

Studying Students' Global Views and Perspectives

Recent studies have indicated that study abroad is beneficial to college students in many ways. The GLOSSARI project by the Georgia University System concluded that students who study abroad have 10% higher odds of graduating in four years.¹ A 2009 University of Minnesota study found that the retention rate for students who studied abroad was approximately 28% higher than for those who did not study abroad.²

During the 2010-2011 academic year, the SAU Center for International Education administered the Global Perspectives Inventory (GPI), an assessment instrument that is used by over 70 colleges, universities, and third-party study abroad organizations. The GPI asks 64 questions within eight matrices: cognitive knowing and knowledge; intrapersonal identity and affect; interpersonal social responsibility and interaction; well being; and global citizenship.

The GPI was administered to two groups of students at SAU: students who studied abroad and residential undergraduate students who did not study abroad. In order to measure growth in global perspective over a semester, students took the GPI at the beginning of the term and again at the end of the term. An analysis of the results, visualized on the next page, found that:

- **Prior to any study abroad experience, SAU students score average in global perspective.**
- **Study abroad has a significant, noticeable impact on SAU students' global perspective.**
- **Students who do not study abroad experience no significant gains in global perspective.**
- **SAU students appear to benefit more from study abroad than students at other institutions.**

These results held even after controlling for demographic differences between groups (age, gender, GPA, and class). Therefore, we have evidence that our study abroad students are better equipped to “enrich their own lives and the lives of others” in several key areas related to cognition, identity, interpersonal relationships, and global citizenship.³

Principal Investigators:

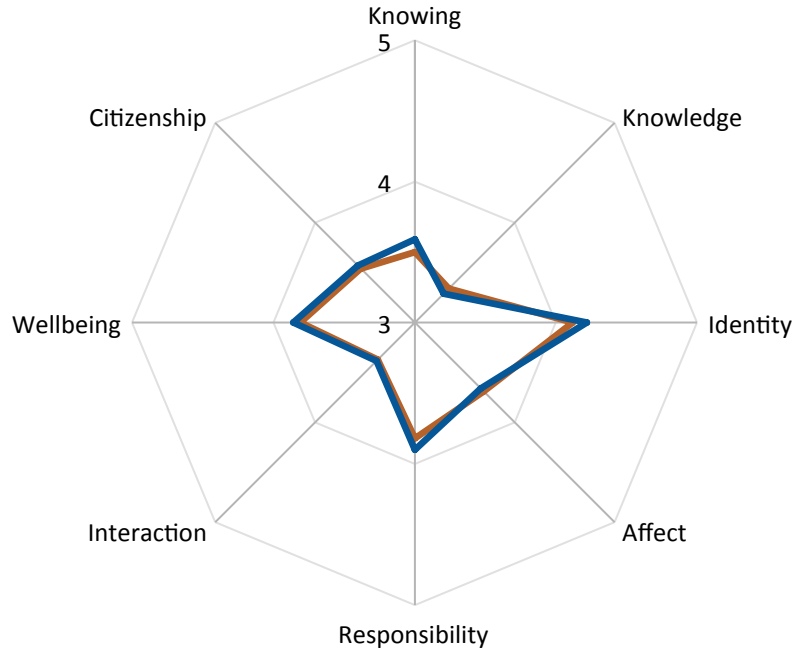
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¹ <http://glossari.uga.edu/>

² <http://www.umabroad.umn.edu/assets/files/PDFs/ci/Evaluation%20Pages/RetentionData.pdf>

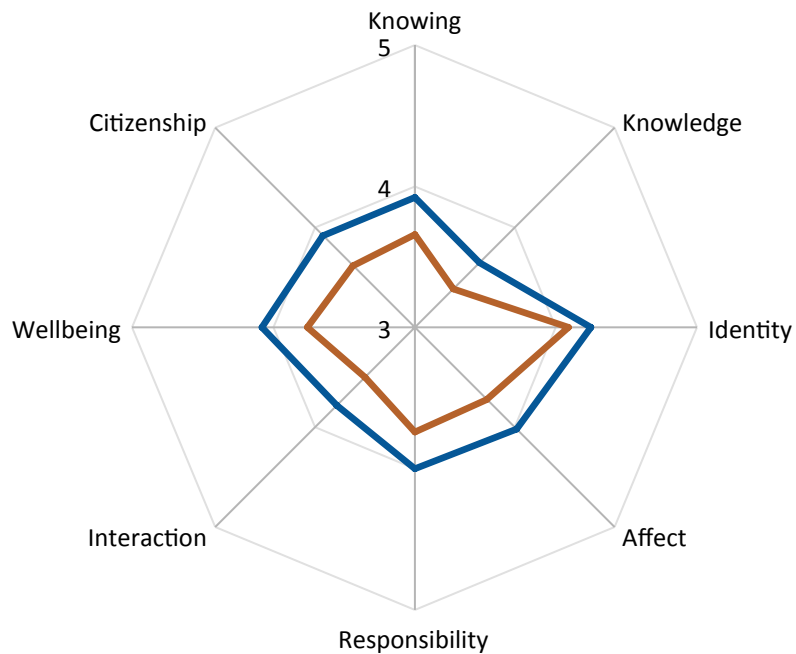
³ http://www.sau.edu/About_SAU.html

Growth in the 8 dimensions of Global Perspective: SAU Study Abroad vs. Other SAU Students



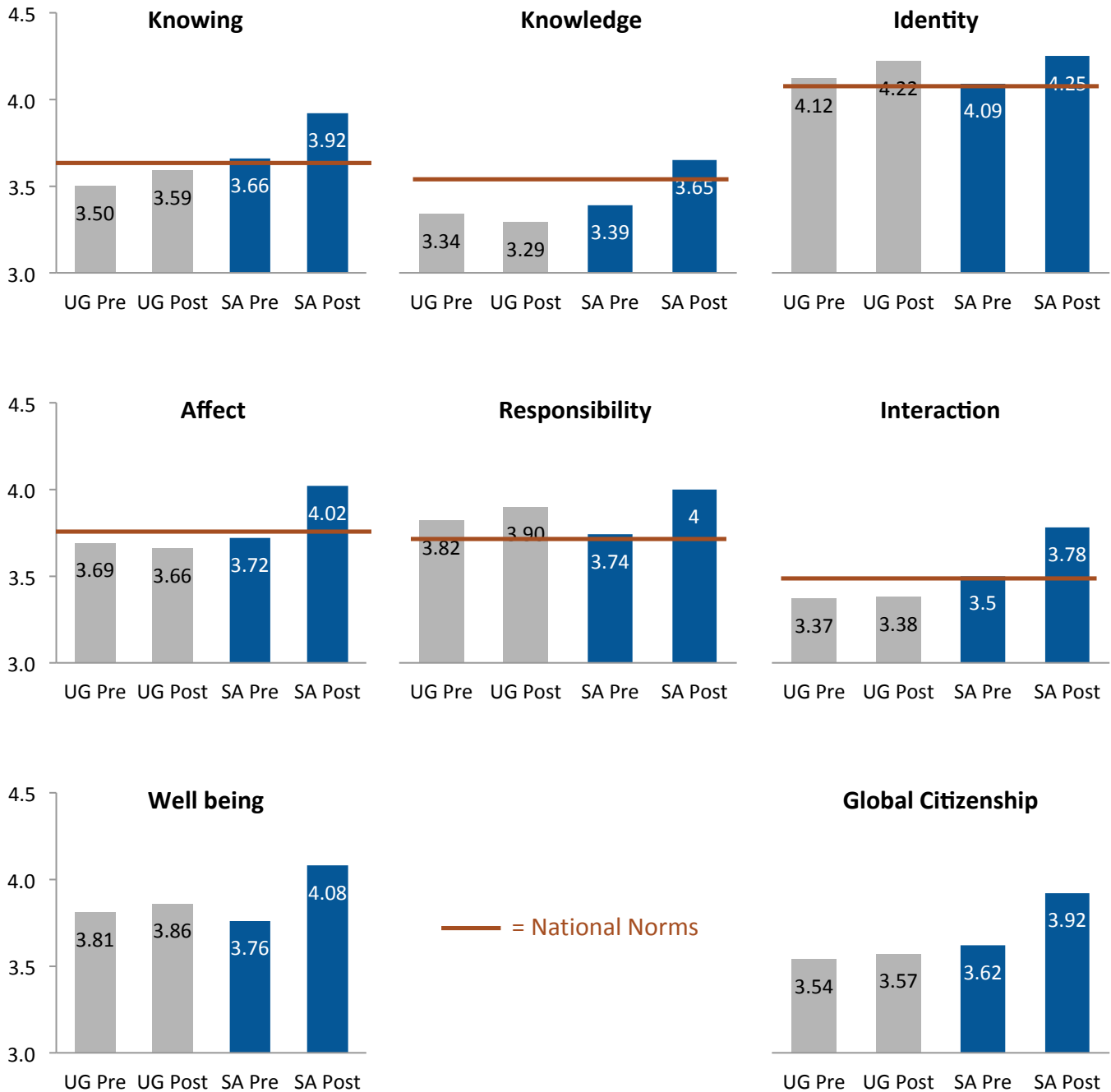
Above: SAU students who did not study abroad

Below: SAU students who did study abroad



These radar charts display the growth in GPI scores for SAU students who did and did not study abroad. The orange (inner) lines represent GPI scores at the beginning of the semester and the blue (outer) lines represent scores following the study abroad experience. As you can see in the top chart, students who did not study abroad experienced virtually no change in GPI scores over a semester. The bottom chart shows an expansion in global perspective (across all 8 dimensions) for study abroad students.

The following bar charts further display the gains in global perspective experienced by study abroad students. Whereas SAU students at the beginning of the semester scored average or below average in global perspective, SAU students who completed a study abroad experience scored significantly above the national average.



UG Pre: GPI scores for undergraduate residential students at the beginning of the semester.

UG Post: GPI scores for undergraduate residential students at the end of the semester

SA Pre: GPI scores for study abroad students at the beginning of the semester (prior to study abroad experience)

SA Post: GPI scores for study abroad students at the end of the semester (following the study abroad experience)

Orange Line: National average GPI scores