Investigation of the Relationship Between Students’ Global Competence and Study Abroad Experience
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Introduction and Background
A wide range of researchers and practitioners have pointed to the importance of international experience in fostering global competence. (McDougall, 2009; Niehaus & Komives, 2009; Oddou & Mendenhall, 2008)
Research has reported a wide variety of positive outcomes. For example, students who have studied abroad:
• have greater cultural knowledge and understanding
  (Rater, 1997; Drews & Meyer, 1990; Hutchins, 1990; Williams, 2005)
• demonstrate greater flexibility and adaptability
  (Black & Duron, 2000; Willard-Holt, 2001)
• express better ability to recognize and appreciate differences
  (Rater, 1997; Hutchins, 1990)
• are more emotionally resilient and independent
  (Black & Duron, 2000)
• express greater desire to learn
  (Carson & Widaman, 1988; Forgues, 2005; Hadis, 2005; Hutchins, 1990)

The Global Competence Model™
GCAA is based on over ten years of rigorous research.
Provides a visual representation of the knowledge, skills and attitudes that research shows are necessary for developing Global Competence.
The instrument assesses and reports on individual ability to fit and function within a global environment.

Current Study
The purpose of the present study was to assess students’ level of global competence before and after studying abroad.
Participants: Students participating in study abroad programs, 195 completed pre-departure assessments and 182 completed post-reentry assessments.
Method: Students participating in study abroad programs completed the GCAA before and after studying abroad.
Instrument: GCAA - 113 questions, average time 30 minutes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Pre-Departure 2015</th>
<th>Post-Departure 2015</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Sample Size</td>
<td>Mean</td>
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<tr>
<td>-------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Internal Readiness</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>75.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Self-Awareness</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>80.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Risk Taking</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>72.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attentiveness to Diversity</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>74.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Open-Mindedness</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>76.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>External Readiness</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>63.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Global Awareness</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>54.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Historical Perspective</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>45.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Intercultural Capability</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>74</td>
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Results and Discussion
A simple means analysis shows an increase in overall readiness (internal and external) after a study abroad experience.
In all categories of internal readiness including self-awareness, open mindedness, risk taking, and attentiveness to diversity we find a two point increase.
In all categories of external readiness, we find significant growth. For example, a full point increase in intercultural capability, a five point increase in collaboration across cultures, and of greatest significance near five point increase in historical perspective, and over twelve points increased in global awareness.

Implications
Aid in better understanding students’ levels of global competence, specifically TAMUC students who are engaged in studying abroad.
Aids in creation and development of programs designed to improve global competence – for example, our QEP.
May assist in improving students’ global learning, understanding, and engagement.