

# Study Abroad, Global Citizenship, and the Study of Nongovernmental Organizations

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**Abstract** Nonprofit education and management programs often recognize the efficacy of including experiential learning opportunities such as study abroad in their curricula. In addition, higher education institutions increasingly prioritize global citizenship as a learning outcome. However, challenges abound for educators who want to evaluate study abroad courses that expect students to acquire or deepen their levels of global citizenship. This study seeks to evaluate the impact of a short-course study abroad program on students' global citizenship orientation. Our qualitative findings suggest that students indeed grapple with the notion of global citizenship in various ways while immersed in such a course. They can also express conflicting views, further confounding scholarly understanding of how to best measure global citizenship. We discuss implications for students expressing more of an observational role than an inclination to act on global issues.

**Keywords** Study abroad · Global citizenship · Nongovernmental organizations · Experiential learning

*I truly did fall in love with the people and the culture and it was a wonderful experience that left me feeling like I need to be doing work like this.—*

Student 6, female undergraduate.

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Nonprofit and nongovernmental organization (NGO) education and management programs often emphasize experiential learning opportunities in their curricula (Appel et al. 2015; Carpenter 2014). Experiential learning can be defined as the “many methodologies in which educators purposefully engage with learners in direct experience and focused reflection in order to increase knowledge, develop skills, clarify values, and develop people’s capacity to contribute to their communities” (Association for Experiential Education 2016). Study abroad programs—where students engage within other nations for academic credit (Lewin 2009)—are one method of experiential learning that can immerse students in a wide range of experiences.

The increased attention on experiential learning and study abroad opportunities parallels higher education institutions’ growing emphasis on global citizenship as a learning outcome (Carpenter 2014; Deardorff 2006; Hendershot and Sperandio 2009; Nolan 2009). Indeed, several scholars position global citizenship as the most central strategic aim of modern universities (Caruana 2014). As one among various definitions, Oxfam (2015) describes global citizens as being aware of the wider world; sensing one’s own role as a world citizen; respecting and valuing diversity; understanding how the world works; committing passionately to social justice; participating in local and global communities; collaborating to produce a more equitable, sustainable world; and taking responsibility for one’s actions. In addition, scholars have described the pursuit of global citizenship as useful for establishing a harmonious international village (e.g., Zhao 2009), understanding impacts on an inclusive civil society (Armstrong 2006), or simply influencing one’s personal growth (Thier 2015). Che et al. (2009) also argue that global citizens are

well-positioned to aid in efforts of diplomacy/national security or solve multinational dilemmas.

Given this range of benefits, being a global citizen might be particularly useful for graduates who work cross-culturally and/or cross-nationally for NGOs (Shultz 2007) or for those organizations with international clientele. NGOs are nonprofit or not-for-profit, “third sector” organizations that exist outside both market and state. These groups engage heavily in humanitarian efforts, conservation and environmental campaigns, or community and economic development programs. Among many NGO activities, they provide human services and charity to those in need and lead conservation and civil society efforts (Lewis 2014). We define NGOs as both international organizations with financial support from Western donors, as well as organizations staffed and funded locally.

Drawing on a sample of students studying abroad in a short-term (3 weeks), faculty-led study abroad course, this study uses a pre-/post-qualitative design to measure global citizenship development through the lens of experiential learning theory (ELT). During the course of a program, participating students ( $n = 13$ ) met with and learned from NGOs in Thailand and Cambodia during the summer of 2016. We reviewed students’ written reflections before and after the program using a global citizenship coding schema developed from four validated, extant measures (Morais and Ogden 2010; Reysen and Katzarska-Miller 2013; Türken and Rudmin 2013; Van Dyne et al. 2008). Our findings suggest that students grapple with the notion of global citizenship in various ways while immersed in short-term study abroad; students can also present conflicting views, further confounding understanding of how to best measure global citizenship. In addition, students expressed more of an observational role than an inclination to act on global issues. The inclination to take an observational role (a) coheres with findings from research that used ELT to examine short-term study abroad and (b) reinforces calls from global citizenship scholars who emphasize the importance of critical global citizenship education to address paternalism, racism, depoliticization, and ethnocentrism (e.g., Andreotti 2014).

## Global Citizenship

Globalization’s economic, environmental, and social impacts have made universities keen on developing ways to increase students’ cultural competency, compassion, and knowledge of global topics. In fact, many university mission statements refer to global citizenship (Sheppard 2004; Summit 2013). However, “global citizenship” is fraught with definitional challenges from camps of fierce adherents and ardent skeptics. Hovey and Weinberg (2009) champion

development of a global citizen identity, or the production of individuals who take responsibility for their citizenship commitments by respecting cultural difference across nations, communities, and worldviews. By contrast, Woolf (2010) casts global citizenship as

an inexact term that suggests a set of aspirations indistinguishable from those that might define a good citizen. When related to education abroad, however, it creates unrealistic expectations, and claims more than the experience can reasonably be expected to deliver ... Global citizenship is, instead, a concept that needs to be explored, analysed, modified and contested within a coherent educational framework. (59)

Not surprisingly, global citizenship studies reveal different inflections of the construct depending upon nation or region (Dolby 2008; Goren and Yemini 2017). One of the few aspects of global citizenship that rings consistently across borders is the assertion that the construct has not yet found its definitional agreements, according to academics in Asia (e.g., Schattle 2009), Europe (e.g., Davies 2006), or the Americas (e.g., Myers 2016).

Aside from definitions, pursuits to engender or enhance global citizenship among university students accompany philosophical, pedagogical, and equity-related challenges. Global citizenship and the activities that institutions expect to help develop that trait within individuals presents the risk of othering, fetishizing, or exoticizing people and communities that so-called global citizens might encounter (Skelly 2009). To some scholars, the very notion of becoming a global citizen is irreconcilably elitist, extending the type of paternalism that has positioned the Global North with respect to the Global South (Dobson and Sáiz 2005). In addition, the term “global citizen” holds little face validity for some university students in the UK, unless the expression of global citizenship includes an orientation toward action and/or social justice (Bourn 2011). Relatedly, the notion of acquiring global citizenship through study abroad highlights several compounding aspects of privilege: having sufficient resources to both attend university and study in a country other than one’s home campus (Hovey and Weinberg 2009; Lutterman-Aguilar and Gingerich 2002). Participation rates reflect such privilege. Only 1.5% of college students overall experience study abroad, but that small proportion accounts for 10% of college students who graduate (NAFSA: The Association of International Educators 2016).

To guard against conflating global citizenship education with an extension or expansion of neocolonialism, Andreotti (2014) argues for critical global citizenship, practices that exceed a “soft” focus primarily on poverty and helplessness, instead of analyzing systems that

perpetuate inequality and injustice. Recognizing the possibility of American university students indulging in fascination that stems from their relative socioeconomic advantages over others—a phenomenon that popular media has referred to as “poverty porn” (see Miles 2009)—several study abroad researchers have identified intentional, strong pedagogy from a competent instructor as a crucial input for study abroad participants’ development as global citizens (Pedersen 2010; Wynveen et al. 2012).

## Experiential Learning

Seeking way to develop global citizens, many universities have turned to experiential learning techniques and opportunities. Differing from traditional assumptions of learning in which ideas and values are assumed to be relatively fixed, experiential learning theory (ELT) argues that ideas and beliefs are continuously “formed and reformed” through experience (Kolb 2014, 28). With contributions from Dewey (1938), Lewin (1939), and Piaget (1964), experiential learning theory assumes that students arrive in an educational environment with preformed experiences and beliefs that may then be reconceptualized or changed based on new information or experiences. ELT suggests that individuals move through four dimensions: (a) concrete experience, (b) reflective observation, (c) abstract conceptualization, and (d) active experimentation. Thus, the theory suggests that individuals engage in recursive cycles through these dimensions, and individuals face constant challenges to integrate and balance ideas and actions that can conflict with each other (Kolb and Kolb 2005). In other words, learning can be considered a process or cycle that focuses on how beliefs are derived and modified through individuals’ experiences, compelling educators to alternatively support and challenge students to engage, reflect, conceptualize, and act (Kolb and Kolb 2012).

Contemporary experiential learning takes a variety of forms: internships, cooperative learning, service learning, study abroad, outdoor education, work experience, simulations and adventure education, among other techniques (Crowe and Adams 1979; Itin 1999). In a review of 49 Nonprofit Academic Affairs Council-affiliated master’s degree programs that offer nonprofit components, Carpenter (2014) finds experiential content in 125 different projects for more than 400 syllabi. Scheiber (2016) also finds that successful social entrepreneurs are more likely to have work and volunteer experiences, formal education, and cross-cultural experiences that prepare them for leadership roles. Yet nonprofit/NGO education has primarily operationalized experiential learning through service learning, which includes volunteering, applied projects, or

internships with nonprofit organizations (Gazley et al. 2013; Geller et al. 2016; Littlepage and Gazley 2013; Littlepage et al. 2012), rarely through study abroad or other international opportunities.

## Study Abroad: Experiential Learning Facilitating Global Citizenship

Study abroad programs, or “international experience for academic credit” (Lewin 2009, xiii), represent one significant form of experiential learning. Study abroad, with a long history in the USA after being idealized initially to promote “international understanding and world peace” (Crabtree 2008, 19), immerses students in a foreign culture and community with the expectation of conveying significant cultural learning and developing intercultural relationships (Coryell et al. 2016). Universities often position study abroad as an opportunity for students to develop as global citizens, thus yielding graduates who are prepared for active global engagement (Pang 2009). Relatedly, Schattle (2009) identifies educational programs as one of five ways that individuals can become global citizens. Alongside the other four—childhood experiences, immigration, political and social activism, and professional opportunities—Schattle (2009, 15) notes “traveling abroad to participate in educational programs” can be a particularly “pivotal step in the lives of many self-described global citizens.” Similarly, Hendershot and Sperandio (2009, 45) characterize study abroad as “the most important element in developing students’ global citizen identities.”

Moreover, Horn and Fry (2013) find in retrospective survey responses from alumni of undergraduate studies abroad between 1995 and 2005 that studying abroad in developing countries associates positively with the odds that a student will engage in development volunteerism. Relatedly, Bellamy and Weinberg (2006) assert that study abroad can teach intercultural and language skills, but its unique contribution is “true global citizenship,” an individual development trajectory that enables participants to view the world from various cultural perspectives. Such an effect engenders desires for continued language learning, intercultural awareness, and sensitivity to global issues. Particularly focusing on the global citizenship learning of what he calls First World students, Greenberg (2008) finds that the service-learning components of a history course that includes short-term community development visits to Argentina, Peru, or Brazil can lead to a variation of Freire and Macedo (2000) notion of *concientizacao*, or consciousness-raising. Furthermore, Tarrant (2010) theorizes that study abroad programs featuring experiential learning are particularly well-suited to develop worldviews that

align with notions of global citizenship. Most recently, Walters et al. (2017) show short-term study abroad courses as effective for spurring “transformative” or critical learning, particularly when paired with reflective journaling and a service-learning component.

Study abroad programs have also shown immediate (Wynveen et al. 2012) and long-term benefits (Paige et al. 2009) in supporting the development of global citizenship among participants. For example, survey results from US university students who participated in 4-week courses in Australia or New Zealand associate experiences abroad with more ecologically conscious behaviors and stronger environmental values, beliefs, and norms (Wynveen et al. 2012). In a mixed method, retrospective study, study abroad participation relates to lasting effects on five dimensions of global engagement (civic engagement, knowledge production, philanthropy, social entrepreneurship, and voluntary simplicity) and career choices (Paige et al. 2009).

In addition, short-term, faculty-led courses generate wide-ranging benefits for students such as opportunities for personal growth, intercultural competence (i.e., understanding one’s personal biases), and a global perspective (Di Gregorio 2015). Likewise, Graham and Crawford (2012) find student learning to vary among three types of study abroad models: engagement, immersion, and faculty-led opportunities, the latter of which tend to show the highest rates of learning and also support student conceptions of nation and citizenship. By contrast, engagement courses associate with higher recognition of problem-solving skill development but the lowest recognition of national identities. Short-term courses, however, can be problematic, amounting to little more than academic tourism if done incorrectly (Kelly 2010).

Perhaps unsurprisingly then, the last several decades have included dramatic expansion in study abroad opportunities (Lewin 2009): growth in study abroad participation swelled 5.3% between academic year 2012–2013 and 2013–2014 (NAFSA 2016). Also important for understanding the rapid expansion of study abroad is the variety of such activities that higher education institutions offer. Some students go abroad for a full academic year, others for a single term, to attend a partnering university or program. Faculty lead some study abroad opportunities by focusing intensively on singular topics for short durations. Short-term courses (up to 8 weeks)—the focus of this study—account for more than half of study abroad opportunities that US higher education institutions run, but there is also considerable variation among them (Donnelly-Smith 2009; Wynveen et al. 2012). Short-term courses can include homestays, travel to multiple sites, and incorporate service and/or research along with traditional tourist activities and classroom learning. Such variety means

“there is no ‘average’ short-term study abroad experience; the variations are as numerous as the institutions that host them” (Donnelly-Smith 2009, 12). Regardless of type, study abroad can be a vehicle to teach “students a basic but very important truth: that there are people beyond the shoreline who think just as well as they do, but who think somewhat differently” (Nolan 2009, 266).

Despite a growing interest in study abroad, little extant research focuses both on the roles of study abroad courses and NGOs. Such programs can link organizational studies to practical applications of NGO management, providing several benefits. First, NGO-related study abroad courses offer opportunities to see organizations in their actual social, political, and economic contexts. Second, such courses facilitate students meeting with, and learning from, international organizations that are wholly located and staffed by people outside a student’s home country—allowing for direct intercultural communication and knowledge sharing in an appropriate context. Third, such courses help students overcome the typical study abroad limitation of exposure only “to the elite sectors of a particular nation and only teach[ing] about the cultural values of the dominant group” (Lutterman-Aguilar and Gingerich 2002, 66), particularly if the study abroad program includes organizations that are led by or serve marginalized communities. This third component serves as a critical counterbalance to Hovey and Weinberg’s (2009, 46) caution about the danger that study abroad does little more than provide “a world of privilege in which a passport and a study abroad semester on a CV are a sufficient claim to global citizenship.” Domestically, Kuzma (2012) found that embedding refugee-focused, service-learning content in a course for undergraduates helped students acknowledge the refugee experience and various cultures/customs, change belief systems, and develop advocacy stances.

## Method

In this section, we discuss our method for addressing the research question of this study: Can a short-term, faculty-led study abroad course focusing on NGOs help students to develop a global citizenship orientation?

## Sample and Design

This qualitative study includes data from participants in a short-term (3 weeks), faculty-led study abroad course that a West Coast research university in the USA offered during the summer of 2016. The course included 13 participants: ten undergraduates (76.9%) and three graduate students (23.1%). Females (76.9%) were in the majority; no participants identified as transgender or gender

nonconforming. The students came from a mix of disciplinary majors, including international studies, international business, and geography, although the largest group studied the nonprofit/NGO sector. A faculty member who is based in a public affairs school and specializes in nonprofit/NGO research organized the program, which the university's study abroad office coordinated and made available to all majors and students both inside and outside the university. Among program participants, 12 were from the home university (92.3%). All participants enrolled voluntarily in the course, which included domestic activities prior to the cultural immersion and NGO activities in two developing nations: Thailand and Cambodia. No participants had prior experience working or traveling in the region.

Coursework began with pre-readings and a video on the NGO sector and the nations of interest, along with writing a memo (2–3 pages) to reflect upon those readings and share expectations.<sup>1</sup> During the course itself, participants visited more than a dozen NGOs across the region of study: Chiang Mai and Bangkok in Thailand followed by Siem Reap and Phnom Penh in Cambodia. The NGOs varied widely in their missions and included groups providing education for children, organizing civil society activism for land rights, conservation/environmental efforts, and serving refugees and victims of human trafficking. After a brief presentation by organization staff, students were allowed to ask questions and engage in dialogue with staff. Most visits lasted 60–90 min. Students interacted with staff and observed processes, but did not work/intern for the NGOs (with the exception of 1-day-long excursion where students prepared a program-sponsored lunch at a rural elementary school). The group also visited cultural and historical sites such as Bangkok's Grand Palace in Thailand and Angkor Wat and the Killing Fields in Cambodia.

Although the study abroad course did not include formal training in global citizenship—either before disembarkation or on site in Thailand and Cambodia—experts led briefings on cultural norms and etiquette upon arrival in each country. The program also featured debrief time to allow students to reflect collaboratively on their experiences, a practice that Lutterman-Aguilar and Gingerich (2002) emphasize as an essential process for educating learners to become global citizens. As another activity that an additional paper in this program of research focuses upon, students participated in two focus group discussions about their values and expectations in the course program, first at the outset in Thailand and second near the end of the course in Cambodia. Upon returning home, each student produced a journal in either typed (expected minimum: 10

pages) or edited video form (5 min). Lutterman-Aguilar and Gingerich (2002, 69) endorse journals as “perfect tools for reflection upon the meaning of responsible global citizenship and action for social transformation.” The syllabus instructed students to integrate their experiences with course discussions and assigned readings into all work products, but neither written nor verbal instructions specified that responses should address global citizenship. Two pre-visit memos were not available for analysis ( $n = 11$ ), and one final journal ( $n = 12$ ) was not available, leaving us to compare a matched set of  $n = 10$  pre- and post-documents.

Although many universities aim to internationalize learning experiences and develop their students' intercultural competence in the process, few institutions employ specific methods to document or measure student growth in this area (Deardorff 2006). In examining university administrators' and scholarly experts' recommendations in this area, Deardorff (2006, 250) finds a consensus preference for a mix of qualitative and quantitative methods that leans on “bottom-up” approaches such as narrative diaries or focus groups. We believe the current study to be the first global citizenship inquiry to examine student writing before *and* after a study abroad experience; potentially, ours is the only study in this area to make pre-/post-comparisons using qualitative methods. Several global citizenship studies have made quantitative pre-/post-comparisons (e.g., Brunell 2013; Wynveen et al. 2012).

Interestingly, Deardorff (2006, 251, 252) finds that only 65% of scholars felt that pre- and posttesting should be used as a way to assess intercultural competence, whereas administrators (90%) overwhelmingly agreed on the use of pre- and posttests. The administrators' premise seems to be that ease of using pretest/posttest design enables a program evaluator to determine whether an intervention (i.e., study abroad) has indeed made a difference in students' global knowledge, skills, behaviors, and/or dispositions.

Limitations of previous studies suggest the need for our approach, which is novel in this field. For example, studying Australian preservice teachers' placements in Malaysian secondary schools, Campbell and Walta (2015) analyzed daily journals of two academic staff that directed practicum experiences and interview data from preservice teachers only at the end of the first day in their practicum schools. Such data sources offer partial longitudinal insights: merely perspectives external to the students who are immersing culturally. Gambino and Hashim (2016) reviewed retrospective essays about students' short-term, study abroad experiences in a class on climate change and sustainable development in Bangladesh. The authors found multiple dialogues with diverse members of the host country to associate with cultural understanding, ethical commitments, and cosmopolitan civic-mindedness.

<sup>1</sup> Course materials and assignment prompts can be accessed in an appendix available from the corresponding author.

However, their data present only rear-facing perspectives, not differences between expectations and experiences, both of which we present here.

### Analytical Techniques

To analyze students' work products, we employed Hsieh and Shannon's (2005) directed content analysis approach to derive relevant findings from pre-visit memos and post-visit journals/videos. We applied that approach after developing a coding schema from four validated measures of global citizenship or closely related constructs:

- Cultural Intelligence Scale (Van Dyne et al. 2008)
- Global Citizen Scale (Reysen and Katzarska-Miller 2013)
- Global Citizenship Scale (Morais and Ogden 2010)
- Global Identity Scale (Türken and Rudmin 2013)

In Table 1, we report internal consistency statistics and sample items for the four measures upon which we based our codes. By including more than one measure, we met the expectation of Schattle (2009, 18), who notes the essential need to avoid the risk that “self-professed global citizens, especially those who begin to think about global citizenship as a result of short and limited experiences abroad, gravitate to a relatively shallow view of the concept” when examining such a multifaceted construct.

Collapsing conceptually related subscales across measures, we developed a schema with nine dimensions of global citizenship: (a) social justice orientation, (b) global competence, (c) global awareness and/or knowledge, (d) global citizenship identity, (e) intergroup empathy, (f) valuing diversity, (g) tolerance for ambiguity, (h) global metacognition, and (i) feeling responsible to act/engage globally. In Table 2, we report the 48 indicators that those nine codes subsume. We organized the 48 indicators into nine codes for two reasons. First, employing multiple indicators per code enabled us to enhance construct validity (Rushton et al. 1983), a crucial advantage given the vast definitional disagreements that surround global citizenship. Second, reporting data from nine codes improved our ability to interpret and discuss findings. Ultimately, our schema enabled us to code documents both for the occurrence of a global citizenship indicator and the inverse of an indicator (i.e., instances in which students' responses exhibited opposition to global citizenship). Our more expansive view thus enabled us to track the ways in which individual students' experiences with becoming global citizens and demonstrating global citizenship might vary on major dimensions of this complex construct.

The member of the research team with more expertise in global citizenship coded the pre-visit memos and post-visit journals/video transcripts, which we matched via unique

participant identifiers. To promote validity and reliability in our analyses of qualitative data, we used rich, thick descriptions (Merriam 2009) and systematic counting procedures to help readers examine the extent to which our findings might be representative and/or widespread (Seale and Silverman 1997). We report and discuss findings in the ensuing section.

### Findings and Discussion

We divide this section into (a) expressions of global citizenship and (b) opposed/contradictory views on global citizenship.

#### Expressions of Global Citizenship

As shown in Table 3, students' writing represented far more global citizenship dimensions after the study abroad component of the course than before. Pre-visit memos featured  $M = 4.27$  ( $SD = 2.57$ ) coded statements per student. Much of what students produced was a summary of material, not analysis of topics or comparing materials to their expected experiences. In the assignments that students submitted prior to studying abroad, global awareness and/or knowledge accounted for 18 of 47 coded statements (38.3%) with social justice orientation and global metacognition each accounting for 12 (25.5% each). Those three codes produced nearly 90% of the students' written demonstration of themselves as global citizens. No student's writing addressed global competence, intergroup empathy, tolerance for ambiguity, or feeling responsibility to act/engage globally.

By contrast, students' writing after 3 weeks in Thailand and Cambodia reflected much greater variety across the nine dimensions. Post-visit, journals and transcribed videos featured nearly five times as many coded statements on average ( $M = 20.50$ ), though nearly eight times as much between-student variance ( $SD = 23.71$ ). There were notable differences before and after the course in the breadth of coverage across the nine dimensions. Global awareness and/or knowledge remained the most common code with an exceptionally similar proportion to the pre-visit (94 of 246 coded statements or 38.2%), but after visiting Thailand and Cambodia, 7 of the 9 codes accounted for 10 or more statements. Furthermore, half of the students addressed 8 of 9 dimensions, all but global competence. Two-thirds of students addressed social justice orientation, global citizenship identification, and global metacognition. In fact, global metacognition appeared in 34 statements (13.8%), followed by tolerance for ambiguity with 28 (11.4%), global citizenship identity with 27 (11.0%), and valuing diversity with 21 (8.5%). Still, there

**Table 1** Reliability and sample items for four measures of constructs related to global citizenship

Source	Subscale	<i>n</i>	$\alpha$	Sample item
Global Citizenship Scale (Morais and Ogden 2010)	Social responsibility	6	0.79	<i>I think that many people around the world are poor because they do not work hard enough</i>
	Self-awareness	3	0.69	I am able to get other people to care about global problems that concern me
	Intercultural communication	3	0.76	I often adapt my communication style to other people's cultural background
	Global knowledge	3	0.67	I feel comfortable expressing my views regarding a pressing global problem in front of a group of people
	Involvement in civic organizations	8	0.92	Over the next 6 months, I plan to get involved with a global humanitarian organization or project
	Political voice	4	0.86	Over the next 6 months, I will contact or visit someone in government to seek public action on global issues and concerns
	Glocal civic activism	3	0.74	I will boycott brands or products that are known to harm marginalized global people and places
Global Citizen Scale (Reysen and Katzarska-Miller 2013)	Normative environment	2	0.82	Most people who are important to me think that being a global citizen is desirable
	Global awareness	4	0.80	I am aware that my actions in my local environment may affect people in other countries
	Global citizenship identification	2	0.89	I would describe myself as a global citizen
	Intergroup empathy	2	0.76	It is easy for me to put myself in someone else's shoes regardless of what country they are from
	Valuing diversity	2	0.91	I would like to join groups that emphasize getting to know people from different countries
Global Citizen Scale (Reysen and Katzarska-Miller 2013)	Social justice	2	0.74	Those countries that are well off should help people in countries who are less fortunate
	Environmental sustainability	2	0.76	Natural resources should be used primarily to provide for basic needs rather than material wealth
	Intergroup helping	2	0.76	If I had the opportunity, I would help others who are in need regardless of their nationality
	Responsibility to act	2	0.78	Being actively involved in global issues is my responsibility
Global Identity Scale (Türken and Rudmin 2013)	Cultural openness	5	0.76	I identify with a world community
	Non-nationalism	5	0.86	<i>My own culture is the best in the world</i>
Cultural Intelligence Scale (Van Dyne et al. 2008)	Metacognitive	4	0.71–0.77	I check the accuracy of my cultural knowledge as I interact with people from different cultures
	Cognitive	6	0.84–0.85	I know the cultural values and religious beliefs of other cultures
	Motivational	5	0.75–0.77	I am confident that I can socialize with locals in a culture that is unfamiliar to me
	Behavioral	5	0.83–0.84	I change my nonverbal behavior when a cross-cultural interaction requires it

$\alpha$  = internal consistency; *Italics* indicate reverse-coded items

was considerable between-student variance: standard deviations exceeded the means for each code.

Given the format of the course, it is not surprising that these findings show global awareness and/or knowledge more frequently than tolerance for ambiguity, global citizenship identity, global metacognition, global competence, and feeling responsibility to act/engage globally. First, this course was the first formal study abroad experience for 12

of 13 participants (92.3%, though one student had served in the US Peace Corps; another interned in India). For some, it was their first trip out of the country. Expecting students to be fully globally competent at such an early stage in their learning would not be realistic. Second, the course featured more of an observation-focus than an action-oriented program such as one that impelled students to volunteer for an organization. Being observational and

**Table 2** Codes and indicators of global citizenship

Code	Indicator
Social justice orientation	Recognition that others, regardless of country, are equally entitled to rights or opportunities enjoyed by privileged groups
	Recognition of the degree to which punishments are just, regardless of a defendants' country
	Belief that those who are advantaged in one country should aid those who are disadvantaged in their own or various countries
	Belief that people have universal rights to health care, clean water, food, and legal assistance, regardless of country
Global competence	Knowledge of how to mitigate pressing environmental or social concerns that affect people in various countries or in a country where the individual does not live
	Ability to rally others to care about a problem that affects people in various countries or in a country where the individual does not live
	Comfort in public forums expressing views regarding pressing global concerns
	Adaptation of behaviors (e.g., nonverbal cues, facial expressions, silence), when interacting with people of various countries' cultural backgrounds
	Adaptation of communication (e.g., language, accent, tone, pacing) when interacting with people of various countries' cultural backgrounds
Global awareness and/or knowledge	Awareness of current issues that impact relations between countries
	Attempts to stay informed of current issues that impact relations between countries
	Understands systems that lead to interactions between people in various countries
	Knowledge of various countries' economic and legal systems
	Knowledge of various countries' cultural values and religious beliefs
	Knowledge of various countries' styles of arts and crafts
	Knowledge of various countries' cultural rites, processes, and rituals
	Knowledge of rules (e.g., nonverbal behaviors, vocabulary, grammar, alphabets or other systems) for various countries' communication systems
	Recognition of one's local impact on interdependence of countries
	Recognition of the limited nature of natural resources across countries
	Belief that natural resources should be used primarily to provide for basic needs rather than material wealth, regardless of country
Global citizenship identity	Awareness of current issues that impact relations between countries
	Belief in one's connection with people from various countries
	Self-describing as a global citizen
	Recognition of one's family and/or friends desire for the individual to become or act as a global citizen
	Considering oneself a citizen of the world more than of a particular country
	Identifying with a world community as much, or more than, a region's, country's, or sub-national jurisdiction's community
	Belief that one's own country does not have a supreme role in the world
	Belief that one's own country is not superior to other countries overall
Intergroup empathy	Ability to empathize with people from various countries
	Caring about people from other countries as much as one's own country
	Desire to help others, regardless of country
Valuing diversity	Desire to participate in groups that emphasize getting to know people from different countries
	Interest in learning about the countries, and their associated cultures, that have existed in this world
	Enjoyment of interacting with people from various countries
	Enjoyment of cultural artifacts (e.g., music, film, literature, etc.) from various countries
Tolerance for ambiguity	Confidence in one's ability to interact with locals in an unfamiliar country's culture
	Ability to manage stresses of adjusting to an unfamiliar country's culture
	Enjoyment of living in an unfamiliar country's culture



**Table 2** continued

Code	Indicator
Global metacognition	Consciousness of the cultural knowledge one uses when interacting with people from various countries
	Adjusting one's cultural knowledge when interacting with people from various countries
	Checking the accuracy of one's cultural knowledge when interacting with people from various countries
Feeling responsible to act/ engage globally	Buys fair-trade or locally grown products and brands from various countries
	Boycotts brands or products that are known to harm marginalized people in various countries
	Pays membership or makes cash donation to charit(ies) in countries abroad
	Volunteers with humanitarian organizations or projects to help individuals and/or communities in countries abroad
	Participates in walks, dances, runs, or bike rides in support of humanitarian organizations or projects to help individuals and/or communities in countries abroad
	Attends forums, live music shows, theater performances, other event in support of humanitarian organizations or projects to help individuals and/or communities in countries abroad
	Contacts newspapers, radio stations, websites, blogs, chatrooms, or other social media outlets to express concerns about pressing global concerns
	Contacts government officials, of any level, about pressing global concerns

**Table 3** Descriptive statistics of global citizenship in students' writing

Code	Pre-visit				Post-visit			
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>	%	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Social justice orientation	12	25.5	1.09	1.14	14	5.7	1.17	2.21
Global competence	0	0.0	0.00	0.00	4	1.6	0.33	0.89
Global awareness and/or knowledge	18	38.3	1.64	1.29	94	38.2	7.83	6.91
Global citizenship identity	2	4.3	0.18	0.40	27	11.0	2.25	3.39
Intergroup empathy	0	0.0	0.00	0.00	16	6.5	1.33	1.56
Valuing diversity	3	6.4	0.27	0.47	21	8.5	1.75	2.60
Tolerance for ambiguity	0	0.0	0.00	0.00	28	11.4	2.33	4.74
Global metacognition	12	25.5	1.09	0.94	34	13.8	2.83	5.54
Feeling responsibility to act/engage globally	0	0.0	0.00	0.00	8	3.3	0.67	0.78
Total	47		4.27	2.57	246		20.50	23.71

reflective in nature are the first two stages of Kolb and Kolb's (2005) experiential learning theory framework, followed by abstract conceptualization and active experimentation. A short course such as this one could be expected to jumpstart a learning process, but perhaps not allow enough time to move students from observation to active experimentation.

Still, counting coded quotations and examining the statements themselves indicated tangible changes in students' global citizenship dispositions. For example, Student 1, a female undergraduate, described acquiring global knowledge from pre-visit course materials:

Most development NGOs were founded by Westerners but the video and all articles bring up a really interesting point in that we are often the least prepared and qualified to actually be making decisions and trying to provide aid to people in other countries. The idea of starting local to eventually

grow a circle of influence is important, but how do we go about helping these other countries without ignoring our own issues in America and without asserting Western norms and solutions in a means analogous to colonization?

That statement was one of Student 1's three coded quotations in her pre-visit memo, which at 1140 words was pretty typical of the average in number of codes ( $M = 4.27$ ,  $SD = 2.37$ ) and words for that assignment ( $M = 1029.73$ ,  $SD = 387.63$ ). After the visit to Thailand and Cambodia, Student 1 wrote a 7286-word journal, which was 1.08  $SD$  above the mean word count for that assignment ( $M = 3621.25$ ,  $SD = 3382.74$ ). Her 86 coded quotations were more than four times that of an average student ( $M = 20.50$ ,  $SD = 23.71$ ) and was one of few students to account for all nine global citizenship dimensions. Notably, no student wrote pre-visit memos that addressed more than 4 of 9 codes. After the visit to

Thailand and Cambodia, 10 of 12 students who submitted journals or videos addressed 4 or more codes (83.3%).

Relatedly, Student 12, a female undergraduate, might not have needed to fly 7500 miles from the West Coast of the USA to acquire simple awareness of global issues. She confessed in her pre-visit memo, “I never really knew how big human trafficking was in until I began reading and asking questions.” However, it was not until the student saw the work of NGOs in Southeast Asia that her writing demonstrated a social justice orientation. In the post-visit journal, Student 12 described an NGO that provides scholarships and school uniforms for children; seeing that NGO’s work made her appreciate her parents’ reminder “to appreciate the privilege I have to attend school because many children do not ... witnessing the struggles Cambodian kids have to go through just to attend school was an eye-opener.”

Variation between student statements is another interesting finding. For example, Student 9’s (a female graduate student) 42 coded statements addressed all nine global citizenship dimensions, Student 11 (male undergraduate) accounted for 8 dimensions with 29 coded statements, and Student 6 (female undergraduate) accounted for 7 dimensions with 15 coded statements. By contrast, Student 10’s (female undergraduate) 5 coded statements reflected 2 dimensions. Some of this variation may reflect the length of the final project, the writing style, or sophistication of a given student. Perhaps we detected some students’ willingness to share more of their internal reflections, which sits at the core of experiential learning. Knowing that students learn in different ways, and find some instructional methods more challenging than others. This finding is not necessarily surprising, but it would be instructive for future programs to consider the widest possible array of student experiences and opportunities. As another important consideration, faculty leaders would benefit from understanding that students might take very different meanings from the same experiences.

As Andreotti (2014) suggests, educators should challenge students to think critically about international development. Although many students described the impact of seeing poverty in the communities we visited (a “soft” perspective), others grappled with extant social and economic systems that allow such conditions to persist. For example, Student 1 wrote: “the real power for change in Cambodia needs to come from the people. Where can they start if they aren’t even aware of their own rights or the system of which they could someday help improve?” Similarly, Student 7 (female undergraduate) thought systemically:

This [rice] subsidy did allow small-scale farmers to produce rice more cost-effectively, but it also

enabled the large companies to do so. Unfortunately, the large-scale producers can take better advantage of this than smaller producers as they have the technology and machinery to handle massive amounts of rice. Though the subsidy was initially intended to help the local farmers, it actually hurt them ....

Finally, Student 8 (a female graduate student) also applied a critical lens, connecting local labor practices with policies that enable human rights violations. Speaking of an organization helping to monitor labor practices, the student wrote, “If they had more support for government to punish people for not complying, their mission may be more attainable.”

### Opposed/Contradictory Views on Global Citizenship

Students also pondered notions that counter global citizenship (revisit Tables 4, 5). Likewise, oppositional or contradictory views appeared more regularly in post-course writings (per student  $M = 3.83$ ,  $SD = 6.79$ ) than in pre-visit memos ( $M = 0.27$ ,  $SD = 0.47$ ). Inverse coding was seen occasionally, however, in the pre-visit memos. For example, under the theme “global citizenship identity,” an example of an inverse code was:

Being such highly religious countries, I would like to know if people are more likely to donate to temples and, if so, how that might be affecting NGOs in comparison to less religious countries. In India, this is a huge problem; people give money to mythological gods but are unwilling to donate to the local schoolchildren. (Student 7, a female undergraduate)

Apparently, post-visit journals or videos afforded students an opportunity to reflect comprehensively on their experiences, as evidenced by the inverse codes (i.e., an “I” in Table 5). For example, although global awareness and/or knowledge produced the most positive statements, it also held seven statements in which students indicated dissonance with the idea of global awareness or knowledge. One way to view this finding is that the measures are not as useful as expected. Another way to think about this finding is that contradictory statements are evidence of learning itself. In 14 of 16 instances in which students demonstrated the inverse of a given domain, the same students produced as many or more statements that indicated the domain itself (87.5%). In those 14 instances, it seems that students might have been wrestling with the inherent contradictions of previously held worldviews versus how their study abroad experiences might have challenged their assumptions.

Examining findings from individual students, rather than the group aggregate, allows us to further understand how

**Table 4** Codes accounted for, coded quotations, and inverse codes per student

Student		Codes account for	Coded quotations	Inverse codes
1	Pre	3	3	0
	Post	9	87	22
2	Pre	4	6	1
	Post	4	7	1
3	Pre	4	6	0
	Post	3	7	3
4	Pre	NA		
	Post	5	11	1
5	Pre	3	10	1
	Post	4	7	0
6	Pre	NA		
	Post	7	15	4
7	Pre	2	4	1
	Post	4	14	0
8	Pre	4	4	0
	Post	4	18	2
9	Pre	3	4	0
	Post	9	42	0
10	Pre	2	3	0
	Post	2	5	0
11	Pre	1	1	0
	Post	8	29	13
12	Pre	2	3	0
	Post	4	4	0
13	Pre	2	3	0
	Post	NA		
<i>M</i> per student	Pre	2.73	4.27	0.27
	Post	5.25	21.33	3.83

students grappled with contradictions. For example, Student 1 expressed 17 positive statements on global awareness and knowledge, but three inverse statements. For example, she characterized Cambodia as a place where:

There are so many things I hadn't thought about being different about education here than back home. These kids even have a tooth brushing program at school (and judging by some of their teeth they needed it) but they can't bring the toothbrushes home because everyone in the family will use them.

Yet, at another point in her journal, the same student indicated limited "awareness of economic and legal systems" by writing: "We went out to dinner (I had fried rice with shrimp and a Thai Iced tea—I can't believe the food here is so cheap!)"

Similarly, the student expressed 11 statements that exemplified a global citizenship identity, specifically viewing her own culture as not being superior to another's, yet 12 inverse statements. For example, the student wrote: "I truly did fall in love with the people and the culture and it was a wonderful experience that left me feeling like I need to be doing work like this." However later, the same student wrote:

I know in other parts of [A]sia rivers can serve as bathing places but also places to use the bathroom or dispose of bodies. I wonder how much of that happens in other areas of this river as I see a young boy downstream drop his pants. I have never been so thankful for running clean water and working plumbing in my life.

Such contradictions also fall into the observing and reflecting categories of experiential learning. In these instances, students are being exposed to new cultures and norms. Balancing their openness and willingness to find the experience empowering, students also exhibited dissonance with their home experiences in the USA.

## Conclusion

This study showed results from measuring global citizenship qualitatively, using a quantitative measurement-informed schema to code students' writing before and after a short-term, faculty-led study abroad course. Using Kolb and Kolb's (2005) experiential learning theory, our findings suggest that short courses such as this one can assist students in igniting a learning process toward global citizenship.

However, this study has limitations that should be considered. As with all qualitative data, it is not possible to generalize findings from this single set of students to all students who participate in study abroad programs. Additionally, it could be argued that students who enrolled in this course already possessed a certain level of global citizenship: they were interested in learning first-hand about the challenges and opportunities that individuals experience both locally and inside NGOs in the developing world. There were also differences among students in their previous exposure to international travel or issues, including one student who had previously served in the US Peace Corps, one who had completed another study abroad course, and one who had interned in India.

Similarly, it is impossible to ignore the confounding effects of different writing styles of students or their observational and academic abilities in how they absorbed and were able to reflect upon experiences. Students' maturity and previous experiences may have also shaped

**Table 5** Coded quotations for final journals/videos including inverse codings

St.	SJO	GC	GAK	GCI	IE	VD	TfA	GM	FR
1	8	3; I1	17; I3	11; I12	3	8	17; I6	19	1
2	0	0	3; I1	0	0	1	2	1	0
3	0	0	5; I2	I3	1; I1	0	0	1; I1	0
4	0	0	2; I1	1	0	4	3	1	0
5	1	0	3	0	2	0	0	0	1
6	1	0	7	1; I4	0	2	1	1	2
7	0	0	9	3	1	0	0	0	1
8	I1	0	15	1; I1	0	0	1	1	0
9	1	1	23	7	4	1	2	2	1
10	1	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0
11	1	0	5	2; I6	4	5	2; I6	8	2; I1
12	1	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0
Total	14; I1	4; I1	94; I7	27; I26	16; I1	21	28; I12	34; I1	8; I1
<i>M</i>	1.17	0.33	7.83	2.25	1.33	1.75	2.33	2.83	0.67
<i>Prop.</i>	0.67	0.17	100.00	0.67	0.58	0.50	0.58	0.67	0.50

*I* inverse, *St.* student, *SJO* social justice orientation, *GC* global competence, *GAK* global awareness and/or knowledge, *GCI* global citizen identity, *IE* intergroup empathy, *VD* valuing diversity, *TfA* tolerance for ambiguity, *GM* global metacognition, *FR* feeling responsibility to act/engage globally, *M* average number of quotations per student; per code (inverse excluded for this calculation), *Prop.* proportion of students who had at least one quotation receive a given code (inverse excluded for this calculation)

how they understood their experiences. In other words, prior significant experiences or preexisting values might differentially support a global citizenship orientation. Because learning is a lifelong experience, it is not realistic to think that students engaging in this program arrived with blank slates, nor is it realistic to assume that their slates were equally blank or not relative to global citizenship. Finally, we operationalized global citizenship, a contested construct, using four extant measures; Alternate operationalizations might yield different conclusions.

Despite these limitations, this study offered a unique design to explore the influence of a study abroad program on students. Correspondingly, we found concrete evidence of students engaging in, reflecting upon, and conceptualizing global citizenship while studying NGOs in Thailand and Cambodia. However, unlike some previous studies (e.g., Horn and Fry 2013), we saw limited levels of active engagement, the final aspect of experiential learning (Kolb and Kolb 2012). This deficiency may have been a function of length or design; the program was primarily observational in its pedagogical approach. In order to “close the loop” in the experimental learning theory model and move to experimentation, students would likely need more time to digest information, as well as have an action element included in their program (e.g., being tasked with a project or activity). Open questions remain such as whether longer programs associate with increased learning, how engaging in various study abroad activities contribute to differential levels of learning, or whether providing students with more

opportunities to reflect or engage might lead to more global awareness.

Ultimately, this study raises important possibilities for future practice and research on study abroad programs that focus on NGOs. As students interested in nonprofit and NGO work, what better way to expose students to international issues and organizations than learning first-hand from these organizations during a cultural immersion opportunity. However, an essential characteristic of such an opportunity should be to challenge students to think critically about the problems facing the world, the economic and social systems that perpetuate inequality and poverty, and understand the inherent privileges many students hold when coming from developed economies. Considering the critical aspects of global citizenship can only support strong future understanding and leadership for students on the precipice of careers both at home and abroad.

#### Compliance with Ethical Standards

**Conflict of interest** The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

#### Appendix

See Tables 6, 7, 8, 9.

**Table 6** Course objectives*Instructional goals*

The course will provide a cultural immersion experience in Thailand and Cambodia

It will allow an opportunity to analyze NGOs and visit them on the ground through site visits

Be conversant in the issues facing international development through the perspective of nongovernmental organizations

*Student outcomes. Students who successfully complete this course will*

Understand and evaluate the primary theories of NGOs abroad

Understand the role of NGOs in the economy, in advocacy, and in policy in a developing nation

Evaluate the ways that NGOs carry about their work, from fundraising to their day-to-day operations

Understand the trends, challenges, and opportunities facing international NGOs

**Table 7** Pre-departure reading list

Lewis, D. (2014). *Nongovernmental Organizations, Management and Development, Third Edition*. New York: Routledge. (Chapters 1–2 and 5–6)

Kamler, E. M. (2013). Negotiating Narratives of Human Trafficking: NGOs, Communication and the Power of Culture. *Journal of Intercultural Communication Research*, 42(1), 73–90

Bryson, D. (2013). Diversifying NGO Leadership (SSIR), *Stanford Social Innovation Review* (Spring)

Herrman, C. (2015). *An African's Message for America*. New York Times Op-Docs Season 4. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/video/opinion/10000003431559/an-africans-message-for-america.html>

**Table 8** Pre-departure memo assignment prompt

We will engage in some class work to prepare us for our trip the week before we leave. One of the assignments due before our departure will be a Reading Reflections Memo. In 2–3 pages, single-spaced, please describe your reflection to the readings provided, and how they mesh with your expectations for the course. This is due June X and should be uploaded to Canvas or emailed to me. I will also accept hard copies the day we arrive in Chiang Mai

**Table 9** Post-program journal/video assignment prompt

Students have two options to complete the course project. This is due July X and uploaded or emailed to the instructor

*Option 1: Final report/journal/video*

Your final project will be due on the last day of the summer term. This project can take a variety of forms (e.g., a journal or video) that integrates your experiences with the course materials and class discussions. If a typed journal, you may include pictures, clips, links to websites or external videos. The paper length does not include pictures or any appendices. This will be uploaded to Canvas. Please let me know if you have large picture/video files that will need to be uploaded, or if your journal is in a format that can't be uploaded.

You may want to consider the following questions in preparing your final report: What were the big surprises of the trip? How did these differ from my expectations? How did you perceive the needs to be of the peoples of Thailand and Cambodia? What are the challenges and opportunities facing NGOs working abroad? What are the ethical considerations to managing an NGO? What is your biggest management takeaway?

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