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THE CASE FOR INTERNATIONALIZING THE UNDERGRADUATE PSYCHOLOGY CURRICULUM

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Having a global perspective is becoming a vital characteristic of informed citizens, productive employees, and members of diverse communities. As Kathryn Campbell (2014) recently noted, “It is more apparent than ever that local occurrences have global consequences, and that global systems—financial, technological, natural, ideological—have palpable local effects” (p. 3). As educators, we should bear this in mind as we prepare our students for life as citizens and workers in the 21st century.

At the same time, we need to be aware of the assumptions and global perspectives that students bring to our classrooms. Resources such as the Beloit College Mindset List may help in this regard. Issued every August since 1998, the list profiles the ways in which that year’s incoming students—born approximately 18 years earlier—differ from previous cohorts in “the cultural touchstones and experiences” that have shaped their worldviews (<https://www.beloit.edu/mindset>). Although U.S. politicians, athletes, and celebrities

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Internationalizing the Undergraduate Psychology Curriculum: Practical Lessons Learned at Home and Abroad,
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tend to predominate, along with technological innovations and other elements of pop culture, the list always provides a few examples of students' global views, such as "Hong Kong has always been part of China," "Bosnia and Herzegovina have always been one nation," and "the United States and Russia have always been partners in space." American employers identify "global knowledge" as the domain (out of 12 surveyed) in which recent baccalaureate graduates have the least preparedness (Hart Research Associates, 2008). That is, only 18% of employers indicated graduates are "well prepared," whereas 46% indicated graduates are "not well prepared." What are the implications of these views for us as members of psychology departments, striving to deliver a coherent, meaningful, and useful undergraduate curriculum?

A related question is, how confident should we be that the well-known theories we teach our students, such as cognitive dissonance, person-environment fit, and personal growth initiative, are relevant to students' lives and valid cross-culturally (Hardin, Robitschek, Flores, Navarro, & Ashton, 2014)? Since 2000, there has been a 72% increase in international students at U.S. colleges and universities (Institute of International Education [IIE], 2014b). How effectively are we adapting our classroom dynamics and course content to reflect these enrollment trends? Are there possibilities for using the increased presence of international students as a resource for supporting intercultural learning?

International study is an increasingly important part of 21st-century postsecondary education, with rates of U.S. student participation in study abroad programs having tripled since the early 1990s (IIE, 2012) and most undergraduate institutions striving to provide learning experiences that assist students in becoming responsible, involved, and knowledgeable citizens of the world (Association of American Colleges and Universities, 2005, 2007; IIE, 2011; Mullens & Cuper, 2012). At one time, only students in certain majors and fields of study, such as foreign language, area studies, history, and art history, participated in study abroad programs. Today, however, a broader spectrum of college students—including those majoring in psychology—sees value in off-campus learning that fosters self-reflection and critical thinking. How can we integrate the material and inquiry from our on-campus courses with the off-campus, international experiences that an increasing number of our students see as essential to their learning?

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO HAVE AN INTERNATIONALIZED CURRICULUM?

Having an *internationalized* psychology curriculum can mean different things. At the most basic level, it suggests the inclusion of international and comparative research across a department's course offerings (i.e., not only

within cross-cultural psychology). At a more fundamental level, it suggests a common departmental attitude. Faculty should recognize that Western values, assumptions, and examples underlie much of the undergraduate psychology curriculum (Christopher, Wendt, Marecek, & Goodman, 2014) and, as a result, should consistently challenge students to evaluate the extent to which psychological theories apply across cultures and borders (Hardin et al., 2014). This volume provides many concrete examples of strategies used by faculty to challenge students to pursue these tasks.

Of course, internationalizing the curriculum also means providing opportunities for students to study abroad in psychology and, just as important, enabling them to incorporate knowledge gained from their time abroad into on-campus courses and activities. Establishing study-abroad opportunities, however, carries its own set of complexities.

COMMON BARRIERS TO STUDY ABROAD IN PSYCHOLOGY: FACULTY PERSPECTIVES

A major challenge for colleges in meeting the increased interest in study abroad is providing opportunities that are coherently integrated into students' on-campus learning, including their major area(s) of study. In psychology, an additional challenge is that relatively few colleges and universities include off-campus international programs taught by faculty in their home department (e.g., psychology faculty members who teach off-campus courses for psychology credit). One reason is that most psychology faculty themselves have limited international professional experience and few contacts in such settings; a lack of proficiency in languages other than English may further impede efforts to make those connections. In addition, in the absence of professional relationships and experiences, deciding which international settings to focus on may be problematic because psychological phenomena can be studied everywhere and anywhere (Pósfay, Abrams, & Kaufman, 2008). Administrative support for study abroad as an explicitly valued institutional priority can help, but early career faculty may feel pressure to focus their time and energy on campus, conducting research and publishing; as a result, study abroad may be regarded as an activity that can be pursued only after receiving tenure (Dewey & Duff, 2009; Moseley, 2009). Even faculty who wish to incorporate global perspectives into on-campus course offerings may find it difficult to do so, given long-standing disciplinary assumptions about the universality of psychological phenomena and behavior (Arnett, 2002, 2008; Heine & Norenzayan, 2006; Matsumoto & Yoo, 2006) and the relative absence of cross-cultural and international research in most psychology textbooks and journals (Adair, Coelho, & Luna, 2002; Arnett, 2008; Woolf, Hulsizer, & McCarthy, 2002).

THE AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION'S ENDORSEMENT OF INTERNATIONALIZING THE CURRICULUM

In response to these challenges, an American Psychological Association (APA)—sponsored report on internationalizing the undergraduate psychology curriculum (APA Working Group on Internationalizing the Undergraduate Psychology Curriculum, 2005) recommended five key learning outcomes for students—namely, that they should be able to

- recognize, acknowledge, and describe sociocultural differences and commonalities between people, and consider how the diversity of human behavior around the world contributes to the study and practice of psychology; (p. 3)
- explain the research methods and skills necessary for international research competence; (p. 3)
- describe how the discipline of psychology is developed, studied, and applied in and across cultures; (p. 3)
- use their psychological knowledge and understanding of cultural differences and behavior to demonstrate skills and values that will help them function effectively in a complex multicultural global world; (p. 3) and
- recognize, appreciate, and describe the role that psychological knowledge plays in addressing issues related to the human condition from a global perspective. (p. 4)

Two years later, leaders in the APA endorsed *sociocultural and international awareness* as one of 10 goals for undergraduate education, asserting that psychology majors should be able to “recognize, understand, and respect the complexity of sociocultural and international diversity” (APA, 2007, p. 16). The 2013 revision (APA, 2013) of learning goals for the undergraduate major used an infusion approach to integrate sociocultural dimensions within five superordinate domains of knowledge, scientific inquiry and critical thinking, ethical and social responsibility in a diverse world, communication, and professional development. Examples of suggested learning outcomes specify that students should be able to

- predict how sociocultural and international factors influence how scientists think about behavioral and mental processes; (p. 18)
- explain how psychological constructs can be used to understand and resolve interpersonal and intercultural conflicts; (p. 19)
- incorporate sociocultural factors in scientific inquiry; (p. 21)
- exhibit respect for members of diverse groups with sensitivity to issues of power, privilege, and discrimination; (p. 60)

- pursue personal opportunities to promote civic, social, and global outcomes that benefit the community; (p. 54)
- consider the potential effects of psychology-based interventions on issues of global concern; (p. 27) and
- interact sensitively with people of diverse abilities, backgrounds, and cultural perspectives. (p. 31)

Although these principles and outcomes were developed with psychology majors in mind, they are also relevant for students who take only one or two psychology courses. Indeed, as U.S. colleges and universities draw an increasingly diverse student body, including a growing number of international students, the value and necessity of incorporating global perspectives into the curriculum have similarly grown (IIE, 2012). As a result, there is broad agreement that whether students are planning to continue their study of psychology at the graduate level or pursue a career path in a different field, it is critical to prepare them to succeed as citizens with a global perspective (APA Presidential Task Force on Enhancing Diversity, 2005; Kite et al., 2006; Kuh, 2008; Lewin, 2009; National Research Council, 2014).

WHAT THIS BOOK OFFERS

As important as guidelines and good intentions are, they represent only the first step. What teachers of psychology need most to internationalize the undergraduate curriculum are clear orientations and terminology about their preferred approaches to studying psychology across cultures, practical ideas that they can use in the classroom, information about resources that connect students to the world beyond their home campus, and advice from experts about how to develop and administer study abroad programs. These themes are explored in the following section.

Terminology and Varied Approaches to the Study of Culture

The terminology and orientations that psychologists use in the study and teaching of culture vary. Theorists, researchers, and professors often express preference for one approach or term over others, and some of these differences are listed and clarified here. Note that the first three terms have at their root *culture*, whereas the next three have at their root *nation*.

- *Cross-cultural psychology* focuses on comparing and contrasting psychological characteristics and behavior across two or more cultures to identify phenomena that are more universal and those that are more culturally specific (Triandis, 2000).

- *Cultural psychology* clarifies how culture influences the psychological characteristics and behavior of the people within it (Shiraev & Levy, 2010). Cultural psychologists emphasize the exploration of culture from within and often borrow from methods used by anthropologists. Cultural psychology is closely related to indigenous psychology, which emphasizes cultural uniqueness and is often contrasted with a cross-cultural comparative approach (Shweder, 2000).
- *Intercultural psychology* emphasizes “what happens when the two (or more) culturally-different groups come together, interact, and communicate” (González, 2011).
- *International psychology* refers to scientific or professional activities (organizations, exchanges, and research enterprises) of a psychological nature involving groups of psychologists in two or more nations. Such activities are generally aimed at advancing psychological science or improving the practice of psychology through organizational efforts in one or more nations (Holtzman, 2000).
- *Internationalizing psychology* refers to “an understanding of how psychologists pursue psychological science and apply psychology around the world and of how scientists and practitioners address psychological phenomena that potentially vary” across nations (APA Working Group, 2005, p. 2).
- *Transnational approaches* explore how experiences and everyday activities are shaped by multiple connections and linkages among individuals to several nations and cultures through travel, technology, and media (Schiller, Basch, & Blanc, 1995).
- *Global psychology* focuses on global phenomena (e.g., intergroup conflict, environmental threats) from a psychological perspective (Stevens & Gielen, 2007).

Although the terms and definitions just described appear, at least on the surface, to be straightforward, psychologists may use these terms in different ways, and some controversy exists about which approaches are most likely to support inclusive and collaborative approaches to studying culture. For example, in this chapter, we use the term *global* to describe the need to be knowledgeable about the world as informed citizens. In contrast, Watters’s (2010) book *Crazy Like Us: The Globalization of the American Psyche* uses *globalization* to refer to ways in which Western psychologies are exported and often imposed on others.

As another example, *internationalization* and *internationalizing* are sometimes seen as signifying Western-centric perspectives that may limit

understanding of cultures on their own terms (Staeuble, 2006). We use *internationalizing* as part of the title of this book, and this term is used throughout psychology to focus on efforts to expand the purview, focus, and worldview of psychology (e.g., APA, 2005). Consistent with our use of internationalizing, a qualitative study of faculty members identified core features of internationalizing psychology as (a) challenging Western privilege in psychology and notions that traditional psychology is a universal psychology as well as (b) emphasizing ways in which psychology is shaped and embedded within cultural contexts. In addition, (c) although internationalizing psychology includes cross-cultural study and comparisons, it also includes the study and valuing of indigenous psychologies (Bikos, Chism, Forman, & King, 2013). Given the multiple meanings assigned to the terms described in this section, it is important to be mindful that terms related to the study of culture are often interpreted through varied lenses and experiences.

Teaching Resources

Instructors seeking to transform their on-campus courses can turn to a number of general teaching resources on culture and human behavior and on classroom strategies for exploring cross-cultural perspectives (Goldstein, 2005; Michaelson, 2006). Teachers can also find ideas for introducing broad international issues as well as country-specific topics in psychology (Bartolini, Gharib, & Phillips, 2010; Dalglish, Evans, & Lawson, 2011; Hull, 2001; Rosenzweig, 1999; Smith & Vandermaas-Peeler, 2009). Other potentially useful publications identify areas of theory and research in a range of subfields and suggest international perspectives that can be incorporated into existing on-campus courses (Leong, Pickren, Leach, & Marsella, 2012). Courses in developmental psychology, for example, can incorporate the comparative study of sleeping arrangements, attachment, and parenting styles (White & Schnurr, 2012).

A small but growing number of resources exist for instructors wishing to develop or contribute to study abroad programs. However, these articles and books tend to emphasize broad themes (e.g., citizenship in a global context) or offer strategies and examples from across the curriculum, drawing from a wide range of disciplines (e.g., anthropology, religious studies, literature, urban studies, biology, public health) that only rarely includes psychology (Brewer & Cunningham, 2009; Hamon & Fernsler, 2006; Lewin, 2009; Mullens & Cuper, 2012; Paige, Cohen, Kappler, Chi, & Lassegard, 2006; Vande Berg, Paige, & Lou, 2012). Among those texts that focus explicitly on psychology, the intended audience is typically faculty and students in graduate programs, and the emphasis is on strategies for research and clinical training rather than undergraduate education (Leong et al., 2012).

In contrast to most of the publications already noted, this volume offers practical approaches and lessons learned from our collective experience as teachers who have developed internationally oriented courses and study abroad programs for undergraduate students of psychology. Moreover, this volume differs from existing resources by (a) incorporating into most chapters perspectives and insights (presented anonymously)¹ from students who have studied and traveled alongside us and (b) offering advice and strategies for faculty development and assessment of learning goals.

The APA-sponsored book *Undergraduate Education in Psychology: A Blueprint for the Future of the Discipline* (Halpern, 2009) informs all of the chapters in this book. The views presented are well aligned, for example, with Halpern and colleagues' assertion that psychology departments should integrate "diversity and global issues at multiple levels of the curriculum" and that the "internationalization of psychology is essential to maximize the transferability of learning knowledge and skills" (p. 15). There is also strong endorsement in this book of the pedagogical principle presented by Chew and colleagues (2009) that faculty should select learning goals before identifying and adapting teaching methods for use in off-campus programs and on-campus efforts to internationalize courses.

Practical Considerations

In addition to incorporating perspectives from Halpern, many of the chapters in this book are linked by a number of practical issues that most off-campus programs need to address. Programs that include study and travel in countries where there may be problems of violence or crime, for example, require a thorough evaluation of the risks involved in visiting those locations. As the authors of the chapters in this book know, program leaders and their institutions can consult resources such as the U.S. State Department's travel advisory system, which provides information for every country of the world, as well as travel alerts and warnings. For each country, the system indicates the location of the U.S. embassy and any consular offices, as well as information about visas, crime and security, health and medical considerations, drug penalties, and localized hot spots (<http://travel.state.gov/content/passports/english/country.html>). Given that conditions may change unexpectedly, whether due to political unrest or natural disasters, all participants in off-campus programs need to be aware that the itinerary may change to ensure their safety and security. Because these changes may need to be made after a program has begun and the group has left the United States, it is essential to

¹All student quotations in this book are used with permission.

have a clear plan in place for communicating with the program's on-campus support team and the families of participants. Clear plans also need to be in place for responding if students become ill, emotionally overwhelmed, or physically injured. Useful resources, including a publication that addresses crisis management in cross-cultural settings (Albrecht, 2015), are available on the website of NAFSA: Association of International Educators (<http://www.nafsa.org>), a leading organization in international education.

Another issue that links many of the chapters in this book is the presence and role of technology in off-campus study. Some program leaders, including many who began leading study abroad programs before laptops, smartphones, and tablets existed, lament today's students' attachment to these devices, which they regard as insidious barriers to cultural immersion and personal growth. Other program leaders, by contrast, including study abroad veterans whose ideas have evolved over time, have a more positive view. They note, for example, that the widespread availability of mobile services in even the most remote locations is a positive development for the health and safety of study abroad participants and may also offer a way for students to communicate with people they meet during the program and stay connected after they return home (Huesca, 2013; Kaplan, 2012). As you read the chapters in this volume, you will see examples of these different viewpoints, as well as strategies that the authors have adopted and modified, as they reflect on the place of technology in off-campus study.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDY ABROAD: FACTORS AFFECTING STUDENT PARTICIPATION

Given that the number of U.S. students studying abroad for credit has tripled since the early 1990s, many people are surprised to learn that only 9% of all undergraduates in 2012–2013 participated in an international off-campus program (IIE, 2014b). As in previous years, the vast majority (76%) identified as White, and nearly two thirds were women (American Institute for Foreign Study, 2005; IIE 2014b). In addition, most students participating in study abroad today, as in the past, are from “middle to upper class socioeconomic backgrounds, have at least some travel experience . . . and have enjoyed a rigorous, high quality academic education for most of their lives” (Zemach-Bersin, 2009, p. 304). Participation rates are notably higher at small liberal arts colleges, which send a larger proportion of their students abroad than other types of institutions (American Institute for Foreign Study, 2005). Recent data also reveal that East Coast colleges and universities have the highest annual study abroad participation rates, with the Washington, DC, area showing the highest participation rates for the 2012–2013 academic year (NAFSA, 2014).

These patterns have led numerous working groups of educators, policy-makers, and leaders from the private sector to conclude that “promoting and democratizing undergraduate study abroad is the next step in the evolution of American higher education” (American Institute for Foreign Study, 2005, p. v) and to recommend that “the demographics of the U.S. undergraduate students abroad should be similar to those of the U.S. undergraduate student population” (p. 27). In addition, “the proportion of study abroad students who are enrolled in community colleges, minority-serving institutions, and institutions serving large numbers of low-income and first-generation students [should] be similar to their share of the undergraduate population” (p. 27). The Institute of International Education, for its part, released *Generation Study Abroad* in 2014, a “green paper” outlining a 5-year initiative to double the number of U.S. students studying abroad (IIE, 2014a).

A variety of student individual differences and sociocultural factors may also be pertinent to which students participate in study abroad, the countries in which they prefer to study, and how they experience study abroad. These differences may be related to a wide range of social identities such as nationality, area of residence within the United States, ethnicity/race, religious orientation, socioeconomic status and opportunity, gender, and other identities.

As one example, how might the geographic origin of students and the geographic location of higher education institutions be relevant? Regional differences among students may include variations in awareness of and investment in local social issues as well as regional transnational interactions. In some states, such as Minnesota, active involvement in refugee resettlement may contribute to student awareness of transnational and immigration issues. Within multiple southern states, the proximity of the Mexico–U.S. border and related immigration and border permeability issues may be related to student attitudes, concerns, and study abroad interests. Several studies have also suggested that personality styles may vary somewhat by region. Perhaps such variations may be related to how students approach study abroad. For example, when compared with other geographic regions of the United States, persons from the Midwest (West North Central region) have been found to score higher on dimensions such as extraversion, conscientiousness, and agreeableness but lower on openness (Plaut, Markus, & Lachman, 2002; Rentfrow, 2010; Rentfrow, Gosling, & Potter, 2008). As these brief examples suggest, the complex interaction of (a) individual differences and social identities; (b) region-based life experiences and potential personality variations; (c) salient regional social issues and political trends; (d) availability of college-level courses that focus on social justice, intercultural communication, and transnational understanding; and (e) institutional priorities is likely to be an important consideration for study abroad.

Although our knowledge base about students in study abroad programs is increasing (e.g., Vande Berg et al., 2012), we do not have enough information based on research findings to draw generalizations about the relationship of specific social identities such as regional identity to teaching and learning about culture and psychology. The study of interactions between students' identities and their responsiveness to specific teaching methods and experiences, such as study abroad opportunities, will be a useful research agenda for the future.

Three of the top 10 U.S. colleges/universities that send students abroad are Midwestern national liberal arts colleges (Haynie, 2014). In the interest of transparency, it is important to note that a high percentage of this book's authors teach at national liberal arts colleges in the Midwestern region. The typical reader may wonder whether students in these types of educational settings differ from students in other settings. National liberal arts colleges offer at least half of their degrees in the liberal arts, tend to be small (1,000–3,000 students), emphasize teaching excellence, draw students from all 50 states and many international contexts, and tend to be residential educational institutions. These institutions also range from being somewhat selective to highly selective, offer small class sizes, feature rich cocurricular opportunities for students, and value discussion-based and critical thinking pedagogies. Foreign language study is a prominent part of the general education curriculum at most of these institutions. Study abroad opportunities are often highlighted in these college contexts, and special funds may be designated to enable students with significant financial need to participate in off-campus study. Although many of the educational settings featured in this volume are situated in the Midwest, a minority of their students and faculty members are from the Midwest. Thus, although there may be distinctive educational features in these institutions, the student bodies of these colleges are likely to represent a microcosm of students attending U.S. colleges and universities. This assumption still needs to be tested, and we encourage readers to consider the social and personal identities of their students when applying the approaches and strategies described in this book.

OVERVIEW OF THE CHAPTERS

Throughout, this book offers insights and information about the study of psychology from multiple perspectives and across the globe, with examples that can be adapted for different settings and subfields of psychology. Part I (Chapters 1 and 2) creates a foundation for thinking about the importance of study abroad and global perspectives for student and faculty development. Both chapters also suggest practical goals and strategies for achieving them.

We share ideas in Part II (Chapters 3–6) for developing long-term study abroad programs and in Part III (Chapters 7–9) for developing short-term study abroad programs that range in length from 2 weeks to 1 month. In both sections, the programs discussed span multiple continents and subdisciplines of psychology.

The focus of Part IV (Chapters 10–12) is on teaching transnational and international psychology courses on campus. The chapters provide resources for on-campus courses that incorporate international perspectives and demonstrate how these courses can help students prepare for study abroad as well as integrate prior off-campus learning experiences.

In Part V, we summarize best practices for assessing student learning outcomes in international psychology courses (Chapter 13), for considering intercultural development in institutional context (Chapter 14), for supporting students with disabilities who study abroad (Chapter 15), and for supporting psychology students applying for Fulbright grants (Chapter 16).

We hope that you enjoy and learn from this book. As you adapt the lessons we have learned in your own courses, whether on or off campus, we invite you to contribute perspectives to our growing knowledge base that informs intercultural learning in psychology. The more we share our ideas and experiences, the better prepared our students will be to contribute to our increasingly global world.

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