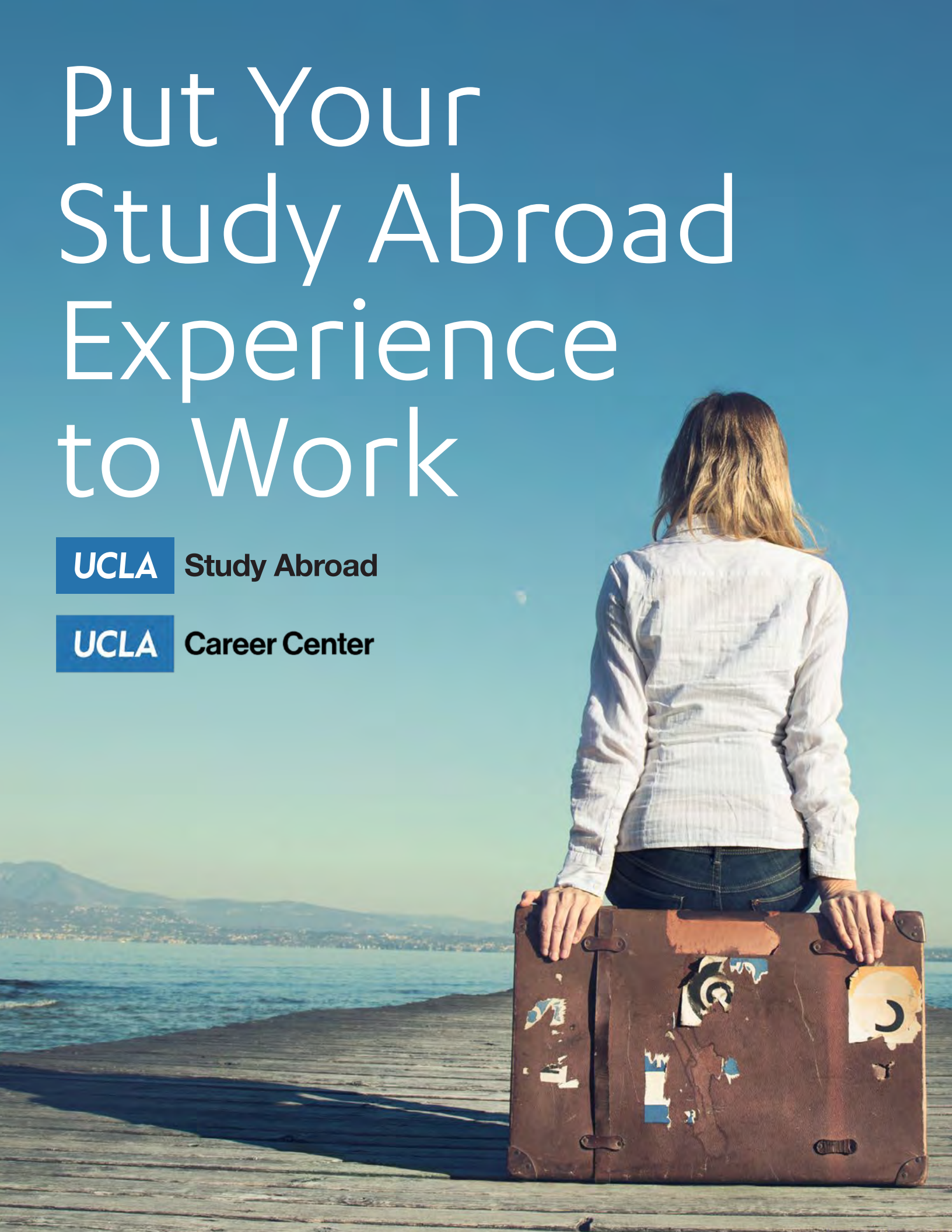
Put Your Study Abroad Experience to Work

UCLA Study Abroad

UCLA Career Center



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Letter from the Director

Exploring the world through studying or interning abroad is one of the best investments in a student's education. At UCLA, it is often ranked as the best decision students make during their academic career (per Senior Survey•). We also believe that these unique programs make you a better citizen and stronger job applicant in our global economy.

Study abroad is more than an isolated event; it is the beginning of a transformational experience. Our goal is to deliver a greater return on your investment by helping you connect your study abroad experience to your career goals. To accomplish this, the UCLA International Education Office has partnered with the UCLA Career Center to create a custom resource for all study abroad participants.

UCLA IEO honors the financial cost and courage that students and their families make in choosing study abroad programs. It is our sincere hope that this resource will help you unpack the unique experiences, language skills, resourcefulness and flexibility you've acquired abroad. Beyond the academic and personal fulfillment, it's time to put your study abroad experience to work for you!

Sincerely,

Magdalena Barragán
Executive Director, International Education
UCLA International Education Office

UCLA Study Abroad

• UCLA Study Abroad Alumni Survey – 2021

Introduction

STUDENTS WHO HAVE STUDIED ABROAD OFTEN IDENTIFY THE EXPERIENCE AS ONE OF THE MOST MEANINGFUL IN THEIR COLLEGE CAREER, OR EVEN LIFETIME. It can be challenging, however, to convey the significance and impact of the experience to someone who did not share it with you. This can be challenging in everyday conversations with peers and relatives, but even more so within the context of the pursuit of professional or academic goals. This handbook will guide you through the process of identifying and communicating how your study abroad experience has equipped you to contribute unique value to a potential employer or academic program.

Reflect on Your Experience

REFLECTING ON YOUR EXPERIENCE ABROAD WILL HELP YOU CRAFT NARRATIVES THAT CAN BE ADAPTED FOR USE IN NETWORKING CONVERSATIONS, INTERVIEWS, COVER LETTERS, AND ADMISSION ESSAYS. While abroad, you encountered many situations which required you to adapt and step outside of your comfort zone. These experiences may have led to increased self-efficacy and resilience to overcome challenges and approach unfamiliar situations. It is important to reflect upon these experiences appropriately so they can be evaluated, applied, and conveyed effectively in various contexts when interacting with employers.

Here are some examples on how to connect your experience abroad to skills or qualities valued in the workplace.

REFLECT ON YOUR EXPERIENCE

PROMPT	REFLECTION	SKILLS/QUALITIES
These experiences were uncomfortable or challenging for me...	*As a first-gen, low income student I had a difficult time fitting in with the rest of the group who had previous experience traveling abroad. I also had a challenging time adjusting to a new culture and language.*	*Adaptability* *Patience* *Understanding*
How did I respond to these challenging situations and what did I learn from them?	*I decided to embrace my differences and get out of my comfort zone. When invited to go out or do something with the group I accepted, and soon I started feeling more integrated.* *I really wanted to be more familiar with the language, so I decided to do volunteer work with the community. I was amazed at how quickly my language skills improved.*	*Confidence* *Courage* *Initiative* *Perseverance* *Independence* *Problem-solving*
I am proud of myself for....	*Getting out of my comfort zone and being willing to accept the challenges that came my way.*	*Courage* *Self-reliance*
My values or goals were impacted in the following ways...	*Not being fluent in the language made me have to pay close attention to what people were saying. I learned the value of really listening to others. I also learned humility as I made so many mistakes while trying to speak. But, mistakes helped me learn.*	*Listening* *Communication* *Adaptability* *Self-awareness*
My views of the world have changed in the following ways....	*Being in a different culture exposed me to customs and traditions that were uncomfortable at times. Learning to appreciate differences or what I didn't understand while also accepting the people, was the key to having meaningful connections.*	*Cultural Understanding* *Empathy* *Adaptability*
My views of my own country or culture have changed in the following ways...	*Even though we have different values and priorities, in many ways we are similar no matter the country we come from. I have a better understanding of my own cultural identities now than before going abroad.*	*Cultural Awareness* *Self-awareness*
I have improved or grown in the following ways...	*I learned that when I put myself out there (even though it is uncomfortable) I can come out on the other side with new perspectives, experiences and memories to cherish.*	*Openness* *Emotional Balance* *Maturity* *Self-awareness*

PRACTICE: *Take a moment to reflect and write down your own responses to these prompts using the worksheet on* ***page 28****. After writing your reflection, see if you can identify which skills or qualities you demonstrate that would be of value to a potential employer or academic program.*

THE STAR METHOD

The STAR method is a communication technique that can help you provide complete and meaningful answers to behavior focused questions. This powerful personal development tool can help you engage in self-reflection. When people reflect, they are more aware of what motivates them and this helps them develop and grow.

Let's take a look at an example on how to craft a thoughtful response to the prompt ***"Tell me about your experience studying abroad."*** Even in an informal, social situation you can connect and engage on a deeper level if you avoid surface-level responses such as "it was amazing" or vague references to the things you miss about the country (food, culture, people). Engage the listener in a story that enables them to grasp the complexity of your experience and the nuanced skills and perspectives it instilled in you.

START WITH THE TAKEAWAY:

[One sentence on how your experience abroad impacted or changed you]

Study abroad was a life changing experience that helped me define my career plans for the future.

SITUATION:

[Provide contextual information about the program: what, when, where, why, with whom]

I studied abroad in 2021 at the University of Cambridge, England, in a faculty-led program with other UCLA students. Our program focused on Political Science and Art.

TASK:

[Share a challenge or opportunity you faced]

On the first day of my program, I got lost on the subway and had forgotten my phone at my dorm.

ACTION:

[Describe how you responded to the challenge or opportunity]

I had to find my way back by talking to locals and being resourceful.

RESULT:

[Share how you have grown or changed as a result of the experience and how you hope to apply your skills and knowledge to your academic or professional pursuits.]

I am less reliant on technology and more confident in asking for help when needed. This situation allowed me to develop my problem-solving skills, which is an important skill for the workforce or grad school.

PRACTICE: *Enter your own responses to the prompt "Tell me about your experience studying abroad" on the worksheet on* ***page 29*** *using the same steps provided in the above example.*

Identify Your Skills

FROM THE "TOP SKILLS" LIST BELOW, IDENTIFY THOSE WHICH YOU FEEL YOU HAVE DEVELOPED.
When preparing your job search materials or for an interview, be prepared to share specific examples that demonstrate your abilities.

Top skills employers seek and value from students with international experiences:

- Interaction with people who hold different interests, values, or perspectives
- Understanding cultural differences in the workplace
- Ability to plan, organize, and prioritize work
- Adapting to situations of change
- Gaining new knowledge from experiences
- Ability to work independently
- Undertaking tasks that are unfamiliar/risky
- Applying information in new or broader contexts
- Identifying new problems and their solutions
- Working effectively with co-workers

NACE CAREER READINESS COMPETENCIES

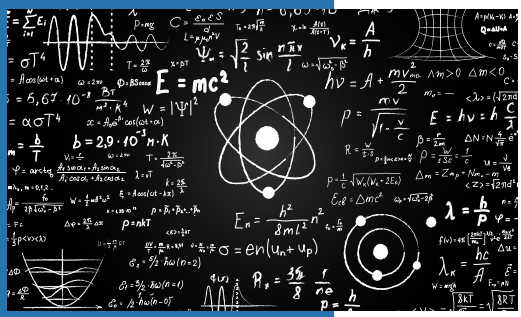
The following competencies have been identified through research conducted by the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) as broadly preparing the college educated for success in the workplace and lifelong career management. Listed within each competency are sample behaviors that you may have developed throughout the course of your experience abroad.

Career and Self-Development

- Identify areas for continual growth while pursuing and applying feedback.
- Develop plans and goals for one's future career.
- Display curiosity; seek out opportunities to learn.
- Establish, maintain, and/or leverage relationships with people who can help one professionally.
- Seek and embrace development opportunities.
- Voluntarily participate in further education, training, or other events to support one's career

Communication

- Demonstrate verbal, written, and non-verbal/body language abilities.
- Communicate in a clear and organized manner so that others can effectively understand.
- Frame communication with respect to diversity of learning styles, varied individual communication abilities, and cultural differences.
- Ask appropriate questions for specific information.
- Promptly inform relevant others when needing guidance.



Critical Thinking

- Make decisions and solve problems using sound, inclusive reasoning and judgment.
- Gather and analyze information from a diverse set of sources and individuals to fully understand a problem.
- Effectively communicate actions and rationale, recognizing the diverse perspectives and lived experiences of stakeholders.
- Multi-task well in a fast-paced environment.

NACE CAREER READINESS COMPETENCIES

Equity & Inclusion

- Seek global cross-cultural interactions and experiences that enhance one's understanding of people from different demographic groups and that leads to personal growth.
- Keep an open mind to diverse ideas and new ways of thinking.
- Demonstrate flexibility by adapting to diverse environments.

Leadership

- Use innovative thinking to go beyond traditional methods.
- Serve as a role model to others by approaching tasks with confidence and a positive attitude.
- Motivate and inspire others by encouraging them and by building mutual trust.

Professionalism

- Be present and prepared.
- Demonstrate dependability.
- Consistently meet or exceed goals and expectations.
- Show a high level of dedication toward doing a good job.

Teamwork

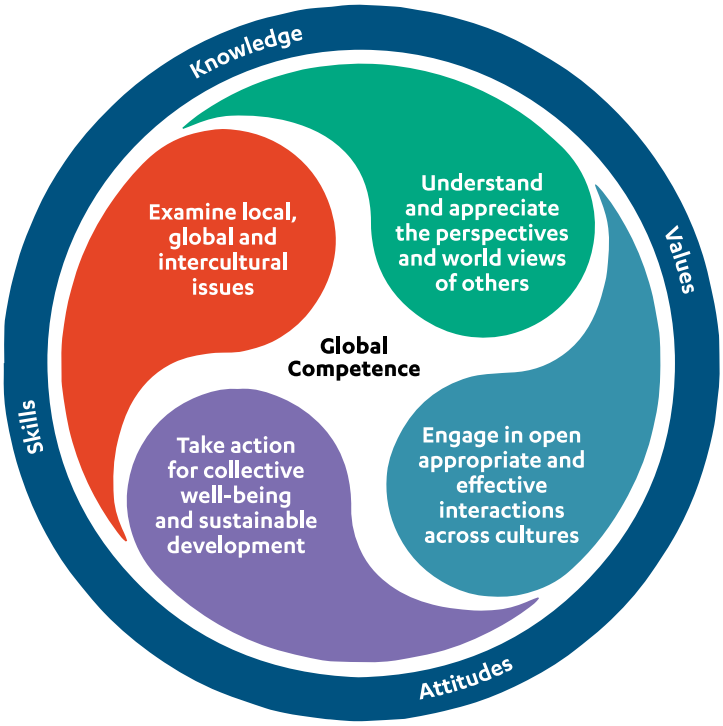
- Listen carefully to others, taking time to understand and ask appropriate questions without interrupting.
- Effectively manage conflict, interact with and respect diverse personalities, and meet ambiguity with resilience.
- Be accountable for individual and team responsibilities and deliverables.
- Exercise the ability to compromise and be agile.
- Collaborate with others to achieve common goals.
- Build strong, positive relationships with others.

Technology

- Navigate change and be open to learning new technologies.
- Quickly adapt to new or unfamiliar technologies.

PRACTICE: *Take the self-assessment found of* ***page 30*** *to see what professional competencies you already have and the ones you still need to develop to be career ready and have success in the workplace.*

Global Competence



Source: https://www.oecd.org/pisa/innovation/global-competence/

GLOBAL COMPETENCE EQUIPS INDIVIDUALS TO MOVE FROM LEARNING ABOUT THE WORLD TO MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN IT. It is the key to becoming local and global problem solvers, to thrive in a more diverse, interconnected world, and fully engage in issues of global significance. In this globalization era, people with global competency are more attractive and valuable to employers.

Global competence is comprised of the following dimensions: knowledge, skills, values, attitudes

KNOWLEDGE:	SKILLS:	VALUES & ATTITUDES:
Understanding of global/ intercultural issues and appreciation for diverse perspectives.	Thinking critically, observing, and analyzing issues. Taking action to make an impact on society.	Understanding and appreciating diverse perspectives. Communicating and interacting appropriately across cultures, while remaining open to continuous learning.

The world of work demands effective communication, openness, appreciation for diversity, and respect for others. Understanding the world through a global lens will help you stand out as a well-rounded candidate in the job market. To do this, you'll need to translate your experiences into tangible skills and articulate them to the employer.

GLOBAL COMPETENCE

To demonstrate global competence, you'll need to convey the following skills to the employer:

- Appreciation and respect of diverse cultural perspectives and norms, such as being open minded, non-judgmental, |and accepting of differences.
- Experience of multicultural environments either abroad or in one's own country.
- Adaptability and flexibility in unfamiliar situations.
- International awareness, knowledge, and understanding.

Let's identify each Global Competency and the study abroad experiences that helped develop them.

	Identify the Global Competency **List ONE specific knowledge, ONE skill, and ONE value you've gained.**	**Study Abroad Experience** **Identify the specific study abroad experience that contributed to each competency**
Knowledge	*Understanding issues of global significance*	*While studying abroad in Vietnam, I learned about industrialization and economic growth in developing countries. I was surprised to hear that many young people work in poor conditions in factories for up to ten hours a day, instead of going to school. I decided to go online to learn more about manufacturing standards and policies and discovered that some clothing brands are more concerned with human rights in their factories than others. I am now an advocate for ethically responsible manufacturing.*
Skills	*Resiliency in new situations*	*While staying with a host family in Morocco, I learned very quickly the importance of being aware of social customs. In Morocco, you only take food from shared dishes with your right hand as the left is reserved for bathroom and cleaning duties. Fortunately, my host-family explained this before I made a cultural faux pas (mistake).*
Values & Attitudes	*Valuing multiple perspectives*	*During my study abroad program in the Middle East, I met with many locals and officials from difference countries. I kept an open mind and respected the perspectives of everyone I met with.*

PRACTICE: *Think about your study abroad experience. How did your study abroad experience help you develop the knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes necessary for global competence? Complete the reflection chart on* ***page 31*** *to help you identify the competencies and how you've developed them.*

Communicate Your Value

NOW THAT YOU'VE IDENTIFIED YOUR COMPETENCIES AND HOW YOU'VE DEVELOPED THEM, YOU CAN PRACTICE ARTICULATING THEM TO AN EMPLOYER. In this section, you will learn specific strategies to help you integrate your study abroad experience into your resume, cover letter, interviews, and networking conversations.

RESUME

The purpose of a resume is to get you an interview, help you prepare for an interview, and build your confidence. This section will focus on ways you may consider showcasing your study abroad experiences on your resume.

Please refer to the UCLA Career Guide (career.ucla.edu/resources/ucla-career-guide) Chapter 6 for comprehensive guidance around resume development. Once you have created a draft of a resume, upload it into VMock (career.ucla.edu/resources/vmock/) for instant feedback to ensure your resume is optimized for consideration by a recruiter or hiring manager.

GENERAL TIPS FOR RESUMES

Formatting

- Standard/legible font
- 10-12 size font
- Make sure your name stands out
- Use a professional email address
- Use bullet points
  No complete sentences or paragraphs
- Stay consistent on format
- Keep it to one page

Content

- Education
- Experience
- Leadership/Involvement
- Extracurricular Activities
- Skills
- Certifications

Action Statements

- Quantify your achievements
- Highlight transferrable skills
- 3-5 bullets per position
- Each bullet should state what you do and how you do it
- Each bullet should begin with an action verb to indicate what skill you used
- Sample action verbs: Monitored, answered, served, collaborated, presented, facilitated, organized
- Ex: Monitored inventory on a weekly basis by counting and recording data using excel data sheet
- Ex: Organized activities and events for 30 student club members on a monthly basis

Tailoring Your Resume

- Ensure that the content of your resume is directly aligned with the job that you are applying for
- Use keywords from the job description
- Generic resumes do not get interviews
- Employers sense when a resume is generic and assume that you do not care enough about the job to spend time tailoring your resume

RESUME TIPS FOR STUDY ABROAD EXPERIENCE

- Make sure the study abroad experience is stated in the Education section
- Beyond the Education section, you can include study abroad throughout your resume as appropriate and relevant to the job you're applying to. For example, if you were involved in a research project while abroad and it is relevant to the job you're applying to, you can include the research project within your resume. If you did an internship or community service while abroad, you could include that throughout your experiences on the resume. (See sample on the next page.)
- Describe your experiences in bullet-point format, using action verbs to highlight the transferrable skills.

Get detailed feedback
on your resume's content and format
anytime, anywhere, 24/7
with VMock

SAMPLE RESUME INCLUDING STUDY ABROAD EXPERIENCE

DISCLAIMER: Please note that the sample below is meant to be used as a general guide. It is not a template. There are many ways to showcase your experiences. Your resume can include various experiences and categories as relevant to your experiences and career goals.

HEADING

EDUCATION

University of California, Los Angeles — Spring 20xx
Bachelor of Arts, Psychology and Education
Honors: Presidential Scholarship
GPA: 3.9

University Of Naples Federico II, Naples, Italy — Summer 20xx

- Participated in a six-week, six credit, intensive honors level summer semester abroad program
- Completed a seminar course in Italian Education System on the systematic foundations of their educational system and learned how they teach English Abroad.
- Volunteered in the classroom to observe a lesson plan on how to teach Italian in elementary schools.

Include study abroad experiences throughout as relevant. This student has included a research project that emphasizes skills in analyzing data, observation, etc.

EXPERIENCE

Educational Research Project
University Of Naples Federico II, Naples, Italy — Summer 20xx

- Participated in a month-long study abroad research program that focused on analyzing the intersection between motivation and learning where students expressed their intrinsic and extrinsic motivations.
- Confirmed passion for working with children to discover what motivates them in school, optimizing their engagement and what prevents them from getting bored in the classroom.
- Interacted with students to find out what motivates them through art, board games, and activities.
- Conducted behavioral observations of students in the first- fifth grades to compare their intrinsic and extrinsic motivations in the classroom and noted their attention span time and their activity

Intern
Beacon Economics, Los Angeles, CA — January 20xx - April 20xx

- Conducted literature reviews and gathered data analyzing shortage of future Allied Healthcare workers
- Created written reports and Power Point presentations to assist in gaining media coverage of recent research findings

LEADERSHIP AND INVOLVEMENT

This student has included a volunteer experience they had abroad that emphasizes skills in teaching, communication, etc.

International Elementary School of Italy, Naples, Italy — Summer 20xx
Volunteer

- Tutored English and math in a local elementary school to second grade students with learning disabilities.
- Honed Italian language skills by explaining math and English in Italian to 4 students.
- Assisted students in English grammar and in writing paragraphs to test English proficiency and communication skills.
- Taught basic multiplication skills and evaluated the students' engagement, understanding, and motivation in learning their least favorite subject.

Finance and Outreach Director — March 20xx – May 20xx
UCLA Bruin Consulting, Los Angeles, CA

- Collaborated with a 9-person board to implement over 7 professional events for 450+ members quarterly
- Planned and hosted UCLA's largest annual Consulting Fair with over 20 firms and 250+ attendees
- Developed and implemented innovative marketing campaign that increased event attendance by 70%

SKILLS

- **Languages:** Italian Fluency and Conversational Spanish
- **Computer Software:** Proficient in Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Canva, Google Docs, SPSS
- **International Travel:** (Italy, France, Vienna, and Israel), Amnesty International, Spanish club

COVER LETTERS

The goal of the cover letter is to help support your resume and experience. This is your opportunity to share what sets you apart from other candidates while pitching your skills, qualifications, experiences and knowledge of the company and the contribution you can make.

GENERAL TIPS FOR COVER LETTERS

Formatting

- Format like a letter, including employer address and contact information at the top
- Address to a specific person/hiring manager if you can find their name
- Use the same header as your resume
- Keep to one page
- Include a salutation and signature

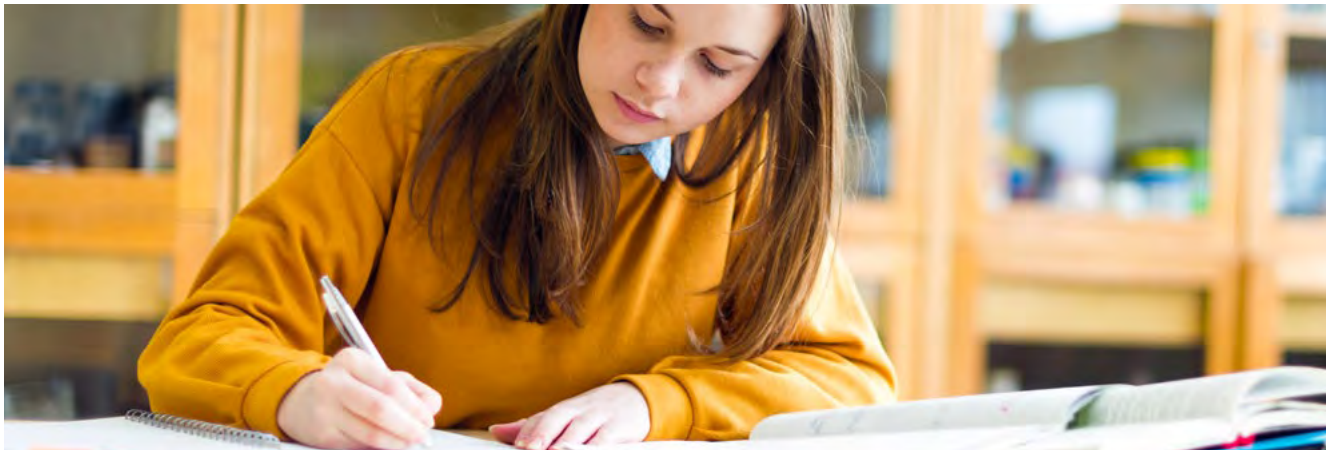
Content

- Include an introduction stating the position you're applying to and how you learned about the position
- Provide a summary of your relevant skills and experiences
- Connect your past experiences to the job and company
- State the mission of the company and how it relates to your goals
- Share your passion and interest in the field
- Push for an interview
- Make sure it's tailored to a specific position

COVER LETTER TIPS FOR STUDY ABROAD EXPERIENCE

- Describe your global competencies – knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes. Provide examples of your experiences and how you used those competencies
- Connect your global competencies to the job. Explain how your international experience can uniquely contribute to your role at the organization
- Market your transferable skills such as independence, cultural sensitivity, confidence, and problem-solving skills to the employer to help you stand out from the other candidates more uniquely.
- Make sure your cover letter is future oriented. Relate your experiences to the company and how you can contribute to their mission, vision, clients, and overall purpose.

Please refer to Chapter 6 of the UCLA Career Guide (career.ucla.edu/resources/ucla-career-guide) for comprehensive guidance around cover letter development, pg. 46-47.



PRACTICE: *Identify a position that you are currently interested in. Use worksheet on* ***page 32*** *to write about the knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes that you gained from your study abroad experience that relate to this position. Write a paragraph summarizing those skills and how they relate to the position of interest.*

SAMPLE COVER LETTER INCLUDING STUDY ABROAD EXPERIENCE

DISCLAIMER: Please note that the sample below is meant to be used as a general guide. Make sure to use your own language and tone to create a genuine and effective letter.

HEADING

Date
Addressee
Role
Company

Dear...,
I am delighted to apply for the Educational Strategist position at the International Educational Organization in the New York office. I learned about this opportunity through Handshake and the Virtual networking event on May 10, 2021. Collectively, my coursework, study abroad experiences, internships, and co-curricular experiences make me an ideal candidate for this opportunity.

While enrolled at the University Of Naples Federico II, in Italy, I took a course on the Italian Education System where I learned the systematic foundations of their educational system and about how they teach English abroad. This was a fascinating class because it helped me to see and understand differences between the educational system in the U.S. and in Italy. Additionally, I participated in an educational research experience that analyzed motivation and learning with its origin as intrinsic or extrinsic motivation. This experience confirmed my passion in educational research and multiculturalism. I enhanced my proficiency in Italian language and became more skilled in a cross-cultural context in education. My skill set enables me to provide perspective and international models of other educational systems that would benefit your research to improve the ESL curriculum of the English Camp for next summer.

I would welcome the opportunity to further discuss how I could contribute to your organization and students. Collaborating on your team would enable me to contribute to the educational planning, strategy, and curriculum development that this role requires. I look forward to discussing my qualifications as an Educational Strategist for the International unit as it would also be a great fit with my interest in international educational equality and systems. Thanks for your time and consideration.

Kind Regards,
Your Name

Source: Word Learning SIT Study Abroad: After Study Abroad A toolkit for Returning students
http://www.worldlearning.org/documents/worldlearning/studyabroad-reentry-toolkit.pdf

There are many types of Interviews: one-on-one, panel, group, presentation, etc. Regardless of which type of interview you're asked to do, there are general tips that apply to all interviews.

GENERAL TIPS FOR INTERVIEWS

- Do your research before the interview to make sure you know about company's goals
- Practice for general interview questions
- Know how the position applies to your skills and interests and think of how you can demonstrate that
- Identify questions you want to ask the employer
- Dress for success
- Use the CARR Method below to identify examples from your past experiences and answer behavioral interview questions

THE CARR METHOD

Behavioral interview questions aim to assess a particular skill or quality through an example of how you handled a situation in the past. The idea is that past behavior indicates future performance. Behavioral questions typically start with "Tell me about a time when..." or "Give an example of when you..."

CONTEXT:

Describe a specific event/situation from your past. Provide context so that the interviewer understands the situation but avoid unnecessary details. Use examples from past jobs, school, or community experiences

ACTION:

Describe the action that you took to address the situation. Focus on your role, what you thought and how you handled the situation

RESULT:

What was the result of your action? What did you accomplish? What did you learn?

RELATE:

How does this experience relate to the position you're applying to?

INTERVIEW EXAMPLE 1:

Describe a time when you encountered a communication barrier while studying abroad and how did you handle it?

CONTEXT:

While studying abroad in Spain, I was living with a host family. On my first day I realized that I didn't have a pillowcase on my pillow. I did not know the word, but it was late and I didn't have time to look it up before my Señora went to bed.

ACTION:

I thought about different options. I could either sleep without a pillow that night or think of another way to ask for what I needed. I decided to get creative and asked her for a "t-shirt" for the pillow.

RESULT:

This actually became a nice icebreaker. We laughed about the situation and she was able to teach me the correct word and get me what I needed.

RELATE:

In this experience, I used creativity to help me communicate my needs. I've learned that it's important to communicate my needs and adapt my approach to each situation, which is a valuable skillset that I can translate to other situations.

THE CARR METHOD

INTERVIEW EXAMPLE 2:

What experience do you have working with people from backgrounds different from your own, and how do you think this experience relates to the workplace?

CONTEXT:

During the summer of my 3rd year at UCLA, I conducted an 8-week internship in Bogota, Colombia. For my internship, I was placed at an organization that works with adolescents and LGBTI youth who are victims of domestic violence. As a non-native Spanish speaker and first time visitor to Colombia, I had to learn how to navigate my workplace in a second language and a new culture, while also serving a diverse group of clientele. In the beginning, due to the language barrier, I often found myself getting frustrated when I couldn't get my point across or when I didn't fully understand instructions provided to me by my colleagues. I also realized that the approach the organization goes about supporting their clientele in Colombia is much different than how I have been accustomed to at similar organizations in Los Angeles.

ACTION:

Although challenging in the beginning, I was eventually able to adapt and become a strong contributor to my office place. Rather than getting frustrated, I worked hard to be patient when speaking in Spanish and made sure to ask clarifying questions if I didn't understand something from one of my fellow colleagues. Over time, I began to understand why the organization took a different approach to serving their clientele, much of which was based on local laws, stigma and support systems. Instead of viewing the "U.S. approach" as better, just because that was what I was used to, I began to see and understand the benefits of the way my internship site served their clientele in the local context of the Colombian culture.

RESULT:

By the end of the 8-week internship, I went from being an outsider assisting with small supportive tasks, to being a full blown contributing member of the team. I was able to value the opinions and viewpoints of the other team members, while also providing ideas based on my own experiences working in similar organizations in Los Angeles. Towards the end of my internship, I was even tasked with leading a new initiative focused on creating resources for local primary school teachers, who may believe that their students have been victims of domestic violence.

RELATE:

This experience taught me a lot about working with people from different backgrounds. I realize that most office spaces are global and include people from various backgrounds. This experience has definitely improved my intercultural fluency and has taught me to be more adaptable, patient, and open-minded, so that I can thrive while working with a diverse group of co-workers.

PRACTICE: Answer the following interview question "***How have your past experiences prepared you for this position?***" by incorporating your study abroad experience using the CARR method. Use the worksheet on ***page 33***.

INTERVIEWS

INTERVIEW TIPS FOR STUDY ABROAD EXPERIENCE

- Integrate your study abroad experiences into your answers throughout the interview. Don't wait until the employer specifically asks about study abroad/ global competence.
- Describe how you can contribute to the company by highlighting the specific skills you developed while studying abroad.
- Clearly state specific examples from your study abroad experience and what skills you gained from each given situation as they relate to the job.
- Be prepared to highlight examples from study abroad that demonstrate diversity, problem-solving, openness to learning, risk-taking, foreign language, etc.

COMMON INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Tell us about yourself.
2. What is your understanding of the position and why are you interested in it?
3. How have your past experiences prepared you for this position?
4. How does this position align with your long-term and short-term career goals?
5. What do you know about our company, our products, and our mission statement?
6. In what significant ways can you contribute to our organization?
7. What are your greatest strengths and weaknesses?
8. Tell us about a time when...
9. Describe an example of when you showed...
10. Tell us about one of your greatest accomplishments.

Please refer to the UCLA Career Guide (career.ucla.edu/resources/ucla-career-guide/) Chapter 7 for comprehensive guidance around successful interviewing strategies, pg. 49-52.

TIP: Use Interview Stream to prepare for your next interview by creating and conducting custom interviews with hundreds of position-specific questions.

Expand Your Network

NETWORKING IS A VITAL SKILL IN YOUR CAREER JOURNEY. WHETHER YOU SEEK EMPLOYMENT IN THE STATES OR ABROAD, NETWORKING IS THE KEY THAT WILL MAKE THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN YOU AND ANOTHER CANDIDATE. With the various social media platforms available in modern society, networking has become easier than ever. You can leverage your social media platforms to develop your personal brand, connect with professionals, and remain relevant in your industry. As a study abroad returnee, you can stay in contact with people from your host country, which will significantly broaden your network! As a result of being abroad, you have expanded your network tremendously by meeting new faculty, peers and possibly even employers and co-workers. That puts you at a huge advantage over the competition so optimizing your network is key in your career trajectory.

EXPAND YOUR NETWORK

Here are some tips to help you grow and maintain a global network:

Professionalism and Awareness

How you portray yourself on social media matters. Even on your personal profiles, it is important to be mindful of the message and branding you are putting across. Keep in mind that employers can access your social media during the job search process. Furthermore, while you are studying abroad, you may be sharing your experience on your social platforms. Make sure to highlight the quality of your experiences and indicate what you're learning via your posts. It is also a good idea to add study abroad to your Handshake and LinkedIn profiles as this demonstrates that you've engaged in diverse experiences and went out of your comfort zone to grow and develop.

Elevator Pitch

Developing your elevator pitch is the first step in networking and building your personal brand. A good elevator pitch should be short and memorable.

Introduce yourself + your value proposition + the ask

SAMPLE PITCH: *Hello, my name is Ellis Bruin. I am a UCLA student majoring in psychology and Education minor. I just returned from a summer abroad in Italy where I studied intrinsic and extrinsic motivation and how it affects student learning. I am aspiring to become a global educational consultant helping families in identifying ideal international schools for their children when moving abroad for work. It is a pleasure to meet you.*

Please refer to the UCLA Career Guide (career.ucla.edu/resources/ucla-career-guide) Chapter 5 for comprehensive guidance around elevator pitch development, pg. 18.

EXPAND YOUR NETWORK

Informational Interviews

An informational interview is a conversation with a professional in a career field you are considering, which will help you gather information and advice to assist in your career planning process. Informational interviews are a great way to learn from professionals and grow your network.

Social media platforms, especially LinkedIn, are a great way to connect with professionals. You can also use UCLAOne to connect specifically with UCLA alumni.

To request an informational interview, you can send a written request via email or message on a social media platform. Your message includes your elevator pitch and serves as a preliminary introduction to help communicate the intent of your request—to gather information and advice about a career option (not to ask for a job). Remember, this is their first impression of you. Be formal and professional in your correspondence.

SAMPLE MESSAGE:

I am a psychology student at UCLA with experience in research and tutoring, and with interest in intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. I am aspiring to become an educational consultant for global markets and I was hoping to hear about your career journey in this field. I appreciate your consideration and look forward to meeting you.

Kind Regards,
Student name

Don't forget to send a "Thank You" note after the meeting and what you got out of the interaction. It's important to show your gratitude and professionalism.

Please refer to the UCLA Career Guide (career.ucla.edu/resources/ucla-career-guide) Chapter 3 for comprehensive guidance on informational interviews, pg. 10-11.

EXPAND YOUR NETWORK

Maintaining Connection Globally

While studying abroad, you can contact professionals in your industry via social media, specifically LinkedIn, to introduce yourself and create a connection.

Take note of the people you met while abroad. These can include anyone from professors, peers, roommates, employers, coworkers or people you met in your extracurricular activities. Make a list of these individuals and how you met them. Add them to your LinkedIn account and reach out to them for an update from time to time.

You can also request a recommendation from faculty and/or employers if you think they can add value to your profile. Choose people that have witnessed your knowledge, leadership, tenacity, and hard work and can attest to the contribution you can make to a potential employer/role.

Remember that your online presence impacts your professional image. Continue to be mindful about your posts as you build and maintain your global network.

In conclusion, keep in touch with your network, be active on LinkedIn and share relevant articles, wins, accomplishments to keep your profile active and thriving. Request and provide recommendations to keep your profile up to date and thriving. Optimize your network and live your Brand. Remember, your brand is your name so make it impeccable by the reputation you build for yourself.

Conclusion & Resources

We hope this handbook has provided valuable tips to help you integrate your study abroad experience and share it with others. Please note that your unique experiences are valuable. We encourage you to continue reflecting on your experiences and continue to communicate them with your network.

Staff at the UCLA Career Center can provide additional assistance on incorporating the skills and competencies you developed during your study abroad experience into your job search. Please reach out to the **UCLA Career Center** to meet with a counselor, explore resources, connect with employers, attend career events, and learn more about your career and professional development. The online resources listed below can be accessed through **Handshake** and the Career Center website.:

HANDSHAKE
Make appointments with Career Educators, sign-up for the Career Center's workshops, panels, recruiting events, and find jobs/internships on the job board.

VMOCK
Get detailed feedback on your resume's content and format anytime, anywhere, 24/7.

PARKER DEWEY
Apply for paid, micro-internship opportunities for students of all majors, class years, and degree levels.

FORAGE
Complete virtual work experience programs designed by top companies to build competitive skills.

FOCUS 2
Match your interests, personality, values, and skills to different career options. Explore different occupations and build a personalized career plan.

FIRSTHAND
Gain access to over 120 industry-specific career guides

GOINGLOBAL
Peruse over 100 country and international city career guides. Access an international job and internship search portal and a H1B sponsorship database.

INTERVIEW STREAM
Prepare for your next interview by creating and conducting custom interviews with hundreds of position-specific questions.

Self-Reflection Worksheets

IN THIS SECTION, YOU WILL HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO APPLY WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNED IN THIS HANDBOOK AND CREATE YOUR OWN STORY. This practice will help you identify the skills you have developed abroad and how you can highlight these skills to a potential employer. Once you have completed the worksheets, you should be aware of the competencies you already have and the ones you need to further develop to be career ready and have success in the workplace.

SKILLS & QUALITIES

PROMPT	REFLECTION	SKILLS/QUALITIES
These experiences were uncomfortable or challenging for me...		
How did I respond to these challenging situations and what did I learn from them?		
I am proud of myself for....		
My values or goals were impacted in the following ways...		
My views of the world have changed in the following ways....		
My views of my own country or culture have changed in the following ways...		
I have improved or grown in the following ways...		

DEVELOPING THE PROMPT - STAR METHOD

"Tell me about your experience studying abroad."

START WITH THE TAKEAWAY:

[One sentence on how your experience abroad impacted or changed you]

SITUATION:

[Provide contextual information about the program: what, when, where, why, with whom]

TASK:

[Share a challenge or opportunity you faced]

ACTION:

[Describe how you responded to the challenge or opportunity]

RESULT:

[Share how you have grown or changed as a result of the experience and how you hope to apply your skills and knowledge to your academic or professional pursuits.]

SELF-ASSESSMENT
NACE - Are You Career Ready?

COMPETENCY	READINESS
CAREER & SELF-DEVELOPMENT Proactively develop oneself and one's career through continual personal and professional learning, awareness of one's strengths and weaknesses, navigation of career opportunities, and networking to build relationships within and without one's organization.	☐ Need to Develop ☐ Currently Developing ☐ Excelling
COMMUNICATION Clearly and effectively exchange information, ideas, facts, and perspectives with persons inside and outside of an organization.	☐ Need to Develop ☐ Currently Developing ☐ Excelling
CRITICAL THINKING Identify and respond to needs based upon an understanding of situational context and logical analysis of relevant information.	☐ Need to Develop ☐ Currently Developing ☐ Excelling
EQUITY & INCLUSION Demonstrate the awareness, attitude, knowledge, and skills required to equitably engage and include people from different local and global cultures. Engage in anti-racist practices that actively challenge the systems, structures, and policies of racism.	☐ Need to Develop ☐ Currently Developing ☐ Excelling
LEADERSHIP Recognize and capitalize on personal and team strengths to achieve organizational goals.	☐ Need to Develop ☐ Currently Developing ☐ Excelling
PROFESSIONALISM Knowing work environments differ greatly, understand and demonstrate effective work habits, and act in the interest of the larger community and workplace.	☐ Need to Develop ☐ Currently Developing ☐ Excelling
TEAMWORK Build and maintain collaborative relationships to work effectively toward common goals, while appreciating diverse viewpoints and shared responsibilities.	☐ Need to Develop ☐ Currently Developing ☐ Excelling
TECHNOLOGY Understand and leverage technologies ethically to enhance efficiencies, complete tasks, and accomplish goals.	☐ Need to Develop ☐ Currently Developing ☐ Excelling

Adapted from NACE Career Readiness Competencies (www.naceweb.org)

IDENTIFY YOUR SKILLS

	Identify the Global Competency List ONE specific knowledge, ONE skill, and ONE value you've gained.	Study Abroad Experience Identify the specific study abroad experience that contributed to each competency
Knowledge		
Skills		
Values & Attitudes		

COVER LETTER

Identify a position that you are currently interested in. Think of the knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes that you gained from your study abroad experience that relate to this position. Write a paragraph summarizing those skills and how they relate to the position of interest:

INTERVIEW - CARR METHOD

Answer the following interview question by incorporating your study abroad experience using the **CARR Method**.

How have your prior experiences prepared you for this position?summarizing those skills and how they relate to the position of interest:

Context:		
Action:		
Result:		
Relate:		