

Worth the Investment? Liberal Arts Faculty Self-Assess the Transformative Impact of Leading Study-Abroad



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PRESENTATION OVERVIEW

- Faculty-led off-campus programs present high-strategic value, but entail opportunity costs, making it essential that we examine and understand the impact leading global programs has on faculty members' teaching, research, service, and overall well-being.
- Presenters will report on a two-year study of 230 faculty program leaders at 28 private liberal arts colleges.
- Quantitative and qualitative findings highlight perceptions of the value of off-campus programs for faculty, students, and institutions and suggest policies and practices to enhance the transformative impact.



OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

- Multi-institutional cohort engaged in a multi-year study to investigate the experiences of faculty members who lead short-term global programs at select private liberal arts college as well as the students who participate in these programs.
- Numerous studies measure impact of study abroad on student outcomes, but ...
 - Relatively little attention paid to the corresponding faculty members
- Given that global programs are of high strategic value, costly, and exact a heavy opportunity cost...
 - Critical that we understand this phenomenon in greater depth.
- Seeks to understand the motivations and experiences of global program faculty and gather data to inform university policies and professional development support.



OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

- Informed by theoretical framework of Transformative Learning Theory (TLT) on how adults learn from experience
 - Mezirow and Taylor's (2009) transformative learning paradigm
- Research questions include:
 - What factors contribute to the transformation of study abroad/study away (SASA) faculty leaders to positively impact them, their students and institutions?
 - How do faculty describe the contexts or situations that have influenced their experiences leading global programs?
 - What is the greater institutional impact of faculty-led SASA programs?



DESIRED OUTCOMES

- Elucidate perceptions of the value of off-campus programs for faculty leaders, students, and institutions
- Create a white paper advocating for institutional policy changes that support faculty transformation in global education
- Suggest Best Practices in Global Education (policies and practices to enhance the transformative impact)
- Develop an instrument on faculty transformation in Global Education
- Develop communities of practice
- Document how faculty preparation affects positive student learning outcomes
- Increase resources and documentation on how students are learning



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What constitutes *Transformative Learning*?

The study of transformative learning emerged with the work of Jack Mezirow (1981, 1994, 1997).

- Defined as learning that induces more far-reaching change in the learner than other kinds of learning, especially learning experiences which shape the learner and produce a significant impact, or paradigm shift, which affects the learner's subsequent experiences (Clark, 1993).

In sum:

- *Learning that goes beyond acquisition of basic knowledge or skills*
- *Transformative learning involves a change in one's frame of reference, habits of mind, system of meanings or set of taken-for-granted. (Mezirow 1997)*
- *The sort of learning that changes our view of the world and of ourselves within it*
- *It shifts your frame of reference in a fundamental way, allowing you to see the world as a socially and linguistically constructed space.*



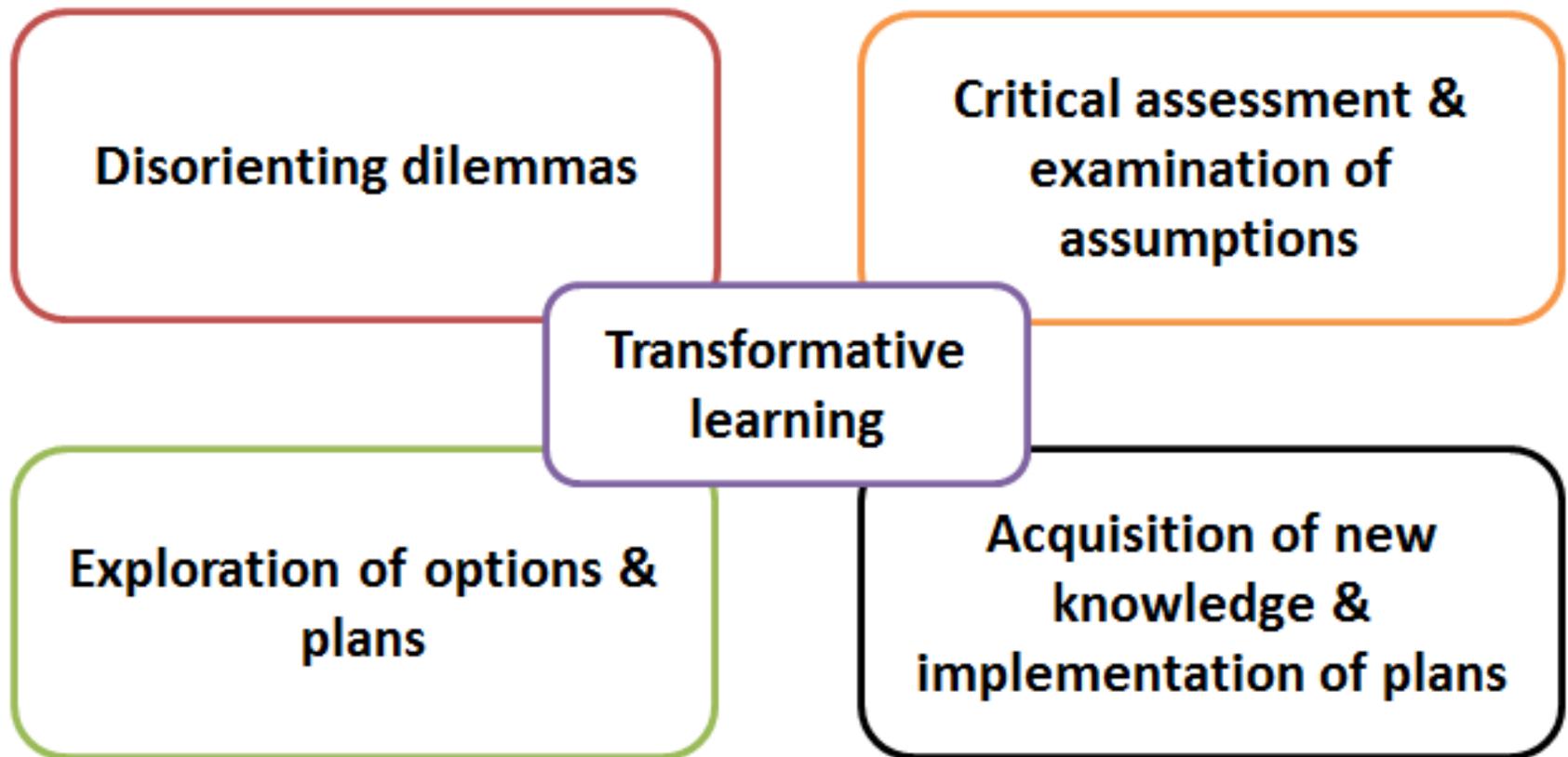
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KEY CONCEPTS

TLT applied lexicon

- Self-examination
- Critical assessment of internal assumptions
- Feeling of disconnect from traditional social expectations
- Relating of one's discontent to the similar experiences of others (e.g. problems are shared)
- Explore new options for ways of acting/behaving
- Build competence and self-confidence and shift in roles
- Try new roles and assess them, reintegrate into society with the 'other' perspective





DATA COLLECTION & ANALYSIS

■ Methodology and Theoretical Framework

- 31 institutions invited to participate (Associated Colleges of the Midwest; Associated Colleges of the South; & Elon University) in IRB approved multi-year study; 28 participated.

- Methodology includes / evidence extracted from two custom electronic surveys crafted and disseminated with Survey Monkey Pro
 - Survey 1 (fall 2015): “*Understanding Faculty & Student Transformation in Study Abroad/Study Away Programs at Liberal Arts Institutions*” (59 item electronic question survey - fixed answer and narrative responses)
 - 223 responses
 - Survey 2: Follow-Up Questions for Faculty Members Who Lead Study Away and Study Abroad at Liberal Arts Institutions (10 electronic question survey – narrative responses)
 - 72 responses

- Mixed methods approach to analyze data collected: Quantitative analysis using SPSS; Hand coding and Dedoose implemented for qualitative analyses



Simple descriptive findings from Survey 1

Respondents are...

Affiliation	n	%
ACM Institution	104	47%
ACS Institution	83	37%
Elon Univ.	35	16%
Unaffiliated	1	.4%

Demographics	n	%
Male	98	44%
Female	119	53%
Full Professor	98	44%
Associate Professor	61	31%
Assistant Professor	28	13%
Rank - Other	27	12%
White	185	83%
Black	7	3%
Asian	4	2%
Latino	8	4%
Other	15	7%

Preliminary Quantitative Analysis

Statistical analysis ruled out differences in response as a function of...

Factors

Tenure Status
Academic Rank
Sex
Marital Status
Parental Status
Program Destination
Academic Discipline

Amount of leadership responsibilities for SASA Program



Outcome Variables

Teaching
Research
Service
"Transformation"
Score

Positive Feelings
Negative Feelings

Initial Interpretive Statistical Findings...

Finding 1: Participants who spoke the language of the SASA Destination reported **higher rates of negative feelings** post-SASA (i.e., increased stress at work, increased stress at home/personal life, convinced would not lead SASA again, burned out, concerned about research productivity)

Potential implications for these findings:

-Current forms of institutional support following a SASA program may be inadequate for program leaders who speak the language of the destination country

-The effects of leading a SASA program continue AFTER one returns back to work

Initial Interpretive Statistical Findings...

Finding: Participants who reported that their institutions offered a **high amount of support for global learning** (determined by degree to which they were trained, supported, compensated, recognized and offered post-program support) then they were **more more likely experience positive feelings post-SASA** (i.e., eager to lead the same SASA again, eager to lead a different SASA program, felt renewed or energized, improved relationships with colleagues, more connected to the mission of their institutions, found SASA to be a worthwhile use of time and energy).

Implications for Practice:

-The degree to which an institution offers support to faculty who lead SASA programs impacts the way the faculty member will feel upon returning home.

Initial Interpretive Statistical Findings...

Finding: Participants who lead a SASA program that **was more than 31 days in duration reported higher rates of negative feelings** post-SASA (i.e., increased stress at work, increased stress at home/personal life, convinced would not lead SASA again, burned out, concerned about research productivity)

Implications for practice:

- Institutions should provide additional forms of support for faculty who lead programs lasting more than 31 days
- Institutions have not been sufficiently attentive to faculty returning from semester-long programs to account for the “re-entry” process and its implications both in one’s professional and personal life

Implications for Faculty Development....

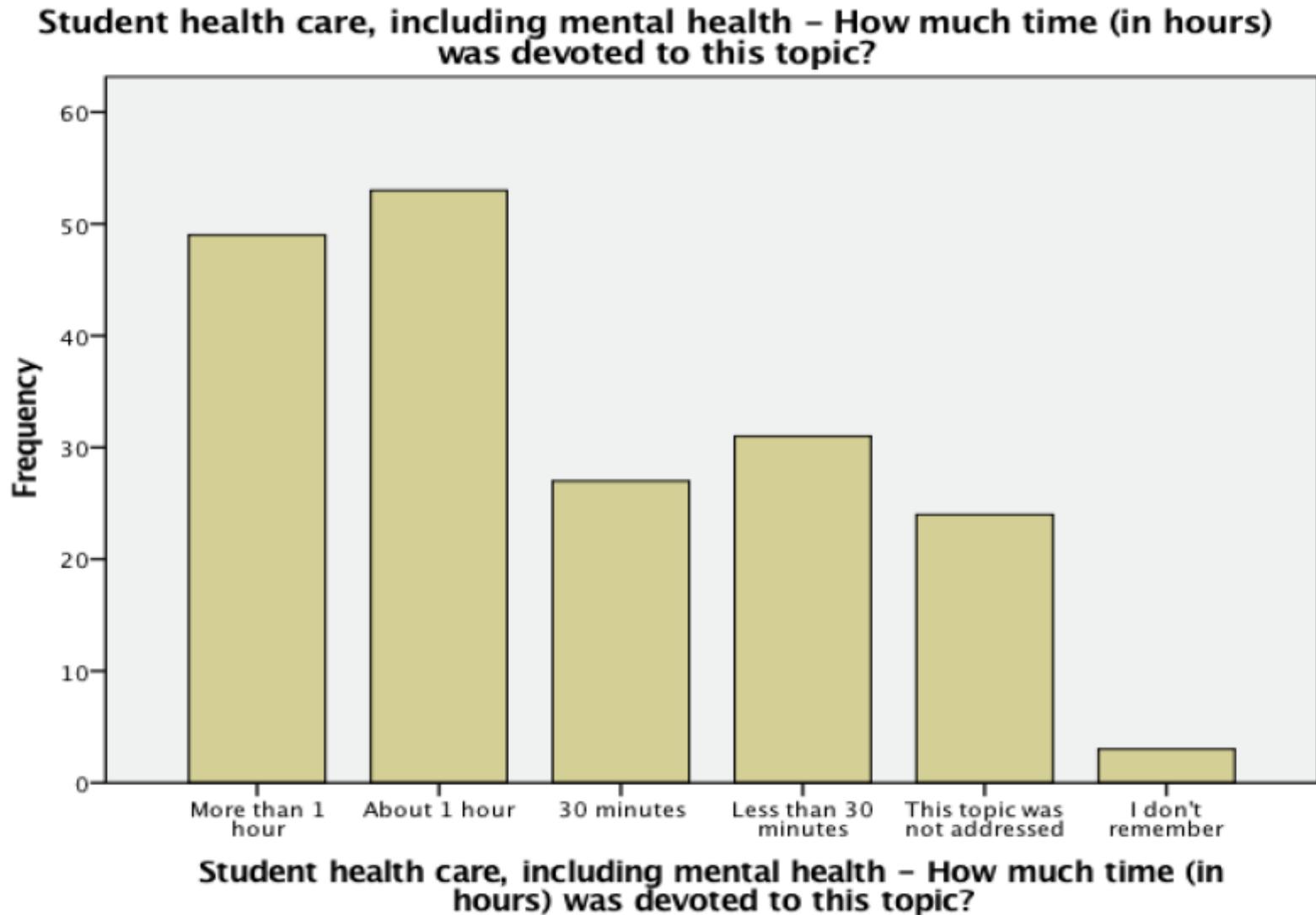
Survey respondents stated that they were **MOST** confident about the following topics (ranked in order):

1. "Designing effective pedagogical method for teaching students in the field." (29.1%)
2. "Cross-cultural adaptation / culture shock" (16.1%)
3. "Administrative responsibilities (e.g., budgeting)" (10.3%)

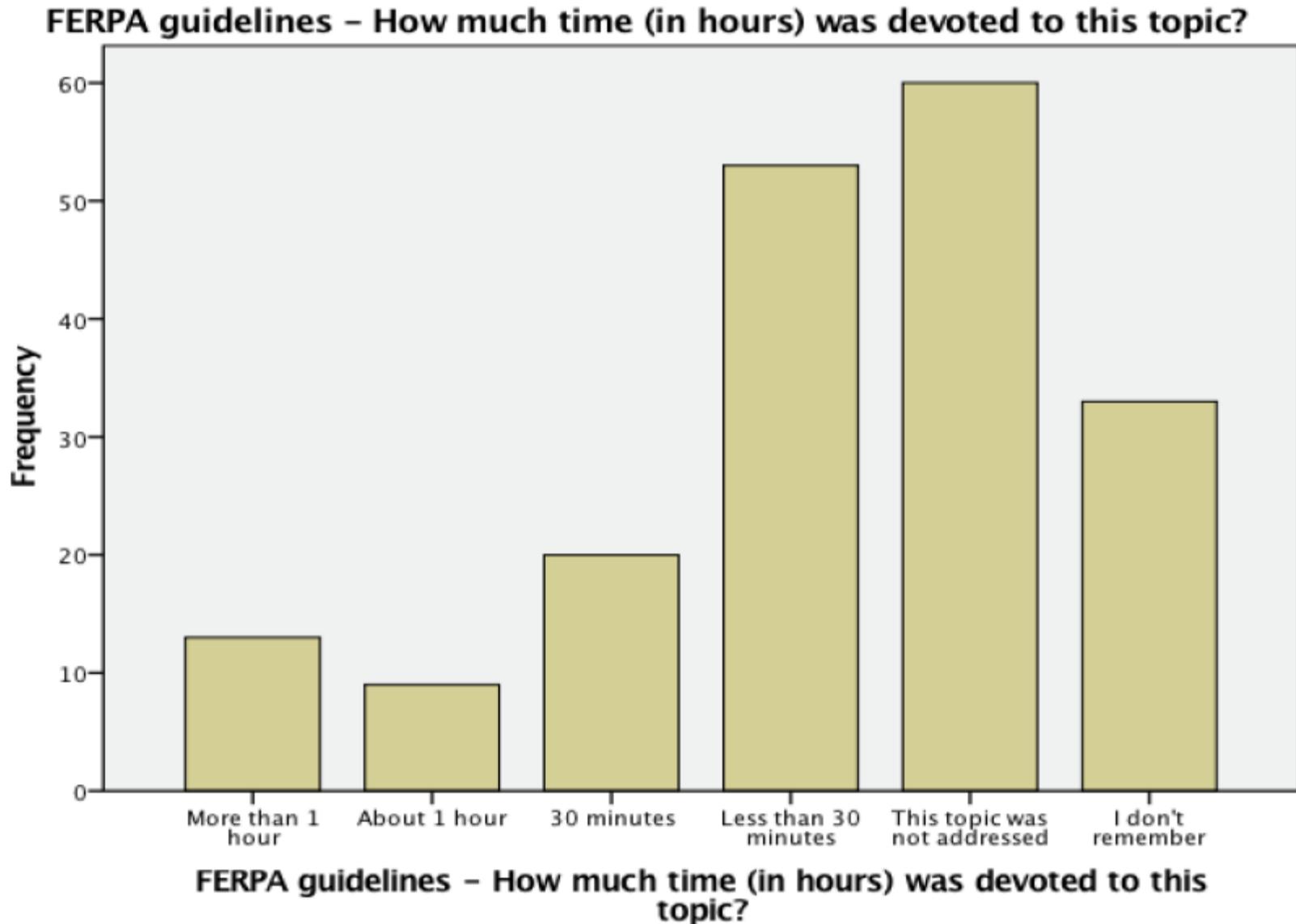
Survey respondents stated that they were **LEAST** confident about the following topics (ranked in order):

1. "Student healthcare, including mental health" (22.9%)
2. "FERPA Guidelines" (14.8%)
3. "Assessing student growth and learning" (6.7%)

Amount of time during pre-departure training for faculty devoted to “Student healthcare, including mental health” (22.9%) (#1 Least Confident)

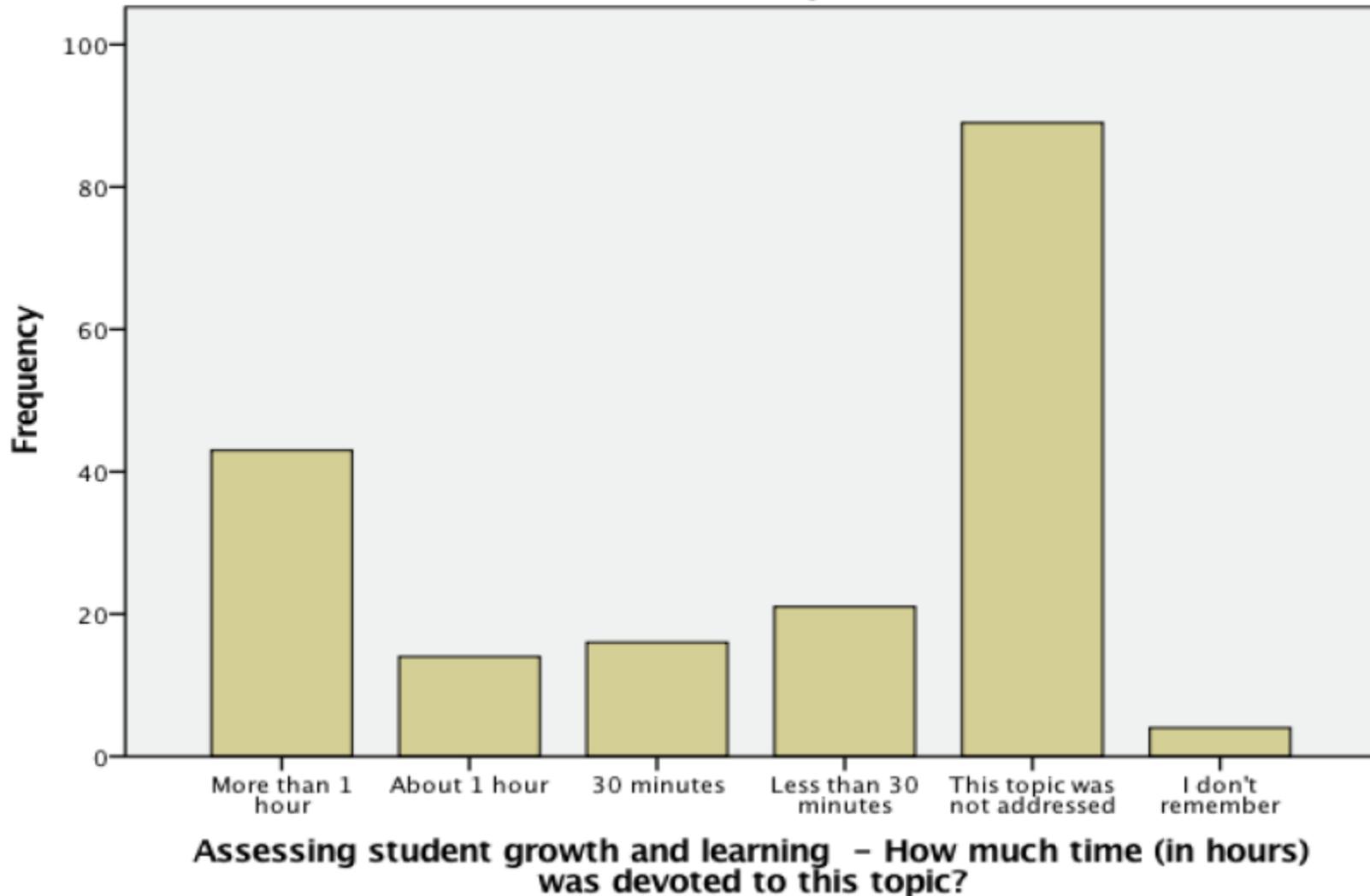


Amount of time during pre-departure training for faculty devoted to “FERPA Guidelines” (14.8%) (2nd Least Confident)

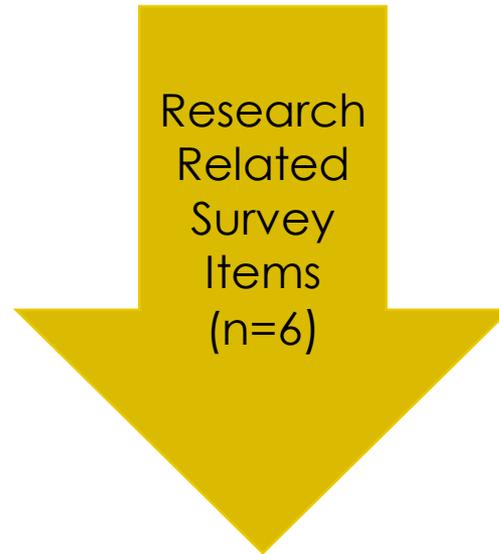
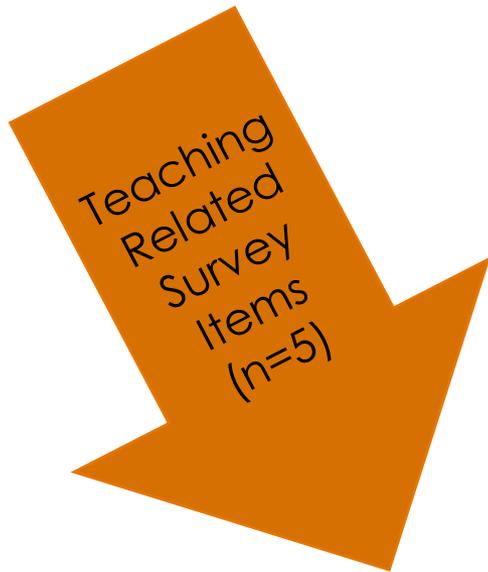


Amount of time during pre-departure training for faculty devoted to “Assessing student growth and learning” (6.7%) (3rd Least Confident)

Assessing student growth and learning – How much time (in hours) was devoted to this topic?



Composite Transformation Score

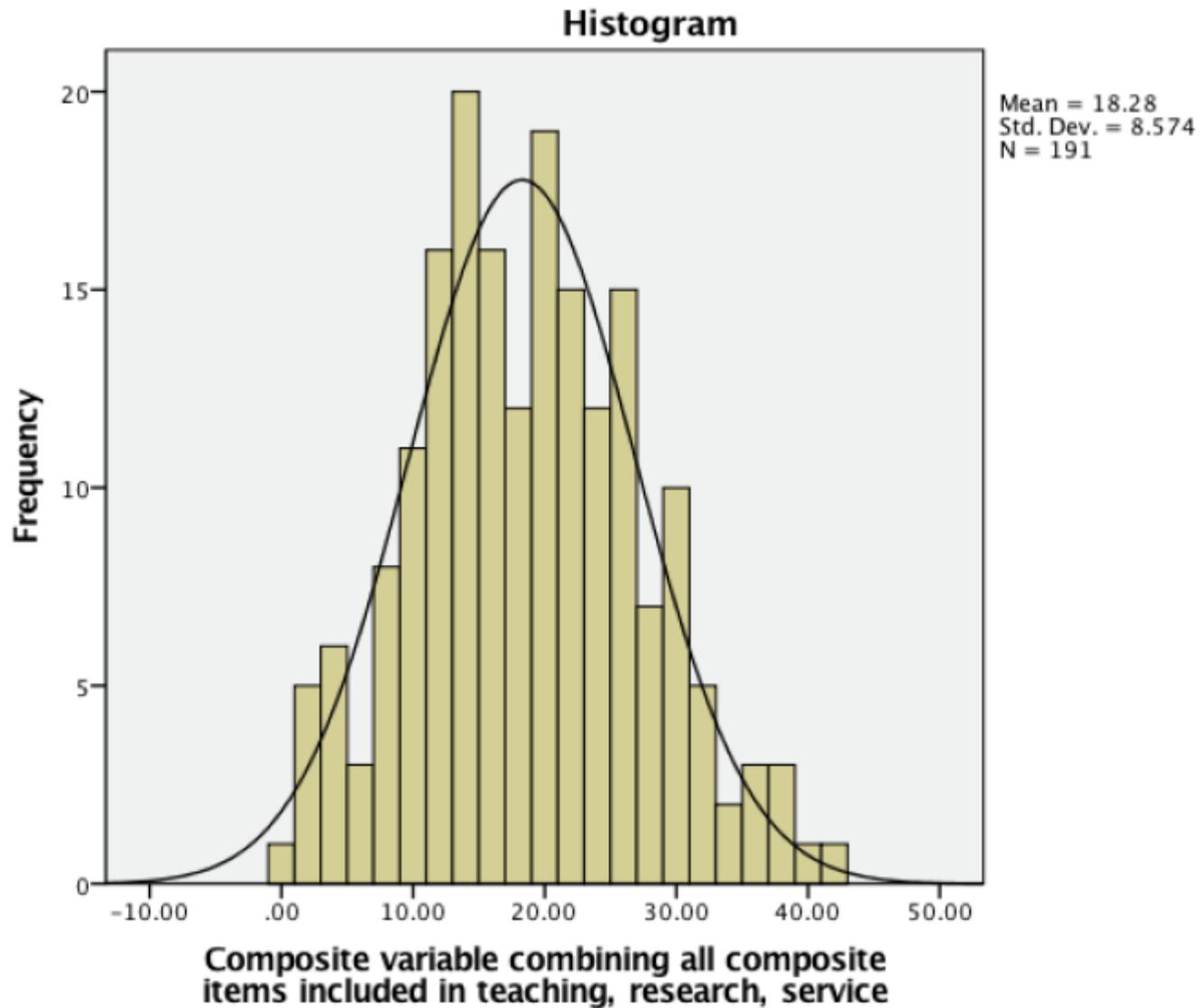


Transformation Score

Composite Variable Made Up of 16
Statistically Correlated Items

Distribution of Faculty Transformation Scores

(Composite of Teaching, Research, and Service Item Scores)



Dividing participants into groups by transformation score: Low / Medium / High Transformation

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Low Transformation	70	31.4	36.6	36.6
	Medium Transformation	58	26.0	30.4	67.0
	High Transformation	63	28.3	33.0	100.0
	Total	191	85.7	100.0	
Missing	System	32	14.3		
Total		223	100.0		

SURVEY 1 QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS CODING

Question 1: **What changes have you noticed post-SASA?**

CODING KEY A- Positive B- Negative C- Neutral	DESCRIPTION Faculty...
1	Shifts in attitudes toward: students (international & domestic); international colleagues; institution; research; teaching (eager, willing, unwilling, etc.); mentoring
2	Shifts in behavior: teaching (revised/created a new course/assignment); research; service; advising; mentoring; collaborating (Specific evidence cited)
3	Shifts in learning (faculty member becomes more...): intercultural / global; experimental/ adventurous
4	Institutional context: personal impact (family, health) /institutional investment (support/preparation, formal pre-departure course?, financial) / faculty status (marital, tenure, etc)
5	Faculty perceptions of student learning (direct impact of SASA on student learning): references to evidence, assignments
6	Other (responses are not clear, don't fit existing codes)

SURVEY 1 QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS CODING

Question 2: **What advice would you give to a colleague who wants to lead a SASA program?**

CODING KEY A- Positive B- Negative C- Neutral	DESCRIPTION
12- Faculty perceptions of shifts in student attitudes & institutional attitudes	Institutional and logistical support
13- Faculty perceptions of shifts in student & institutional behaviors	Student learning
14- Faculty perceptions of shifts in students' global learning	work/life balance and personal growth
15- Faculty perceptions of what students have said is the impact of their experience on....	Personal transformation
16	Other (responses are not clear, don't fit existing codes)

SURVEY 1 QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS CODING

Question 3: **What impact has leading a SA/SA program had on your students and your institution? How do you know?**

CODING KEY A- Positive B- Negative C- Neutral	DESCRIPTION Faculty
7- Faculty perceptions of shifts in student attitudes & institutional attitudes	Shifts in attitudes toward: other students (international & domestic); faculty; institution; host country/nationals, research; coursework, majors, disciplines (eager, willing, unwilling, etc.); mentoring, service, leadership
8- Faculty perceptions of shifts in student & institutional behaviors	Shifts in behavior: coursework, majors, disciplines (changed major); research; service; leadership; mentoring; collaborating (Specific evidence cited)
9- Faculty perceptions of shifts in students' global learning	Shifts in learning (student becomes more...): intercultural / global; experimental/ adventurous
10- Faculty perceptions of what students have said is the impact of their experience on....	Their professional lives; personal impact (family, health) /institutional investment (support/preparation, formal pre-departure course?, financial (scholarships)/ time (athletes?!), curricular structure of their disciplines / student demographics/characteristics (support for student of color, first generation college students, etc)
11	Other (responses are not clear, don't fit existing codes)

SURVEY 2: Follow-Up Questions for Faculty Members Who Lead Study Away and Study Abroad at Liberal Arts Institutions

- 1. The Association of American Colleges and Universities identifies **global learning** in its [VALUE rubric](#) as an essential learning outcome for students. **What is the relationship between your global learning and your teaching and research?**
- 2. Please describe **a single critical incident** (positive or negative) that occurred while preparing to lead a Study Away/Study Abroad program, during a program, or upon return and **how that incident contributed to your global learning** as defined in question 1.



SURVEY 2: Follow-Up Questions for Faculty Members Who Lead Study Away and Study Abroad at Liberal Arts Institutions

- 3. Describe **one thing** your current institution has done to make the biggest (positive or negative) impact on your ability to lead Study Away / Study Abroad programs?
- 4. Describe **one thing** your current institution could do to enhance your ability to lead Study Away / Study Abroad programs?



SURVEY 2: Follow-Up Questions for Faculty Members Who Lead Study Away and Study Abroad at Liberal Arts Institutions

- 5. In the Study Away / Study Abroad programs you have led, have you ever incorporated any of the following high-impact practices (as defined by the [American Association of Colleges and Universities](#))? Check all that apply.
 - First-Year Seminar or Experience
 - Undergraduate Research (i.e., faculty mentored research project)
 - Learning Communities (i.e., linked courses taken by all participants)
 - Service-Learning or Community Based Learning
 - Writing Intensive Coursework
 - Collaborative Assignments / Group Projects
 - Internships
 - Capstone Course/Project
 - I do not use any of these in my SASA program(s)



SURVEY 2: Follow-Up Questions for Faculty Members Who Lead Study Away and Study Abroad at Liberal Arts Institutions

6. Which of the following approaches have you used to **measure student learning** in any of your Study Away / Study Abroad courses? (Check all that apply)

- Academic essays/research papers
- Pre/post tests
- Multi-media projects
- Reflective prompts (written/discussion)
- Oral presentations (individual)
- Oral presentations (collaborative/group)
- Portfolios of student work
- Artistic performances or creative works
- Lab reports/field notes
- Research poster
- Ethnographic findings
- A student survey created by my institution
- A student survey that I created
- Student focus groups
- Informal conversations with students/program alumni
- Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI)
- Global Perspective Inventory (GPI)
- AAC&U Value Rubrics
- I do not use any of these methods
- Other (please specify)



SURVEY 2: Follow-Up Questions for Faculty Members Who Lead Study Away and Study Abroad at Liberal Arts Institutions

- 7. Based on the approaches you checked in Question 6, **what kinds of student learning** are you trying to measure? (Check all that apply)
 - Global learning
 - Disciplinary learning
 - Site-specific learning
 - Intercultural competency
 - Intercultural communication
 - Other learning (please specify)



SURVEY 2: Follow-Up Questions for Faculty Members Who Lead Study Away and Study Abroad at Liberal Arts Institutions

- 8. As a **teacher and scholar**, how have you **developed or changed** as a result of leading a Study Away / Study Abroad program?



SURVEY 2: EMERGING THEMES

- New research areas: secondary expertise
- Global goals across the curriculum
- Renewed/fueled work
- Happier, braver
- Spirituality, more empathy
- Deeper reflection on own identity
- Increased flexibility as a teacher
- Rethinking assumptions
- More effective leader
- More modest, more realistic
- Intentionally seeking to teach to transform
- Tackling global learning more aggressively
- More interdisciplinary
- Problem solving
- Intercultural and bilingual learning



DISCUSSION

Think: Consider the all-important role of faculty and their global learning in the discussion of how to support students' global learning and to demonstrate how the high impact on faculty of leading off-campus programs strengthens institution-wide internationalization.

Pair: In pairs or small groups, discuss your institution's practices regarding strategies for developing and implementing coherent and efficient approaches to faculty preparation for leading off-campus programs and debriefing of faculty leaders when they return.

Share: Share and compare your ideas with the whole room.

- *For those from institutions that do not host faculty-led student programs:*
 - *1- How are faculty engaged in students' global learning?*
 - *2- How are faculty working with students who have studied internationally to integrate their off-campus and on-campus experiences*



DISCUSSION

Based on our discussions and collaboration today, what are some of the conclusions we have derived?

What questions remain?

- If we want students to apply and acquire lifelong values from the short-term study abroad experience, then *faculty, staff and institutional investments and commitments must also be lifelong endeavors.*
- Can transformation of faculty be quantified in terms of personal and professional endeavors as well as how faculty transformation impacts students? How do we move this theory and practice beyond the anecdotal?



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