The purpose of the study was to determine the information needs of study abroad students and the extent to which academic libraries can fulfill those needs. Data were gathered using a web survey and semistructured interviews of students who completed a study abroad program through the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Respondents had a variety of information needs, consulted a wide range of sources, and encountered unique challenges to information seeking before, during and after they studied abroad. The respondents reported that library materials covering travel and country information would be most helpful to them. The respondents also suggested that UNC-CH Libraries collaborate with the Study Abroad Office and that UNC-CH Libraries actively advertise the availability of resources and services for study abroad students through signage, the library web site and promotional materials.

Headings:

- Foreign study
- College and university libraries -- Services to groups
- Information needs -- Evaluation
ACADEMIC LIBRARY SUPPORT FOR STUDY ABROAD STUDENTS

by
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A Master’s paper submitted to the faculty of the School of Information and Library Science of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science in Library Science.

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Approved by

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Joanne G. Marshall
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Introduction

In the 2008/2009 academic year, 260,327 students enrolled at U.S. institutions of higher education studied abroad for academic credit (International Institute of Education, 2010). Each year, students leave the comfort of their dorm rooms and the safety of their college campuses in order to spend anywhere from eight weeks to an entire year living and studying in another country. Over the past decade, the numbers of students enrolled in U.S. institutions of higher education studying abroad has been on the rise. International Institute of Education (IIE) (2010) data suggest that the number of students studying abroad has more than doubled in the past decade.

IIE’s statistics indicate that the nature of study abroad is changing. More students opt for short-term study abroad programs, with 54.6% of students studying abroad for a summer, January term, or eight weeks or less during the 2008/2009 academic year (IIE, 2010). Travel to non-traditional locations is on the rise. Fourteen of the top 25 study abroad destinations are outside of Europe and 19 of the top 25 destinations are countries where English is not the primary language (IIE, 2010). The trends exhibited in data of U.S. study abroad participation suggest that participation will continue to increase and that study abroad destinations will continue to broaden. As the popularity of study abroad increases, the world becomes increasingly globalized, and as access to campus resources becomes less tied to the physical campus, academic libraries must make supporting the information needs of study abroad students a priority.
Study abroad students represent a challenge for academic libraries. This population is entitled to the same access to library resources as any other user community. Study abroad students complete a portion of their coursework off-campus, which separates them from the rest of their on-campus peers. Although they are distance learners, their time for learning at a distance is only temporary. Before, during and after a study abroad experience, students may face unique challenges as they prepare to travel to, live in, study in, and return home from a foreign country. The Association of College & Research Libraries (ACRL) states that academic libraries must meet the information and research needs of all constituents, wherever they may be (ACRL, 2008). The Access Entitlement Principle “applies equally to all individuals on a main campus, off campus, in distance learning or regional campus programs, or in the absence of any physical campus” (ACRL, 2008). Academic librarians are charged with providing study abroad students with the same level of access to information as they provide to any other library user. It is clear that academic libraries must fulfill the needs of study abroad students; however, librarians must first determine the information needs and behaviors of study abroad students.

The purpose of this study was to identify the information needs and behaviors of study abroad students and to identify how academic libraries can support those needs. In order to achieve this purpose, the following research questions were considered: 1) What are the information needs of study abroad students?, 2) What information sources do students consult before, during and after study abroad programs?, 3) What challenges and barriers do students encounter in the information seeking process?, 4) In what ways can librarians help fulfill students’ needs throughout the study abroad process?
The author hypothesized that students consult a variety of information sources and that those sources will vary throughout the course of the study abroad experience. Students currently study abroad in locations worldwide and those locations can vary greatly in terms of culture, language, and living conditions. The author hypothesized that the location of study abroad experience will have an effect on the challenges and barriers that students face. This research study found that the types of information and the ways of going about finding information vary greatly by individual. Respondents’ information sources vary throughout their experience and are dependent on the type of information they are seeking. Research in LIS suggests that study abroad students are sometimes unaware of the services that they can take advantage of while abroad (Kutner, 2009).

The author hypothesized that study abroad participants may be unaware of the extent to which academic libraries can fulfill their needs. This research study found that while many students were aware of their access to library services and resources while studying abroad, a number of students were not aware that these resources were available to them.

**Literature Review**

**Library Services in Support of Study Abroad**

Until recently, there has been little focus on library support for study abroad in LIS literature. The earliest article to address library support of study abroad was written in 1985 following the author’s return from a trip to Japan (Engeldinger, 1985). The author offered criteria for librarians to consider when deciding whether to provide bibliographic instruction (BI) for study abroad participants (Engeldinger, 1985). Engeldinger (1985) concluded that the need to provide BI would depend on the situation and that there would be circumstances that did not require BI for study abroad students.
Despite this stance, Engeldinger left the question open and stated that more consideration was warranted (Engeldinger, 1985).

In 2009, Connell elaborated on the context of the academic library’s role in providing services for study abroad participants. Offering a short history and the current state of study abroad in the U.S., Connell (2009) states that library access and services are necessary for students to fully benefit from study abroad. Connell (2009) compares study abroad participants to distance learners but concludes that due to the temporary nature of the study abroad experience, the two groups are different. Ultimately, Connell (2009) suggests avenues for ways that libraries can get involved to increase student success.

Three recent articles provide case studies of the implementation of library services for study abroad or internationally located students (Wang & Tremblay, 2009; Cohen, 2010; Connell, 2009). Wang and Tremblay (2009) discuss how they assessed the needs of Long Island University’s Global Campus and then tailored their services based on those assessments. They considered the different features and contexts that each of the four overseas locations exhibited and then provided specific services and resources based on those circumstances (Wang & Tremblay, 2009). Cohen (2010) describes how librarians developed a Skype-based reference service for study abroad students and offers a list of lessons that they learned. White (2009) describes librarian involvement with study abroad programs and offers questions for librarians to consider when implementing services for study abroad programs.

These studies illustrate the different ways that libraries are currently supporting study abroad. However, the studies fail to provide detailed descriptions of the methods
the researchers used to assess the needs of their users or whether the researchers used other methods for determining the most community-appropriate services to implement.

**Library Collaboration in Support of Study Abroad**

While Engeldinger (1985) was an early pioneer in turning attention to library services in support of study abroad, Brogan (1990) was an early pioneer in promoting cross-institutional collaboration in support of study abroad. Brogan (1990) outlined current trends in international education that related to academic librarianship, including foreign language instruction, study abroad, internationalizing the curriculum, foreign students and scholars, technical assistance and international developments. Brogan (1990) suggested big picture ways that ACRL and the American Library Association can team together to address the emerging trends. This represents the first move towards increasing focus on collaboration across offices and departments in librarianship and education for support of study abroad.

Love and Edwards (2009), Kutner (2010), and Hammond (2009) have also addressed innovative ways for libraries to collaborate with other offices and institutions. Love and Edwards (2009) discuss outreach in libraries and how liaisons can branch out to offices across campus. The needs of students are changing and strategic partnerships help to address those needs (Love & Edwards, 2009). Kutner (2010) discusses how, in light of the advent of service learning projects during study abroad experiences, librarians must also consider that study abroad students are not only information users, but that they are information producers. Kutner (2010) provides a case study describing how librarians can assist study abroad students develop sustainable digital libraries in the context of service learning. Hammond (2009) outlines the ways that libraries can engage
with other institutions in order to better support study abroad students. Through creating Memorandums of Understanding, libraries and overseas institutions can work together to fulfill the information needs of study abroad students (Hammond, 2009).

**Study Abroad Participant as Library User**

LIS literature has addressed the issue of library services for study abroad students and ways that libraries can collaborate in order to provide services to study abroad students, but there have been few articles that have linked the information needs of study abroad students with the provision of library services and support. There have only been three that focus specifically on study abroad students as library users, as opposed to focusing on services provided to study abroad students (Lindell, 2008; Kutner, 2009; White et al., 2009;).

Lindell (2008) examined the ways that Association of Research Libraries (ARL) institutions provide support to study abroad students. This study collected survey responses from 53 ARL institutions regarding which services and resources are provided to participants, how support is staffed and administered, how services are delivered and whether collections are physical or online (Lindell, 2008). Results of the survey suggested that ARL institutions do not have particular initiatives aimed at study abroad participants, but provide them with the same level of service as they do distance learners (Lindell, 2008). ARL data suggest that institutions are unsure if study abroad students know that the services offered to distance learners apply to them, but anecdotal evidence suggests that students who are aware find library support useful (Lindell, 2008).

Kutner (2009) conducted research to assess study abroad students’ library engagement at home and abroad. This survey was conducted on site in Monteverde,
Costa Rica and the accompanying article describes the methodology and instruments used (Kutner, 2009). Kutner (2009) assessed the frequency of library use and other factors of students both at their home institution and during their study abroad experience. The results suggest that students exhibited a level of uncertainty regarding their access to their home institutions’ library services during their study abroad experiences (Kutner, 2009). The author suggests that widespread promotion and greater communication of library resources and services for students abroad will reduce uncertainty and increase confidence in the use of the library while off campus (Kutner, 2009).

In addition to providing case studies regarding library services for study abroad students, White et al. (2009) provide a theoretical framework for the information seeking behavior of study abroad students. This theoretical model draws heavily from the theories of information behavior, cross-cultural psychology and communication studies (White et al., 2009). For the purposes of this framework, information is defined in the broadest sense and the librarian’s role is one of connecting students and faculty with all types of information that they may need while living and studying in a foreign country (White et al., 2009). No distinction is made between educational information needs and everyday information needs, as they are often conflated during a study abroad experience, when students must seek information for their schoolwork at the same time that they must seek information to help them navigate a new and foreign terrain (White et al., 2009). This framework situates the librarian as a bridge that fills the gaps between students’ information needs and their current states of knowledge (White et al., 2009). The current study investigated the information needs and behaviors of study abroad students by
building off of this framework and by using Dervin’s (1992) sense-making theory and Savolainen’s (1995) everyday life information seeking perspective in order to identify the information needs of study abroad students.

**Sense-making & Everyday Life Information Seeking**

Dervin states that we need to “make-sense” of the world and one’s need to make sense implies that some kind of gap has occurred (Dervin, 1992). When sense-making is applied to information, the term “information need” suggests that there exists a gap which can be filled by something that the person calls “information” (Dervin, 1992, p.156). Case (2007) offers the following definition for Dervin’s sense-making paradigm: "a search for information starts with questions directed at making sense of the situation; communication is central to the process of 'bridging the gap' to reach some kind of information or help desired" (p. 75). In the sense-making model, the strategies employed by the information seekers are shaped by their conceptualization of the gap in knowledge and the bridge, and by the answers, ideas, and resources obtained along the way (Case, 2007, p. 75). Sense-making attempts to uncover the problems that people experience in life and how they face and solve those problems (Case, 2007, p. 158).

Complementing the sense-making paradigm is Reijo Savolainen’s model of Everyday Life Information Seeking (ELIS) (Savaolainen & Kari, 1995; Savolainen, 2005). Savolainen describes everyday life information seeking as taking Dervin’s sense-making paradigm a step further toward addressing the more substantial issues of information seeking (Savaolainen & Kari, 1995). Savolainen notes that work and non-work information seeking are often complementary (Case, 2007). Issues of job-related and nonwork information seeking tend to overlap; for example, seeking information
concerning language courses may serve both professional ends and leisure-time hobbies (Savolainen, 1995; Savolainen & Kari, 2005). In the current study, the ELIS perspective was used as a basis for analyzing data collected from study abroad students. Study abroad students are living and working as students simultaneously, which blurs line between their roles as students versus their roles as non-students.

**Importance of Study**

The nature of study abroad in the United States has changed in the past two decades. More students are studying abroad, they are doing so for shorter durations and they are increasingly traveling to non-traditional locations. In an age where study abroad is on the rise and budgets are shrinking, it is important for libraries to be aware of their users’ information needs in order to effectively and efficiently provide the resources and services to their users.

LIS literature has focused on providing distance services to users; however, there are distinct differences between distance learners and study abroad participants. The information needs and behaviors of study abroad students have not been discussed in professional literature until recently. When study abroad students have been discussed in literature, those studies have focused on the services that are provided to study abroad students. The existing research does not succeed in answering the critical question: What are the information needs and behaviors of study abroad participants and how can libraries support those needs? To date, there have only been two articles that address the issue of the information needs and behaviors of study abroad students (Kutner, 2009; White, 2009). No articles have been written which tie the information needs and
behaviors of study abroad students with the provision of academic library services and support.

Given the current nature of study abroad, Engeldinger (1985) may not be completely correct in stating that some study abroad students will not need any form of bibliographic instruction; however, he makes a crucial argument: librarians must assess the needs of study abroad students and the conditions in which they are working in order to better serve the students.

**Methodology**

The current study adopted a mixed methods approach, collecting both qualitative and quantitative data so that the strength of the study was stronger than if only one form of data was collected (Creswell, 2009). The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC-CH) Institutional Review Board approved a confidential online survey and interview methodology with study abroad students from UNC-CH. Survey methodology included recruiting subjects, designing the questionnaire and interview script, data collection, and data analysis.

**Study Population**

The target population of this study was students attending U.S. institutions of higher education who have studied abroad for academic credit. Attempting to conduct a research survey of all students attending U.S. institutions of higher education who have studied abroad would have been an insurmountable feat for this study, as over 200,000 students at U.S. institutions study abroad each academic year (IEE, 2010). Due to time and cost restraints, the researcher utilized purposive sampling. The sample population of
this study was students enrolled at UNC-CH who studied abroad during the Spring, Summer or Fall 2010 sessions.

**Study Abroad at UNC-CH**

The UNC-CH Study Abroad Program (2011) offers over 300 programs in 70 countries to sophomores, juniors, seniors and graduate students enrolled at UNC-CH. Undergraduate students who participate in programs that have been officially approved by the UNC Study Abroad Office and the Summer School receive academic credit for their participation. Students can earn 12-18 credits per semester and those credits can be used to fulfill elective, general college, foreign language or major/minor requirements (UNC-CH Study Abroad Office, 2011).

**Recruiting Subjects**

The researcher identified and recruited subjects with the aid of the UNC-CH Study Abroad Office’s Information Systems Director, Mark Nielsen. The Study Abroad Office compiled a list of study abroad participants from the Spring 2010, Summer 2010 and Fall 2010 sessions and sent invitation emails to potential respondents on the behalf of the researcher. The first email was sent to the subjects in the middle of February 2011. The online questionnaire remained open for 18 days and students were sent one email reminder a week after the first email survey invitation. Respondents were asked to provide their contact information and availability if they wished to volunteer for a follow-up interview. Survey respondents were told that they would receive $10 gift certificates to The Daily Grind, a coffee shop on UNC-CH’s campus, if they were chosen for and completed a follow-up interview. The researcher chose participants for the follow-up interviews based on respondents’ answers to three survey questions that identified when
participants studied abroad, where they studied abroad and what type of study abroad program they completed.

In order to conduct interviews with as broad of a group of students as possible, the researcher identified 15 different types of study abroad students to interview. The researcher analyzed questionnaire responses as they were submitted and contacted potential interview respondents on a rolling basis. The researcher completed this process on a rolling basis, rather than waiting until the questionnaire had closed, due to time constraints. An initial invitation email was sent to each potential interview participant. One follow-up email was sent to potential interview participants who did not respond to the initial invitation email. Both emails told the participant that they had been chosen and why they were chosen for a follow-up interview.

As stated above, potential interview participants were chosen based on their answers to the questionnaire. The researcher aimed to conduct an interview with at least one student who fell into the following categories:

- Studied Abroad During Spring 2010 Session
- Studied Abroad During Summer 2010 Session
- Studied Abroad During Fall 2010 Session
- Studied Abroad in Africa
- Studied Abroad in Asia
- Studied Abroad in Australia/Oceania
- Studied Abroad in Europe
- Studied Abroad in Latin America
- Studied Abroad in the Middle East
• Studied Abroad in North America
• Studied Abroad in Scandinavia
• Studied Abroad in the UK/Ireland
• Participated in a Faculty-Led Program
• Participated in an Internship Program
• Participated in a Service Learning Program

The researcher chose these categories in order to gather qualitative data from as broad of a selection of study abroad students as possible. The categories represent the different time periods, regions, and types of programs that students complete study abroad programs. The researcher compared the category list with survey responses as respondents completed the web-based questionnaire. Those respondents who fell into categories for which no interviews had been conducted were invited to participate in a follow-up interview. Interviews were conducted over the course of the 18 days that the survey was open.

Description of Survey & Interviews

The researcher developed a survey instrument and an interview script for the research study. In creating both instruments, the researcher borrowed from previous studies conducted on study abroad students (Kutner, 2009), undergraduates (Head & Eisenberg, 2010), and information behavior (Cheuk Wai-Yi, 2002; Chang, 2009). A copy of the survey instrument can be found in Appendix A. The questionnaire contained 19 questions. Fifteen questions were multiple choice and four questions were open-ended. Questionnaire respondents responded to either 14 or 15 of the multiple choice questions. The survey incorporated skip logic and respondents’ answers to two separate
questions determined the number of questions that they would ultimately answer. All respondents were given the option to answer the four open-ended questions. Four optional questions at the end of the survey solicited respondents to volunteer to be considered for the follow-up interviews.

The questionnaire aimed to obtain a general overview of the types of information that study abroad students need and use. Using existing studies and surveys as models, questions in the final instrument were developed specifically for this study. Question categories included information needs and use, library use while abroad, library support of study abroad and demographics.

A semistructured interview script was developed for this study. A copy of the interview script can be found in Appendix B. The interview script was developed to investigate students’ information needs and behaviors using Dervin’s (1992) sense-making theory. Cheuk Wai-Yi’s (2002) interview scripts were consulted when designing the interview script. The script was written to identify respondents’ information gaps, the bridges they used to fill information gaps, and barriers that respondents encountered in their information seeking processes. Interview respondents were asked to provide an overview of their study abroad experience and to explain their information seeking processes before, during and after they studied abroad. Subjects were asked to elaborate on whether they used UNC-CH Libraries’ resources to find information and how they think UNC-CH Libraries can support the information needs of study abroad students. The semistructured nature of the interviews allowed the researcher to gather focused data about the subjects’ information needs and behaviors without limiting their responses in a
way that would prevent the researcher to collect accurate data. Estimated time for the interviews was between 20 and 30 minutes.

The researcher consulted Professor Joanne Marshall and Kim Vassiliadis, UNC-CH Libraries’ Instructional Services & Technology Librarian, for help in designing survey questions and the interview script before data collection began.

**Distributing Survey**

The survey was programmed and administered using Qualtrics survey software (Smith, 1997). Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act (FERPA) regulations prevented the Study Abroad Office from providing names of study abroad students to the researcher. Due to this constraint, the Study Abroad Office sent survey invitations via email to potential participants on the researcher’s behalf. An anonymous survey link was inserted into the invitation email. After the initial email was sent, the researcher received emails from potential respondents indicating that there was an error with the survey link. The researcher had the Study Abroad Office send out a follow-up email with a corrected link one hour later. An email reminder was sent to the initial group of potential survey respondents after one week. Invitation emails clearly stated that the survey would close after being open for 18 days.

**Scheduling Interviews**

When the researcher identified potential interview participants, she invited them via email to participate in an interview and suggested two to three potential times to meet. Interviewees responded with their preferred time and the researcher scheduled a group study room in the R.B. House Undergraduate Library at UNC-CH for all but one interview. One interview was conducted in the interviewee’s apartment. Upon reserving
the group study room, the researcher emailed the interviewee to confirm date, time and location of the interview. The researcher sent an email reminder to interviewees on the day before the scheduled interview. One follow-up invitation email was sent to potential interviewees who did not respond to the initial invitation.

**Data Analysis**

Quantitative data for multiple-choice questions was automatically generated by Qualtrics software. The researcher analyzed and categorized qualitative data from the open-ended questions into appropriate topics, such as types of information for study abroad tutorials, ways the library can promote services, and study abroad destinations. Interviewee Codes were assigned at the time that the researcher contacted potential interviewees to invite them to participate in a follow-up interview. Not every potential interviewee completed an interview, which accounts for gaps in the alphabetical sequencing of interviewee codes.

Interviews were recorded using a digital audio recorder and the researcher took notes during the interview sessions. Audio recordings were transcribed after each session. Transcripts of interviews and interview notes were analyzed, coded and categorized into appropriate topics and themes, such as types of information consulted, barriers and challenges encountered, and information needs.

**Method Advantages & Limitations**

The research methods were chosen for the advantages that they offer the study. Case (2007) states that formulating measures that are both highly reliable and highly valid is a difficult feat. A mixed method design helped to alleviate validity and reliability concerns. Reliability is “demonstrated when measures are repeated under the same
conditions and yield highly similar measurements each time” (Case, 2007, p.183). Comparing results from the questionnaire and the interviews for similar trends ensured the reliability of data that was collected. Validity is “the extent that the measurement procedures accurately reflect the concept we are studying” (Case, 2007, p.183). The questionnaire asked the types and sources of information that students need. Asking close-ended questions with only a certain number of potential answers can pose a problem for validity, as the choices offered may not fully address the full range of sources and needs. In order to address this, semistructured interviews were conducted and subjects had the opportunity to speak about their information seeking process, the needs they felt and the ways that they went about filling those needs. The semistructured approach gave subjects the opportunity to discuss sources and needs that were not listed as choices on the web-based questionnaire.

Using email allowed the survey to be sent to a large number of people, with very little cost for distribution. While online surveys have the potential to produce higher response rates, they may also produce lower response rates, as some respondents view them as impersonal (Case, 2007). This study followed Wildemuth’s (2009) suggestions for increasing response rate by contacting respondents multiple times throughout the survey data collection period and collaborating with a third party, the UNC-CH Study Abroad Office. In email surveys, bias can be created if respondents take the questionnaire more than once. Setting the survey software to “Prevent Ballot Box Stuffing” minimized this bias. Interviewing respondents allowed for the collection of a large amount of qualitative data. This offers an advantage over the questionnaire, which gathered quantitative data.
The major limitations to this study were lack of time and limited resources. A disadvantage to the interview method is that data analysis can be time consuming. Due to time constraints, only 11 interviews were conducted. Certain decisions had to be made in order for the research study to be completed on schedule. Limiting the sample size and the length of the interviews made collecting data more manageable. Given more time, the researcher would have conducted more interviews and extended the length of the interviews. Given the limitations on data collection this study is considered to be exploratory in nature. The results cannot be generalized to the greater population of study abroad students; however the study does provide useful data on the information needs and behaviors of study abroad students.

Results

Response Rate & Participation

The web-based survey was sent to 1144 students who studied abroad during the Spring 2010, Summer 2010 and Fall 2010 sessions. One hundred forty-nine of 1144 potential respondents participated in the survey, yielding a response rate of 13%. A total of 113 survey respondents volunteered for a follow-up interview. The researcher contacted 19 survey respondents to participate in a follow-up interview. Eleven of 19 were successfully scheduled. Of the unsuccessful interviews, one student was still abroad and unable to meet for an interview. Seven respondents did not respond to the researcher’s attempts to schedule an interview. Interviews lasted between 20 and 45 minutes.

Participant Background
A majority of respondents (94%, n=137) participated in faculty-led study abroad programs, followed by six respondents (4%) participating in an internship, and three respondents (2%) participating in a service learning program. Of 148 respondents, 50 respondents (34%) studied abroad during the Spring 2010 session, 51 (34%) studied abroad during the Summer 2010 session and 47 (32%) studied abroad during the Fall 2010 session. When asked their status as a student during their study abroad semester, a majority of respondents indicated that they were Juniors (62%), followed by sophomores (19%), seniors (14%), masters or professional students (2%), and freshmen (1%) (Figure 1). Three respondents indicated “other” as their student status. One respondent indicated that they were a rising sophomore, one respondent indicated that they studied abroad once as a junior and once as a senior, and one respondent indicated that they studied abroad as a senior, but had also studied abroad during two separate summer sessions.

![Figure 1. Student Status of Survey Respondents.](image)

As shown in Figure 2, the majority of students studied in Europe (44%), followed by Latin America (18%), Asia (12%), UK & Ireland (11%), Australia/Oceania (5%),
Africa (5%), multiple regions (3%), the Middle East (1%) and Scandinavia (1%). No (0%) respondents reported that they studied abroad in North America.

One hundred twenty eight respondents indicated the city and/or country in which they completed their study abroad program. Survey respondents studied abroad in 62 cities in 44 countries. Some respondents did not indicate which city they studied in and some respondents indicated that they studied abroad in more than one city or country. The top five countries that respondents studied abroad in were Spain (n=19), Italy (n=14), France (n=12), Great Britain (n=12), China (n=10), and Ecuador (n=9). The top five cities that respondents studied in were Seville, Spain (n=13), London, England (n=9), Florence Italy (n=9), Paris, France (n=6), Quito, Ecuador (n=5), Buenos Aires, Argentina (n=4), Hong Kong, People’s Republic of China (n=4), Havana, Cuba (n=4) and Montpellier, France (n=4).

![Figure 2. Study Abroad Destination Region of Survey Respondents.](image-url)
The researcher intended to survey only students who studied abroad as undergraduate students; however, survey data collected suggest that three respondents studied abroad as graduate students (Figure 1). The researcher also intended to only survey students who were enrolled at UNC-CH during their study abroad program. The UNC-CH Study Abroad Office provided the researcher with a data report outlining characteristics of the students that were sent study invitation emails. The data report indicates that 53 non-UNC-CH students who participated in UNC-CH Study Abroad Programs were included in the survey sample (M. Nielsen, personal communication, February 16, 2011). Answers to open-ended questions confirm that some respondents were not enrolled at UNC-CH at the time of their study abroad experience. For example, when asked why they did not use UNC Libraries’ resources to complete coursework during their study abroad experience, one respondent answered: “I attend University of South Carolina.” Since this study is meant to aid librarians in providing services to study abroad students in general, the data collected from these respondents has been included in the final analysis.

When asked if they had completed at least one study abroad session for which they received academic credit, four of 148 respondents indicated that they had not. These four respondents answered all questions in the survey as if they had completed a study abroad program. After conducting the follow-up interviews, it became clear to the researcher that receiving credit for courses taken while abroad can be a lengthy and complex process. Several interviewees indicated that they were not able to receive credit for a course that they had taken while they were abroad or that they were unsure at that
point in time whether or not they would receive credit. Because of the complexities of this credit approval process, these responses were included in the final analysis.

**Interviewee Profiles**

Interviews were conducted with students who fit into all but two of the pre-determined interview selection categories (Table 1). Interviews were conducted with students who studied abroad during Spring 2010, Summer 2010, and Fall 2010 (Table 1). As Table 1 shows, interviews were conducted with students who studied abroad in Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America, the Middle East, Scandinavia and the UK.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1</th>
<th>Categories and Corresponding Interviewee Codes</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Interviewee Code</td>
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<td>C, N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer 2010</td>
<td>B, H, M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2010</td>
<td>A, E, K, P, O, Q</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty-led Program</td>
<td>A, B, E, H, K, N, P, Q</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internship Program</td>
<td>C, O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service Learning Program</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>H</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia</td>
<td>K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia/Oceania</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>A, B, O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin America</td>
<td>E, M, Q</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle East</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North America</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scandinavia</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK &amp; Ireland</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Eight interviewees completed faculty-led study abroad programs (Table 1). Two interviewees completed internships while they were abroad (Table 1). Internship participants received credit for their internship and completed three faculty-led courses in addition to their internships. One interviewee completed a service learning program
This student, who studied abroad during the summer session, completed faculty-led coursework in addition to her service learning project.

**Information Needs**

As shown in Table 2, which displays results from 149 survey respondents, the top information needs of study abroad students were information about the program (97%), travel information (97%), information about country traveled to (90%), financial information (85%) and research for academic credit (67%).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study Abroad-Related Information Needs of Survey Respondents</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Information about my study abroad program (e.g., Semester at Sea, UNC in Sevilla)</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>97%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel information (e.g., visas, trip planning)</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>97%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information about the country I traveled to (e.g., history, culture)</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance or money information (e.g., exchange rates, currency)</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research for academic credit (e.g., coursework, seminars, internships, service learning)</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current events and news in my study abroad host country</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travelers’ health or wellness information (e.g., vaccinations needed, illness abroad)</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domestic life (e.g., figuring out where to live)</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language skills (e.g., translators, language learning software)</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work or career (e.g., job openings, internships available)</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Searched for an expert of some kind (e.g., medical doctor)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (please specify):</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Information needs before studying abroad.**

All interviewees indicated that they needed information about their study abroad program before going abroad (Table 3). The information needs included: general information about studying abroad; information about their specific study abroad program; finding former students who participated in their program; packing and pre-departure logistical information; and information about the coursework they would be
Students who searched for travel information discussed searching for general travel information and visa information.

**Interviewee C:** Honestly, my biggest concern going over there, I think, was very narrow-minded and I was just concerned about getting from the airport into [my host city], where I needed to be and what the transportation system was like and trying to navigate trains, because I hadn’t had to do that before.

**Interviewee Q:** The big things I wanted to know before going were visa-related things and housing things. And to a lesser degree, the courses I would be taking. But I had at least the general idea that I would be getting credit, so I wasn’t too
worried. But, visa and housing were the biggest questions I wasn’t really sure about. I didn’t really know anything about it beforehand.

Interviewees also needed information about the countries and cities they would be going to study abroad. They searched for information about the history, culture, weather, and location of their study abroad location.

**Interviewee C:** Google Maps was definitely my first source for trying to understand geographically what [my host city] looked like. I was a big Fodor’s fan. I had that book and a couple other guide books that I would look through once and a while... I found it really helpful when sources would group, um, neighborhoods and talk about different areas of the city. What made each little niche stand out.

Students who were travelling to areas where there were current world news events happening mentioned that they searched for news before leaving. Interviewees A, E and M mentioned looking into current events, including civil strife and drug violence occurring in their host countries.

**Information needs while studying abroad.**

Interviewees most frequently cited travel information, research for academic work, domestic life, and language skills as types of information they needed while studying abroad (Table 3). Interviewees who required travel information were looking for information about travelling in-country and to other locations. Interviewee Q indicated that he still needed information about the visa process, as his questions had not been answered before departing. Interviewee K needed visa information about travelling to another country from her host country. Interviewees indicated needing information for their coursework, although this varied by student and the type of coursework that they were completing. All but one interviewee needed to find information to complete research papers (Table 4). As Table 4 indicates, interviewees also conducted research for presentations, their internships, and for independent research projects.
Several interviewees mentioned needing information about the language of their host country while they were abroad (Table 3). These interviewees traveled to both non-English and English speaking countries. Interviewees E and B travelled to Spanish-speaking countries and indicated that they needed information about local idioms and slang. Interviewee C, who studied abroad in an English-speaking country, needed information about slangs and idioms in order to function in the workplace:

**Interview C:** And in slang – just the casual terms that they used. I had to – I would have to stop them in conversation and say, “What? What does that mean? Tell me what you’re trying to say!” [laughs] And then things would be fine.

Domestic life and “getting around” was another information need mentioned by interviewees (Table 3). Interviewee C discussed searching for information about restaurants, what to do, and where to do things while in her study abroad city.

Interviewee K indicated that she asked one of her study abroad professors for general day-to-day information, because the professor had lived extensively in both the United States and in her study abroad country.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coursework Research</th>
<th>Interviewee</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Research Paper</td>
<td>A, B, C, K, M, N, O, P, Q</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internship-related</td>
<td>C, O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation</td>
<td>Q</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent Research Project</td>
<td>E, N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service Learning-related</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>H</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Information needs after returning from abroad.**

Upon returning, interviewees indicated that they most often needed information about their program, current events and news in their host country, and domestic life
Table 3. Students who required program information were looking for information about course credit transfers, which was often a complex and time consuming process:

**Interviewee A:** I had questions about, um, how to get the credit transferred. And, um, I was kind of put on, like, a goose chase, or goose hunt or whatever, to get the right forms and the paperwork to go through the bureaucracy of getting it transferred, but, um, it eventually all worked out.

**Interviewee Q:** Well, I guess the question about course approvals still came up, because I just had the tentative approval while I was gone and I actually had to go through the process to get them approved here. And I found out that I to wait, basically, until they got my grades. I don’t think that they’ve gotten them yet.

Interviewees who indicated that they were looking for information about current events in their host country were looking at the news and were keeping in touch with people that they had met while abroad (Table 3). Interviewees who were looking for information about domestic life were searching for information about culture shock and about getting involved once they were back on campus (Table 3).

**Sources of Information & Help**

One hundred forty-nine survey respondents indicated their top sources of information relating to their study abroad experience were the Study Abroad Office web site (92%), travel web sites or guides (74%), the study abroad program’s web site (70%), and events hosted by the Study Abroad Office (62%) (Table 5). The least consulted sources were library materials (9%), the library web site (7%), and research databases offered through the library (5%). Table 6 indicates that of 149 survey respondents, the top three sources of help in finding study abroad related information were Study Abroad Office advisors (82%), former or current study abroad students (74%), and friends or family (63%). The least consulted sources of help were librarians (0%) and tandem language partners or tutors (3%) (Table 6).
Table 5  
*Sources Consulted by Survey Respondents for Study Abroad Information*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sources Consulted</th>
<th>Response</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Study Abroad Office web site (<a href="http://studyabroad.unc.edu">http://studyabroad.unc.edu</a>)</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel web sites or travel guides (e.g. Lonely Planet)</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study Abroad Program web site (e.g. Semester at Sea web site, SIT web site)</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Events hosted by Study Abroad Office (e.g. Information Sessions, Study Abroad Fair, orientations)</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governmental Web sites (.gov sites)</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wikipedia</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social networking sites (e.g. Facebook, Twitter)</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language resources (e.g. coursework, language learning software, translators, dictionaries)</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My personal collection (materials I already owned or purchased)</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blogs</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (please specify):</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library materials (e.g. books, journals)</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library web site (e.g. research guides, contact information, policies)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research databases through the library web site (e.g., E-Research Tools)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6  
*Survey Respondents’ Sources of Help in Finding Study Abroad-Related Information*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Study Abroad Office Advisors</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Former or current study abroad students</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends or Family</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classmates</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Instructors (e.g. professors, TAs)</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People from host country</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (please specify):</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tandem language partner or tutor</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Librarians (e.g., reference desk, online chat)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Information sources and help before studying abroad.**

The most cited sources of information by interviewees before travelling abroad were the Study Abroad Office web site, travel web sites or travel guides, the web sites for individuals’ study abroad programs, events hosted by the Study Abroad Office, freely accessible web sites, the Study Abroad Office, and materials provided by the specific
programs (Table 7). Before going abroad, interviewees most often mentioned receiving help in finding and acquiring information from Study Abroad Office advisors and friends or family (Table 8).

Table 7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sources Consulted</th>
<th>Before</th>
<th>During</th>
<th>After</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Study Abroad Office Web Site</td>
<td>K, H, M</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>H, K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel Web Sites &amp; Travel Guides</td>
<td>K, H, C, B, N, O</td>
<td>B, P</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study Abroad Program Web Site</td>
<td>H, P, C, M</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Events Hosted by Study Abroad Office</td>
<td>B, M, K, A, N</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governmental Web Sites</td>
<td>Q, P, A</td>
<td>K, M, E, O</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wikipedia</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social networking sites</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>K, P, A, B, C, E, M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language Resources</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>K, O, B, E</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Collection</td>
<td>B, C</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blogs</td>
<td>C, N</td>
<td>A, C</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library Materials (e.g. books, journals)</td>
<td>E, H</td>
<td>N, E, B, P</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library Web Site (e.g. research guides, contact information, policies)</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Databases Through Library Web Site (e.g., E-Research Tools)</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>K, P, A, C, E, N</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>News &amp; Media</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>K, A, C</td>
<td>H, B, C, M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freely Accessible Web Sites (e.g. Google searches)</td>
<td>K, N, P, C</td>
<td>O, Q, M</td>
<td>O, P, C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study Abroad Office (e.g. as general source)</td>
<td>P, Q, O, B</td>
<td>Q</td>
<td>A, P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Materials Provided by Program</td>
<td>E, H, Q, M, N, O,</td>
<td>H, O, P, B, E, M</td>
<td>O, H</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNC web site (e.g. <a href="http://unc.edu">http://unc.edu</a>)</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>H, P, M</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Information sources and help while studying abroad.

During their study abroad experiences, interviewees most often mentioned consulting government web sites, library materials, research databases through UNC-CH Libraries, and course materials provided by their program (Table 7). At this point in
time, interviewees only mentioned receiving help from friends or family, course instructors, and on-site program directors or staff (Table 8).

Table 8
Interviewees’ Sources of Help Before, During and After Study Abroad

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer</th>
<th>Before</th>
<th>During</th>
<th>After</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Study Abroad Office Advisors</td>
<td>O, M, Q, N</td>
<td>Q</td>
<td>M, H, Q</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Former or current study abroad students</td>
<td>P, N</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends or Family</td>
<td>P, C, A, B, M</td>
<td>O, M</td>
<td>O, P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classmates</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Instructors (e.g. professors, TAs)</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>K, O, C, E, M</td>
<td>M, Q, A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People from host country</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>H, B, C, M, N, E, P</td>
<td>K, P, B, A, C, E, M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On-site Program Directors</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>M, N, H</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tandem language partner or tutor</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Librarians (e.g., reference desk, online chat)</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Information sources and help after returning from abroad.

After returning from their study abroad experience, interviewees most often consulted the Study Abroad Office, social networking sites, news and media, and the UNC web site for information (Table 7). Interviewees consulted Study Abroad Office advisors, course instructors, and people from their host country at this time (Table 8).

Challenges & Barriers to Information Seeking

Challenges and barriers before studying abroad.

Limited time between acceptance and departure.

Timing, miscommunication and complexity intertwined for several of the interviewees. They noted that there is not much time between being accepted into a study abroad program and departure for the program. Interviewee M noted that problems caused by miscommunication between her program and the Study Abroad Office were
made worse due to the limited amount of time there was between being accepted and departure. Interviewee Q noted that the timing of the information that the program was supposed to provide was problematic. He said that they were “cutting it close” with giving him enough time to schedule his flight. Interviewee O noted that the information was there, but it just took a lot of time to get to it all.

**Miscommunication between students, programs and institutions.**

Several students experienced miscommunication between the host institutions, the university and themselves. Interviewee Q explained how there was a discrepancy between the courses that his host institution said were offered and the courses that were actually offered once he arrived. This miscommunication set off a chain of events that carried throughout all stages of his study abroad experience. Two months after returning to the United States, he is still attempting to straighten out his course credit. Interviewee M explained a miscommunication between her program and her host institution, which caused her to arrive a day late to her host country and miss her institution’s orientation.

**Complexity of visa process.**

The complex visa process was a challenge for several students. Interviewee B noted that this complex process was made more difficult by the fact that there was no cohesive place to look for information. She said that she was given differing information and that she searched on government web sites and the UNC-CH Study Abroad Office to find this information. Interviewee O noted that the process for visas was complex, highly dependent on timing and required a lot of documents, forms and meeting with the consulate. His trip was not hindered by difficulties, but he noted that some student in his program were unable to depart as scheduled due to visa complications.
Lack of information.

Students noted that they felt like they did not receive enough information about certain aspects of their study abroad experience. Interviewee N, who had hoped to connect with a student from a previous semester, was unable to get information about previous program participants from the Study Abroad Office. She resorted to using Facebook to track down a previous participant from a neighboring institution. This interviewee wishes there had been a stronger resource with information about students who had previously studied abroad:

**Interviewee N:** *When I asked my advisor, they just mentioned - She just mentioned that there was a guy who went from UNC and, like, I was like the first girl to go through this program. But they didn’t really – I don’t know why they didn’t – They didn’t give me his contact [information] or, you know, like encourage me to really meet up with him. And he’s in my class this semester and they [sic] were like – “Oh, you were the one who went before me.” But it would have been nice if I would have met up with him before I went.*

Interviewees E and B mentioned lack of information about idioms and language dialects as being a challenge. These interviewees felt like they did not find enough of this information before they left, which would have prepared them for their time in country. Information provided by programs was less than satisfactory for a couple of the students. Study abroad students are heavily dependent on information provided by their respective programs, especially for logistical information, such as arrival dates.

Interviewees M and Q noted that they received vague and incomplete information.

Challenges and barriers to information seeking while studying abroad.

Access to materials and resources.

Interviewees H and K noted that they experienced hardware issues with accessing information while they were abroad. Interviewee H noted that power outages prevented him from accessing the Internet a couple times. Interviewee K, who traveled to Asia,
mentioned that government restrictions on Internet access prevented her from using Facebook and from searching for travel blogs. She had wanted to use these resources, but was prevented from doing so, since she did not purchase a proxy server that would allow her to surpass the restrictions.

Students also mentioned that the local resources available were limited and those limitations affected how they searched for information. Interviewee P said that she was only able to access online articles through her host institution while she was on campus or within the city’s limits. Since she lived outside of the city, she had to either download the articles to her computer before leaving campus or she used UNC-CH Libraries’ resources from off campus. Interviewee A used UNC-CH resources instead of local resources, because UNC-CH offered her greater access to materials.

Assumptions about access to UNC-CH Resources.

Several interviewees assumed that they wouldn’t be able to access library resources while they were abroad. Interviewee O mentioned how he wasn’t sure he would be able to use UNC-CH Libraries’ resources because of his location:

**Interviewee O:** But to be honest, you might know better than I do. I’m not even sure if I would have been able to [access UNC Libraries’ resources]. I don’t think it ever came up. Certain web sites will block access depending on your region. Like Hulu, you can’t access from Europe because you’re not in the U.S. and vice versa. There are a lot of French web sites that you can’t access in the U.S., because you’re not in France.

Interviewee E misinterpreted the “Find @ UNC” button, which enables library users to access materials from anywhere. She thought that she needed to physically be at UNC-CH in order to access materials using “Find @ UNC” button. As a result, she only used articles that had the full text readily available in the database she was searching.
**Lack of information need & information seeking.**

During their study abroad experience, several students noted that they didn’t feel a need to find things. Interviewee P noted that her host institution made it very clear that they were available as an information source for students, but she didn’t have a need to utilize that resource. Interviewee A noted that at this point, she really didn’t go to anyone for outside help in finding information: “I didn’t really ask or anything. I just, I didn’t ask.” Interviewee C mentioned that she didn’t ask certain questions, because she wasn’t sure that her questions could have been answered. She didn’t elaborate on what those questions would have been.

**Challenges and barriers to information seeking after returning.**

**Life getting in the way.**

Several students mentioned that once they got back, life got in the way of their information seeking. Interviewee E watched Spanish television and listened to Spanish radio in order to feel like she was still there. However, she noted that she got busy and wasn’t able to keep up with that as much as she would like. Interviewee O, who mentioned a lingering question about whether his GPA would count as Dean’s list, said that he had not found the answer, but that that question has been sitting on the back burner because he got busy once the semester started. Interviewee P mentioned that she had wanted to get involved with student groups and meeting international students once she was back on campus. Before she was able to find something, she went back to work and life got in the way; she never successfully found ways that she could get involved.
**Disconnect between self and others.**

Interviewee P mentioned that she had tried to keep in touch with people she had met while abroad, but that the technology took away the “humanness” and that she didn’t like that mode of communication for that reason. Interviewee N wanted to feel connections to her study abroad location, but felt that there was a lack of human connections once she returned. She wanted to find ways to be involved and stay connected with her study abroad location, but was unable to find them.

**Library Support for Study Abroad**

Table 9 indicates that of 148 survey respondents, the majority of study abroad students (68%) did not use library resources for credit-bearing activities while abroad. Those who used library resources most often used databases to locate articles (85%) and electronic Reserves (57%) (Table 9). Of the 100 respondents who did not use UNC-CH Libraries’ resource, half indicated their work not requiring outside research. Others used local or host institution libraries (39%), did not know that UNC-CH library resources was an option (39%) or responded “other” (12%). A majority of respondents who answered “other” (n=9) indicated that Internet access was not readily available.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 9</th>
<th>Survey Respondents’ Use of Library Resources for Credit-Bearing Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Answer</td>
<td>Response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Used the library’s databases to locate articles and other resources for research</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Used electronic Reserves</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Used the library catalog to find library materials</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Used the library web site to find information (e.g. research guides, tutorials, contact information, policies)</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Used interlibrary loan/document delivery to have an article delivered to me</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Get assistance from librarian for help with research (e.g. chat or email)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (please specify):</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Library materials for study abroad students.

UNC-CH Libraries provides resources that are useful for study abroad students, including Study Abroad Research Tutorials and a robust collection of travel guides. Of 149 survey respondents, a majority (77%, n=114) indicated that they have not used the Study Abroad Research Tutorials to find study abroad-related information. The majority of respondents who used the Study Abroad Research Tutorials indicated that the Getting to Know... section was most useful (79%), followed by Accessing UNC Resources Abroad (18%) and Conducting Research in... (1%). Table 10 provides an overview of survey respondents’ suggestions for information that would be most helpful in a tutorial. Ninety-six survey participants responded to this question and some respondents indicated more than one type of information that would be helpful.

Suggestions for information about the study abroad programs include information about former students, course logistics, study abroad politics, host institutions, credit information and program cost. Respondents indicating that travel information would be helpful mentioned visa information, packing suggestions, modes of transportation, and things to do and not do while travelling abroad. Respondents requesting country information suggested that information about cultures, cities, social customs, history, politics, food, and geography would be helpful to include in tutorials. Respondents who suggested financial information would be helpful mentioned currency and budgeting. Library resource information suggestions included information about what students have access to while abroad and information about libraries and resources available in other countries. Traveller’s health information suggestions included information about diseases, coping with homesickness and depression, and vaccination information.
Domestic life included daily life, housing, safety, what to expect, and staying connected with UNC while away. Requested language resources include information about language barriers, online dictionaries, idioms and materials in foreign languages. Several responses suggested that there should be no tutorial. Some felt that the current tutorials were sufficient; others felt that there is too much variation across study abroad programs in order to create an effective tutorial.

Table 10
Survey Respondents’ Suggestions for Study Abroad Research Tutorial

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th># of Suggestions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Study Abroad Program Information</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel information</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country Information</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Information</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library Resources</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>News &amp; Media</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traveller’s Health Information</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domestic Life</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language Resources</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jobs &amp; Internships</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

UNC-CH Libraries has a robust collection of travel guides. The UNC-CH collection includes current guides for regions, countries, and cities all over the world. Of 149 survey respondents, the majority (97%) indicated that they had not used travel guides held by UNC-CH Libraries. Table 11 displays results from 120 survey respondents’ suggestions for types of library materials they felt would be helpful for study abroad students. As Table 11 indicates, the majority of suggestions were for travel information (n=88), followed by country information (n=47), language resources (n=15), and study abroad-focused material (n=7). Travel guides were the most suggested item, with 74 respondents suggesting that these would be helpful items for the library to collect.
Table 11
Survey Respondents’ Suggestions for Library Materials for Study Abroad

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Travel Information</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel Guides</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maps</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel Narratives</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel Web Sites</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visa Information</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>88</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country Information</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country Information (e.g. statistics, geography)</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Politics</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City Information</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food &amp; Restaurant Information</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customs</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Architecture</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>47</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language Resources</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dictionaries &amp; Phrase Books</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language Learning Software</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Books in Other Languages</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>15</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study Abroad-Focused</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>About Study Abroad</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information About Host Institutions</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Living in a Foreign Country</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programs Offered at UNC Study Abroad</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>7</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While some survey respondents suggested types of information, some respondents suggested types of materials that UNC-CH Libraries could provide for study abroad students (Table 12). Respondents suggested that the library provide materials that are accessible online, that students would be able to access while abroad, brochures and pamphlets, magazines, online journals and documentaries and videos (Table 12).
Table 12

Survey Respondents’ Suggestions for Types of Materials for Study Abroad

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of Materials</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Online Materials Accessible While Abroad</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brochures &amp; Pamphlets</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magazines</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Journals</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Documentaries &amp; Videos</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Interviewees were asked what resources that the library could provide that would help study abroad students. Responses collected reflect the survey responses. Some suggestions offered by interviewees include:

**Interviewee C:** I think having access to the resources online was really helpful. If I wouldn’t have had that, I wouldn’t have been able to write the papers that I needed to write. Um, I think it might be helpful if we had a place where students’ blogs were accessible. Like, the students that had been on this program previously... A lot of my fellow students kept blogs while we were there, so if they could be arranged somewhere and I could have access to them and learn from other students’ experiences that would have been really helpful and interesting.

**Interviewee E:** Definitely just providing resources for language and um, and culture. I mean those are just really critical. And also travel. Oh! That’s another thing. I – Recommendations for travel, because I did travel after the program and a little bit during the program.

**Interviewee H:** Well, the survey mentioned those travel books, which sounded like a really good idea to me. And just kind of offering, like a, I don’t know – if there’s a small little shelf for study abroad. And just having different information for every different country would be really helpful. Especially just being able to know uh, some background history and culture or if, they could even do, like an online sort of thing for each country, and just give a short, brief overview and give just the main bullet points that you should know.

**Promotion of library services and resources for study abroad students.**

The final question of the survey asked respondents to suggest ways that the library can promote their services for study abroad students. Two themes arose in the open-ended responses. Respondents suggested ways that the library can collaborate with
the Study Abroad Office and ways that the library can work independently to promote services and resources (Figure 13).

Table 13
Survey Respondents’ Suggestions for Promotion of Library Resources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study Abroad web site</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study Abroad Office</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email to study abroad students</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orientations and information sessions</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study Abroad Office advisors</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have Study Abroad Office include Library Tutorial on mandatory pre-departure checklist</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library Promotion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signage</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase awareness</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing brochures and handouts</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advertising (e.g. Daily Tar Heel, social media, UNC web site)</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In collaborating with the Study Abroad Office, respondents most often suggested that information about the library be included on the Study Abroad Office web site, followed by the library working with the Study Abroad Office in a general fashion and the library sending emails to study abroad students (Table 13). As indicated in Table 13, the most frequent suggestions for the library independently promoting itself were creating signage, increasing general awareness of library resources and services for study abroad students, and promoting services for study abroad students on the library web site.

Interviewees suggested similar ways for the library to promote its services for study abroad students:

Interviewee K: I mean probably through the study abroad website, because basically, or the Study Abroad Office, or orientations – anything that, like that beginning process. Like, yeah, you’re accepted, “Now what do I do? Wow, this
is really real kind of thing.” If the study abroad web site – or at our orientation – if they were like, “The library’s a great source. You should definitely go check it out!” I would have absolutely done that, but since nobody mentioned using the UNC library, I didn’t really.

**Interviewee B:** To be honest, I wasn’t even really aware of what the libraries had to offer and there wasn’t, um, a whole lot of exposure. So maybe something like a brief informational session where, as part of the study abroad, the libraries were to say, “We have this to offer, if you have any questions.” And I think that would have helped.

**Interviewee A:** I think maybe, like, integrate it more with the Study Abroad Office. I don’t know if they do that and then the study abroad people just don’t tell you about it, but, um, just kind of like making the line of communication there.

**Interviewee C:** Somehow just reminding students that they still have access to all of the resources online. I think a lot of people just forgot, since we were off campus. And just keeping in touch with them still. I’m not sure how other people wrote their papers or found different sources for their papers, but I certainly wouldn’t have been able to do so without using the online stuff.

**Interviewee H:** It can probably just advertise through the Study Abroad Department, since that’s really where most people – or all of the study abroad students – are going to get their information for the most part.

**Interviewee M:** Well maybe on their – you know, on the main page of their web site. Just maybe a little “Interested in study abroad? Click here.” Or even, I know, because I come here a lot to study, [the library] had a white board right when you walked in and it was like, “Preparing for the GRE? LSAT? Go to such and such.” You know, and for me, interested, I was like, “Oh, wow, I’m really interested; I’m going to go there.” So you know, just whiteboard, you know. In all of the computers here, they have a screensaver or backdrop and just advertising it through that. And then again, using the study abroad office as a resource, where the study abroad office they can send people to the web site for UNC Libraries.

**Discussion**

The findings of this study directly tie in with the previous studies that have been conducted on library support for study abroad students. Wang and Tremblay (2009) assessed the needs of Long Island University’s Global Campus and tailored their services based on those needs. With a better understanding of the information needs and behaviors of study abroad students, libraries will be able to tailor their services and resources to this specific user population. White (2009) described how librarians became
intimately involved with study abroad programs. This may not be possible for every academic librarian, but study results suggest that students were unaware of library resources, that students feel that librarians can collaborate with the Study Abroad Office and that students feel as if knowing more about the library beforehand would have been helpful. Knowing that students were unaware of the extent of their access to library services is important, because librarians can now make sure future study abroad students are more aware of the resources available to them. This collaboration and outreach would be in keeping with Love and Edwards’ (2009) suggestion for librarians to reach out to other offices on campus in order to support different populations of students.

Library outreach to the Study Abroad Office would achieve two purposes. First, study abroad students would become more aware of library resources that are provided specifically for study abroad students. Second, students who may not use or interact with the library in other areas of their academic experience would be exposed to library resources. Libraries must promote their relevancy and resources to their user communities. Reaching out and promoting library services and resources to study abroad students is just one way of reaching out to the greater user population.

Lindell (2008) noted that results of the ARL survey on library support for study abroad suggested that institutions were unsure if study abroad students knew that services for distance learning were available to them. Interviewees’ comments and survey responses suggest that there was an unawareness of students’ ability to access campus resources while off campus. Lindell (2008) also determined that those students who did know about their access to distance learning services found those services helpful. The current study supports this, as students who were aware of their access to library support
found that support to be helpful. Kutner (2009) found that students were unaware of their access to their home library resources while abroad. Students in the current study suggested that they were comfortable in using library resources from off campus, but there is still room for promotion and the teaching of information literacy skills. Several students noted issues with finding relevant information or navigating through the massive amounts of information that they encountered. By promoting services for study abroad students, librarians can help to increase awareness and reduce uncertainty in finding and using information, as Kutner (2009) suggests.

White et al. (2009) proposed a framework for the information seeking behaviors of study abroad students. The current study investigated the information needs and behaviors of students from this perspective, building off of Dervin’s (1992) sense-making theory and Savolainen’s everyday life information seeking perspective. The study found that study abroad students do have distinct information gaps at different periods throughout their study abroad experience and that they utilize a variety of bridges to help fill those information gaps. White et al. (2009) suggest that librarians can be that bridge for study abroad students. Results of this study indicate that this is not the case. Students did not consult librarians for information, either for their coursework or for their everyday life information seeking activities. Interviewee B mentioned talking to a librarian before going abroad, but the librarian mentioned was a family friend of the student. The context of the comment within the interview suggested that the student was asking the librarian for advice as a family friend, not as a librarian.

How can librarians position themselves as the bridges for filling study abroad students’ information gaps? Librarians can begin by examining the types of information
that students most commonly need and by providing it to them. The current study abroad tutorials cover much of what students suggest that they would like to learn more about, especially in terms of country information. The Study Abroad Tutorials could be redesigned to include more travel information. For example, students mentioned wanting to find travel blogs and visa information, which can be incorporated into the study abroad tutorials. Students mentioned travel guides as the number one material that they think that the library could provide that would be useful. The Undergraduate Library currently holds over 500 individual travel guides. Five of 149 survey respondents indicated that they had used travel guides from the library. This suggests that students are unaware of these valuable resources. Librarians can work to promote these resources to study abroad students, and to the general user population through signage, word of mouth and other promotional materials.

Working with the Study Abroad Office will be pivotal to reaching out to study abroad students. The Study Abroad Office and the resources that the Office provides are the main sources of information that students consult. Librarians can team up with the Study Abroad Office by getting involved in informational events, providing brochures and other materials to be handed out to students during information fairs and orientations, sending study abroad students emails telling them about resources available to them, and by working with the Study Abroad Office to have library resources promoted on the Study Abroad web site.

The results of this study are directly applicable to librarians, but the Study Abroad Office can also learn from the results. Students indicated that timing, complexity and miscommunication were issues and barriers to their information seeking processes. They
were often unsure about where to go for information, they received conflicting information or they felt that they did not receive enough information. These challenges resulted in students being unable to get credit for the courses they took while they were abroad, they resulted in students encountering great difficulty in navigating the visa process, and they resulted in students arriving to their study abroad destinations on the wrong dates. Some of these barriers occurred on the end of third-party study abroad programs, but that does not mean those barriers and issues are any less important to address. The Study Abroad Office needs to be aware of pre-departure issues in order to become more efficient and to better serve the needs of the students. By being aware of the challenges that students encounter, the Study Abroad Office can work to rectify these situations.

**Conclusion**

Participation in study abroad programs has been on the rise in recent years. A literature review showed that while the focus on library services to support study abroad students has been on the rise, there have been few research studies focusing on the information needs and behaviors of study abroad students. The purpose of the proposed study was to identify these needs and behaviors and to identify ways that academic libraries can support the needs of study abroad students. One hundred forty nine study abroad students participated in a web-based survey and 11 follow-up interviews were conducted with survey respondents. Data collected from former study abroad students indicated that study abroad students need a variety of information at different points in their study abroad experience and that they utilize a variety of sources and help in order to fill their information needs. Students encounter distinct challenges and barriers before,
during and after they study abroad. Students see that libraries can be useful in providing country and travel information. The library can collaborate with the Study Abroad Office to promote its services and resources for study abroad students. Additionally, the library can promote student awareness of its resources through signage and advertising on campus.

As more students leave their college campuses to study abroad, librarians must provide them with the same level of support that they provide on-campus students. As more students study abroad, librarians must be aware of the challenges that the students are facing before, during and after they study overseas. Through using the results of this exploratory study, librarians can begin to make decisions regarding where to offer their help and what resources they should expend in order to better serve the study abroad community. Through an analysis of study abroad participants’ needs, librarians can develop a baseline from which to operate and build relationships with the people and organizations that also support study abroad students.
References


Wang, Z., & Tremblay, P. (2009). Going global: providing library resources and services
to international sites. *Journal of Library Administration, 49*(1/2), 171-85. doi: [10.1080/01930820802312961](10.1080/01930820802312961)


Appendix A

Survey Instrument

[Contents of Information Sheet]

[Start Survey Button]

The purpose of the study is to gain an understanding of the information needs and behaviors of study abroad students and to explore ways that libraries can aid students throughout the study abroad process. I am interested in the types of information that you needed before, during and after you studied abroad, how you interacted with the library throughout your study abroad experience, and how the library can support study abroad students in the future.

Information Needs & Sources

Think about the types of information that you needed that related to your study abroad experience, from the time you decided to study abroad until after you returned home.

What types of study abroad-related information did you need?

- Information about my study abroad program (e.g., Semester at Sea, UNC in Sevilla) Information about the country I traveled to (e.g. history, culture)
- Current events and news in my study abroad host country
- Travel information (e.g., visas, trip planning)
- Research for academic credit (e.g., coursework, seminars, internships, service learning)
- Language skills (e.g., translators, language learning software)
- Travelers’ health or wellness information (e.g., vaccinations needed, illness abroad)
- Finance or money information (e.g., exchange rates, currency)
- Domestic life (e.g., figuring out where to live)
- Work or career (e.g., job openings, internships available)
- Searched for an expert of some kind (e.g., medical doctor)
- Other (please specify): ____________________

What sources did you use to search for study abroad-related information?

- Study Abroad Office web site (http://studyabroad.unc.edu)
- Study Abroad Program web site (e.g. Semester at Sea web site, SIT web site)
- Events hosted by Study Abroad Office (e.g. Information Sessions, Study Abroad Fair, orientations)
- Library web site (e.g. research guides, contact information, policies)
- Research databases through the library web site (e.g., E-Research Tools)
- Library materials (e.g. books, journals)
- Wikipedia
- Blogs
Governmental Web sites (.gov sites)
Travel web sites or travel guides (e.g. Lonely Planet)
Language resources (e.g. coursework, language learning software, translators, dictionaries)
My personal collection (materials I already owned or purchased)
Social networking sites (e.g. Facebook, Twitter)
Other (please specify): ____________________

Did you go to any of the following people for help in answering questions you had regarding your study abroad experience?

- Course Instructors (e.g. professors, TAs)
- Classmates
- Friends or Family
- Former or current study abroad students
- Study Abroad Office Advisors
- People from host country
- Tandem language partner or tutor
- Librarians (e.g., reference desk, online chat)
- Other (please specify): ____________________

Use of Library for Coursework While Abroad

Now I'm interested in learning more about how and if you used the library's resources to complete research for credit bearing activities (e.g. courses, internships, service learning projects) while you were abroad.

What type of study abroad program did you participate in?

- Faculty-led (e.g. traditional courses, lectures, seminars)
- Internship
- Service learning

Did you use UNC Libraries to conduct research for credit-bearing activities (e.g. courses, internships, service learning projects) while you were abroad?

- Yes
- No

Answer If Did you use UNC Libraries to conduct research for credi... Yes Is Selected

Which of UNC Libraries' resources did you use?

- Used the library catalog to find library materials
- Used electronic Reserves
- Used the library’s databases to locate articles and other resources for research
- Get assistance from librarian for help with research (e.g. chat or email)
- Used interlibrary loan/document delivery to have an article delivered to me
- Used the library web site to find information (e.g. research guides, tutorials, contact information, policies)
- Other (please specify): ____________________
Answer If Did you use UNC Libraries to conduct research for credit... No Is Selected

What were your reasons for not using UNC Libraries' resources for course-related research while abroad?

☐ I used a local library or my host institution’s library
☐ My work did not require outside research
☐ I didn’t know that using UNC Library resources while I was abroad was an option
☐ Other (please specify): ____________________

**Study Abroad Tutorials**

Research tutorials for study abroad students are available on the UNC Libraries’ web site (http://lib.unc.edu/instruct/studyabroad). Tutorials are available for several different countries and each tutorial offers advice for finding information about a country, conducting research in another country and accessing UNC Libraries' resources while abroad.

The library is currently in the process of updating the tutorials and would love your input!

Have you ever used a Study Abroad Tutorial?

☐ Yes
☐ No

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To What information would be most helpful...

Answer If Have you ever used a Study Abroad Tutorial? Yes Is Selected

What section of the Study Abroad Tutorial was most helpful?

☐ Getting to Know... (e.g. books, films, background information on a specific country)
☐ Conducting Research in... (e.g. types of libraries, classification systems in a specific country)
☐ Accessing UNC Resources Abroad

What information would be most helpful to include in a tutorial for study abroad students?

**UNC Libraries Travel Guide Collection**

UNC Libraries has a large travel guide collection. Most of the travel guides are located in the Undergraduate Library and they are available for checkout.

Did you use any of the travel guides held by UNC Libraries to find information relating to your study abroad experience?

☐ Yes
☐ No

What type of library materials would be most helpful for study abroad students?
How can the library better advertise its services to study abroad students?

**Demographics**

At this time, have you completed at least one session (summer, fall, spring) of study abroad for which you received academic credit?

- Yes
- No

During which term did you study abroad?

- Spring 2010
- Summer 2010
- Fall 2010

Your status as a student CURRENTLY is:

- Freshman
- Sophomore
- Junior
- Senior
- Masters, Professional or PhD
- Graduated
- Other (please specify): ____________________

Your status as a student WHILE studying abroad WAS:

- Freshman
- Sophomore
- Junior
- Senior
- Masters, Professional or PhD
- Graduated
- Other (please specify): ____________________

What region did you study abroad in?

- Africa
- Asia
- Australia/Oceania
- Europe
- Latin America
- Middle East
- North America
- Scandinavia
- United Kingdom and Ireland
- Multiple Regions (please specify): ____________________

In what city and country did you study abroad?
WANT TO SHARE MORE OF YOUR STUDY ABROAD EXPERIENCE???
(Optional)

If you would like to be considered to participate in a follow-up interview, please provide a working email address and the best times of day that you're available to meet for an interview.

If you participate in an interview, you will receive a $10 gift certificate to The Daily Grind after you have completed the interview.
The contact information you provide will ONLY be used for scheduling purposes. It will not be linked to your responses in any way!

THANK YOU AGAIN FOR PARTICIPATING IN THIS STUDY!

Name (optional):

Email (optional):

Telephone number (optional):

Best times to meet for interview

☐ Morning
☐ Afternoon
☐ Evening
☐ Late evening (after 9pm)
Appendix B

Interview Script

Today we’re going to talk about your study abroad experience. In the following interview, I will ask you to think about your entire study abroad experience and relate to me step-by-step what happened to you. We will be focusing on your overall experience by concentrating on what happened to you at different stages before, during and after your study abroad program.

1. Obtain an overview of the student’s study abroad experience [context]
   Please describe to me your study abroad program experience
   What country or countries did you study in
   How long were you there
   What type of coursework did you have – faculty-led, internship, service

2. Before you went abroad, …
   What kind of research did you need to do? [gaps: info need]
     Location
     The program
     Living arrangements
     How did you find the answers to your questions? What sources? [bridging the gap]
     Did you receive any help? [help]
   Did you encounter any difficulties when doing this research?

3. During your study abroad program, …
   What kind of research did you need to do? [gaps: info need]
     Coursework
     Traveling
     Language barriers
     How did you find the answers to your questions? What sources? [bridging the gap]
     Did you receive any help? [help]
   Did you encounter any difficulties when doing this research?

4. After your study abroad program, …
   What kind of research did you need to do? [gaps: info need]
     Culture shock
     Staying in touch
     How did you find the answers to your questions? What sources? [bridging the gap]
     Did you receive any help? [help]
   Did you encounter any difficulties when doing this research?
5. Did you use UNC Libraries’ to help you answer any of the questions you had at any time throughout your study abroad experience?
[If they mentioned libraries above, say something like – elaborate on how you used UNC Library resources]
   What resources did you use? What questions did you ask?
   Were you satisfied with the answers?

6. What was the biggest challenge or barrier to finding information relating to your study abroad experience?

7. What ways do you think UNC Libraries can better help study abroad students?

8. How can the library better advertise its services to study abroad students?

9. Do you have any other comments regarding any aspect of this study?