The vast majority of community colleges in the United States enroll students in educational programs to advance career pathways. While a transfer option is one of the academic programs offered, most of the academic and career programs are terminal and students graduate upon completion. Thus, the only opportunity that a student has to gain international knowledge is during the time they study at the community college (Raby, 1996). Community colleges offer many internationalization initiatives and programs, such as Internationalization at Home, International Student Services, International Business, and Education Abroad. In 2019, over one-third of all U.S. community colleges documented at least one international program (Raby, 2020).

Unlike commonly held assumptions, there is not a dearth of research on community college international education nor on education abroad. Research includes descriptive studies as to who studies and what is their experience. Research is also quantitative in terms of demographics of who studies abroad and outcomes of studying abroad.

Many studies challenge stereotypes that exist in the broader university literature and among practitioner sensemaking that advances a deficit perspective of the institutional type and the students who attend the community college. Studies are found in community college journals, international focused journals, books, and is the topic of dissertation research.

The following is a brief list of some of the major knowledge areas within contemporary education abroad scholarship as it relates to community colleges and a listing of books, book chapters and/or articles that provide foundational reading within each area. This essential reading provides insight into the existing research and scholarship that informs our practice. This list is neither prescriptive nor exhaustive and should be adapted and expanded upon.
ADVOCACY FOR INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION

Advocacy dominates the focus of early research that establishes the clear purpose and intent of internationalization in U.S. community colleges. The Truman Commission Report, American Association of Community Colleges reports, and general advocacy explains that global is not the opposite of local thereby allowing a focus on international to be part of the local mission of the community colleges.

1. Foundations of Advocacy & Truman Report

The Truman Commission Report of 1947 (Zook, 1947) set the course for contemporary US higher education and included international education as a key focus. The Sub-section Toward International Understanding and Cooperation: (1) all students gain an international understanding (p. 14-15), and (2) shift from learning solely from a local context to embrace internationalization in curricula and in practice (p. 15).


Articles that unpack the Truman Report regarding community college international education:


2. American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) Advocacy


3. General Advocacy: Global is Not the Opposite of Local


**4. Times of Crisis**


**FOUNDATIONS OF EDUCATION ABROAD RESEARCH**

Pamela Eddy (2014) in a special issue, encourages research to validate what exists and to inform others of the potential for change since “examples of research will be helpful to institutional leaders planning internationalization efforts” (Eddy, 2014, p. viii). The potential for change is repeated in many of the historical articles that see internationalization as important and something that community colleges should adapt.


**COMPREHENSIVE INTERNATIONALIZATION**

Toolkits show how to build programs independently or within comprehensive internationalization efforts. Community colleges have long advocated for what they called “holistic international education” and what today is called “comprehensive internationalization.” Both holistic and comprehensive internationalization includes the integration of mission, vision, values and within academic programs. Toolkits show how to build individual internationalization
programs, like education abroad, and then how to include them within comprehensive internationalization efforts.


**EDUCATION ABROAD: COMPONENTS TO BUILD PROGRAMS**

While comprehensive internationalization is advocated for, in general, much of community college reach nonetheless focuses on singular programmatic aspects of education abroad. However, when these various singular foci are combined, they still denote a comprehensive internationalization effort. This section examines singular efforts to have support from cohorts, faculty, parents, and peer; consortia; virtual programming; and leadership sensemaking to build education abroad programs.

1. **Support from Cohorts: Bonding with Faculty, Parents, and Peers**


2. **Consortia in Education Abroad**


3. Virtual Internationalizing Curricula and Exchanges


4. Leadership Duties and Sensemaking


WHICH STUDENTS STUDY ABROAD

The field of education abroad has long been interested in who studies abroad, although studying abroad is not a required component of higher education learning. As such, there is inequity of who studies abroad and who does not. There are two categories of research on which type of student’s study abroad, those that use a deficit lens and those that do not.

1. Using a Deficit Lens


2. Using a Non-Deficit or Equity Lens


3. Student Profiles


4. Focus on Adults


5. Focus on Low Income


6. Students of Color


7. African-American Men who Study Abroad


8. African-American Community College Women Who Study Abroad


9. Career-Technical Education Students


10. Rural Students

WHY COMMUNITY COLLEGE STUDENTS STUDY ABROAD: STUDENT VOICE AND EXPERIENCES

Qualitative research on community college students who study abroad shows a consistency in why they want to study abroad. Student voices share three common reasons why they choose to study abroad. Community colleges students are highly motivated to study abroad, many have previously traveled, and all claim that studying abroad is a once in a lifetime opportunity.

1. Are Highly Motivated to Study Abroad


2. Have traveled before (hence not deficit)


3. Once-In-A-Lifetime Opportunity


EQUITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION

Community college education makes an important statement on equity, diversity, and inclusion and universities simply do not. Community colleges have an open access policy which means that anyone can enroll in classes. For study abroad, this becomes a complicated issue as discussed by the selected readings. Due to community colleges’ open access policies, these institutions tend to enroll proportionately students of color who attend that college.


CASE STUDIES

Case studies of community college education is numerous. This research examines in-depth education abroad by detailing the experiences of a single college. The selected readings include case studies of community colleges from around the U.S.


OUTCOMES FROM STUDYING ABROAD

There is a growing number of research using qualitative and quantitative research on the outcomes of studying abroad. Research on outcomes from studying abroad include transformative changes in self and worldviews, intercultural experiences, interculturality, and career employability. Studies also track academic achievements in terms of graduation success, persistence, and transferability.

1. Student Growth, Intercultural Experiences, and Interculturality


2. Transformative Learning


3. Career Development


Thomas, M. (2016). Community college education abroad and business internship programs cultivation of competency...

**4. Assessment, and Evaluation,**


