K-12 Internationalization in the U. S.

IEMG 8610 Study Abroad and International Exchange

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In the past decade, there has been an increasing call for the U.S. to send more college students abroad, as the benefits of study abroad have been acutely recognized. For example, Currier et al. (2009) outlined the benefits of study abroad in students’ learning lie in one or more of three general domains: “academic knowledge and skills, personal growth, and intercultural sensitivity” (p. 140). Similarly, Hovey and Weinberg (2009) noted that intentional and purposeful study abroad programs “have greater capacity to develop communicative capacities in languages, interact appropriately in other cultures, and acquire problem solving strategies for international living (p. 36). Although expressed in different form, educators tend to agree that study abroad can help build students’ intercultural competence – attitudes, knowledge and skills that enable effective and appropriate interaction with people from different language and cultural backgrounds (Deardorff, 2010). Given that intercultural competence is a key component of global citizenship (Deardorff, 2009, p. 347), we can extrapolate that study abroad is conducive to the shaping of our college students into global citizens. Actually, many scholars such as Skelly, Kolb, Hovey and Weinberg, have explicitly argued that study abroad can be used as a vehicle to achieve global citizenship (Lewin, 2009, p xix). From a personal level, stories about study abroad participants’ life changing or transformative experience are numerous. For example, Fernandez (2011) told five stories of two senior diplomats, a journalist, a CEO, and a pair of renowned architects who all share a common denominator – a study abroad experience that opened them up to a wider world and new perspectives.

Not surprisingly, educators have been grappling with the issue of how to facilitate such experience so that a much greater variety and number of people will study abroad. Their efforts have led to a number of suggestions in the current literature encouraging institutions to push for wider participation in study abroad. For example, Currier et al. (2009) highly recommended
nurses to go abroad to study; Chieffo and Griffiths (2009) were convinced that short-term programs would serve as a starter for more students to study abroad; Frost and Raby (2009) called on community colleges to democratize study abroad; and Picard et al. (2009) appealed to have more minority students to participate in this endeavor. Their voice is heard by the U.S. government, which has made greater efforts to increase the number of outbound American students in the past decade, as demonstrated by the Senator Paul Simon Study Abroad Foundation Act proposed in 2007. This act aims to expand high quality study abroad programs fivefold in the coming decade; so that by 2016, the number of students studying abroad will rise to one million from the current 200,000 (Wanner, 2009, p. 85). As a result, study abroad has been growing in recent years; the Open Doors’ 2007 report indicates the number of study abroad students increased 8.5% to 223,543 in 2005-2006 from the previous year; from 2001 to 2006, there was a minimum growth of 13,000 students annually in study abroad (Picard et al., 2009, p. 321). However, as Picard et al. (2009) commented, despite the steady and upward trend, these numbers are still very modest and larger challenges are waiting. The Department of Education’s 2008 statistics show that almost 17.5 million students enrolled in U.S. colleges and universities in the academic year 2005-2006, and this figure is expected to climb up to 20 million by 2016. Therefore, compared to the total student body of academic year 2005-2006, the number of students studying abroad in the U.S. was less than 2% (p. 321).

This small percentage poses a big question for educators: what can we do to advance study abroad so as to maximize the great benefits inherently associated with this practice among American students? After familiarizing myself with the current literature on study abroad in the U.S., one idea occurred to me – the current internationalization movement in higher education has to be implemented beyond colleges and universities. To be more specific,
internationalization has to start from kindergarten through Grade 12; so that by the time students reach college, they have been well prepared with a certain level of language skills and intercultural competence. Such preparation will propel them to explore more about the world, and become inclined, if not eager, to go abroad to study. The deeper I delve into my research, the more convinced I have become that K-12 internationalization is both the direction for America’s future education, and the answers to the above question of how to expand study abroad. To me, study abroad is only a means to an end; it is not an end itself. The end is the nurturing and producing of global citizenship. In this case, the means and the end are symbiotic: students who study abroad tend to be more globally aware; whereas people who have a better global awareness tend to study abroad. It is based on this understanding this paper is written, in which I begin with a revelation of the current deficiency of foreign language skills and intercultural competence of American undergraduates, which is followed by three arguments on why the U.S. higher education needs to produce graduates that are globally competent and linguistically prepared; next, I move on to illustrate why such internationalization endeavor should start much earlier – to be implemented from kindergarten through to Grade 12; then I introduce some initiatives taken towards this direction, and conclude with a further emphasis on the significance of K-12 internationalization for the U.S. to maintain its global leadership in the 21st Century.

**Literature Review on Education Internationalization**

In the wake of the 9/11 terrorist attacks, much more attention has been given to foreign language learning and international studies in the U.S, as the lack of foreign language proficiency and world knowledge among American undergraduates was painfully felt. Within the higher education circles, a movement of internationalization has gradually rippled across the
country, as many educators have come to realize such an endeavor is of paramount importance for America’s national security, economic security, and public diplomacy.

**U.S. Undergraduates’ Deficiency in Foreign Language Skills & Intercultural Competence**

As Nolan (2009) noted, most senior faculty and administrators in the U.S. universities grew up at a time when U.S. knowledge and power enjoyed supreme status, from the 1940s through the early 1960s. During that time period, the rest of the world turned to the U.S. for goods, services, advice, and especially education; “although in many ways [the U.S.] dominated the globe, most of the rest of the world seemed very far away” (p. 267). Today, things are vastly different: countries have become increasingly intertwined, and globalization has made goods, services, and people much more mobile than ever before. Against such a backdrop, U.S. colleges and universities have lagged behind in producing globally competent graduates due to a lack of focus on international education. Nolan (2009) declared that, “many students graduate with no real idea of how the rest of the world lives or thinks. Worse, many of them have little curiosity about these different modes of life, except insofar as they interfere with what we consider our inalienable rights to life, liberty, and cheap gasoline” (p. 269). His viewpoint was echoed by Kolb (2009), who referred to a survey conducted by the RAND Corporation among 16 global corporations, many of which criticized that U.S. universities had failed to produce graduates with international skills. He also related to a CED (Committee for Economic Development) 2006 report, in which a marketing manager lamented, “compared to their counterparts from universities in other parts of the world, U.S. students are ‘strongly technical’ but ‘shortchanged’ in cross-cultural experience and ‘linguistically deprived’” (p. 57). Fortunately, as Steinberg (2010) affirmed, U.S. colleges and universities have started to tackle this problem since 1992; so have the U.S. government and the business world. He stated, “The events of 9/11 and its
Internationalization is a Necessity for National Security

On one hand, the 9/11 terrorist attacks made American people realize how serious their inward focus had been; on the other, it also demonstrated how little the rest of the world truly understood an America that strove to be globally responsible. The misunderstandings between the U.S. and the rest of the world were enormous and alarming. One major reason was because many Americans do not understand other people’s language and culture, thus failed to communicate effectively with them. This foreign language and intercultural deficiency has also had a direct impact on America’s national security.

According to Kolb (2009), in the post-Cold War era, U.S. national security is challenged by non-state actors speaking languages that are not commonly taught in this country, including
Arabic, Chinese, Hindi, Japanese, Korean, Persian/Farsi, Russian and Turkish. To be specific, due to the significant shortage of skill in translating certain critical languages, the U.S. law enforcement, homeland security, and counterterrorism endeavor has been impeded. For example, the National Security Agency and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) constantly have problems finding qualified translators to decode the intelligence information they have gathered. In view of this problem, President Bush proposed the “National Security Language Initiative”, and called on the nation to build a military consisting of people with sufficient language and intercultural skills to understand other people and nations in every corner of the world, so as to protect the American people (p. 51).

Internationalization is a Necessity for Economic Security

In the 21st century, technology has further advanced globalization, which in turn has sparked cutthroat competition on the world markets. As such, Cushner (2009) called on today’s students to be well prepared with adequate problem solving skills to live and work in an increasingly complex global marketplace, preparation and skills he is convinced they are missing. In fact, he is not alone in expressing such concern: Heyl and McCarthy also emphasized the message sent by President Carter’s 1979 Commission on Foreign Language and International studies, which warned that if the American educational system could not more effectively address international studies, geography, and foreign languages, there would be dire consequences (as cited in Cushner, 2009, p. 153). According to the CED 2006 report, American affiliates of foreign companies employed more than 5.4 million U.S. workers in 2002; however, the inadequacy of these workers in intercultural understanding was estimated to have caused an annual loss of $2 billion (Brustein, 2009, p. 252). Based on his association with business leaders, government officers, and NGOs, Brustein summarized that there are two types of major
qualifications they look for when hiring graduate students. One is technical expertise; the other is
global knowledge, foreign language skills, and learning abroad experience (p. 251). To support
his argument, he quoted Friedman by saying that in an increasingly global world, students should
not only possess technical know-how, they should also familiarize themselves with regional and
local cultures, “for without knowledge of these cultures our companies are unlikely to be
successful in understanding local customer tastes” (p. 252).

Friedman’s inference was proven by the same survey in the CED report, which found
nearly 30% of large American companies believed they lost many international business
opportunities due to lack of employees with sufficient international skills. The inadequacy of
their workers’ intercultural competence placed them in disadvantageous situations – “missed
marketing or business opportunities; failure to recognize important shifts in host country policies
toward foreign-owned corporations; failure to anticipate the needs of international customers;
and failure to take full advantage of expertise available or technological advances occurring
abroad” (as cited in Kolb, 2009, p. 57). As a result, almost three out of four business leaders
surveyed postulated that, their overall business would have expanded significantly, had there not
been a deficiency in their employees’ intercultural competence. To tackle such deficiency, the
CED report recommended each state's K-12 education system to integrate foreign language
instruction and international contents (as cited in Kolb, 2009, p. 57).

**Internationalization is a Necessity for Public Diplomacy**

As the First Lady put it in her address at the Howard University in 2011, “Through the
wonders of modern technology, our world has grown increasingly interconnected. Ideas can
cross oceans with the click of a button” (Obama, 2011). Naturally, interactions between people
across borders have become an everyday occurrence. Therefore, the nature of foreign diplomacy
has changed dramatically over the past decades. In the same speech, Michelle Obama pointed out that high level visits could strengthen ties and deepen bonds of understanding between nations, but that work “doesn’t just happen at the White House or within the walls of the U.N.” (Obama, 2011). She stressed that foreign diplomacy goes beyond relationships between governments and presidents; it is also about relationships between people, such as business leaders, scientists, educators, and particularly young people (Obama, 2011). For American people to effectively communicate with others across the globe, they must understand others’ language and culture. This concept can be best illustrated by President Bush’s remarks cited by Kolb (2009):

When somebody comes to me and speaks Texan, I know they appreciate the Texas culture. I mean, … somebody takes time to figure out how to speak Arabic, it means they’re interested in somebody else’s culture. Learning a language—somebody else’s language is a kind gesture. It’s a gesture of interest. It really is a fundamental way to reach out to somebody and say, I care about you. I want you to know that I’m interested in not only how you talk but how you live. In order for this country to be able to convince others, people have got to be able to see our true worth in our heart. And when Americans learn to speak a language, learn to speak Arabic, those in the Arabic region will say, gosh, America is interested in us. They care enough to learn how we speak (p. 52).

In the same spirit, the 2006 CED report emphasized that, “America’s continued global leadership will depend on our students’ abilities to interact with the world community both inside and outside our borders” (as cited in Kolb, 2009, p. 53). Coincidentally, such awareness was exactly the major motive leading to the establishment of the first study abroad program almost a century ago – the Junior Year Abroad Program – launched from the University of Delaware in
1923. According to Stearns (2009), this program was set up by a professor of French who had stayed in France for education after having served there in World War I. In order to convince other institutions to join the program, the professor warned: “We shall always be at a disadvantage in our foreign relations of every kind… until there is a much larger number of Americans who know the language and in some measure the customs and methods of the peoples with whom we have to deal” (as cited in Stearns, 2009, p. 69). This message was well taken by the Secretary of State, John Kerry, as he asserted in his speech at the University of Virginia this February, “…deploying diplomats today is much cheaper than sending troops tomorrow”, and he urged the U.S. to produce diplomats with a global awareness because “In the global challenges of diplomacy, development, economic security, environmental security, you will feel our success or failure just as strongly as those people in those other countries that you’ll never meet. For all that we have gained in the 21st century, we have lost the luxury of just looking inward” (Kerry, 2013).

**Rational on K-12 Internationalization**

The current literature shows that academia has reached a consensus on three fronts. First, in an increasingly globalized world, producing graduates with global citizenship should be the central goal of higher education. Second, study abroad can be used as a critical tool to develop global citizenship. Third, to reach this goal, institutions of higher education must be internationalized. Few scholars represented by Kolb have taken the third concept one big stride further, advocating K-12 internationalization. Based on the premise that the importance of education internationalization has been agreed upon with the only discrepancy being at which level of the education system the initiative should be implemented, I will attempt to back up Kolb by providing more grounds for K-12 internationalization, which I believe can play an
essential role in advancing both the means and the end (study abroad and global citizenship). This is because by incorporating foreign language studies and intercultural training in K-12 curriculum, by the time students reach college, they will have been linguistically and interculturally much better prepared than if they only start such courses in college. The higher language proficiency will not only trigger them to find out more about the country and people whose language they have been studying, it will also enable them to immerse into the local culture when they do get there to study. The level of proficiency required for immersive learning takes time to build, and the same holds true when it comes to the nurturing of global citizenship.

**Language Proficiency is the Key to Immersive Learning in Study Abroad**

Open Doors reports indicate that for more than a decade, the leading destinations for U.S. students study abroad have remained European or Anglo countries, such as the U.K., Italy, Spain, France, Australia, Germany, and Ireland (as cited in Picard et al. 2009, pp. 339-340). The preference of English speaking countries for study abroad is one of the manifestations of U.S. students’ foreign language deficiency described previously. Che et al. (2009) enthusiastically proposed institutions of higher education to target study abroad programs at less familiar destinations as they believe such programs have “a potential for student development, social good, and for increasing cultural awareness and global mildness to a greater degree than those that target more familiar locations” (p. 104). To realize this potential, they suggested that both study abroad facilitators and students “need to be thoroughly prepared in terms of historical understandings about international relationships and in terms of understanding what responsible global citizenship entails” (p. 115). This thorough understanding of the local history and culture requires a high level of students’ foreign language proficiency and meaningful engagement with the local people. If students can barely carry a simple conversation with the local people, their
contact with them will only stay at the surface level, which rarely leads to any fundamental change of inner mind – the essential component of a transformative experience. This theory is thoroughly discussed by Wanner (2009) in his advocacy of maximal study abroad that involves language immersion, as he articulated that, “To give students the chance of interacting with another community on its own terms and in the native language opens up a true experience and appreciation of the other culture. Only in this constructive and engaged way will students be able to conquer any disconcerting sense of otherness in the international setting, further enhanced by a new and unfamiliar language” (p. 84).

Superficial contact with local people will only enable students to see the tip of the cultural iceberg: they can show off photos of exotic food, artifacts, and costumes to their family or friends back home; but it is inconceivable for them to dig deeper and probe what is hidden way below the surface. As such, these shallow study abroad experiences are unlikely to develop students’ intercultural competence. In the same speech, the First Lady affirms the importance of studying abroad, not only as part of a well-rounded education experience, but it also contributes to success in today’s global economy. She believes that to remain competitive in today’s workplace requires both skills learned from the classroom, and the experiences students have with people across borders, languages, and cultures that are different from their own. Studying abroad in countries such as China, she maintains, is much more than simply improving students’ own prospects in the global marketplace, because “with every friendship [students] make, and every bond of trust [students] establish, [students] are shaping the image of America projected to the rest of the world…so when [they] study abroad, [students] are actually helping to make America stronger” (Obama, 2011). Without profound knowledge of the local language and culture, for American students to build true friendships or meaningful bonds of trust with others
is out of the question; consequently, they will fail to live up to the task of enhancing America’s soft power as the First Lady wishes.

**Language Learning is a Lifelong Process**

Now that we have established the ground that high language proficiency is the key to fostering intercultural competence, how can we, as educators, develop students’ language skills? Many scholars have advocated institutions of higher education to embed foreign languages and international studies into their curriculum. However acquiring a high proficiency in a foreign language takes time, as Wanner (2009) observed, to reach a high level of proficiency requires tremendous individual investment including many years of intense study and practice in a naturalistic context. Therefore, he called for a generational shift in the education system to first permeate the relevant institutions of learning to increase proficient language learners (p. 93). We have to keep in mind that proficient language learners do not emerge from a loose-structured college language program of a few years, let alone a study abroad program of a few weeks or months.

Kolb (2009) was fully aware of this fact when he announced, “…one cannot learn a foreign language overnight. Students cannot take a pill today and wake up tomorrow fluent in Farsi, French, Mandarin, or Arabic. They have to invest years of time to master the rules of grammar and the nuances of pronunciation” (p. 56). In view of this long-term challenge, he recommended that endeavors and investment should be made at every level, from K-12 system through postsecondary, convinced that once students take an interest in a foreign language, they become much more intrigued to look into the country’s culture, arts, history, geography, and literate as well. He added, “In many cases, these interests have profound educational and career consequences for the individuals who decide to pursue the instruction in order to achieve a
measure of proficiency” (p. 56). As a result, studying foreign countries and languages at a young age will potentially make young people lifelong learners.

**Language Learning is More Effective at K-12 Level**

Given the enormous challenge of language learning, it is much better for students to start the learning process at a young age. According to a study of young people’s international socialization, the ages between 8 and 12 may represent the critical time for children to develop an international or intercultural perspective (as cited in Cushner, 2009, p. 157). Cushner elaborated that, “Psychosocial development at this age seems to be characterized by rapid cognitive development, especially related to perspective and role-taking ability; low rejection of groups; high attitude flexibility; development of more differentiated intergroup perceptions; and, is a time when one is able to perceive another’s point of view… Children at this age are comfortable being away from home, interact with relative ease nonverbally through games and other activities, and are eager and willing to learn new languages. Educational efforts to develop an international and intercultural perspective should begin during these years” (p, 157).

His opinion was echoed by Olivera (2013) in her article “Challenges and Tips for Raising Bilingual Children”, in which she pointed out that language learning process could be made much easier if started at a young age because children’s brains are hard-wired for language acquisition. She cited Nancy Rhodes, Director of Foreign Language Education at the Center for Applied Linguistics by saying that over the past decade or more, the center had witnessed an increase in parents going to school districts and asking them to start language programs for early education classes. Olivera asserted that young children could learn many languages at the same time, and exposure to more than one language as early as possible could lead to near-native fluency. To support her argument, she quoted Dr. Xiao-lei Wang, a professor at Pace University
in New York by saying that, “Human capacity for language acquisition at an early age is unlimited” (Olivera, 2013).

**Global Citizenship Can’t be Built Overnight**

So far, I have discussed why the U.S. should internationalize K-12 education from the perspective of foreign language learning; now I will shift the focus to the development of global citizenship, the central goal of many, if not all, institutions. As mentioned before, a major component of global citizenship is intercultural competence, which enables successful interactions with people from different language and cultural backgrounds. Upon many years of research, Deardorff (2010) has developed the following Intercultural Competence Framework:

- **Attitudes**: such as respect, openness, curiosity and discovery.
- **Knowledge**: including cultural self-awareness, culture-specific knowledge, deep cultural knowledge including understanding other worldviews, and sociolinguistic awareness.
- **Skills**: the ability of observing, listening, evaluating, analyzing, interpreting, and relating.
- **Internal Outcomes**: the above attitudes, knowledge, and skills, ideally lead to flexibility, adaptability, an ethno-relative perspective and empathy.
- **External Outcomes**: behavior and communication in intercultural settings that is effective and appropriate (p. 1).

Deardorff cautioned that “intercultural competence is a process – a lifelong process – there is no one point at which an individual becomes completely interculturally competent” (p. 2). It is feasible to obtain some culture-specific knowledge and basic skills such as observing and listening through study abroad programs or some language courses in college; but it is a much different story to acquire “deep cultural knowledge including understanding other worldviews, and sociolinguistic awareness”, critical thinking skills (evaluating, analyzing, interpreting, and
relating), or to change one’s attitudes. Rome isn’t built in a day: advanced knowledge and skills need a great deal of time and practice to accumulate and develop, the same holds true when it comes to change of attitudes. There are students whose lives have been transformed through learning abroad experience; however, usually those students are open-minded and curious already before they go abroad. For many who have been living with the inwardness described in Kerry’s speech or in some cases, ethnocentrism, one or two study abroad programs, or even four years of college life won’t make much difference in their attitudes. Once an attitude is formed into adulthood, it is engrained in one’s mind; to change it is almost out of the question.

Hovey and Weinberg (2009) understood that global citizenship takes much more than just a study abroad program, as they contended, “Global citizenship entails developing the awareness and knowledge to be a globally aware and responsible citizen within overlapping and interconnected communities. To do this involves learning to assume responsibility for one’s own citizen commitments while appreciating and developing ability to respectfully represent differences of other nations, communities and worldviews. We do not want to reproduce a world of privilege in which a passport and a study abroad semester on a CV are a sufficient claim to global citizenship” (p. 46). Their message testifies that the development of global citizenship is an evolving process, which needs to be embedded in the entire education system, from K-12 through postsecondary.

**Trends in K-12 Internationalization**

While many people remain skeptical about K-12 internationalization; parents are actually embracing this idea as demonstrated in Olivera’s article, they are looking for language programs for their children to start at an early age. Rhodes attributes this trend to parents’ recognition that bilingualism is a tremendous asset for future careers. “The current focus appears to be on the
globalized economy,” she says. “Parents are thinking about their children’s future in internet jobs, or international and intercultural careers” (Olivera, 2013). Within the K-12 system, parents are absolutely one of the key stakeholders; their support augurs well for K-12 internationalization. As a matter of fact, K-12 internationalization is not just a theory or wishful thinking, it has been happening across the world including the U.S. For example, the International Baccalaureate (IB) has been growing rapidly since its inception in 1968; the Asia Society’s International Studies Schools Network (ISSN) has incorporated foreign language instruction and international studies in their curricula, and the Confucius Institutes have been providing Chinese language teaching for both higher education and K-12.

**International Baccalaureate (IB)**

The International Baccalaureate (IB) was created out of the necessity for a common curriculum and university credential that is universally accepted; it consists of three programs: the IB Diploma Program (DP, for 16-19 years old), the Middle Years Program (MYP, for children 12-16), and the Primary Years Program (PYP, for children 3-12). The curriculum of these three programs are exhibited in Appendices A, B, and C respectively (IBO, 2013a).

According to Bunnell (2011), the presence of IB schools in the U.S. has expanded significantly since 1971. Today, America has 40% of the world’s IB schools (1,435 in total), among which 374 schools offering PYP, 481 offering MYP and 792 offering DP (IBO, 2013b).

At the core of IB curriculum, is the development of intercultural competence and global-mindedness; since this curriculum was designed to cater to different cultures from the outset. The mission statement of the IB Organization (IBO) calls for students across the world to understand that “other people, with their differences, can also be right” (IBO, 2013c). The IB program encourages students to consider a broad range of perspectives when dealing with global issues.
For example, IB students have to learn another language, empowering them to access another culture. Meanwhile, the course of community and service enables students to interact with others; while providing service for the community, students gain a deeper understanding about themselves as well. Throughout the program, students learn about their own culture and how it fits into the world around them, and understand that their choices will affect others.

Many educators are impressed that IB schools have added greater chance for students to succeed in college and in life. William Kolb, Director of Admissions for the University of Florida, conducted an analysis on his freshmen’s SAT scores in 1996. He found that IB students’ average SAT score was 1,213, higher than that of AP program and the standard college prep programs, which were 1,177 and 1,158 respectively. Moreover, he discovered that IB students were better prepared to cope with the demanding academic life in college, and their grade point average as freshmen dropped only slightly from that in high school (Matthews & Hill, 2006, p. 215). IB students’ better performance both in academics and in life, has gained the program worldwide recognition from universities. According to the IBO, by the year 2009, the IB diploma was accepted for admission to 2,765 universities throughout the world (as cited in Resnik, 2012, p. 258). The success of the IB also augurs well for K-12 internationalization.

**ISSN of Asia Society**

In the promotion of international education, the IBO is not alone. In recent years, the International Studies Schools Network (ISSN), established by Asia Society, has been dedicated to “develop college-ready, globally competent high school graduates” (Asia Society, 2013). Currently, there are 34 schools in the network, scattering in urban and rural communities across the U.S.. ISSN “responds to two intertwined imperatives facing American education. The first is overcoming the chronic problem of poor academic performance among low-income and minority
students. The second is preparing students for work and civic roles in a globalized environment, where success increasingly requires the ability to compete, connect, and cooperate on an international scale” (Asia Society, 2013). The ISSN schools’ learning system features an emphasis on foreign language learning and international studies (for more details of their learning system, see Appendix D).

From 2004 to 2008, the Consortium for Policy Research in Education and Hupothesi, Inc collected ISSN data and results from out-of-network schools with similar demographic profiles located in the same school districts. Analysis on these data suggests that “ISSN schools showed greater academic achievement in 85% of all cases”, and their students “are doing better academically and graduating at far greater numbers than their peers” (Asia Society, 2013). ISSN’s positive results also proclaim a promising future for K-12 internationalization.

Confucius Institutes

Since 2004, China has started to promote its own language and culture around the world through establishing non-profit public institutions – Confucius Institutes. In the past decade, there has been a big growth in the number of Confucius Institutes. According to its website, by the end of 2010, 322 Confucius Institutes and 369 Confucius Classrooms had been established in 96 countries. Adopting a flexible teaching approach to cater to local needs, Confucius Institutes have been offering Chinese language teaching and promoting Chinese culture in primary schools, secondary schools, communities, and enterprises. In 2009, 9,000 Chinese courses were offered to 260,000 people, 7,500 cultural exchange activities were also organized with over 3 million participants across the globe (Confucius Institutes, 2009).

The first Confucius Institute in the U.S. was established at the University of Maryland in 2005; by 2010, there were 64 Confucius Institutes in 37 states. While most Confucius Institutes
partner with institutions of higher learning, some are at school districts and community organizations. Their primary goal is to support Chinese language study in classrooms, but sometimes they also provide the training of Chinese language teachers (Chiu, 2010). Institutes like this can play an important role in supporting America’s K-12 internationalization.

**Conclusion**

As Stewart (2013) portrayed, “The world in which today’s students will graduate is fundamentally different from the world in which we (adults) grew up. The quickening pace of globalization over the past 20 years – driven by profound technological changes, the rise of China and India, and the accelerating pace of scientific discovery – has produced a whole new world” (p. 1). In this new world, the U.S. education system has to shift its focus from looking inward to looking outward, and produce graduate students with global awareness and intercultural competence. As discussed in this paper, a single study abroad program or a few years of loose-structured language studies in college is far from sufficient to develop global citizenship; rather, it takes the entire system to review and update its curriculum to meet the challenges facing the U.S. in the 21st century. In the same address mentioned above, the First Lady quoted President Obama by saying, “America has no better ambassadors to offer than our young people”, and she commended that, as America’s energy, optimism, and true face to the world, young people would show the world America’s decency, openness and compassion (Obama, 2011). To turn America’s young people into ambassadors as the First Lady and the President have envisioned, the U.S. has no other choice but to internationalize its K-12 education.
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Appendix A

IBDP (IB Diploma Program)
Appendix B

MYP (Middle Years Program)
Appendix C

PYP (Primary Years Program)
Appendix D: Features of ISSN School’s Learning System

The ISSN school design and learning system helps schools develop:

- An intellectual mission focused on international studies that targets educational excellence for every student.
- A curriculum that meets state standards and integrates international content throughout all subject areas.
- Engaging, inquiry-based instruction and multiple forms of assessment that promote learning with real understanding.
- The opportunity for students to study one or more world languages, including an Asian language.
- Innovative uses of technology that support instruction and linkages to schools around the world.
- A school culture that promotes a sense of belonging for every student and supports students' personal growth.
- Opportunities for student international travel and exchanges.
- Internships and community service opportunities at internationally oriented businesses, cultural institutions, and universities.
- Engagement of faculty in continuous high-quality professional development including international travel and exchange.