors). Amidst these fledgling policies, a 22-year-old major-specific study abroad requirement has thrived and continues to evolve in today's global state.

This capstone is an analysis of the State University of New York (SUNY) at Geneseo's International Relations (IR) policy requiring all undergraduate degree seeking students to participate in a for-credit international experience in order to graduate. The policy outlines a number of options for the required international experience, including an internship and a special project, yet places the greatest emphasis on study abroad for academic credit. Using supplemental data and resources, both the history and the future of this unique policy will be examined, taking into consideration SUNY Geneseo's Internationalization campaign. There will also be a literature review presented, which will look at various policies mandating study abroad and the way different campuses work toward increasing participation and maintaining best practices. In addition, the perspectives of key stakeholders will be presented using interview responses and day-to-day observations. With the completion of the analysis, recommendations and consistent themes will be presented on SUNY Geneseo's IR policy, assessing the impact it has had to date as well as potential options to promote sustainability in the years ahead. Recommendations include documenting formal goals and objectives,

standardizing pre-departure and re-entry processes, and conducting comprehensive assessment and evaluation.

## Introduction

Emphasis on International and intercultural experience is growing in today's global society. Evidence of this prioritization of international engagement is especially present in education. Higher education institutions are working to promote this process of internationalization within their campuses in a variety of ways. Internationalization, which is what Knight (1994) describes as this "process of integrating international and multicultural perspectives and experiences into the learning, discovery, and engagement mission of higher education" is becoming the inspiration for areas such as, student and staff diversification efforts, increased technology application and greater study abroad participation (as cited in Alexejun and D'Angelo, 2016, p.1).

The State University of New York (SUNY) at Geneseo is one higher education institution committed to internationalization. SUNY Geneseo's long standing requirement for all international relations (IR) major and minor degree seeking students to fulfill an international experience in the form of either study abroad, internship, or special project is a prime example of that dedication to internationalization. The policy has been in operation for over 20 years, yet recent changes in its processes can be attributed to the increasingly international environment in which we live ("The History," 2012).

Although the policy has been part of the IR degree since 1994, its most recent revisions can be traced back to SUNY Geneseo's participation in the American Council on Education (ACE) Internationalization Lab, which was conducted between 2013 and 2015. The ACE

Lab, “provides institutions with customized guidance and insight as they review their internationalization goals and develop strategic plans” (“About ACE,” 2015). Some of the efforts revealed during the ACE Internationalization Lab included international student enrollment and core curriculum design, but the topic of this paper focuses particularly on the overall promotion of study abroad and its steady stream of participants thanks in part to this specific IR Department policy. A full description of the findings from the ACE Internationalization Lab can be found in Appendix A.

SUNY Geneseo’s Department of Institutional Research prepared data on the growing number of students studying abroad as well as the growing number of students declaring IR majors and minors. At the start of the 2015-2016 academic year, SUNY Geneseo’s Fast Facts webpage boasted that approximately 40 percent of the student body have participated in some form of credit-bearing study abroad, this data and other SUNY Geneseo demographics can be seen in Appendix B. This is the highest percentage the University has seen to date (2015). At the same time, there was a huge jump in IR majors in the last ten years, with numbers increasing five times from 2005 to 2015.

This analysis will use institutional data, ACE Internationalization Lab findings, and testimonials from interviews with key SUNY Geneseo stakeholders to assess the current state and impact of the policy. Much of the assessment will focus on study abroad in particular because it’s the aspect of the policy both prioritized by IR staff as the preferred option as well as the area presenting the greatest potential for growth. Based on the aforementioned sources, along with a collection of the most recent literature examining similar policies in different contexts, the analysis will also propose recommendations and potentials causes for

concern should the current changes to SUNY Geneseo's IR Department policy inspire expansion across departments as stakeholders, such as International Department Coordinator and Faculty Advisor, Jeremy Grace, and Assistant Provost for International Programs, Dr. Rebecca Lewis, seem to suggest.

My decision to spend a year in SUNY Geneseo's Study Abroad Office as the Graduate Intern was influenced by the extensiveness of the program options. Students had the option of studying for intersession, spring break, summer, semester and full-year programs through the SUNY system. I found that it was the summer session that drew most SUNY Geneseo students abroad. More specifically, it was faculty-led summer sessions that ranged from four to about eight weeks depending on the program. Having had little exposure to faculty-led programming, it was fascinating to see the level of engagement on behalf of the faculty. It was clear that despite the plethora of options, in terms of length, SUNY provider, and program type, which for SUNY Geneseo, includes semester exchange, study abroad, summer host institution, and again, summer faculty-led, students gravitated to the programs of the professors they knew best. One of these professors was Jeremy Grace, who, in his 15 years has proposed and implemented a number of summer faculty-led programs for the Political Science and International Relations Departments. It was while I was overseeing the application process of one of Jeremy Grace's new programs in Switzerland that he described the unique IR policy that required international experience credit.

#### The Current Policy

As described on the International Relations Degree Requirements webpage, the current policy states:



In order to satisfy the requirements for the international relations major, you must complete at least 3 credits in either a study abroad experience, an approved internship, or a special project approved by the Director of the International Relations major. The preferred option is study abroad, which provides the fullest cross-cultural exposure. This experience may be accomplished through one of many State University programs or programs from other colleges. Internships may be selected from a number of options in foreign countries or the US, primarily in Washington, DC. (“International Relations Brochure,” n.d., para. 8).

This language detailing the policy found on both the Department page and in SUNY Geneseo’s yearly *Bulletin*, a comprehensive layout of all degrees and courses for the academic year, has remained unchanged for the 22 years that the policy has been in place (J. Grace, personal communication, March 29, 2016).

Most of the research pertaining to the current state of the policy was acquired during an interview with the International Relations Department Coordinator, Jeremy Grace, and from current and historical texts detailing the degree. The interview questions and responses can be seen in Appendix C. After consulting these resources, it seems that although the Department itself has gone through changes since its inception, this specific policy has seen little formal revision since the year it was established in 1994 (J. Grace, personal communication, March 29, 2016). That being said, in regard to the previous point about SUNY Geneseo and its academic departments’ commitment to internationalization, Professor Grace did speak on a number of current revisions and future goals he has for the policy.

Grace revealed that, in his experience as Department Coordinator and as a faculty advisor to a section of IR degree seeking students each year, the international experience requirement has been a major draw for students:

I wouldn't say that it has in any way dissuaded the vast majority of students or prompted them to change their major. In fact, when I get informal feedback from students, almost uniformly they say that the requirement is a great thing. And that they picked Geneseo and international relations particularly because we have this requirement and they have every intention of meeting it (personal communication, March 29, 2016).

Study abroad has been the recommended option to earn the international credits but the department does have the small percentage of students who choose a US-based internship instead ("The 2015 Bulletin," p.74).

The special project option was created initially for individuals in extreme financial or personal circumstances that prevented them from participation in either a study abroad program or an internship (J. Grace, personal communication, March 29, 2016). In Grace's 15 years at SUNY Geneseo, he cannot recall any special project options submitted by IR degree seeking students. In fact, he believes there has only been one or two in the department's history. These few special projects have typically taken the form of intensive direct study projects (J. Grace, personal communication, March 29, 2016).

The rarity in number of students fulfilling their requirement via special project has resulted in a policy change, set to be implemented at the start of academic year 2016, that will do away with the "special project" option all together (J. Grace, personal communication,

March 29, 2016). Grace and his colleagues of various disciplines who contribute to the IR degree, particularly Political Science, have agreed that the formal removal of this option has long been overdue. Along with this change, there will also be rewording in the policy description as to the length of an international experience (personal communication, March 29, 2016)

Currently, the requirement states that students need to earn at least three-credits in a study abroad course, an internship, or a special project (J. Grace, personal communication, March 29, 2016). In order to give the IR Department more flexibility in terms of approving students' international experiences, the portion of the policy stating that students must "complete at least 3 credits," will be removed and simply replaced with wording that states, "an approve study abroad experience or internship." Grace points out that this gives advisors and faculty the opportunity to ultimately require longer, more immersive, international experiences (personal communication, March 29, 2016).

At SUNY Geneseo, most three credit study abroad programs run between two and four weeks. With this subtle change, Grace and his colleagues have the opportunity to decrease the number of IR students opting for the two-week intersession programs by withholding approval in favor of programs that are a minimum of four weeks. Grace explains:

This will allow us the flexibility to sort of tinker with and deal with the actual length requirement going forward. So what it will be, is an internal department policy that will be shared with all the majors but it won't be specifically written in the bulletin that you have to go abroad for four weeks but we just simply say, 'an approved' and then we will

just go through a system where we won't approve them for less than four weeks (personal communication, March 29, 2016).

These are the two current changes to the policy that were made in an effort to transition into an increasingly study abroad focused international experience requirement (J. Grace, personal communication, March 29, 2016). As Grace noted, these current revisions will pave the way for potential changes in the future that will formally require longer-term study abroad experiences. With this, study abroad will be less dominated by SUNY Geneseo's popular short-term, faculty-led programs and more by semester or year-long programs. This hope will reduce the likelihood of participating in "some pre-packaged tour where you hardly even interact with anybody but you just go visit a couple museums and then come home" and instead have an immersive, cross-cultural experience, which is what Grace describes as the intended spirit of the policy (personal communication, March 29, 2016).

### Background

Painting a picture detailed enough to provide context for a thorough policy analysis requires examination at multiple levels. This examination will start broadly and gradually narrow to the IR Department itself. SUNY Geneseo is a smaller New York State liberal arts university with an enrollment of 5,600 undergraduates and 98 graduate students ("Fast Facts," 2015). This rural institution is set in the Genesee Valley about 40 minutes south of Rochester in the village of Geneseo. For a more detailed SUNY Geneseo profile, see Appendix B.

Geneseo is in the academic company of 64 other SUNY schools. One of the unique characteristics about the SUNY system in relation to international education is that all 64 institutions are in a study abroad consortium. This means that any SUNY student can study

abroad through any other SUNY school's programs. So, while the SUNY Geneseo Study Abroad Office offers around 80 of its own programs, its students are open to the upward of 600 programs within the consortium ("About Study Abroad," n.d.). SUNY Geneseo's collection of programs are categorized as one of the following types, semester study abroad, semester exchange, short-term faculty-led, short term host institution. The program type descriptions can be seen in Appendix D.

To stay consistent, the forthcoming data presented is titled, "most recent," which is for the 2014-2015 school year due to the fact that a portion of the 2016-2015 data was underway during the research for this analysis. As mentioned, the most recent enrollment was 5,600. Of those, approximately 241 are currently declared IR majors and 19 IR minors. At the close of the 2014-2015 academic year, about 536 students studied abroad, with IR degree seeking students constituting 62 of those students, this data can be seen in Appendices E and F. That's almost 12 percent of study abroad participants from one of 39 degree programs ("Institutional Research Data", 2015).

To put that into perspective, two of the most popular majors at SUNY Geneseo are biology and psychology, whose most current enrollment was 853 and 730 degree seeking students respectively. Each of those degrees had about the same number of students participate in study abroad, with 62 biology students participating and 59 psychology students participating. That means that about 260 IR students are contributing to 12 percent of study abroad participation while the 853 biology students contribute about the same and the 730 psychology students contribute about 11 percent. Supporting data can be seen in Appendix G.

These three degrees make up the largest percentages of study abroad participation (Factbook, 2015).

Student study abroad participation is a characteristic of Geneseo of which the University community is quite proud. When SUNY Geneseo completed the ACE Internationalization Lab in the summer of 2015, this high participation rate was one of the most outstanding achievements presented by the ACE evaluators, which are outlined in Appendix A. The two-year process culminated with the appointment of a new President in the summer of 2015. President Denise Battles mentioned the initiatives that she would like to prioritize in light of the findings from the ACE Lab during her Inaugural Address:

While the (study abroad) participation rate is admirable, that (40) percentage indicates that the majority of our students do not have a study abroad experience. And while the number of international students at Geneseo has increased over time, from three in 1990 to about 160 today, we have incredible potential for growth, as we do for hosting international scholars, recruiting international faculty and staff, supporting exchanges, and enhancing global perspectives in our curriculum (“The Inauguration,” para. 43).

This is the climate being set for SUNY Geneseo which forecasts new and exciting international campaigns for the University and its students. And while its globalized future looks bright, the campus culture has historically supported diversity and international engagement as well. Such was the case when the IR Department emerged out of a joint faculty-student effort 22 years ago.

The document titled, “The History of the Department of Political Science and International Relations at SUNY Geneseo” (2012) provides a concise history of the creation of

the major. This occurred in 1994 when two political science students, Mary Cusick and Bronwyn Irwin went to the SUNY Geneseo administration and requested the creation of a new major focusing specifically on international relations. In response, the administration put the new major within the Political Science Department and Cusick and Irwin were the first two graduates of the IR Department in 1996 and 1997 respectively (“The History,” p.27).

Intended to be an interdisciplinary degree that drew from courses in a variety of fields, from geology to anthropology, administrators assumed that the weight of another major would be evenly distributed amongst these numerous disciplines. Thus, there were little resources provided for the new major. And although some faculty voiced opposition, most were enthusiastic about the addition (“The History,” p.27).

In its early years, before it developed a department-specific chain of command, the IR degree was headed by a committee made up of faculty from the disciplines offering courses to degree seekers. Eventually, coordination and scheduling concerns among the departments interfered with efficient operation so the Political Science Department took over the major (“The History,” p.27). Today, though it maintains its own specific identity, the IR Department is still housed within the Political Science Department and many faculty interchange between teaching courses under the headings of both majors (J. Grace, personal communication, March 29, 2016).

The major’s design was modelled after Tuft University’s IR major and initially housed four different tracks that students could choose as a focus. Those tracks included, the Developing World, European Systems, War and Peace, and Global Political Economy (“The History,” p. 27-28). Today, the four tracks consist of:

- The Global Political Economy track focuses on globalization processes, international economics, comparative economic systems, economic development, and international business.
- The War and Peace Studies track concentrates on understanding the causes of war, conflict and disorder, as well as promotion of peace and conflict resolution.
- The European System track focuses on problems and developments in Europe, in particular integration and post-communist transition.
- The Developing World track includes study of various regions including Central and South America, the Middle East, Africa, and Asia, all of which are undergoing processes of political and economic development (“International Relations Brochure,” n.d., para. 3-6)

#### Literature Review

The notion of study abroad as a degree requirement is relatively new, and although it has gained momentum in recent years, there is little in terms of research or literature on the practice itself. Goucher College gained attention in 2006 with the establishment of a school-wide policy that required every enrolled student to study abroad before graduation (Scheer, 2010). As a result, most of the literature found references Goucher as the standard. While the policy analyzed in this paper examines mandatory study abroad (or comparable international experiences) in relation to a single degree offering at a small higher education institution in New York State, the following literature review presents a variety of study abroad requirement models and perspectives that may spark new ideas or potential areas of improvement for SUNY Geneseo’s IR Department.



The three sources were determined based on a number of factors. The first, as mentioned, is that most literature highlights Goucher College in reference to mandatory study abroad policy. The articles to follow were the most recent and the most scholarly, meaning they were published either in journals or university publications. Many shorter articles did not present substantial enough evidence to achieve the goal of the literature review, which is to provide alternative models and perspectives on mandatory study abroad policies. The mention of internationalization was also present in the proceeding articles, which was a characteristic that needed to be tied in, as it is so within the greater analysis. Lastly, the institutions and their models for international education requirements highlighted varying methods, campus culture and perspectives, which, for the purpose of this analysis, were necessary to give a grander context of this relatively new practice.

The sources presented are a collection of articles penned within the last six years that speak to study abroad requirements in a variety of contexts as well as the perspectives of those directly impacted by those requirements. Beginning at a micro level, Kirsten M. Alexejun and Anne M. D'Angelo (2013) examine the impact of requiring degree seekers in the University of Minnesota's Carlson School of Management to study abroad before graduating. Just as the theme of internationalization has permeated throughout SUNY Geneseo, so too has the focus on the international and multicultural throughout the University of Minnesota (p.80).

Interestingly enough, in researching policies with similar requirements, there seems to be more data on degrees and academic fields that don't traditionally make up the study abroad participant majority, specifically business. In an effort to understand the fields that are less accounted for, scholars appear to have left the seemingly obvious degree choices for study

abroad requirements (i.e. international relations) at the wayside. While it is much easier to justify the establishment of a study abroad requirement for these more obvious contenders, there is little current research on the implementation and long-term outcomes of these types of policies. While the policy characteristics vary from program to program and institution to institution, case studies such as Alexejun and D'Angelo's *International Experience Required: Lessons from the Carlson School of Management* (2013) help distinguish what is necessary in creating a sustainable mandatory study abroad policy.

The article uses the Carlson School of Management's international experience degree requirement to promote international education in business schools but also to "demonstrate how innovative practice can emerge as a core curricular requirement" (Alexejun and D'Angelo, 2013, p. 82). Multiple facets of the policy are examined, from the initial needs assessment to implementation to the post evaluation for the first cohort from freshman year to graduation. The policy functions under three guiding principles that are meant to fulfill both the School's goals to increase internationalization and the University of Minnesota's overall student development goals (p. 82).

Those three guiding principles state that one, business is global, two, experiences abroad increase global perspective, and three, "an experience that meets students' developmental readiness is critical for success" (Alexejun and D'Angelo, 2013, p. 81-82). The authors describe developmental readiness in terms of qualities such as "maturity, tolerance for ambiguity, (and) prior international exposure" (p.82). Principles such as these, especially numbers two and three, should be at the heart of every policy similar to this because intercultural competence and practical experience contribute to transformative learning. And

while departments and institutions can spout their commitment to these principles, unless they are embedded in the values of every stakeholder playing a role in the policy design and implementation, optimal success seems unlikely (p.83).

This is key to what Alexejun and D'Angelo (2013) attribute to the favorable outcomes of the Carlson School of Management's international experience requirement. Not only does the College have buy-in at every level, but the policy is specifically intended to augment the overall education experience for students. These are goals that were outlined early, even before the policy was put into effect. By having this foresight and attention to detail, schools like the Carlson School of Management, and SUNY Geneseo for the matter, can make decisions and conduct assessment with the goals in mind so as not to let the original intentions be muddled or lost completely (p. 83-84). This may be achieved through regular evaluation and feedback opportunity as well as consistent communication.

Attesting to this point is the Carlson School's impressive outcomes upon evaluation. The authors note that at the time of its inception in 2007, the international experience requirement was controversial amongst peers in the field of higher education. However, with strong institutional support and commitment to a comprehensive design, "96 percent of fourth-year students from the first undergraduate cohort held to the requirement and completed the IE (international experience) within four years" (Alexajun and D'Angelo, 2013. P. 81). Thorough assessment and evaluation of academic, developmental, cultural, and professional goals were conducted, analyzed and reevaluated for future consideration (p. 86).

While it's important to narrow the scope and look at policies on an individual level, it is also crucial to zoom out and take the general practices in the field into account as well. This is

what Nicole R. Scheer accomplished in *Requiring Study Abroad for a Bachelor's Degree: A New Trend in Higher Education* (2010). While Alexejun and D'Angelo examined the practice of mandatory study abroad from an academic affairs perspective, Scheer's 2010 article employs a student affairs lens. The article takes on the role of the study abroad office and what these professionals can do to ensure optimal results when it comes to these international education degree requirements (p. 34).

Reiterating the common thread mentioned before, Scheer (2010) acknowledges the trend that is higher education campus internationalization, specifically liberal arts higher education institutions. A bulk of the article lays out the benefits of study abroad, namely intercultural competence and personal and intellectual development (p. 35). Similar notions were present throughout each of the articles discussed in this review, and suggest that these are realistic and attainable goals. That being said, it depends on how an office, department, or institution implements the requirement as to whether those potential outcomes are successfully realized.

This is where the next section of the article comes into play. Scheer (2010) reveals the current practices of a number institutions' study abroad requirement policies. Institutions such as Goucher College and Arcadia University, who require all undergraduates to have an international experience during their college career, rely heavily on their study abroad offices to facilitate and monitor the progress (p. 36). It's a bit different in a case like the Carlson School of Management when academic departments are assessing the policy and the study abroad office facilitates the international experiences.

Both designs present strengths and potential weaknesses. Although perhaps more organized and concise, a model where a center for study abroad like those at Goucher and Arcadia are in operation may run the risk of promoting abroad experiences for specific academic disciplines that may not fully align with the intended academic track. Conversely, when you have two distinct players, in this case it would be academic departments coordinating with study abroad offices working to implement a degree requirement, there leaves room for potential miscommunication and differing priorities (Scheer, 2010, p. 36).

At the same time, while definitely relevant, study abroad offices may have specific department goals for its students, such as working to incorporate specific learning outcomes into the overall study abroad model. Now, while there are obvious ties and interweaving themes here, unless communication and collaboration are at their best between the study abroad office and the academic departments or administrators, there leaves room for untapped potential in the form of missed developmental and learning opportunities. This is a consideration both SUNY Geneseo and other institutions may have to consider, especially as policies like these continue to grow.

In this vein, and as Scheer (2010) touches upon, another point to keep in mind is distribution of resources. As overall study abroad participation continues to rise, be it by policy or by student self-selection, Scheer explains that it is how institutions distribute its resources that can also impact the overall effectiveness of an international experience. Obviously funding is a top concern for all stakeholders associated with higher education study abroad. Yet when it comes to a study abroad requirement in particular, it stands out even more. In the case of

Goucher College, as all students are expected to study abroad, the institution presents every student with a \$1,200 voucher upon enrollment to allay the costs of their program (p.35).

To ensure sustainability, Scheer emphasizes that programs like Goucher College's voucher program and its peers who have planned to expand study abroad participation in some capacity in internationalization efforts must ensure interdepartmental support and sufficient faculty and/or staff (p. 36). Scheer points out that whatever implementation model an institution decides to follow, it is crucial that considerations are made to ensure financial stability and that there are the appropriate number of personnel to meet the needs of the students and maintain the policy's goals (p. 35-35).

While the first two sources provided a bit of background on international experience requirement policy implementation models, the third article veers in another direction and presents the perspectives of the stakeholders directly impacted by one of these policies. In *Goucher Students and Faculty Voice Opinions on Study Abroad*, author Rachel Brustein provides readers with the points of view of the students who must fulfill a study abroad requirement as well as the faculty who are assessing their students with this policy in mind. Written in 2014, Brustein compiles the perspectives of stakeholders who are tied to Goucher College eight years after the policy was first implemented (Brustein, 2014).

Brustein's work is especially valuable for the purposes of this policy analysis. In order to create the most comprehensive and accurate analysis, it is necessary to present every prospective outcome. Therefore, although the specific context is different, the lenses through which readers see the Goucher study abroad requirement are salient. Feedback included one student recommending study abroad be a requirement for every higher education institution

(p.1). An alumna, Kathryn Walker said that the reality of how much she has learned and grown didn't become as apparent as it did when she came back to campus for her senior year and reunited with her peers. Walker was able to see "how far she had come" in comparison to her friends who had remained on campus (as cited in Brustein, p.2). And a faculty member, Florencia Cortes-Conde said the experience changes students on a deeper level and highlights the significance of home stays and immersing oneself in a completely different academic environment (p.2-3).

Conversely, there are the students who expressed disappointment and frustration with the Goucher college-wide mandatory study abroad policy. Some of the concerns included a lack of study abroad options for certain majors, which for an institution that requires all students participate, can be extremely challenging. Student Katelyn Shiring claims there are so many restrictions and arbitrary rules when it comes to study abroad. "We're a school that likes to think outside the box, but as soon as you slap rules and restrictions on something that's meant to broaden the mind, it loses its magic." Shiring also made the important point that study abroad has the potential to "become so institutionalized that it's seen as a graduation requirement rather than an experience and an adventure" (as cited in Brustein, p.2).

These are all crucial perspectives on a trend that is becoming increasingly more prevalent in the United States and beyond. Although offered by students from a variety of disciplines who were required to study abroad before graduating, there are many parallels between stakeholders at Goucher College and SUNY Geneseo, especially if policies similar to that in the IR Department begin to spring up in light of internationalization efforts. It is important to take all points of view into consideration, however rare they may be, in order to

ensure the greatest number of students are receiving the best international and educational opportunities as possible.

### Stakeholder Analysis

For the majority of stakeholders, the opinion of the IR degree policy requiring at least three credits of study abroad, internship or special project is overwhelmingly positive. Three interviews and one focus group were held to obtain feedback from various stakeholders on the IR Department policy to require some form of international experience. A focus group was facilitated with three IR majors who have completed their requirement by studying abroad. They were each asked a series of questions on the policy and its impact. The focus group questions and responses can be found in Appendix H. Individual interviews were conducted with the head of the Study Abroad Office, Dr. Rebecca Lewis, and the IR Department Coordinator, Jeremy Grace. Each were asked a series of questions specifically catered to their role in implementing the IR policy. The questions asked during Dr. Lewis' interview and transcript can be seen in Appendix I and, as mentioned, Jeremy Grace's interview transcript can be seen in Appendix C. Lastly, an interview was carried out with an IR major who opted for an internship to fulfill his international requirement. The questions and responses can be referred to in Appendix J.

### **Students**

The formal interviews conducted include a focus group of three students majoring in IR who chose to fulfill their required international component through study abroad. The other student interview was with one of the few IR majors who chose to participate in a domestic



internship for his international requirement. The following presents the participants' opinions and perspectives and includes excerpts from the interviews.

Between the interviewee responses and the majority of IR degree seeking students who shared their opinions during advising sessions and outreach events for the Study Abroad Office, it was hard to find a student who did not view the Department policy as a major advantage of their studies. Although it often comes up as one of the first reasons why an IR student considers studying abroad, it soon becomes apparent that it's not the most significant force driving their desire to have an international experience. Ultimately, the strongest pulls to study abroad are aspects such as building intercultural competence, enhancing a particular academic subject or gaining a new, expansive perspective of the world.

The three students who had earned their required international experience credits abroad provided some of the best insight into the student perspective on this policy. The students, Stella Oduro, a junior who spent the spring 2014 semester studying in South Korea, Anna Biuso, a junior who spend the fall 2015 semester studying in South Africa, and Amanda Wagner, a senior who spent summer 2015 in Ecuador, shared their thoughts on their experiences and the policy itself.

Having already completed a study abroad program, the participants each explained how the experience had a multidimensional and lasting impact on their lives, well beyond academics alone. It was reiterated by all three students, who chose their study abroad locations for uniquely different reasons, that the requirement has definitely benefitted their academic careers. There was also at least one mention in each of the interviews about how the international experience requirement should be characteristic of other majors at SUNY

Geneseo. Oduro, who came to the United States at the age of 12 from Ghana, spoke of her transformative semester in Seoul, South Korea:

People are very critical of going outside of this country. It's very important to encourage people to step outside of this country and go and be independent and learn about other people's culture and ethnic issues. I just think this aspect of the program itself brings the perspective of every single student and they should expand it more to other majors if anything (S. Oduro, personal communication, April 20, 2016).

While there were few suggestions made by the three students when asked if they could offer any points of concern or problematic areas with the policy, they did provide some ideas. Oduro admitted that she didn't even know that there was an international experience requirement for IR majors until her sophomore year. She said that she started the study abroad application process independently and it wasn't until she needed an approval signature from her IR advisor for the required credit that she discovered it was a degree component. Both Biuso and Wagner mentioned the fact that scheduling and finances could be potential problems for their peers. However, each had remedies in the form of diligent course planning to prevent scheduling conflicts and scholarships for financial difficulties combine with smart spending while abroad. Ultimately, each participant felt that the potential challenges students and parents may encounter still pale in comparison to the invaluable aspects of studying abroad.

Wagner said:

It kind of adds a lot of context to the things that you're learning. So, as a developing world track, to not have spent a significant period of time in a developing country I think would be sort of a shame because it really does help to not only allow you to see some

of the problems you're learning about but also to see the ways in which those regions are succeeding that you may not always get when you're looking at problems in a classroom (A. Wagner, personal communication, April 20, 2016).

For David Gomez, a junior IR major who chose the internship option for his international experience requirement, the policy is a boon to his academic career. Gomez initially intended to study abroad in a Spanish speaking country when he was first informed of the policy. He hoped to fulfill both language and major requirement in one study abroad program. However, by the start of sophomore year he had declared a second major and due to scheduling conflicts, he sought out an internship (personal communication, April 29, 2016).

When it came to the internship component of his degree, Gomez said that there were challenges. He mentioned that he started seeking out and applying for internships almost a year before he found his internship at the American Council on Germany in New York City (personal communication, April 29, 2016). It seems important to note that there are few internationally focused internship opportunities for students in the greater Rochester area (J. Grace, personal communication, March 29, 2016). Buffalo, the next closest city, is almost an hour away and then Syracuse is nearly two hours away.

Therefore, while many students in other majors who have internship degree requirements may complete their internships while working part-time during the semester, necessity dictates that IR degree seeking students pursue internship opportunities specifically over the summer. With only about 20 percent of undergraduate students being from the Genesee Valley, a region between the Finger Lakes and Buffalo region that hosts Rochester and SUNY Geneseo, this means that students may need to relocate over the summer to complete an

internship. This, although cheaper than a study abroad program, may present obstacles for some students (Factbook, 2015).

Although interviewed two weeks before he was actually set to begin his internship, Gomez explained that because he invested so much time researching and ultimately corresponding with his internship site, that he is confident it will meet the intended goals of the requirement. And to reinforce his certainty, he has discussed the upcoming internship and the outcomes he would like to see upon completion with his faculty advisor. The day to day intercultural interaction with German representatives, as well as the diverse setting that is New York, will contribute to a more global perspective (personal communication, April 29, 2016).

A small minority of students have encountered challenges in regard to the international experience requirement. Although transfer students accounted for only 5 percent of fall 2015 undergraduate enrollment, there were nearly 300 students who started their SUNY Geneseo careers later than their peers with the same requirement (Factbook, 2016). For some of these students, the policy has posed obstacles regarding scheduling and graduation timelines being prolonged.

### **Faculty**

Faculty perspectives regarding the policy came from the feedback of IR Department Coordinator and faculty advisor, Jeremy Grace. Between his direct contact with students and fellow faculty and his 15-year career in the IR Department, Grace provided valuable insight. He says, “from the perspective of faculty and staff around the college, the overall feedback has been very good and from the perspective of the students, it’s just transformative” (personal communication, March 29, 2016).

The Study Abroad Office boasts a large number of faculty-led study abroad programs. This strong participation demonstrates how committed faculty are to international education. As Grace notes, faculty and staff appreciate the IR degree requirement because it feeds a consistent population of students into the applicant pool for their programs. With enrollment requirements necessary for a trip to be carried out, programs need a minimum number of students (which vary by program), faculty leaders appreciate these additional prospective participants. Grace can personally attest to this fact because he implements a number of programs specifically for the IR and Political Science majors and he knows how important it is to meet that minimum number so that the other degree seeking students, who are dependent on the experience, can complete their requirement (J. Grace, personal communication, March 29, 2016).

### **Administration and Staff**

As referenced previously while examining the state of the SUNY Geneseo campus, the administration, headed by President Denise Battles, is a strong proponent of furthering the University's Internationalization efforts. The intended goals of this policy and the resulting relationship with the Study Abroad Office demonstrates how ardently the IR exemplifies the values of Internationalization. In an interview with Assistant Provost for International Programs, Dr. Rebecca Lewis, she spoke to the institution-wide support that the Study Abroad Office receives. Between her commitment to study abroad and other relevant global endeavors, Dr. Lewis appreciates President Battles' prioritization of international education. And when it comes to the relationship with the IR Department, she says:

We are very supportive and we're very grateful, I think as with most of our relationships with academic departments, we work really well with them and try to support their efforts as much as possible and are grateful that they send students abroad because we understand that faculty encouragement is one of the key reasons that we have such a high participation rate (personal communication, May 6, 2016).

Based on feedback from Study Abroad Office staff and faculty, there have been a small number of students who raise questions as to whether or not best intentions are at the heart of their decision to study abroad. With a requirement, this is bound to happen because, after all, it is a requirement. Yet, as IR major Anna Biuso so directly put it, "if you don't want to go abroad, then maybe you shouldn't be in the IR major (personal communications, March 20, 2016). Although it's important not to generalize, it is telling in those rare instances when a student prepares a three sentence paragraph for their study abroad personal statement and the only piece to draw from the text is that they are under a time crunch and need to fit any form of study abroad in before graduation. As a result, perhaps needs assessments and individual learning plans should be utilized early on in an academic career so as to ensure that students find their most suitable international experience.

### **Additional Stakeholders**

Parents are a key stakeholder. Based on faculty and staff accounts of parental support, and the overall success thus far of the IR international experience requirement, it seems that they are committed to promoting study abroad and internship opportunities for their children. During freshman recruitment sessions, it is the parents who are most eager to stop by the study abroad table and receive information about SUNY Geneseo programs. Although eventually, if

genuinely interested, the students will come forward, but it is refreshing to see how excited and eager parents are for their children to have international education opportunities.

For Jeremy Grace, he has also found that parents are incredibly supportive and accommodating when it come to the IR policy. He could however recall a couple of instances when a parent's extreme concern about the study abroad location dissuaded a student from fulfilling their requirement abroad. In these rare cases, Grace explained that he and other faculty would personally speak with these parents, answering any questions and assuring them of the safety protocols that SUNY Geneseo (and its partners) takes to ensure the students' wellbeing. He said that sometimes this was effective and other times it was not, but when a parent makes a decision about such a sensitive topic, there is little to be done (personal communication, March 29, 2016).

In terms of alumni, there is little feedback to present regarding the IR policy. It just so happens that SUNY Geneseo is about to begin a large-scale mapping project to track where alumni are and what they are doing in the world. Unfortunately, with International Relations, there are few alumni in the area and although Grace confirmed their strong support and commitment to the policy and its sustainability, it was difficult to find first-person alumni perspectives for this analysis.

However, Grace acknowledged the ways in which alumni are leaving their impact on the Department and its longstanding policy. Over time, alumni have provided internships for current students looking to fulfill their international experience in the United States. Also, Grace noted that both study abroad and internship opportunities have transpired into post-graduate work opportunities. And, alumni donations account for yearly scholarships that are

awarded to IR degree seeking students preparing for study abroad (personal communication, March 29, 2016).

### Policy Components and Elements

As mentioned, the IR degree requirement calling for an international experience in the form of study abroad or internship (or the rare special project) in order to graduation was established in 1994 (“The History,” 2012, p. 27). This was the same year that the IR Department itself emerged as its own department after branching off from the Political Science Department. The policy began in order to supplement the content learned in the classroom with real world international and/or intercultural experience (J. Grace, personal correspondence, March 29, 2016). Aside from the language that describes the parameters of the requirement itself, there is little documentation on the history or any elaborations on the policy.

That being said, Grace, who has worked in some capacity in the IR Department since 2000, was the greatest source of information regarding this policy. Aside from what is written in the degree description, Grace added:

For the study abroad component, historically, we have required that they be abroad for a minimum of three and half weeks. And the unofficial policy, when we are advising with students, has stretched that we prefer a full semester if not a full year because we want the full cultural immersion experience... this is going to be revised... but up until now, one of the parameters has been a minimum of three and a half weeks abroad. For the internship requirement, they have to work a minimum of 115 hours with an organization that is engaged in work related to international affairs (personal communication, March 29, 2016).



Regarding the special project option, which is set to be removed altogether by the fall 2016 semester because from the start, the policy intended to promote study abroad in particular. When potential IR degree seeking students read the website or brochure describing the major and minor requirements, they are informed that when it comes to the mandatory international experience, “the preferred option is study abroad, which provides the fullest cross-cultural exposure” (“International Relations Brochure”, n.d., para. 8). This preference has been well maintained, as Grace confirms that there are rarely more than a handful of students who opt for the internship alone (often students complete internships during their study abroad program).

At the requirement’s core, IR Department Coordinator and faculty advisor, Jeremy Grace, says the most basic goal is for students, “to get out into the world and understand cross-cultural issues and be able to navigate outside of their own communities and to see what is happening out there” (personal communication, March 29, 2016). While he attests to the unspoken goals that international educators strive for through study abroad, there are no extensive goals based on needs assessment or evaluation. Grace says that outside evaluators visit SUNY Geneseo every five years to determine whether the academic standards of every department are up to the bar that the University and the larger SUNY system has set. However, he admits that it’s not a sufficient evaluation of the specific policy, and initiative should be taken to carry out a comprehensive evaluation (personal communication, March 29, 2016).

Without extensive formal assessment by administrators, one must rely on qualitative data and straight forward demographics to look for trends and determine if outcomes are being achieved. Therefore, looking through the Factbook (2016), SUNY Geneseo’s yearly

demographic information, as far back as 2001, there has been a steady rise in the number of degree seeking students in the IR Department (“Enrollment by Program” p. 1-2). Looking solely at majors, the count of full-time students has more than quadrupled from the 67 students in 2001 to 241 students in 2015. Interestingly enough, the count has remained relatively consistent since 2010, where the number of IR majors has maintained between 200-250 students. Just to provide a glimpse of the minor seeking students, since 2010, the count has remained between 15-21 IR minor degrees. (Factbook, 2016).

This data reveals some important points. The Factbook (2016) shows that the increase in the number of students who are interested in internationally-related topics (and inevitably careers) has risen consistently over the last 10 years (the number of IR majors was 134 in 2006) (“Enrollment by Program”). This can be tied to a number of factors. The first could be attributed to the changing culture of student mobility. International educators have been using innovative methods to design programs that meet the needs of as many students as possible in effort to promote equal opportunities, specifically equal international experience opportunities (Rivza and Teichler, 2007, p. 457-458).

Emphasizing inclusion and diversity has been a priority for SUNY Geneseo in recent years as well. Initiatives taken that may have affected the recent spike in IR majors includes an increase in the number and variety of program types, efforts to reach new demographics (such as access opportunity programs), and additional resources for participants in the form of scholarships (“Diversity” and “About Study Abroad,” n.d.). Outreach and recruitment is aimed at more non-traditional study abroad participants, such as students of color, community college

populations, and first generation students (“Diversity,” n.d.). As these new wells are being tapped, more interest reasons to follow.

### Analysis

Overall, the IR Department’s policy requiring all major and minor seeking students to complete a form of international experience by graduation seems to be working. Due to the lack of formal assessment measures or long-term impact evaluations, it is difficult to say if the policy is necessarily working to its fullest potential. Qualitatively, an overwhelming majority of the sources I consulted via interviews, everyday interactions, and post-study abroad satisfaction surveys revealed that the policy is considered to be an advantage of the degree (Glesne, 2011).

Quantitatively, the 2016 Factbook shows that the IR major has quadrupled in the last 15 years and has been increasing in smaller, yet steady increments over the past five years (“Enrollment”). And while the total undergraduate enrollment has increased over the past five years, the overall percentage of IR majors has also risen which means that the major is not only increasing in enrollment each year but the major itself is overpowering its fellow degrees (“Enrollment”). So there is obviously something drawing students to this major. As Department Coordinator, Jeremy Grace receives testimonials from his advisees who attribute the unique characteristic of a required international experience to their declaring their IR major (personal communication, March 29, 2016).

The recent adoption of a more globally minded vocabulary in the United States and abroad may contributed to the growth of the IR major as well. The percentage of study abroad participation at SUNY Geneseo has been the highest it’s ever been in the past few years and

with a campus-wide goal to reach 50 percent in the near future, it doesn't seem to be slowing down (R. Lewis, personal communication, May 6, 2016).

Regarding goals and objectives, there could definitely be more planning and assessment on the part of the IR Department but also more collaboration between the IR Department and the Study Abroad Office. Based on Jeremy Grace's interview, it is apparent that the Department depends on the Study Abroad Office in many ways. However, according to Dr. Rebecca Lewis, there is little communication or collaboration in terms of defining specific goals to be met or learning outcomes to be achieved.

Perhaps the objective is solely to have major and minor seeking students study abroad or have an internship that will give them a taste of the real world and offer cross-cultural experiences. And perhaps the goal is solely to give students context to the course materials they study and to prepare them for potential career pursuits. However, although these are admirable and necessary components of an impactful learning experience, there is definitely room for refinement and evaluation to ensure needs are being met and optimal learning can take place.

Without proposed assessment and evaluation at a formal level, there is no sure-fire way of knowing if the needs of the target population are being met. As mentioned, with the majority of IR students studying abroad for their requirement, there is survey data available to evaluate certain learning aspects as well as logistical and experiential satisfaction with a program facilitated by the Study Abroad Office. However, there is currently no post-international experience evaluation provided by the policy enforcers (the IR Department).

Yet, based on interviews with students who are directly impacted by the policy, they do feel that their needs are being met. Regarding the policy's prioritization of study abroad and its hope that students, "go into the world and understand cross-cultural issues and be able to navigate outside of their own communities," evidence suggests that IR students concur ("International Relations Brochure," n.d., para 8). Junior IR major, Anna Biuso, spent this past fall 2015 semester in Grahamstown, South Africa studying at Rhodes University. In response to her semester abroad and the policy's intended goals, Biuso says:

(The requirement) definitely does expose you to different cultures. I don't think that the goal could not be reached, honestly, by doing this, it's just going to happen ... I think even if you went to Europe, it's going to be a very different situation and especially now, it's a changing global climate. Personally, I would say you're definitely confronted with a lot of real life experience, a lot of things you have to make your own judgements about, a lot of challenging things where you might have to really evaluate who you are as a person, your identity, where you stand, and I think that that was the most valuable part of my study abroad experience and that's really what I think they're trying to get at with the cross-cultural thing (personal communication, April 20, 2016).

When it comes to the select few who choose an internship in place of study abroad, the student interviewed for this analysis and the feedback Jeremy Grace relayed confirms that those students get a glimpse of what, "work(ing) in international affairs mean(s), as well as getting the basics of what it mean(s) to be a professional in an office, which a lot of our students don't know" (personal communication, March 29, 2016). Junior IR major, David Gomez, expressed his thoughts on the policy's goal in relation to his internship in at the

American Council on Germany in New York City. He says, “I believe that for my internship, the goals are met, just because the focus of the internship is fostering better relations with another country, with another culture, and basically intercultural and knowledge exchange between the US and Germany” (personal communication, April 29, 2016).

### Recommendations

The first recommendation is regarding the policy’s desired outcomes. The SUNY Geneseo IR Department has maintained a policy that was established ahead of its time. As mentioned, the notion of mandatory study abroad is quite new and although this policy is on a small scale, it’s innovative. However, it seems that department heads became complacent and left key aspects of the policy undocumented and informally operated for far too long. For example, although the actual requirement is clearly stated in a variety of sources, from brochures to course catalogues to the website, the actual goals, objectives and outcomes are nowhere to be found. Yes, it is IR and most might assume that an international experience would complement such a degree and it may also increase the intercultural competence necessary to work in international affairs. But this should be documented to strengthen the policy’s legitimacy and to prepare current and potential students for the long-term attitudes, skills and knowledge to be gained through these international experiences.

Continuing on the topic of intercultural competence, I propose a number of recommendations. The Study Abroad Office envisions the study abroad process as a complete arc. This arc includes pre-departure, the actual abroad experience, and re-entry. This full process first sets participants up for the most meaningful and transformative experience and then re-entry provides opportunity for reflection and processing in a way that will best allow

students to apply that learning in the future. With faculty-led programs absorbing the largest number of study abroad participants at SUNY Geneseo, it's a challenge to coordinate the on-campus components of this arc when there are dozens of programs designed and run by one (or two) faculty members, all with different priorities and learning outcomes in mind.

Because the IR Department so obviously values the impact study abroad has on students and because it relies heavily on the Study Abroad Office for its facilitation of the entire study abroad process, it seems the perfect opportunity for collaboration. To have a population of study abroad students who are consistently participating due to a degree requirement, it may therefore benefit both parties and have a lasting impact. To combine resources and collaborate on in-depth, effective pre-departure and re-entry processes would simultaneously allow the Study Abroad Office to exercise its best practices while also strengthening the intended goals of the IR policy.

While students may be able to process and deconstruct their study abroad experiences during classroom discussions or on the pages of a paper, to ensure that they have a program specifically designed to help them reflect and then articulate their experience would be all the more beneficial as they finish their studies and prepare for an international career. In terms of the alternate option, while a domestic internship may not require as in-depth a pre-departure process, a similar re-entry experience could be created by the IR Department for those students.

In the same vein, I believe formal assessment should be conducted to truly meet the needs of the students and achieve the desired outcomes. There are many internationally-centered initiatives springing up throughout the SUNY Geneseo campus community. These

initiatives include the recommendations from the ACE Internationalization Lab that have prompted a campus-wide strategic plan as well as an Office of International Programs (which houses the Study Abroad Office) strategic plan. There are also the previously noted array of international and diversity efforts proposed by President Battles. One specific initiative that I think academic departments, specifically the IR Department would benefit from is the implementation of an intercultural development assessment tool, such as the Global Perspectives Inventory (GPI).

As mentioned, the Office of International Programs is in the beginning stages of a department wide strategic plan. As the graduate intern for the department, I was given an assignment to research intercultural competence instruments and provide recommendations as to which tool(s) would best meet the needs of the office's goals. In this case, the goals focus specifically on the learning impact on study abroad and exchange students. After considering the features of a number of instruments, namely the Beliefs, Events and Values Inventory (BIDI), Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI), and the GPI, the head of the Office of International Programs and Study Abroad Office staff discussed the most applicable tool and agreed that the GPI seems to be the most comprehensive instrument that could potentially be used at the department level but also at a university-wide level as well.

If any party, be it the Study Abroad Office, the IR Department, or the campus as a whole, were to invest in conducting the GPI at pre-study abroad, post-study abroad phases, or even first year to last year, this would be beneficial in a variety of ways. For one, it would be a clear step toward increased internationalization. It would also be a gauge as to the effectiveness of study abroad programming. And in terms of the policy being examined here, it would provide



the IR Department with an organized, formal assessment that would allow faculty and administrators to truly see the impact that this policy has on students. With that, it can then look forward and make any necessary adjustments or improvements to better the Department and its overall degree in the long term.

### Conclusion

As an SIT educated individual, I completely support and encourage an experiential learning component in obtaining one's undergraduate degree. Although a well-rounded, consciously designed study abroad program would be my first choice, I can also see the merit in an immersive, stimulating internship as well. SUNY Geneseo's IR Department exercised its commitment to international and intercultural growth earlier than many of its counterparts by creating an international experience requirement back in 1994. With the majority of IR students opting for study abroad, and after spending a year in the Study Abroad Office witnessing the profound impact that study abroad can have on an individual's personal, academic and professional growth, I definitely believe the policy is working.

While talking with Study Abroad Office volunteers who are majoring in International Relations, I've heard first-hand, the transformative effect that the experience has had on their lives. Be it in class discussions on topics relating to their particular track or adding personal dimension to a senior thesis or totally changing post-graduate plans to volunteer abroad instead of going to graduate school, the intent of the policy is being achieved.

Even when that experience is a domestic internship, a position over a summer can become a long term job or it can help solidify career ambitions. There are intercultural competence and personal development merits in each option of the policy requirement. If

administrators in the relevant departments make the commit to optimize resources and collaborate together, then ensuring that each and every IR degree seeking student has the most impactful international experience will be secured. Striving for growth and staying abreast of best practices will ensure policy sustainability.

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## Appendix A: ACE Internationalization Lab Findings

\*Note: this document was adapted from ACE's final SUNY Geneseo report to remove names, positions, and committees

### **Overall Strengths**

#### **Senior Leadership**

Geneseo is at a propitious moment in time to broaden and deepen its internationalization efforts because the college has strong administrative support for internationalization and broad faculty interest. The Lab process has been extremely helpful to Geneseo as it demonstrated the grass roots interest and assets available for moving forward with comprehensive

internationalization as an element of Geneseo's strategic direction, a position that was reinforced at every one of the meetings during our visit. Joining the ACE Lab showed strong administrative commitment, especially from Interim President Carol Long and Interim Provost David Gordon, who in spite of their interim roles were able to encourage widespread discussions that helped formulate the clear and achievable goals contained in the report. Their support was acknowledged and appreciated by those with whom we met. We understand that the incoming president, Denise A. Battles, has been informed of the Lab process and will be able to respond to the report when she arrives on campus in July.

#### **Leadership and the Internationalization Laboratory Team**

The team leadership by Coordinating Committee was extremely effective, designing a process that elicited wide participation and encouraging consensus through repeated committee meetings with cross-campus representation and presentations to faculty groups throughout the process. We sensed an excitement generated by the collaboration and the ease with which the participants found common ground. We had the strong impression that everyone was listened to, and that the culture of Geneseo was encouraging the campus to think creatively and flexibly about what the college could do with imagination and dedication, in spite of limited resources. In addition, the Lab process allowed people the opportunity to work outside "silos" for the good of the whole institution. We were particularly impressed by the spirit of collaboration that seemed to infuse the Lab process, a combination of bottom-up and top-down working together that conveyed a sense of trust on the campus. We enjoyed learning about the World Café process, which both evidenced and engendered a high level of faculty, student, and staff interest in internationalization.

#### **The Internationalization Review and Strategic Plan**

The Global Geneseo Report provides a clear narrative of the Lab process and a convincing analysis of the findings of the review. Further, the recommendations and their rationales are buttressed with knowledge of the field of comprehensive internationalization. The recommendations are fully aligned with the college's mission and provide compelling

arguments about why the college is well poised to move ahead. Geneseo's strengths in the area of internationalization came into focus in the review process, as did the challenges. In some cases the strengths seem isolated from one another, but the report suggests a set of actions that can be the underpinning to make the sum greater than the individual parts.

### **Cluster Hiring**

The concept of hiring a group of faculty in the same year to support curricular directions is a particularly promising process that can accelerate internationalization, as interdisciplinary work seems natural to curricular internationalization. This may be a new model that should be presented at national meetings by teams of Geneseo administrators and faculty.

### **Study Abroad**

That study abroad numbers are increasing is a very good sign. Certainly the students have a wealth of opportunities, some sponsored by SUNY and others from third party providers. But the growth is probably most due to prompts from Geneseo faculty at home, the presentations in classes, and the wide advertisement of the opportunities.

### **Diversification of the Student Body**

Because Geneseo has a diversity plan, the college is especially sensitive to the issues of difference. We were amused that because of the dominance of New York State residents at the college, a student from Virginia would seem exotic. In any case, the mix of domestic, recent immigrants or New Americans, and international students on campus should have a positive effect of helping to develop an intercultural pedagogy.

### **International Students**

The number of international students at Geneseo is quite impressive, especially for a college in a rural area. The practices that support this should be continued. Given that the campus wants to increase the number of international students, the current situation seems promising.

### **Residential Support**

Recent changes to housing policies to allow more than one residence hall to stay open during holiday breaks is a good action, accommodating to international students' needs. Having international mentors is a creative response, as well.

### **Curriculum**

The existence of a Common Core that includes the humanities and a language requirement in which culture is foregrounded, are positive assets for comprehensive internationalization.

### **Interns in International Programs Office**

The student interns are a valuable addition, as they can provide workshops for international students, acclimatizing them to American mores. We sensed that Geneseo has an innovative and informed study abroad office with vision and expertise.

## **Observations and Recommendations**

### **Unfinished Business**

The Global Geneseo Report still needs further development to become a strategic or implementation plan. The individual actions need to be placed in a timeline, with responsible parties specified. Some institutions have used a matrix format to do this with action, actors, expected completion or start dates, and status updates.

### **Continue Global Geneseo**

We suggest that the Global Geneseo working group continue, perhaps with some reconfiguration and perhaps with a new charge. The group could advise the Office of International Programs on integrating Geneseo's international activities, developing a communications plan so that the campus is more aware of international activities, assisting in data collection, staying abreast of best practices in the field to avoid isolation, and to ensure that programs and partnerships advance the entire college's mission.

### **Study Abroad**

We observed that the college seemed fixated on the primacy of study abroad, which is a default position at many institutions and common at liberal arts institutions, such as Geneseo, where the emphasis is teaching and student learning. Geneseo's study abroad numbers are high, although in our opinion, unlikely to reach 100% participation. We heard that some students' majors do not allow time for study abroad, even though other institutions have found ways to allow for study abroad in even the most structured majors. And, of course, we heard about the problem of affordability of study abroad.

Many faculty seem to be deeply invested in faculty-led short term study abroad, but the way that these are currently financed (faculty travel, hotel, meals, and even stipends are currently paid for by the additional fees charged to the students) will not give greater access for economically disadvantaged students to these opportunities. Because financial aid travels for semester-long programs, and students do not incur the extra costs involved when faculty accompany students abroad, semester-long options seem to offer a better opportunity for financially-challenged students. Further, it was not always clear to us how a particular course benefits from being taught abroad; perhaps this question is addressed in the proposal process. Finally, the learning outcomes of study abroad need to be better articulated and understood, both to make clear to students the purpose of study abroad and how their own goals relate to this, as well as how different kinds of experiences (e.g. semester-long enrollment in universities abroad vs. short-term courses led by Geneseo faculty) contribute to potentially different outcomes in terms of student learning and development.

## Internationalizing the Curriculum and Faculty Development

Internationalizing the curriculum is a vital part of comprehensive internationalization. Because not all students will be able to study abroad, the college must consider ways to internationalize at home by internationalizing the curriculum. An internationalized curriculum can also make study abroad a part of students' overall educational trajectories, as opposed to being a semester away. We recommend that Geneseo make the process of internationalizing the curriculum and pedagogy a priority as soon as possible. Curriculum internationalization is a long-term process, involving a discussion of the desired student learning, creating opportunities in **all** programs for students to acquire and demonstrate this learning, and integrating student study abroad experiences, where possible, into the curriculum (both prior to departure and upon return).

The chief resource needed to accomplish this is the faculty, both those currently at the institution and those who will be hired in the future. They need to be incentivized to do this work. Internationalization cannot be accidental—it must be intentional. Advertisements of new positions can emphasize that international experience or background is preferred so that the institution can augment its internationalization. Professional development at various levels will be necessary to help faculty members, department chairs, and deans identify international and/or intercultural learning outcomes, enhance the international/intercultural content of current programs, and perhaps create study abroad opportunities that will incorporate perspectives relevant to particular majors. Professional development may involve grants and stipends, workshops, released time, administrative support, perhaps even modification of tenure and promotion guidelines or an award system. Internationalization is not additional work, but a means to give the faculty new ways to think about their current teaching and research in a more nuanced way. As the university's international agenda continues to develop and incorporate graduate education as well as faculty research, the possibilities for productive linkages between undergraduate and graduate training as well as research should be enhanced as much as possible.

Internationalizing the curriculum is not just a responsibility of the language departments or the humanities; all courses, general education requirements, and majors and minors can be internationalized. Some programs at the college are already doing this. All disciplines need to understand the major in terms of local, national, and global dimensions and think about how this perspective can be most effectively transmitted to their students. Encouraging interdisciplinary, cross-disciplinary as well as cross-unit collaboration in curriculum development will be especially important in a college such as Geneseo.

Many resources are available to assist the faculty in internationalizing the curriculum, many of which might be familiar to Geneseo. ACE has posted or published successful programs from several projects: "Where Faculty Live"—disciplinary associations (American Political Science Association, American Psychological Association, American Historical Association, and the Association of American Geographers) describing what an internationalized major would look like in their disciplines. Most recently, ACE has posted a four-part series on internationalizing the curriculum on its website in the feature "Internationalization in Action." <http://www.acenet.edu/news-room/Pages/Intlz-in-Action-2013-December.aspx>



In addition, other curricular resources are available at [www.campusinternationalization.org](http://www.campusinternationalization.org), a collaboration of 12 higher education associations dealing with internationalization, including internationalizing the curriculum. Some of the curricular postings include: Campus-Based Curricular Development (AAC&U)—links to 10 award-winning institutional projects; Global Citizenship (AAC&U)—internationalizing undergraduate majors at 11 institutions; Integrating Global Learning in Science Courses (AAC&U); and Internationalization of Teacher Education (NAFSA)—three case studies, Internationalization of STEM Education (NAFSA). Other useful documents are *Integrating Study Abroad into the Curriculum: Theory and Practice Across the Disciplines* (Brewer, E. & Cunningham, K., Eds.). Stylus: 2009 and a chapter (by Bette Leask and Betsy Brewer on Internationalizing the Curriculum in the *SAGE Handbook of International Higher Education*. It can be downloaded at no cost from: <http://www.aieaworld.org/publications>

Finally, Geneseo may want to intentionally expand its culture of faculty development grants to include internationalization of the curriculum.

### **Use of Technology**

Geneseo is already aware of the technology opportunities offered by the SUNY system through the COIL office, though we sensed a campus ethos so focused on face-to-face instruction that there were comments on not wanting to “seduce residential students into on-line learning.” Although on-line learning and other uses of technology in support of internationalization may prove to be imprudent at this time in Geneseo’s history, technology can in fact enhance classroom learning, and we would encourage exploration of its use. ACE has sponsored three technology awards about bringing the world into the classroom, which are available on the ACE website.

Technology can boost faculty involvement in international education efforts. Technology can offer faculty and their students the opportunity to engage with colleagues overseas without incurring the costs (time, money) of traveling abroad. Co-teaching courses with faculty located in other countries using video/internet technology, for example, can help fill gaps in international expertise at an institution and enhance the internationalization of the curriculum. We acknowledge that this kind of cooperation will require considerable investment. Technical capacities are needed in locations convenient for faculty and students. Supports are needed to develop the relationships that can lead to such cooperation, and the university will need to recognize that this may require face-to-face contact for cooperating faculty (and possibly administrators) at some points over an extended time. Further, to be successful, technology must serve specific objectives of an institution’s international education program and be recognized for what it is: a tool that may or may not be the right one for the particular task at hand. Technology, at its best, needs to be used to integrate classroom and educational experience across the disciplines. Finally, technology can prove to be very costly, and if it is not designed to clearly support the international program, Geneseo may find that this particular investment may not be wise

## **International Students**

We heard that international students have a lot of needs, which smacks of a deficit model. Instead, we recommend an asset model, under which international students are viewed positively, not just as a revenue stream but as a lever to change teaching into an intentional intercultural model. That will help link the diversity and international agendas on campus. We recommend expanding the international student mentors program.

## **Partnerships**

Geneseo does have some international partnerships with universities abroad. Rather than trying to develop new ones, we suggest that the college first work on broadening existing partnerships by engaging more departments with them, and going beyond student exchange to include other opportunities for collaboration, such as faculty exchanges, joint teaching, and research.

## **Development Office**

We recommend that the alumni office and the development office keep records of who studies abroad each year, as institutions have found that such data is useful when trying to raise funds to support comprehensive internationalization.

## **International Students and Alumnae**

Like many institutions, Geneseo needs to continue efforts to intentionally connect its domestic and its international students. In addition, the university needs to better track its international alumni, who are a potentially valuable source of internship and service learning opportunities, as well as institutional partnerships.

## **Conclusion**

Geneseo is clearly fortunate to have support for internationalization from many in the faculty and administration. But the conversations about comprehensive internationalization need to continue to widen the base of support so that the college can effectively deliver what its mission implies about internationalization.

Geneseo is well positioned to continue developing its work in comprehensive internationalization because it has all the key ingredients: leadership, energy, and a “new normal” vision to support this work. Global Geneseo has demonstrated that it can engage faculty members and influence faculty processes, and the college should continue this important work. Geneseo also benefits from a student body that is invested in the promise and rewards of internationalization. Internationalization is a long-term project, requiring regular processes for checking progress. In fact, we recommend that the college consider having a Lab 2.0 revisit by a peer review team in three to five years. By developing and continuing an intentional process, Geneseo will make its balanced internationalization goals part of its everyday operations, continuing to reinforce its status as a distinctive institution.

Submitted June 15, 2015

## Appendix B: SUNY Geneseo Fast Facts Webpage

### THE COLLEGE

Established 1871  
Character : Liberal Arts  
Affiliation : State University of New York  
Campus : 220 acres

### STUDENT BODY

Full-time undergraduates: 5,600  
Full-time graduates: 98  
Male/Female ratio: 41/59  
Multicultural students: 20-percent  
International students: 181

### TUITION AND FEES (2016 - 2017)

Tuition: \$6,470  
Room and board: \$12,264  
Fees: \$1,706

### CLASS OF 2019 PROFILE

Enrolled: 1,235  
H.S. Ave., middle 50-percent: 91/96  
SAT, middle 50-percent: 1140/1330 (regularly admitted students)  
ACT, middle 50-percent: 25/29

### PEER INSTITUTIONS

Binghamton University (SUNY)  
Boston College  
Cornell University  
Fordham University  
Hobart and William Smith Colleges  
Ithaca College  
Skidmore College  
University at Buffalo (SUNY)  
University of Delaware  
University of Rochester

### FACULTY/INSTRUCTION

Full-time faculty: 241  
Ph.D. or equivalent: 90-percent  
Student/Faculty ratio : 19/1  
Classes taught by full-time faculty: 81-percent

Classes taught by teaching assistants: 0  
Class size: 68-percent have 29 or fewer students

### **ACADEMIC PROGRAMS**

Undergraduate degree programs: 39  
Interdisciplinary minors: 21  
Graduates with double major or major + minor: 30-percent

### **INTERNATIONAL STUDY**

International study programs sponsored by SUNY: 600+  
Geneseo students who study abroad annually: 300+  
2012 graduates who studied abroad: 40-percent

### **HONOR SOCIETIES**

Geneseo is one of only 275 four year colleges in the nation to have a chapter of Phi Beta Kappa, the oldest and most prestigious honor society in the nation.

### **STUDENT:FACULTY RESEARCH**

965 students presented results of research projects at campus seminars on [G.R.E.A.T \(Geneseo Recognizing Excellence, Achievement and Talent\) Day](#) on Tuesday, April 8, 2014.

### **EDGAR FELLOWS**

30 first-time students selected each year for an intensive honors experience.

### **RECOGNIZED STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS**

200+

### **CAPSTONE EXPERIENCES**

Nearly every academic department offers Capstone Experiences for their majors in the senior year. Examples include a thesis, advanced seminar, recital, exhibit or an intensive research project.

### **ATHLETICS**

NCAA Division III teams : 20  
Member of SUNYAC Conference  
Club sports : 13

### **RESIDENTIAL LIFE**

On-campus housing required freshman and sophomore years  
Housing guaranteed all 4 years  
Commuters : 1-percent  
Residence halls (including townhouses) : 17  
Average number of residents per hall : 200

### **Special Interest Halls**

Eco House

Dante House

Writer's House

### **UPON GRADUATION (SPRING 2010 GRADUATES)**

94-percent were satisfied with Geneseo's academic rigor

90-percent were satisfied with Geneseo's quality of instruction

96-percent were satisfied with Geneseo's intellectual challenge

91-percent would choose Geneseo again

<https://www.geneseo.edu/about/fast-facts>

## Appendix C: J. Grace Interview Questions and Responses

Interview Questions and Responses: Jeremy Grace, IR Department Coordinator, March 29, 2016

**Leiah (L):** Good morning, Mr. Grace. This is the capstone interview that I am conducting for my Policy Analysis on a requirement by the International Relations department at SUNY Geneseo to have some sort of international experience, which is study abroad option, internship option, or what use to be a special project option. Would you please introduce yourself?

**Grace:** Sure, my name is Jeremy Grace, I'm a professor in the Department of Political Science and International Relations at SUNY Geneseo. And I am also the Coordinator of the International Relations program so I have overall administrative responsibility for the curricula of the major and how it works.

**L:** Great, thank you. And just for formality purposes, I want to let you know that as a volunteer participating with me in this interview, if at any moment you do not want to answer a question or you would like to end the interview, please let me know and we'll stop at that point. Is that okay?

**Grace:** Yup, that's fine.

**L:** Thank you. Then I guess we will begin. So, the first question I have for you is, please explain the history behind the creation of the study abroad, internship, special project requirement policy for the International Relations degree.

**Grace:** Sure, it actually dates to the foundation of the International Relations major, which occurred in the mid-1990s and it was a requirement that was built into the major from the very first day. So as they designed the major they were already thinking about this and put it into the major so it's been in operation as long as the major has been in operation.

**L:** Great, thank you. And then, regarding this policy, what exactly are the parameters for the students who are IR majors with this policy, like credits and what the fine lines are?

**Grace:** Okay, yeah, it's a little bit flexible. Originally it was designed... well, first of all, there are three parts to it as you know. The student has the option of studying abroad, completing an internship, or they put in this special project, which I gather we'll talk about later in response to a different question but those are the three options that each student has. When they originally designed it, you had to actually earn credits by doing one of those three things. So if you were going to do a study abroad, you had to be in a credit bearing program and if you read the language of the original requirement, it actually said students must earn a minimum of three credits of an approved study abroad program, internship, or special project. That's how it was written. Those parameters have changed over the years because of the emergence of a number of study abroad or internship opportunities where the student doesn't necessarily earn credit hours toward their degree but which we feel satisfies the intent of the requirement and in those cases we're more than willing to work with the student to submit a waiver to say that they've met the requirement even though they didn't earn the credit hours and actually, in The Bulletin revision that is going to happen this year and come into force in the fall, the language

will finally be changed to reflect that. So now it will simply say that they must do an internship or a study abroad and we've removed the special project all together. Beyond that there are a couple of other parameters, for the study abroad, historically, we have required that they be abroad for a minimum of three and half weeks and the unofficial policy when we are advising with students has stretched that we prefer a full semester if not a full year because we want the full cultural immersion experience but up until now, and again this going to be revised and will be addressed in a later question, but up until now one of the parameters has been a minimum of three and a half weeks abroad. For the internship requirement, they have to work a minimum of 115 hours with an organization that is engaged in work related to international affairs. So they can't just go up and work on Main Street for a local lawyer, you know like a Political Science major, that would be a valuable experience for them, but for International Relations major, we want the internship to be with an organization that does international work. Now that can take a variety of forms, many of them do international internships. So they go abroad, they find an internship opportunity, obviously that combines the best of all possible worlds, but there are many organizations within the United States that do work related to international affairs and that ranges from Washington DC think tanks or congressional committees to internships at the State Department. In New York there are students that intern in the UN system. But outside of that even, there's sometimes local opportunities for them to do an internship with an organization like these. So, for example, we have students that work with local social service organizations that are doing work with refugee and asylum claims or asylum seeker resettlement programs or in New York State, Albany has parts of it's administration that deal with New York's relationship with foreign firms. So, we're flexible, we just need to see that there is that clear emphasis on international affairs in order to be able to pursue the internship option. The other parameter on the internship side of it is that they have to be doing something more than just making photocopies and coffee, it has to be, you know, real substantive work. They can do the basic day-to-day office administration work a part of their job but we require that their supervisor verify that the work that they're doing is more than just making the photocopies because that's not really the experience that we're looking for. SO those are the parameters in terms of what we're looking for these requirements, for either a study abroad or an internship. There are also some university parameters. In order to go through a formal university study abroad program, the student has to maintain a minimum GPA that is higher than a 2.0 and this has occasionally been a problem for a student. I suppose we can address that later. But that's a university wide requirement, that's not an IR requirement, even though it would be if it weren't a university requirement. And in addition, many study abroad programs have even higher GPA requirements than the university requirements and that's the host institution that is putting that requirement down and so we follow their guidance on that. In addition, the student has to obtain two letters of reference and they don't need to be ten-page things about why the student is the greatest thing since sliced bread but just verification from a faculty member or from a professional colleague or acquaintance or supervisor that the student basically has their act together and can represent Geneseo and the United States in an appropriate way while they're abroad and has the cross cultural competence and, you know, the basic disposition to succeed in a program like this and make it work for them. So those are the sort of parameters that govern our thinking about when we're working with individual students as they move through this process of selecting are

they going to do a study abroad internship; which one? How? Where? Sort of what we're pushing informally but there there's also some basic rules that they have to meet in order to be able to do it. Parameters, did that address all the parameters?

L: Wonderful, yes, at every different level, so yes, thank you, well said. Alright, so the third one, in your fifteen years in the SUNY Geneseo International Relations Department, do you know if any assessments or evaluations have been conducted to gauge the impact of the policy and if so, what were the findings?

Grace: No, we have not. Not a formal, instrument based assessment tool. Of course, we have regular, routine department assessment. That takes a lot of different forms, including outside assessors who come in and every department on campus has to do this every seven years for every program so we do get that formal assessment of the overall IR program every, I'm sorry every five years, not seven years, every five years. And since this is a requirement of the program, of course, the assessment process is interested in that. And the outside assessors have looked at the program and talked to us about it and its structure and operation and their thoughts on it so we get that type of feedback. We've never specifically put together an instrument to measure the impact of the experience on the returning students. We've not done that and we probably should. I believe that Geneseo administered some student surveys that asked them about that and we've looked at that data over the years and get a general sense that the program is working well and haven't felt the need to, you know, really revise it in a significant way based specifically on those instruments but we do monitor that. But most commonly, the types of assessment we get is informal feedback from the students so we're always very interested in following up with them on where did they go, what was their experience like, what was a challenge for them, what was the learning experience for them, and we use that sort of informally in our advising for students- for other students as they go through the selection process. If we get routinely bad feedback about a particular program, we start to obviously advise students that maybe somethings not quite coherent there. And then more broadly, we keep in touch with our alumni through a lot of different mechanisms, both through social media but also just routine coordinating, cooperating and bringing them in to give speeches and talks or taking students down to DC to meet alumni. And uniformly what we hear from our alumni is that their study abroad and internship experiences were transformative and they just can't stop telling these students about how important it is to take advantage of these opportunities and, in fact, they often recommend both a study abroad and an internship to the students and for our alums that are in senior positions in the government or in the policy world, it's almost always one of the first things they ever say when our students approach them and advise them. So we hear back from our alumni informally about how incredibly important the experience is and the need to make sure that the requirement stays in place and that students are pushed to take advantage of the opportunity while they're an undergraduate to pursue these opportunities.

L: Great, thank you, bear with me one second, okay, thank you so much. Number four, what is the current state of the policy today? And, you a little bit talked about how it's changed but I guess maybe just in a nutshell.



Grace: Yeah, sure, we have removed the special project option, and I'll give the background on that. When it was first designed, we wanted to have an opportunity for a student that was deeply interested in majoring in International Relations but because of an extreme financial or personal situation, could not take advantage of either of the options of study abroad or an internship. And, the way that it was conceptualized by the professor that designed the original program was this would be some sort of, probably intensive directed study experience while the student was on campus that would hopefully integrate something beyond just normal sort of reading literature and writing a paper, but would hopefully involve field research with a local non-profit, for example the migrant workers center or the legal aid society of Rochester, which works with asylum seekers. Or you know, some sort of organization but not a full-on, formal internship. What we found over the years is that nobody ever took advantage of this and I don't know the actual numbers but I believe it was never more than one or two people over the last, what is now, 20 years that the program's been in place. I believe at a maximum it's been one or two people and it's never been a single person since I started here 15 years ago. SO we decided that we didn't this and the reason is that there are enough local internships opportunities and students find that they can stay on campus and do an internship and meet the requirement that way and we prefer that they do it that way so that's been the logic of that. We are revising the language in the Bulletin about the requirement for the next Bulletin year and the Special Project will be removed entirely. So that will leave just the study abroad or the internship so that's going to be one big change that we see. The other big change that's going to happen this year is the elimination of the language about the credit hours. We used to want to have them in a credit bearing program of some sort but because of the incredible industriousness of the students, they find these amazing opportunities that clearly satisfy the spirit of the requirement but don't earn credits so we've decided to eliminate that as a formal part of the policy and move to a system where when a student finds a non-credit bearing opportunity, they simply put me as the coordinator in touch with the study abroad program supervisor or internship supervisor abroad and I verify that they meet the other threshold criteria for number of hours worked, length of time abroad, whatever. And then receive a report back from the supervisor saying that everything was completed satisfactorily and then I can go into the computer system and check off the box that shows that they met the requirement without earning the credit hours. So that will be a significant change that will start in the next bulletin year. The other change that is going to be a little bit slower to roll out but starting next year, we used to allow students to do a study abroad requirement with a minimum of three and a half weeks abroad. That was the requirement, they had to be abroad for three and a half weeks. We've decided to increase that time abroad requirement to at a minimum four weeks and we're discussing amongst ourselves as a faculty, going to five or six weeks and the reason is again, we want that full cultural immersion experience and we found a number of students who were finding these kind of parachute type opportunities you know, they just sort of drop into national capital for three and a half weeks through some program and then they're gone. And it doesn't really meet the spirit of the requirement, which is if you're an IR major, you have to be out there in the world and you have to see how the world works and you have to get extensive cross-culture experience and preferably not in some pre-packaged tour where you hardly even interact with anybody but you just go visit a couple museums and then come home. That's not at all what we were looking for so by the fall it will be a minimum of four weeks abroad and it will be an

implication here for the wider university, which is that some of our students have used humanities abroad courses to satisfy the requirement. Those courses are only running for three and a half weeks through some program and then they're gone. And it doesn't really meet the spirit of the requirement, which is if you're an IR major, you have to be out there in the world and you have to see how the world works and you have to get extensive cross-culture experience and preferably not in some pre-packaged tour where you hardly even interact with anybody but you just go visit a couple museums and then come home. That's not at all what we were looking for so by the fall it will be a minimum of four weeks abroad and it will be an implication here for the wider university, which is that some of our students have used humanities abroad courses to satisfy the requirement. Those courses are only three and half weeks so it's going to make it so they cannot use those Humanities abroad courses to satisfy this requirement anymore. Now, this is an informal policy change and it may take us a year or two to roll out and finalize our tinkering and mechanics with it and then we will have a sort of final policy within the next year but starting in the fall we're going to be advising students not to complete it through a Humanities abroad or one of these parachute type trips but that we're looking for something a little bit longer. If they were going to actually say that it satisfies the requirement. So those are the changes that are happening and it's funny because that language has been in the Bulletin for 20 years since it was originally founded and we were actually operating a little bit differently already but this next Bulletin will be the one that puts all of that on paper.

L: Great, thank you so much. And, can you just clarify what the Bulletin is? Does it come out yearly?

Grace: It comes out every other year, no, I'm sorry, every year. It used to come out every other year but when we went to online, they didn't have to pay that much. I can bring it up right here and show you how the language currently looks. "At least three (3) credits of study abroad or approved internship or special project." And then I could also bring up the proposed language change, SO instead of the "at least three (3) credits," that will be gone, "students must complete an approved study abroad or an approved internship with an organization engaged in activities relevant to international relations" and then it will simply say "information can be obtained from the faculty advisors" and this will then allow us the flexibility to sort of tinker with and deal with the actual length requirement going forward. So what it will be, is an internal department policy that will be shared with all the majors but it won't be specifically written in the bulletin that you have to go abroad for four (4) weeks but we just simply say, "an approved" and then we will just go through a system where we won't approve them for less than four (4) weeks.

L: Number five, who is responsible for making the changes to the policy? Have there been any changes since you've been in this position? Again, you've sort of touched on that, but if so, please explain. Regarding these upcoming changes, who is involved?

Grace: Sure, actually just a little bit of background. When the IR major was first established, it was, obviously IR is heavily political science and so the political science department faculty sort of got the major up and running, but it was seen as a truly interdisciplinary major and there was a management committee comprised of faculty from all of the departments that contribute to

the major. From sociology, geography, economics, languages, and then there was an IR coordinator, who was the sort of head of state so to speak or the head of the committee. But they took any decisions through a committee discussion process. We found that ultimately unwieldy and obviously it's difficult to corral people from different departments to make meetings and things like that. And in the early 2000s we decided that the major would function better if we simply took it over and changed the name of our department to Political Science and International Relations from just Political Science. At that point, we disbanded the formal role of the interdepartmental advisory committee but we maintained very strong relationships with the different departments. I communicate with every department, every semester about what's going on in the major and get their feedback and input on it. But in terms of bringing it now to the question you asked, ultimately it's political science faculty members who teach in international relations that are running the major and it my role as the IR coordinator, every policy decision that we make is based on a discussion and arriving at a consensus. So if I get an idea of something that I think would be good to do in the major, I will then communicate with all of my colleagues who teach IR courses in political science about whether it's a good idea or what do they think and we'll talk it out and ultimately when the policy changes go though, for example, I submitted and put my name on the bulletin revision that is going to make these types of changes. So ultimately I do have authority, but I would never use it without consulting with my colleagues because that makes for bad academic relationships. You've been around that... you know how departments have their little weird power things. And then the second part of that, yes, there hadn't been any changes but there will be.

L: Thank you so much, so in your opinion, to what extent has the policy impacted student learning and retention rates.

G: I think learning and retention are two different things, well first of all, here's how it's impacted student learning and potentially retention, I see the students, particularly those that go abroad, but also those that do the internships, when they come back to Geneseo, are suddenly like holy crap, it's real, what I'm studying here in the classroom is real, right, it makes a difference in people's lives and when they come back from these experiences, I find that almost uniformly, they have emotionally matured and they are better engaged now in the coursework that they're taking now that they're back home and they have a much better idea of what it means to work on international affairs and they choose their courses more strategically and they are more engaged in the course material in a very profound way. It's just unbelievable the difference, between the freshman and sophomores who haven't done it yet and the juniors and seniors who have done it and the way they relate back to me about how it transformed their interests and what they're doing and how they think about the coursework that they're doing. So, in my opinion, the extent is enormous in terms of its impact on student learning. Regarding retention, first of all, any student who wants to become an IR major, their first step is they will meet with an IR advisor and they will be informed of this requirement. And I do informally that here have been some students who choose a different major because of it. I don't think it happened very often, and the most common place they go is Political Science instead of International Relations because Political Science doesn't require it. So they can study international politics as a Political Science major but they don't have to do the requirement so I do know that occasionally there's that type of student. And usually that's related again to some

sort of extreme financial or personal situation that the special project was originally designed to do but I think that's maybe why nobody ever took the special project is because they simply said, 'ah-ha, I'll just be a Political Science major. I can still take all these great international courses without having to worry about jumping over that particular hurdle.' So I think that yes, there is that, but it certainly hasn't slowed down the growth of our major, which has exploded in the last 10 years, I mean we've quadrupled in the number of majors since 2003 or 2004. I think it's expected almost these days that every college student needs global exposure and they know it. So even outside of our major, everybody is going abroad. I mean you're working in the Study Abroad Office and we've seen this explosion. I think there is probably a few cases where students went to an abroad program and realized that they didn't want- they thought they wanted to work on an issue like international development and so they go off to a study abroad program in the developing world and they just realize that their personality isn't quite cut out for that. And then what might happen is that they will either sort of change their track within IR or they will move over to different major. I would say that's rare but I know that it has happened. They just said, you know what, I can't visualize myself living in the slums of Lagos for the rest of my career, you know? But I wouldn't say it's in any way dissuaded the vast majority of students or prompted them to change their major, in fact, when I get informal feedback from students, almost uniformly they say that the requirement is a great thing. And that they picked Geneseo and International Relations particularly because we have this requirement and they have every intention of meeting it. I know students that have, in consultations with me, have said that they picked IR and have done the study abroad requirement because they couldn't convince their parents that they should be going abroad but then they were able to call them up and say, otherwise I can't get a degree, you know? (laughs). I know for a fact because they've been sitting in a room on their cell phones when that conversation is happening. However they manage to get abroad, they get abroad. I see what you mean retention there, I would say in general it's not a problem, if anything, it's been a benefit to us but in a few cases over the years it's probably scared students either away from declaring the major or they have changed their major when they got back. But it's so rare.

L: Great, thank you so much. Can you describe how the policy has impacted the IR's relationship with the Study Abroad Office? If it has?

G: Oh yes, obviously we rely on the study abroad office to handle all the administration here and we work very closely with the study abroad office and IR majors to make sure, mechanically, everything is happening. I believe that probably for the study abroad office it's a net benefit because there is a guaranteed applicant pool. And the study abroad office in the last 10 years has really gotten its act together compared to what it looked like when I first got here, just in terms of being really well administered and dynamic and just large and helpful to the students so I hope we had some small contribution to that transformation although it's really all Becky Lewis. She's such a dynamo. As well as some of the other people that are over there obviously. But we're entirely reliant on them to mechanically make it all work and I'm always talking with the study abroad office about how are all these things working, what can we do to improve the logistics of the whole thing in terms of getting credits in and all that kind of stuff and there's some work that I've been meaning to do about stream-lining some of that stuff and I'll probably do some of that this summer but we're deeply reliant on them and they provide incredible

services to our students that are doing it and I hope we provide some useful function to them and they don't just sit over there and say 'oh shit, that IR program.'" (28:34)

L: Wonderful, okay, are there any changes or improvements you would like to see to the current policy. Please explain. You've touched on this.

G: I will just say that the revisions that we've put through are designed to allow us to be more flexible in the future, to respond to changing student demands as well as our own thinking about the nature of the requirement. In a perfect world, if you're asking about my opinion, not the opinion of my colleagues, we would go to a situation where they had a minimum that they have to be abroad for 8 weeks. That would be my ideal situation. Now, the trade-off there is cost and is it better for a student to go abroad for 4 weeks and get some exposure versus not being able to meet that requirement and then doing a local internship instead and all of a sudden the number of majors that are doing IR drops that's what we're talking about amongst ourselves. So, in perfect world, yeah, a full semester, minimum 8 weeks, whatever, is what I would want but we have to balance that against the feasibility for the students and whether or not it's better to have them going abroad for a shorter time, so the policy change that we've instituted for next year will allow us to continue to have this conversation and then arrive at a solution at some point. So that's one of the sort of improvements I'd like to see, if we were rich, I wish we had a lot more money to support students. Our alumni are incredibly generous, the department has its own alumni funded scholarship program. We give out 3 or 4 \$1000 scholarships every year to students that are going to pursue a study abroad option. I know that the foundation for the university has a lot of money for the students and I know the study abroad office is intensely focused on financial support for students. So, for a student that has genuine financial circumstances, there are plenty of options but if I could improve one thing about the program it would be to get more money but that's the answer to every problem in the world. But one of the ways we have addressed that is by going directly to alumni starting about 5 or 6 years ago and asking, "would you be interested in funding the scholarship opportunity for study abroad," and the response was overwhelming. So we are going to continue to do that and I would like to ramp that up if we can.

L: Great. Okay, in your opinion, do you think SUNY Geneseo's participation in the ACE Internationalization Lab will affect the policy? If so, how?

G: I was on those committees, I was the head of the SUNY Geneseo Abroad sub-committee and we wrote this long report and we did all these inventories and surveys and that kind of stuff and I just don't know what it means so my opinion is, I don't know, I haven't heard about it, not for a year and half since we finished our work. I'm sure it will. They wouldn't create these types of things if they didn't have a benefit to the participating institutions. I'm just not aware of what the impacts are going to be. Informally our participation in this, sent a signal across the campus community, both to the different departments and to the administrators that global awareness is a foundational element of the Geneseo mission. And to the extent that that causes the movement of any resources, however limited, within the university towards the promotion of those types of transformative experiences, it will be a net benefit. And I do think our participation in the ACE Lab communicated that to the campus community, I just haven't seen the results yet, it's too early to say.

L: That's great. This is kind of in terms of goals and objectives, but what would you say is the policy's primary goal and do you feel that the goal is being accomplished?

G: Yeah, the primary goal is obviously to study abroad. We want them to get out into the world and understand cross-cultural issues and be able to navigate outside of their own communities and to see what is happening out there. I absolutely think it's having that effect, in an enormously profound way, as I talked about earlier, in terms of the pre-study abroad versus post-study abroad attitude of the students toward their coursework and toward their knowledge of what they're doing in the world, I think it is having absolutely that effect. That would be the primary goal of the study abroad requirement. For the internship, obviously it's more focused on the student getting a sense of what professional work in this discipline means. What does work in international affairs mean, as well as getting the basics of what does it mean to be a professional in an office, which a lot of our students don't know. Just really basic things like that and, for the ones who do internships, or the ones who do both, they're realizing that objective. Plus, they get it on their resume, it has a personal, immediate tangible benefit as well. It's important for grad schools and it's important for employers to see that students have these skill sets, whether it's cross-cultural experience or office experience.

L: As a faculty member and as an administrator, what is the general feedback regarding the policy by students and colleagues, which you touched on, but what about other professors or colleagues just in terms of the impact there? Do you have any feedback there?

G: Occasionally I'll meet someone from a different department that isn't aware that we have requirement and they find out about it and they're like, 'wow, that's cool!' so uniformly, when someone finds out about it, they're like, 'that's cool.' It's never like, 'oh that's stupid.' And then, for a number of faculty in different departments, for example in geography, David Ageson runs that course down in Argentina or in Anthro the Brazil projects or run the Haiti projects or Wes Kenneson runs the Nicaragua stuff. Obviously, they love having this pool of IR majors that have to meet the requirement and then start sniffing around their programs and many of them enroll in those programs. So, for faculty outside the department that are organizing these types of broad experiences, it's obviously a useful contributor to their ability to recruit the minimum number of students to make the program actually go. And that's true within the department program too. I run the Uganda program, I'm running the Switzerland program, it makes those programs slightly more viable to have the requirement, so from the perspective of faculty and staff around the college, the overall feedback has been very good and from the perspective of the students, it's just transformative.

L: Thank you. It's great to hear that it's a cross-campus support network. Last question, for those students who choose a study abroad alternative, what are their rationales and can you provide examples of these alternative options? Which again, you sort of touched on.

G: Sure, I'll list it simply as money, probably the single biggest reason that a student chooses an internship, followed closely by scheduling, particularly for students who declare their IR major late, like late in their sophomore year or into their junior year, they're going to have a hard time getting all of their requirements and getting abroad at the same time, although they can do it and they can do it in the summers or by taking an extra semester or whatever, but for some

students, scheduling simply makes it impermissible that they're going to be able to study abroad and therefore they pursue the internship option. The third element, and very very uncommon, are nervous parents, every year on my Uganda program, I get at least one student who wants to do it, gets halfway through the process of applying and then tells me there parents are like, 'no, you're going to die in a terrorist attack.' And there is nothing I can do about that. I talk with parents, I tell them to feel free to call me and I assure them and I talk about the program and the risks and I tell them they could go do an internship in Washington and they could be in more danger than they are in Uganda or even in a place like Cairo but if the parent puts the foot down, we can't control that. So that is one of the reasons that occasionally percolates. Then there are the documented findings, you know family emergencies, the death of a parent, or just some catastrophe where the student wants to complete the degree on time but has to be in the country and just can't be away because of personal circumstances. I've seen that. I've occasionally seen the non-emergency personal circumstances, like 'I can't stand to be away from my boyfriend or girlfriend that long', occasionally I hear that, but I would say that's rare. But they usually know how to navigate those types of issues. But I've occasionally heard stuff like that. And again, the alternative option now is the internship, which they can do from right on campus, it really doesn't represent either a financial or a scheduling burden for any student.

L: Wonderful, I think we're all set. Thank you, Jeremy.

G: Sure, happy to help.

## Appendix D: Study Abroad Program Descriptions

### From The SUNY Geneseo Study Abroad Office “About” Webpage

**Program Types**

**Semester Study Abroad** - Students attend a university abroad as a visiting international student. Geneseo reviews students based on the host university's selection criteria. Students enroll in classes at the host university and transfer their courses back to Geneseo. With careful planning, students from any major are able to study abroad for a semester.

**Semester Exchange** - Students participate in a student exchange with one of Geneseo's exchange partners. Geneseo reviews and nominates students based on the criteria of the exchange agreement. Students enroll in classes at the exchange university and transfer their courses back to Geneseo.

**Short-Term Faculty Led** - Typically summer, intersession, or spring break programs. Students travel with a Geneseo faculty member and are directly registered for a Geneseo course taught by that faculty member. The duration of the program will depend on the number of credit hours of the course.

**Short-Term Host-Institution** - Similar to a semester program, but in the summer. Students take summer-sessions courses at the host university abroad and transfer their courses back to Geneseo.

[https://www.geneseo.edu/study\\_abroad/about](https://www.geneseo.edu/study_abroad/about)



Appendix E: Total Study Abroad Participation Chart

<b>Row Labels</b>	<b>Count of Term</b>
Missing Term	1
Academic Year 2010-2011	10
Academic Year 2011-2012	4
Academic Year 2012-2013	7
Academic Year 2013-2014	2
Academic Year 2014-2015	3
Academic Year 2015-2016	4
Fall 2010	79
Fall 2011	64
Fall 2012	73
Fall 2013	84
Fall 2014	79
Fall 2015	77
Spring 2011	91
Spring 2012	69
Spring 2013	70
Spring 2014	80
Spring 2015	67
Spring 2016	46
Spring Break 2013	4
Spring Break 2014	9
Spring Break 2015	17
Summer 2010	251
Summer 2011	320
Summer 2012	306
Summer 2013	309
Summer 2014	277
Summer 2015	287
Winter 2015/2016	6
Winter Intersession 2010/2011	50
Winter Intersession 2011/2012	34
Winter Intersession 2012/2013	80

Winter Intersession 2013/2014	60
Winter Intersession 2014/2015	83

**Grand Total 3003**

**\*Provided by SUNY Geneseo Department of Institutional Research**

## Appendix F: IR Major Study Abroad Participation Chart

Chart of IR Majors studying abroad (including dual majors with at least one major being international relations)

Note: Major is determined at the moment that the student studies abroad

Row Labels	Count of Term
Academic Year 2010-2011	1
Academic Year 2011-2012	1
Academic Year 2012-2013	1
Academic Year 2014-2015	2
Academic Year 2015-2016	2
Fall 2010	15
Fall 2011	10
Fall 2012	8
Fall 2013	12
Fall 2014	14
Fall 2015	13
Spring 2011	18
Spring 2012	8
Spring 2013	7
Spring 2014	12
Spring 2015	13
Spring 2016	6
Spring Break 2014	2
Spring Break 2015	3
Summer 2010	28
Summer 2011	21
Summer 2012	31
Summer 2013	33
Summer 2014	24
Summer 2015	25
Winter 2015/2016	4
Winter Intersession 2010/2011	6
Winter Intersession 2011/2012	9
Winter Intersession 2012/2013	5
Winter Intersession 2013/2014	8

**Grand Total****347****\*Provided by SUNY Geneseo Department of Institutional Research**

## Appendix G: SUNY Geneseo Fact Book Data

**Undergraduate Majors and Pre-Majors**

<b>Department/Program</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>
Accounting	205	225	264	283	297
American Studies	9	11	8	6	9
<b>Anthropology</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>79</b>
<i>Anthropology Social Sci Adol Ed</i>	0	0	1	1	1
<i>Anthropology</i>	98	106	96	90	78
Applied Physics	6	11	10	18	30
Art History	22	23	21	21	14
Art Studio	24	14	4	1	0
Biochemistry	127	144	112	98	98
<b>Biology</b>	<b>754</b>	<b>791</b>	<b>892</b>	<b>898</b>	<b>858</b>
<i>Biology General Science Adol Ed</i>	40	33	18	10	5
<i>Biology</i>	714	758	874	888	853
Biophysics	17	13	12	17	18
Black Studies	3	0	0	1	0
Business Administration	398	390	422	457	492
<b>Chemistry</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>159</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>156</b>
<i>Chemistry GenSci Adol Ed</i>	12	16	15	13	12
<i>Chemistry</i>	113	131	144	145	144
Childhood Education	43	16	6	9	2
Childhood/Special Education	384	352	314	271	242
Communication	275	306	340	382	360
Communicative Disorders & Sci	173	107	28	0	0
Comparative Literature	3	4	6	2	6
Computer Science	40	20	9	0	0
Early Childhood/Childhood Ed	60	60	64	75	118

Economics	112	122	146	154	164
<b>English</b>	<b>430</b>	<b>407</b>	<b>381</b>	<b>369</b>	<b>343</b>
<i>English Adol Ed</i>	87	90	81	80	73
<i>English</i>	343	317	300	289	270
<b>French</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>43</b>
<i>French Adol Ed</i>	6	6	5	6	4
<i>French</i>	58	60	70	61	39
Geochemistry	2	4	4	4	5
Geography	65	72	77	77	83
<b>Geological Sciences</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>106</b>
<i>Geo Sci/ Earth Sci Adol Ed</i>	16	17	14	8	7
<i>Geological Science</i>	52	66	90	92	99
Geophysics	11	17	9	8	8
<b>History</b>	<b>302</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>185</b>	<b>200</b>
<i>History Social Studies Adol Ed</i>	98	78	73	63	62
<i>History</i>	204	172	147	122	138
International Relations	230	202	230	235	241

Continued on the next page

Department/Program	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
<b>Mathematics</b>	<b>355</b>	<b>318</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>317</b>	<b>325</b>
<i>Mathematics Adol Ed</i>	127	93	79	80	70
<i>Applied Mathematics</i>	0	0	0	0	5
<i>Mathematics</i>	228	225	221	237	250
Music	33	37	27	36	36
Musical Theatre	17	14	11	15	15
Philosophy	72	65	51	46	41
<b>Physics</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>174</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>208</b>	<b>178</b>
<i>Physics General Science Adol Ed</i>	17	23	16	16	15
<i>Physics</i>	134	151	183	192	163
<b>Political Science</b>	<b>176</b>	<b>186</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>213</b>
<i>PolySci &amp; Social Studies Adol Ed</i>	2	2	0	1	0

<i>Political Science</i>	174	184	200	199	213
<b>Psychology</b>	<b>626</b>	<b>628</b>	<b>670</b>	<b>680</b>	<b>730</b>
<i>Psychology Social Studies Adol Ed</i>	7	5	7	7	6
<i>Psychology</i>	619	623	663	673	724
<b>Sociology</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>154</b>
<i>Sociology Social Studies Adol Ed</i>	1	0	0	1	1
<i>Sociology</i>	122	146	149	134	153
<b>Spanish</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>86</b>
<i>Spanish Adol Ed</i>	37	34	28	15	15
<i>Spanish</i>	94	87	85	81	71
Theatre	19	18	19	16	20
Theatre/English	7	8	9	4	5
Undeclared	268	276	277	301	323
<b>Duplicated Total</b>	<b>6,016</b>	<b>5,933</b>	<b>6,026</b>	<b>6,041</b>	<b>6098</b>
<b>Unduplicated Total</b>	<b>5,485</b>	<b>5,388</b>	<b>5,504</b>	<b>5,548</b>	<b>5583</b>
<b>% of Double Majors</b>	<b>9.7%</b>	<b>10.1%</b>	<b>9.5%</b>	<b>9.5%</b>	<b>9.22%</b>

\*Includes first and second majors

<b>Education Majors</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>
N-6*	492	428	383	355	362
7-12**	473	398	338	301	271
<b>Total Education Majors</b>	<b>965</b>	<b>826</b>	<b>721</b>	<b>656</b>	<b>633</b>

\*Prepared by the Office of Institutional Research

## Appendix H: Focus Group Interview Questions and Responses

Interview Questions and Responses: Focus Group, Study Abroad Participants, April 20, 2016

Leiah: Good afternoon. Please introduce yourself

Stella: Stella Oduro, Junior, Asian Studies Minor, South Korea during Spring 2015

Anna: Anna Biaso, Junior, French Minor, Grahamstown, South Africa during Fall 2015

Amanda: Amanda Wagner, Senior, Biology and Environmental Studies Minor, Ecuador 2 months during Summer 2014

L: What attracted you to the International Relations degree at SUNY Geneseo?

S: So I am not an international student but I have international background, I'm from West Africa, Ghana and because I'm from there and we have policies also as a Democratic country, I wanted to learn about how different countries function, in terms of governmental and interacting with each other and including economic policies and I thought, why not international relations because I will get the opportunity to do each and every single thing I want to do.

Anna: I was a transfer student, I did my first year at Mercyhurst University and I was doing intelligent studies there and I decided that I wasn't really sure that I wanted to work for the government, which is basically where that was fast tracking me to and I was also looking for a more affordable option and I'm New York resident so SUNY Geneseo was sort of an easy switch for me to make and the best thing that aligned was international relations, I wanted something a little more internationally focused than just plain political science and it's kind of turned into my passion now but at the time it was more just a convenience.

Amanda: When I came to college I was pretty unsure of what I wanted to study and I knew I had an interest in international issues, particularly the developing world, which is the track that I chose, but I also would have been very interested in the conflict, war and peace studies I believe is the name of the other track. But one of the things that really drew me international relations is how interdisciplinary the major was, through the course of my studies, I've taken courses in political science but also sociology, anthropology, biology, history, economics, so it's given me the chance to branch out into a lot of other disciplines as well.

L: There are 4 different tracks... can everyone name their track so I can have that on record

S: War and Peace

Anna: Developing World

Amanda: Developing World

L: What concerns, if any, did you have when you were informed of the study abroad requirement?

S: Personally, I did not know that I had to study abroad, do an internship or do a special project. I found out when I decided to go to South Korea that I needed a signature if I'm an IR major for it to count as my study abroad requirement.

Anna: For me, I think it just gave me a more concrete excuse to be like, "well I've got to do this so, mom and dad..." But I don't think it was something that I really knew about when I first got into the major but when you start to go through the requirements that you still need to do, you see that you have to study abroad and you're like, oh, cool because I kind of wanted to anyway so it wasn't an issue but yeah, I wasn't really concerned about it because it was something I wanted to do anyway.

Amanda: Yeah, I was in a similar boat where I already had anticipated studying abroad so that didn't particularly make me nervous. What made me more nervous was the fact that there's an extended language requirement for the major and I've always struggled with new languages so for me, I fulfilled the two when I studied abroad by fulfilling my language requirement as well so it was a nice way to hit two birds with one stone.

L: Number three, having completed study abroad, how has the policy impacted your degree pursuits? How has it impacted your academic coursework

S: I think in terms of policies, since I honestly didn't know about it, I don't think it has affected me. But in terms of my academic work, I think it has changed the way I learn a lot of things in the classroom, honestly, both from the point of view of the professor and the students and my own point of view as well. How each of these things interact and how we view other countries as well because going to South Korea and then interacting with other students who are from, like France or Rwanda or from all of these different places with international background interacting with Korean culture in this small school. Honestly, I never thought about each of these individuals same way and it's the same way with my school year, like the way I used to see my major is not the same way that I see it now that I came back from abroad. It has become a whole new entity I think. And a whole new level of questioning and answering and looking for answers.

Anna: I would say that it compounded my career goals even more. I took a government and politics in Africa course and that's where I really know that Africa is where I want to have most of my- because in the developing world there are obviously many different regions that interest me- not really on like an official basis but to know that's where I wanted to end up moving towards. SO for me, going to South Africa and being there and seeing and experiencing a lot of the different things that I saw and experienced really made me feel like this is what I want to do later in life, these are the sort of issues I want to be working with. So now, coming back, I feel like I have much deeper depth into issues that came out in class and having a different perspective on things, like race relations and a lot of other things that practicality wise it really compounded everything for me.



Amanda: I think it really helped to contextualize. Like you guys were saying, it kind of adds a lot of context to the things that you're learning. So, as a developing world track, to not have spent a significant period of time in a developing country I think would be sort of a shame because it really does help to not only allow you to see some of the problems you're learning about but also to see the ways in which those regions are succeeding that you may not always get when you're looking at problems in a classroom. So I had an internship when I was abroad that I had set up through a friend of a professor who we bumped into in a university there so it was a little bit of a bizarre process but I ended up doing research for him and he was attempting to create a master's program. He was a professor of public health so he was trying to create a master's program in their school that would look at the effects of climate change on public health in Ecuador. So, even in that sense it was a very progressive experience so I got the experience of doing research but also being able to talk to professionals in other places which was pretty cool. And on top of that the language component. I mean, there are a lot of things that I think you get from studying abroad more generally, sort of in terms of independence and cultural competency and learning about communication that are just also beneficial to understanding your coursework and being more confident in your coursework at home.

L: Number four, can you think of any negative aspects of this policy, potentially, or if you've experienced anything.

S: I don't really see any negative aspects of the policy, I think if anything, it's much more beneficial because if a student chooses IR, you have to study abroad and that is one of the most rewarding aspects of this major. Most students go through four years of college without deciding to go study abroad at all and the only thing that would know is the text book and the professor and basically a word through a friend or social media or some form of media and they would never really experience a culture as it is for its own. I mean, coming back from abroad, I've talked to people and it's like, 'you've went to South Korea!' The before and after reaction is pretty much the same, it doesn't change, everyone is questioning why you would go there and nobody asks the question, how was your experience or what did you learn from this or how has it impacted you. It's always the same thing. And to be able to change, I guess to frame a question from students' point of view, people are very critical of going outside of this country. It's very important to encourage people to step outside of this country and go and be independent and learn about other people's culture and ethnic issues. I just think this aspect of the program itself brings the perspective of every single student and they should expand it more to other majors if anything.

Anna: I would agree with everything Stella just said. I would say that someone could maybe argue the downside of it is the financial thing. Someone being like, 'I can't afford study abroad' or just being like 'I just don't want to'. But then to me, the two things would be, one, you definitely can afford to study abroad especially if you're willing to open up your horizons. Truthfully, I think I broke even, or at least pretty close to even by traveling abroad to someplace outside of Europe. I think it's something that people don't realize, actually, the things that you can do to make it more affordable, so that doesn't, to me, really pertain and if you're like, 'I don't really think I can afford it or you're just like, I don't want to go abroad, then you shouldn't be in the international relations major because if you're interested in politics then fine, you can

do political science and they don't have that requirement, that's one of the very distinguishing factors, so they still have that option of being involved in politics but not having the study abroad option and I agree that it should be something that's extended to more majors because it gives you such a caliber of knowledge and experiences that you really can't- I actually had the same experience that you had too- people would be like, oh, you're going to Africa? Why are you going there? And I'm like, why not? I don't understand the question.

Amanda: I really don't know if I have any more to add. Obviously, we all three picked places that were a little bit more unusual to study abroad so I think we pretty much buy into the idea that study abroad is a pretty necessary component of understanding our studies in a very unique way.

Leiah: Number five, do you think this policy has benefitted your personal, academic and professional life. If so, how? You have kind of touched on the academic component but maybe just generally how it's effected your life.

S: I would say going to South Korea was the best decision I think. One, I loved South Korea before I went but then when I went there I loved it even more because I grew as an individual. I think a lot of people when they ask me, they say, oh what did you learn, and they expect me to say academics but honestly I grew a lot as an individual, like personally, intellectually. I learned to love who I am. The me that I'm sitting here talking to you about, I just learned to love me. Cherish a lot more than I could ever find in anything else. Sometimes you overlook yourself. You don't think about yourself, being from West Africa Ghana, you cherish every small little thing, then when you live in the United States for a while, everything becomes so superficial sometimes that you forget those small little things and then when I went to South Korea, I found that all those small little things that I take for granted because I've been here (US) since I was almost child, 12 years, so it was just a wonderful experience just to get to know myself as an individual and not to worry about people looking at me and judging me or not to worry about everyone, like someone has expectations of me, it was just like for that whole semester, I was like, 'Stella, just be yourself and be happy, even if you get lost, it's okay, you know being lost is a learning experience as well.

Anna: I grew because what I gained personally is connected to what I want to do professionally so the ways that I was challenged as far as going to a country that, the way I picture it is a developing country with a first world county inside of it. It makes you see society in a whole different way because you have these elements of the United States in there, of privilege and stuff like that, and then you also see that side, I grew up in the Rochester area so I've never really seen real poverty before and seeing that for the first time and being confronted with people who are not friendly toward Americans or may not necessarily be unfriendly to me as a person but assuming things about me because I'm an American. I think that that is one of the very undervalued challenges, that people are going to be like, 'well I'm just going to go to Europe,' and not that that's not an incredibly rewarding experience because I'm sure it is and you have your own things going on but putting yourself into a culture that is completely unlike your own, there is a certain aspect that comes with going someplace outside of the Western world when that's all you've- I mean I was born and raised here and I've never really traveled that much- so getting to know yourself, getting that independence, and just having that idea of

when I'm having a bad day here, just saying, I went to South Africa by myself, no one else came with me and I traveled by myself and I had never done that before, and it gives you kind of an ego boost.

Amanda: It's funny because when we have to practice our elevator pitches at the beginning of the year as Study Abroad Mentors, mine is actually on looking stupid and feeling totally fine with looking stupid because I also went on a trip that was just me and so I passed out in the Mexico City airport in the middle of the night on my way there so I kind of jumped in real fast. But it does really give you an opportunity to explore a new place but also sort of explore yourself in that context, especially too when you meet other traveling young people or old people, in new places it's a really interesting change to get to sort of compare and contrast your experience as, you know me being white female from New York in Ecuador, how I was seen differently from my friends who were native Spanish speakers from New Mexico or friends from Europe, how their experiences varied from mine and based on their experiences at home. So I think it really helped broaden my perspective on my own childhood in that way. Even professionally, I did have the experience of working in a relatively professional setting doing research on a scale that I hadn't done on my own. I was only in an internship for three weeks but I wrote about 25 pages single space researching on my own, in sort of a new context, so I mean I had that additional benefit as well that I can use in the future that I have used back at home as I'm writing my thesis currently.

L: Six, are there any changes or adjustments to the current policy that you would like to see?

S: Just explicit tell students that they have to do it. Maybe push the study abroad a little more than the internship, personally, or change it to an internship abroad or something because I liked studying abroad.

Anna: Grace is my academic advisor and I feel like he, well the internship and special project part was not really advertised, so when you did hear that you had to do this, it was very much like, 'okay, so where are you going to study abroad.' Which I think is actually a good thing for them to be like, study abroad is the main focus and then if you really feel like you just can't do it then fine, let's work on getting you an internship that has an international focus. Maybe the only thing is, like me as a developing world track, and the same thing with you (Amanda), maybe make it mandatory that you have to go to a country that is a developing county or if you focus is in Asia then either require or strongly encourage you to go somewhere that is related because, me as a developing world concentration, don't think I would have gotten as much out of it if I was like, I'm going to go study abroad in like the Netherlands, it wouldn't have been the same experience at all.

Amanda: I think similarly, as someone who really appreciates the study abroad aspect, I would like to see it expanded to be more, like you (Anna) said, suggesting people go to developing places or go, we have some really phenomenal faculty led trips, but there is a safety component of that, that is sort of really valuable to stray away from in some aspects, but obviously not all students are comfortable with that and that's totally acceptable so I think the policy as it is, is decent and it's pretty unique, not a lot of places actually require students to go abroad so I appreciate it for that aspect.

L: Number 7, what is the general atmosphere in your major regarding the policy? Any feedback from peers?

S: I honestly would not know because I don't hang out a lot with IR majors, but I think, based on personal experience, depending on who it is, it would be different for each of us, which is why I appreciate the whole internship and special project portion because not everyone can study abroad and not everyone wants to have that "get lost and find your way back home" kind of experience. Some people like the comfort zone. They like to know, when is my breakfast, when is my lunch, when is my dinner. They don't like to have to find their breakfast or have to go look for a place for lunch.

Anna: I would say the same thing. I think the difficult thing with IR is that because it is so interdisciplinary, I end up talking a lot of classes with people who aren't IR majors or political science majors and sometimes it's difficult to know which is which. You do like the ice-breaker on the first day and you're like, oh that person's IR and this person is political science but I think that's something where there aren't really a lot of venues for IR people to get together to talk about this sort of stuff, which maybe there should be but I've never really actually thought about it. That I've never really talked to anyone about how they felt about the policy. It's just like it's there and you're IR so you would want to do it.

Amanda: I was going to speak to the cohesive nature of the department as well because it's interesting being a graduating senior and knowing even professors in the department who I've never had because I was sort of all over the place academically. I mean I've never spoken to a student who has regretted their study abroad experience so in that sense, I think that once people go abroad they have the experience, they really love it. So I don't know how much it's deterring people before they go.

L: But then in general, from day to day, have you heard anything negative about having to study abroad?

All: No

L: Last question (read goals from Grace), do you think the policies goals and objectives are being fulfilled? Please explain why or why not.

S: Yes, I do think the policies goals are being fulfilled because I think, from what she (Anna) was saying about South Africa, I think it's definitely working. A lot of people from this country think Africa is just a country and when one country in Africa does something that's wrong, it's like, 'oh, the whole of Africa did this...' 'the whole Africa is in poverty or in Africa, everyone is starving.' But I'll let her talk about that. I think people have this weird perception of South Korea and Asia culture as a whole. People don't see it as individual, they always see it as collective you know, like China, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, all of these countries have these own individual characteristics but nobody really sees it because in the media it is portrayed as the Japanese guy is playing the Korean guy or on television, everyone is like, oh the Asian guy, nobody ever says, oh the Japanese guy or the Chinese guy or the South Korean woman, nobody ever says any of these things and I think by going to the country you are able to actually decipher all of these different groups of people, all of these different cultures, the language.

Even in South Korea, it's like, yes they're all speaking Korean but they're all speaking different dialects, that's crazy, because when I move away from Saul and I go to Butan, people are automatically speaking to me in Korean but it's just so different and they're like, this is the Saul dialect, this is the Butan dialect, even when you go to simple places, like Jonju, it's the same thing. You just get to dive into different culture and different problems that you would not get on national television or if you didn't see it, you wouldn't believe it. You just get to see so many different things that even the home government wouldn't want you to see as a foreigner but you're exposed to it because you're living in the culture and living in the day to day activities there and you grow as an intellectual and an individual and also as a person.

Anna: It definitely does expose you to different cultures I don't think that goal could not be reached, honestly, by doing this, it's just going to happen, even as we're coming from really non-traditional places to study abroad, I think even if you went to Europe, it's going to be a very different situation and especially now, it's a changing global climate. Personally, I would say you're definitely confronted with a lot of real life experience, a lot of things you have make your own judgements about, a lot of challenging things where you might have to really evaluate who you are as a person, your identity, where you stand, and I think that was the most valuable part of my study abroad experience and that's really what I think they're trying to get at with the cross-cultural thing. Kind of like what Stella was saying, there is this perception where, like I actually had a friend who asked me what the main place was in Africa and I was like, 'you know that Africa is a continent that is bigger than the United States, right?' There is not like a 'main place.' I think in South Africa alone, I think they have 13-15 official languages and to know that it's unfortunately that way people paint Africa is like everyone is poor, people are killing each other, there's genocides and that's not how it is. There is a lot of passion there and there are a lot of problems there obviously, but kind of evaluating where I come from and how that has effected what I'm seeing there and sometimes is a hard thing to look at because it's basically attacking who you are, like racially, nationality-wise. Not so much gender, but it does bring in question things like gender practices and stuff like that and what it means to be male or female depending on what culture you're in.

Amanda: I really do think it's fitting in with a lot of those goals, most obviously with what Anna was saying at the end, in terms of having to sort of compare or come to terms with who you are and how that impacts how you're seen. For me, I did notice gender a lot more and I think that's a combination of being by myself and being in a country where machismo is still very real but that was something that I did come out having thought a lot more about leaving my experience, but also I like to encourage people to stay with host families when they go abroad because I think that's really one of the main sources of this cross-cultural comparison and understanding because you have so much time spent with natives and people who are there who generally have an interest in hosting international students and comparing the international experience and introducing international people to this new place so some of my richest conversations came out of that host family experience because they were willing and open to share with me about their experiences, not only how things were but why they were that way and how they felt about that. The other thing that I think is interesting and Stella touched upon it when she said she mostly hangs out with international people, is that I think a lot of times when people come back from abroad you do feel a lot more drawn to speaking with other people who have international

experiences or are currently having international experiences and I think some of that stems from having new vocabulary in terms of how to ask people about their experience. I think a lot of people come back from abroad and people are like, how was it, it was good and then that's sort of the end of the conversation, most of the time you come back with so much that you want to talk about and want to share and you want to be able to reflect on that you do end up finding avenues to have those sort of discussions because they become really valuable and important to you and you learn new ways to ask about people's experiences.

## Appendix I: R. Lewis Interview Questions and Responses

Interview Questions and Responses: Dr. Rebecca Lewis, Assistant Provost for International Programs, May 6, 2016

Leiah: Good afternoon, this is Leiah Heckathorn conducting an interview on my Capstone research for a Policy Analysis on the International Relations requirement to do some sort of study abroad or internship requirement for graduation at SUNY Geneseo. With me I have...

Dr. Lewis: My name is Becky Lewis, I'm the Assistant Provost for International Programs at SUNY Geneseo and I oversee Study Abroad

L: Thank you, Becky. And before we begin, I just want to let you know that any time throughout this interview, if you don't want to answer a question or you would like to be done with the interview, we will stop at that moment. So thank you so much for being here and we will begin.

Dr. L: Okay

L: So the first question is, can you describe how the International Relations degree policy requiring some sort of study abroad/internship or special project, which I'll just disclaim here, Jeremy Grace has mentioned that they are cutting the special project-

Dr. L: Okay

L: Component so, how has that affected study abroad participation in your opinion?

Dr. L: Well, it certainly has contributed to the number of students studying abroad. The exact number of students, I'm not sure of. But I do know that the International Relations program has been growing and with their removal of the special project option, I think that will continue to support the number of study abroad students. I also have heard that they are going to focus on longer programs rather than some of the very short term, so that, I hope will impact the number of students who choose to study abroad for a semester, which would be great.

L: Great, and just so you know, I am going to be taking notes so for the interview and just so you know, forgive a little delay-

Dr. L: Sure

L: Before I ask the next question while I finish up my thought there so thank you. Wonderful, okay, number two, do any additional considerations need to be taken by your office for International Relations students and if so, what are they?

Dr. L: Yeah, no not really. We treat them like any other student because they are just studying abroad as far as we're concerned. We have worked with Jeremy Grace to develop particular programs that he is interested in but we do that with any faculty member in any department. So again, that's not a special consideration for those students.

L: Great, thank you. Alright, number three, please describe the current relationship between the study abroad office and the International Relations Department regarding this policy.

Dr. L: We are very supportive and we're very grateful, I think as with most of our relationships with academic departments, we work really well with them and try to support their efforts as much as possible and are grateful that they send students abroad because we understand that faculty encouragement is one of the key reasons that we have such a high participation rate.

L: Wonderful, well said. Let's see here, number four, has the policy impacted the study abroad office in terms of operation and overall mission. If yes, how so?

Dr. L: No, not really.

L: No, not so much. Great, thank you. Alright, number five, are there any elements of the relationship between the International Relations Department and Study Abroad Office that you think should be changed or could be improved. If so, which ones.

Dr. L: Not really, we have a really good relationship with them

L: Great, number six, how might policies such as this impact study abroad in the future? Do you think the recent hiring of a new President and or the findings from the Internationalization Lab will impact the role of study abroad in SUNY Geneseo curricula? That's a pretty loaded question.

Dr. L: Yes, I think as more departments consider making study abroad at least an optional graduation requirement that will certainly have an impact on the number of students who study abroad. And they baccalaureate learning outcomes, which actually isn't either from the new President or the Internationalization Lab but is a curriculum revision, includes global awareness engagement as one of the learning outcomes that all students should have. And again, study abroad would be one of the options for a student to demonstrate that and so that's very supportive and I hope that would bring our numbers up to at least over 50%

L: Great

Dr. L: and I will say, the President is very supportive of study abroad and campus internationalization so that certainly is a positive.

L: Thank you, okay, so number seven and the last question is, have you received any feedback or testimony, good or bad, regarding the International Relations study abroad policy.

Dr. L: Okay, I have not personally, the people to ask that question to would be Sam and Emily as they have much more direct contact with students. My guess is though is that students have a wonderful time and are grateful because I also would guess that having it as a graduation requirement helps students make the case to their parents.

L: That's true... I got that in the focus group so you are correct. Alright, well thank you so much. That's it, we are all done

Dr. L: You are welcome



## Appendix J: Internship Participant Interview Questions and Responses

Interview Questions and Responses: David Gomez, IR Internship Participant, April 29, 2016

Leiah: This is an interview with a SUNY Geneseo IR major who has chosen an internship as his international experience in order to graduate. This is an interview for Leiah Heckathorn's capstone research on the IR policy for some sort of international experience via study abroad or internship in order to graduate. With us we have:

D. Gomez: Hi I'm David Gomez and I'm an International Relations major with a concentration in War and Peace Studies. I have chosen to do an internship at the American Council on Germany in New York City for the summer of 2016, from May to August.

L: Thank you. And you're a junior, correct?

G: Junior, right.

L: Thank you, so before we begin I will remind that you that if at any time you do not want to answer a question or you want to end the interview, we will do that. This is being recorded and if you choose to end, we will end it and it will be erased from any record or any transcriptions. So, if you are ready, we will begin.

G: Yeah

L: Okay, the first question is, what attracted you to the international relations degree?

G: Well I always had an interest in history and I saw international relations as kind of like a practical application of history because we do get a lot of history learning in our classes and it helps you understand why countries behave the way they do today and I just thought it was kind of fascinating how certain countries interact with others depending on their historical situation

L: Thank you. Number two, can you remember any concerns when you heard about the policy requiring some sort of international experience before graduation? If so, what were those concerns?

G: Not at first because I was just an IR major so I didn't really have too much on my plate, I mean I felt like it as a freshman since everything was new, but at the end of freshman year I did declare a second major in Spanish and it really wasn't that much of a burden because it would help with the Spanish major as well if I just combined going to a Spanish speaking country with my IR major and I was considering that other scheduling things have coalesced into me pursuing the internship instead.

L: Thank you. Alright, number three, please explain how you fulfilled your policy requirement in place if study abroad and why you selected that particular option.

G: For one, I'm getting practical work experience in an international, well it's a non-governmental organization with an international focus. Its main objective is strengthening the ties between the US and Germany. They were founded in 1952 after World War II to help fix that broken relationship and it has been fairly successful so I would firsthand how they do cultural exchanges for business professionals and students and they also go over policy initiatives and think of new policies that can benefit both countries and that would be a very beneficial firsthand experience for an international relations major who can go into something like that in the future

L: Great, thank you. Number four, can you think of any negative aspects of this policy? If so, please explain.

G: I would say finances and scheduling. Not everyone has the means to go study abroad and there scholarships and stuff like that but sometimes they are not enough and you're not guaranteed a scholarship and that might be a road block. Internships, you really need to figure out your scheduling because I've been applying since last August and just heard something now so it does take a lot of your time. So for other students that maybe can't really focus on that and may need to work during the summer so that can be a road block. And my internship is unpaid so that can also be an issue for some people

L: Great, thank you. Number five, do you think this policy has benefited your personal, academic and professional life. If so, how? And since you are about to begin your internship, just speak to if and how you foresee your internship affected these areas.

G: Even without the policy, I probably would have wanted to study abroad or an internship because it's applying what you learn in the classroom with actual work experience which I think can be very beneficial because employers will look and see the organization I will be interning at and it will not only be good for your resume but also general skills you can use in your career

L: Thank you, Number six, are there any changes or adjustments to the current policy that you would like to see? Is so, what are they?

G: I haven't really thought of any adjustments to the policy. I would say that the department can expand the internship option. You don't hear much on options other than study abroad and it would be nice to get more information on other options, like my internship was kind of a fluke, it was just a lot of effort through searching. I have heard of the office of career development but the IR department seems more pro-study abroad

L: Number seven, what is the general census within your major regarding the policy. Do you hear any feedback amongst your peers? If so, what do they say?

G: I never really hear much feedback about whether they like the policy or not, I think most students kind of accept that it's necessary to do down the road. And from those students who have studied abroad or plan to, I only hear good things so it certainly is very beneficial. I've heard a few concerns, maybe about finances but that's about it

L: Alright, last question, I will read what Jeremy Grace defines as the ultimate goal of this requirement and with that, do you think that the policy's goal is being fulfilled? And although you have not yet completed your internship, can you speak to what you foresee as being the ultimate outcome of your internship?

I believe for my internship the goals are met just because the focus of the internship is fostering better relations with another country, with another culture, and basically intercultural and knowledge exchange between the US and Germany. I don't know about other internships but the office does have to sign off on them so it must fulfill the requirement. For study abroad, I think definitely it fulfills the goal, maybe some more than others, but yes I do.

L: Great, thank you so much for your time.

G: Sure, thanks

