Recruitment Initiatives in Higher Education: A Comparison of Study Abroad and Enrollment Management Procedures

Carla Joy Ruffer
Loyola University Chicago

Recommended Citation
http://ecommons.luc.edu/luc_theses/490

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Theses and Dissertations at Loyola eCommons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Master's Theses by an authorized administrator of Loyola eCommons. For more information, please contact ecommons@luc.edu.

This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial-No Derivative Works 3.0 License.
Copyright © 2010 Carla Joy Ruffer
LOYOLA UNIVERSITY CHICAGO

MINORITY RECRUITMENT INITIATIVES IN HIGHER EDUCATION: A COMPARISON OF STUDY ABROAD AND ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT PROCEDURES

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO
THE FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL
IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ARTS

PROGRAM IN CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL POLICY STUDIES

BY
CARLA RUFFER
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS
DECEMBER 2010
ABSTRACT

There is a disparity of minority student participation in study abroad, and establishing best practices for successful recruitment would assist in closing this gap. This project looks to add research toward reaching such best practices by analyzing the methods of recruiting minority students into higher education study abroad programs. What methods are universities using to recruit minority students into study abroad, and how do these compare to the methods used by enrollment management to recruit minority students into an institution? In order to answer these questions, I use a qualitative analysis through interviews of study abroad and enrollment management staff members at one large public university and one small private college in two cities. The interviews discuss minority recruitment programs or initiatives at their current institutions and offices as well as the staff members’ perspective on such programs. I then compare the two offices’ procedures within a singular institution as well as across institution types in order to determine any patterns or peculiarities. Looking at study abroad recruitment through the lens of enrollment management recruitment procedures may add to the growing research knowledge.
During the 2006/2007 academic year 241,791 American students traveled abroad. However, 81.9% of these students were Caucasian. The next largest ethnic group is Asians at 6.7%. Hispanics are 6% of participants, and African-Americans are 3.8% (Institute of International Education, 2008a). In comparison, in 2007 the US college population consisted of 64% Caucasian, 13% African-American, 11% Hispanic, 6% Asian, and 4% other (National Center for Education Statistics, 2008). There is an obvious deficit of minorities participating in study abroad. This information is not new to the study abroad community, but I have not yet seen where systematic practice-based research has been attempted to begin addressing the situation.

On what types of programs are students traveling, from where are they coming, and to where are they going? Large research universities, such as Notre Dame, New York University, and Michigan State University, lead in the total number of students sent in all program duration categories (Institute of International Education, 2008a; 2008b). However, small liberal arts colleges send the largest majority of their students. Some of these institutions, such as Rhodes College and Centre College, send up to 80% of their student body to some form of study abroad experience. The majority of programs are short-term or two to eight weeks long. Only 5% of students study abroad for more than one semester (Institute of International Education, 2008b). The majority of institutions that send students abroad are in the northeast with the second largest group coming from the mid-west.
There are no community colleges on any of the Open Doors’ top ten lists (Institute of International Education, 2008a). As I will discuss in the literature review financial considerations are important for both institutional enrollment and study abroad enrollment. The fact that community colleges, which often educate mostly low SES and minority students, did not breach the top ten on any leading program categories reiterates this point as does this statement from Altbach (2007):

Most of the world’s more than two million international students [includes all students regardless of national origin] are self-funded, that is, they and their families pay for their own academic work. Students are therefore the largest source of funds for international education – not government, academic institutions, or philanthropies. (p. 294)

The cost of study abroad was a point made in my interview discussions on minority recruitment.

Some methods used by enrollment management to recruit minority and underrepresented students include pipeline programs in elementary and secondary school, which can include college preparedness programs and teacher qualifications improvement, percentage quotas, and increasing the non-academic or standardized testing factors in admissions considerations. Texas universities used a quota system by taking the top 10% from each high school, which allowed the students to compete with each other instead of the entire state (Douglass, 2007).

There is a gap between minority and majority student participation in study abroad, and I compare this with the steps taken by enrollment management in its attempt to overcome a similarly persistent situation in institution enrollment.
At this point in my research, I have found no study on the coordination of enrollment management recruitment policies with study abroad recruitment. There are a number of studies on access limitations of minority students to higher education (Beattie, 2002; Hossler, 2000; McDonough, 1994; Roscigno & Ainsworth-Darnell, 1999; Shirazi & French, 2005), and there are articles discussing the issue of diversifying study abroad participants (Dessoff, 2006; Norton, 2008) and the experience of students abroad (Jamison, 2001). However, these two issues have not, as far as I have uncovered, been studied together.

Beattie (2002) looked at the economic factors of college choice. Students choose to attend college and then choose which college to attend by analyzing the benefit to cost ratio. Some students will not even consider a particular school, such as an ivy league, because the student perceives the school is too expensive with limited or no financial aid options (Hossler, 2000). In addition to socioeconomic factors, a minority study weighs the perceived possibility of gaining a high paying job post-college. For example, if a Hispanic student does not believe he/she can become a successful lawyer then this student will not consider a prestigious school with a well regarded pre-law program (Beattie, 2002). Norton’s (2008) research reflects this opinion. She notes that many minority and low SES students will not consider study abroad because they are in school to “move quickly to the job market” (B12). Study abroad does not provide a perceived benefit for this goal. Correspondingly, Roscigno and Ainsworth-Darnell (1999) studied how African-American and low SES students gain less from culturally focused classes and class trips in secondary school. They theorize that this is linked to their low cultural
capital upon entrance and the value placed on these types of activities in their households. In regards to study abroad, perhaps this obstacle is not being considered. How do minority students, or any student for that matter, perceive the benefits of study abroad? Is there a cost effective benefit? Is there a personal benefit? How do one’s peers and environment perceive this benefit? Are these issues being considered in recruitment efforts? Might focusing on these concerns and obstacles increase over-all participation as well as minority participation?

Another perception to over-come is that minority students may face prejudice when they are abroad, an issue about which some study abroad offices are speaking with minority student groups (Norton, 2008). Brown University gathers all returning students’ perspectives on their treatment abroad in regards to race, gender, religion, nationality, and sexual orientation (Jamison, 2001). Some of the students’ candid responses, such as a white, female, lesbian traveling in South Africa and an African-American female traveling in Italy (Jamison, 2001), expressed the range of reactions mentioned in Norton’s (2008) article. Some students feel more comfortable surrounded by people of a physical likeness while some students feel uncomfortable being the “other” for the first time (Jamison, 2001; Norton, 2008). At this time, I have not found research into these types of feelings upon entering college. However, there may be a connection between enrollment management recruitment when bringing a minority student to a predominantly majority school or when recruiting a female student into a predominately male major.

According to Hossler (2000) the goals for enrollment management must be the goals of the institution. Enrollment management is the school’s branding. The goal of the
institution must be to diversify its student body in order for enrollment management to increase financial aid options. Shirazi and French (2005) briefly chronicle such an example at Oklahoma City Community College. The institute was committed to increasing and diversifying its student population. It incorporated a college awareness program as part of its enrollment management mission instead of an ad-hoc program, which more than doubled applicants. Hossler (2000) also notes that a majority of research on the effects of financial aid on a student’s choice was conducted prior to the increase in merit-based aid resulting in the decrease of need-based aid. Financial aid is a key to students’ college choice (Hossler, 2000) as it is with study abroad (Dessoff, 2006). Strong assessment is needed to convince staff, administrators, parents, and students that study abroad is important (Emert & Pearson, 2007). If these two offices’ recruitment efforts were to merge or at least reflect each other then the institution would need to commit to study abroad in a similar fashion as the Oklahoma college did for minority enrollment. Enrollment management’s goal to increase international education could then be reflected in the students’ financial aid packages. These are mere speculations, but these issues of synergy were considered during the interview and analysis process. Do the staff members believe this type of cooperation across fields and perhaps organizational politics is possible?

At the core of enrollment management and study abroad recruitment is student access. McDonough (1994) discusses the increase in a side industry created to augment the chances of students’ admission to top schools. Upper socioeconomic groups often exclusively use this additional help. In fact, McDonough notes that lower SES students
do not even aspire to attend the top schools, because they are not a priority in their home, school, or neighborhood environment. Therefore, they do not seek out the additional aid of private counselors (1994). How much do students know about study abroad before arriving at college? How can they plan financially and systematically within their credit requirements to include study abroad in their college career without this prior knowledge? Are they aware of and do they seek out the information about study abroad? Dessoff (2006) contends that there are social elements similar to extra assistance for higher education entrance, which inhibits minorities and lower SES students from even considering study abroad. This common thread to minority recruitment roadblocks might be a key to connecting some aspects of both programs.

Picard, Bernardino, and Ehigiator (2009) created a study abroad office self-assessment model based off of the study abroad offices at Georgia State University and the University of Pittsburgh, which have successful minority recruitment policies. Georgia State University has a strong peer component to at least three promotional programs, such as a study abroad alumni mixer and mentor program. The University of Pittsburgh also has a strong mentor program. Additionally, returning minority students provide feedback directly to study abroad advisors, so they can better address minority students’ concerns whether verbalized or not. An office’s self-assessment should include gauging the minority population already at one’s university, looking at the institutional priority of study abroad, understanding where students travel and from which majors they come, and looking at funding and program leaders. Does the institution and study abroad staff prioritize minority recruitment? Can any of these elements be expanded or improved
to increase minority participation? Picard et al. (2009) are not promoting a rubber stamp program for study abroad best practices, but as will be discussed later there are some similarities between the case studies Picard et al. (2009) present and my research analysis.

Research Questions

Considering the benefits of study abroad and the minimal participation of minority students establishing a best practices recruitment procedure may assist universities to increase levels of these underrepresented students. As shown above enrollment management has focused on minority recruitment for an institution. Can this be applied to study abroad? What practical applications are being implemented in enrollment management? This study looks at how enrollment management staff at certain universities are recruiting minority students, and comparing this with any minority recruitment initiatives at the universities’ study abroad programs. Are there any similarities? If not, then what could or could not be transferred from enrollment management to study abroad? Through staff interviews ultimately I look at what method universities are using to recruit minority students into study abroad, and how does this compare to the methods used by enrollment management to recruit minority students into an institution?

Research Methods

I received human subjects approval from the Loyola University Chicago IRB. I conducted interviews and applied a qualitative analysis in order to answer these research questions. I contacted the enrollment management and study abroad directors at four
universities with information on the study. I requested to interview him or her directly or for a suggestion of another staff member in his/her office to interview. However, I received interviews with only five administrators at four institutions. This has affected the analysis, and it will be discussed as a limitation of this study.

The interviews lasted approximately 30 minutes and were recorded via the online phone system Skype. The questions were open ended and in a loosely sequential format. I looked specifically for what the staff member thinks are some of the issues about minority recruitment at his or her current university and any university he or she has worked at in the past; what has been the past record and procedures for his or her current and past universities’ minority recruitment; what are some initiatives, if any, being taken? For the study abroad offices I looked at staff knowledge of the enrollment management procedures for minority recruitment and any coordination with enrollment management. For the enrollment management staff I looked at any coordination with the study abroad office and what interest these groups express in study abroad when they apply/interview/enroll. I focused on practical applications, whether there is any interoffice cooperation, and whether these procedures have transfer possibilities.

I researched a total of four universities, the identity of which was given an alias. Each school is either public or private, and this paper compares and contrasts my interview analysis within and across each element. The particular schools in city X and city Y were chosen due to indirect connections, which I used to make initial contacts. There are some differences between the two cities that will be accounted for in the analysis. For example, the size of city X is just under one million (Census, 2000), and
city Y is 250,000 (Census 2000, 2000). Also, city X has a 47% white and 48% African-American population while city Y has an 83% white population.

Belle University was founded in 1912 and has an operating budget of $344 million. There were 20,214 students enrolled in the Fall of 2008, of which 15,813 were undergraduates. The student body is made up of 53% Caucasian, 38% African-American, 6% other, 2% Asian, and 1% Hispanic. Lake College was founded in 1848 with an operating budget of $77 million. It enrolls 1,673 undergraduate students, of which 17% are listed as minorities. Belle and Lake are located within city X. Wilson University enrolls 13,246 students undergraduates, of which 61% are white, 6.3% are African-American, 5.6% are Asian, and 27% not reporting. Jackson College was founded in 1976. Jackson enrolls 1,400 undergraduate students, of which 8% are listed as minority students. Wilson and Jackson are located within city Y.

Analysis

My analysis is organized by groups of comparisons, but I feel it is beneficial to begin with some similarities between enrollment management and study abroad recruitment methods both for minorities and all students.

In all interviews\(^1\) it was clear that marketing is a primary contact point for potential students. Marketing takes the form of brochures, articles in student newspapers, and web content. These forms of outreach will continue to exist, but according to the study abroad administrator at Wilson they are not particularly effective. They are

\(^1\) The analysis and conclusion information to follow was gathered from interviews conducted for this research.
immeasurable. He continues, “We can spend hundreds of thousands of dollars on marketing, but it is the personal connections that make all the difference.”

Peer to peer recruitment is a popular form of active recruitment of already interested applicants. Enrollment offices have current students reach out to applicants. These students are often assigned by region, major, or an interest noted by the applicant such as Greek life. For study abroad offices peer-to-peer relationships occur between returning students and study abroad applicants. When focusing on minority students the returning study abroad students are minorities and attend minority group organizations to provide first hand knowledge that reflects the students personally. This strategy was similarly used at Georgia State University and the University of Pittsburgh (Picard et al., 2009). The personal connection to a returning student greatly improved minority recruitment efforts.

Pipeline programs are used in enrollment management at Belle and Jackson. Supporting local high school students’ ability to apply and qualify for any college directly benefits the hosting university. There is no condition for attendance at Belle or Jackson, but students become aware of those schools and are more interested in them. I had not heard of a similar situation for study abroad. Picard et al. (2009) pointed to working with enrollment management when an applicant was interested in study abroad and being a part of the orientation process once students are committed to their university. However, going out to the community to promote study abroad as a concept and indirectly study abroad at Wilson was a unique procedure within my small sample of universities. Wilson’s program is through the Office of Multicultural Affairs (OMA). The
OMA houses the program, but the study abroad office participates. OMA staff, study abroad staff and current Wilson students interact with high school students before they are Wilson students. Study abroad is discussed by the study abroad staff and OMA student mentors who themselves have studied abroad. I will discuss obstacles later in this study, but the Wilson study abroad administrator believes that lack of awareness is a major contributor to limited minority student participation.

Enrollment management offices promote their university by having open houses and attending college fairs. They are unable to bring any other office along to a college fair, but they invite and promote all offices at the open houses. Study abroad is one of the invited departments.

I consider all the above practices as active recruitment, with marketing being the least active. These offices are seeking out interested applicants and students. However, there are a number of passive recruitment techniques used by both departments, such as assisting walk-ins and students or applicants with inquiries. These contacts are already interested or at least intrigued by the university or study abroad. I do not know the numbers, nor if tracking of such participants is compiled, but these applicants and students may not be a full representation of the student body. All the universities in this study maintaining good relationships with guidance counselors and study abroad program facilitators. This strategy may not increase the overall numbers or the minority numbers, but they do not adversely affect them. A similar situation occurs with the enrollment management and study abroad counselors. Although their direct contact has the potential for being active and occasionally a peer-to-peer relationship, the Wilson study abroad
administrator notes that the increased number of interested students without an increase in staff removes the personal connection. His staff is unable to create a relationship with the students beyond paper shuffling.

Without these relationships in enrollment and study abroad it is harder to overcome the obstacles put in place of all but especially minority students. According to all the interviewees, money is the biggest factor discouraging students from studying abroad as well as attending college. The Belle study abroad administrator notes that obligations outside of academia also deter participants at Belle from taking advantage of study abroad. Students must work outside of school to support both school and very often families. One could infer that this could be a deterrent for institutional applicants as well.

Another strong obstacle according to the Lake study abroad administrator is the “fear factor.” Student awareness of the program is limited. Their peer group is unlikely to be aware of study abroad, and therefore unlikely to discuss it in realistic terms if at all. Additionally, parental awareness is limited or non-existent. Without this cultural context the “fear factor” is a strong force against learning about study abroad much less following through. The Lake administrator’s statements reflect the research by Roscigno and Ainsworth-Darnell (1999); Dessoff (2006), who theorize that lack of cultural capital decreases the likelihood that a student will ever consider study abroad. For first generation students, the university application process is complicated, which is similar to the concept and process for study abroad. If students do not understand how the process works will they apply or plan in a timely manner?
Awareness of an institution is a larger obstacle for private universities, who have a smaller footprint and pull from a larger geographical area, whereas a public university enrolls more from the local population. However, awareness in terms that college could be for him or her along with college preparedness could be an issue. Preparedness for college is similar to preparedness for study abroad. Do the students qualify? Do they know what the qualifications are? And in the case of study abroad, have they planned out their course schedules in order to graduate on time and study abroad?

Another obstacle that universities might have no control over is interest. Enrollment markets all the university’s best attributes to a wide range of people, but some in the community are not interested. Beyond self-assessment to constantly retool one’s offerings, there is little that can be accomplished to battle this. Some people are not interested in college or one’s university. This is similar to study abroad. One can market, create dynamic programs, offer the best support, but if a student is not interested then attendance cannot be required unless it becomes a university policy.

Belle is combating the money situation through university wide initiatives. The students have a ten-dollar per semester fee to support study abroad scholarships, and the student body numbers and minority numbers have increased due to a statewide scholarship program. Lake plans to create a parental component to study abroad marketing and recruitment. The Lake study abroad administrator feels that this will “directly combat the fear factor of parents, and thereby increase the number of students with family support.” Wilson and Jackson have no immediate plans for changing their recruitment effort.
A recurring theme during my interviews with two of the three study abroad administrators was the role they are given in the institution as portrayed through enrollment management events. The Wilson study abroad administrator noted that to enrollment management they are an “add on.” During enrollment management’s open houses the study abroad office is placed along side “…the campus police and the library. We are an academic office. We employ PhDs…We are housed under academic affairs not student affairs.” He continues by noting “…it is hard enough to get the students who are timid without them thinking we aren’t an integral part of the curriculum.” Lake’s study abroad administrator communicated a similar notion when explaining her office’s relations with enrollment management. She states, “we discuss our programs with the [enrollment management] counselors, and we attend their fairs, but no we do not have contact with any students prior to the acceptance and orientation.” Enrollment management at Lake markets and promotes study abroad as any other activity. Study abroad is packaged with the university as a whole, but is not promoted beyond answering questions until the applicants are officially Lake students. I was unable to speak with an enrollment management administrator from Lake, so my observations of this relationship are via the study abroad office only. A similar situation occurred with Wilson, but the study abroad administrator there was explicit in his concerns over his office’s placement in the scheme of the university. According to him, enrollment management at Wilson only truly promotes study abroad when prompted by the applicant, which is unlikely to be the underrepresented.
The study abroad administrator from Belle has an opposite view of her office’s relationship with enrollment management and minority recruitment. First and foremost, she did not believe that Belle has a minority recruitment issue. Its minority population is 43%, and the study abroad minority population is 40%, which supports her claim. Belle has not had any minority recruitment initiatives since she started in that office ten years prior. However, she was not particularly forthcoming with information. My research could have benefited more if I could have assessed historical minority numbers and the breakdown of current minority participation. Does Belle consider a minority as ethnicity, which is the basis for my student body comparison, or do they include disabled students, underrepresented students such as males, and/or first generation students? This seems unlikely, but it is a potential limitation to this research.

Belle’s study abroad administrator contributes minority numbers to a statewide scholarship to keep students within the state, which she and the enrollment management administrator believe also helps students to attend college directly from high school. They may also not need to work or work as much to support their college expenditures. This indirectly assists study abroad, which has similar obstacles as discussed above. Additionally, the Belle students are required to pay a fee, which directly supports study abroad scholarships. The study abroad administrator did not elaborate on the process of awarding the scholarship. Are they need based or merit based?

The study abroad office works with enrollment management by sending information about programs. The office is part of orientation and all enrollment management fairs. The enrollment management office provides marketing materials and
answers questions regarding study abroad for applicants. In short, these two offices have the same working relationship as the other universities I interviewed, but the Belle study abroad administrator does not consider this a hindrance primarily due to strong minority student numbers. Is the scholarship playing a significant role in these numbers, or does the student body and city make-up contribute?

Because of the success rate of Belle, I consider it a passive recruitment institution. Within the last ten years no initiative targeting minority students was used. However, the study abroad administrator notes that overall numbers have increased 100% during her tenure due to the scholarship funds. Other than open houses, orientation, and marketing, which I have listed as active recruitment, the Belle study abroad office reacts to inquiries both within enrollment management and study abroad. The Belle enrollment management office has a similar approach to institutional recruitment. As a public university with lower enrollment requirements and lower cost in comparison to a private university the local and statewide population inquire about the school. Enrollment management markets, has open houses, attends college fairs, and promotes the attributes of its university, but primarily recruitment occurs from applicant inquiry, which I consider a passive approach.

I was unable to interview an enrollment management administrator from Wilson, but from the study abroad administrator’s insight I gained a similar impression of Wilson’s enrollment management. Contrary to Belle, the study abroad office at Wilson seems very aggressive in its recruitment. The unique pipeline program already discussed, the extensive peer-to-peer relationship, and its constant contact with minority student
organizations are all aggressive recruitment initiatives. The study abroad administrator quickly mentioned that the study abroad office addresses a gathering of all minority student organizations, OMA student counselors, minority student leaders, etc. once to twice a year. Often minority study abroad alumni address the gathered students. A frank discussion about the benefits of study abroad and who is currently benefiting when minority students do not attend often occurs on these occasions. Unfortunately, the study abroad administrator pointed out that his staff is too small for the increased interest. They actively pursue the underrepresented, but there are not enough staff members to give them the extra attention needed.

He does not feel that his office is fully integrated into the university. He feels as valued to the community as the library, which is arguably a vital part, but they are both complements to the ultimate mission of student learning at the university. On the other hand, Belle’s study abroad administrator feels like there is no need for further gains in institutional stature, because her office has improved significantly. Ironically, this is due to further institutional support by way of the scholarship fee and state government support with tuition scholarships. Minority recruitment is not a priority nor has it been for her tenure. There were initiatives to increase the total number of students. Belle does not create programs or recruitment tools for minority students. Marketing, inquiry follow-up, and personal study abroad counselors are tools that work for her office, and they do not have any plans to change or increase these tools. Similarly, Wilson has no plans to change or increase its recruitment tools. However, minority recruitment is a priority. It is not a number one priority, which is to increase total numbers, but it plays a vital role in
that number one priority. Minority recruitment has been enough of a priority for the above-mentioned programs to be created and expanded. Unfortunately, I did not get historical numbers from Wilson. I would be interested to see the increase, if any, of minority students as these programs were created. He did say that they were successful enough to continue as is.

The Wilson study abroad office continued to see the major obstacle as lack of institutional support. Without this, enrollment management would continue to place them with student services and market them as a choice similar to many. He contends that all other obstacles, such as money, student planning, and student fear management would be diminished with institutional support. The Belle study abroad and enrollment management offices appear to be proof of this. However, a detailed study of Belle should be made before this claim can be quantified. Another future study could be made on the student academic and personal success outcomes of these two programs. Would a passive recruitment program with high participation but limited peer-to-peer and pipeline support be more satisfying than a lower participation program with extensive peer-to-peer relationships but limited staff support?

My comparisons of the two private colleges, Lake and Jackson, are limited by the interviews, but I gained perspective on Jackson’s enrollment management process and Lake’s study abroad process from the limited interviews. My analysis is based on the direct questions about relationships between the offices and inferred references. Both campuses’ offices work together through information sharing. The Lake study abroad administrator stated that she or her staff gives presentations to the enrollment
management counselors in order to better serve applicants’ questions. Jackson’s enrollment management staff invites study abroad to all department open houses for potential students. As I have noted, this is a surface cooperation, but there was no animosity expressed by either Lake or Jackson.

The enrollment management administrator stated that Jackson does not have minority recruitment initiatives for enrollment management. However, it has prioritized parent relations, which could help with first-generation students. The Lake study abroad office’s goal was to initiate a similar program for parents of potential study abroad students. I am not aware if Lake has a parents program through enrollment management or a policy for applicant parents.

Another similarity is the lack of minority recruitment priority at the colleges. Lake does not have any particular programs or initiatives for minority students. The study abroad administrator is tracking their participation, but she felt that beyond the parents program there was not a need for individualized procedures or programs for minority students. Sixty-five percent of her study abroad participants are Caucasian students, which is close to the 53% make-up of the student body.

Originally, this study was designed to compare the interview responses by city as well by institution type. However, I found no major distinctions between the two cities. Belle and Lake from city X both did not prioritize minority recruitment neither in enrollment management nor study abroad, but Jackson from city Y did not either. Only Wilson from city Y prioritized minority recruitment in study abroad. From all the interviews it was the stand-alone exception. Similarly, from this small research sample
there was no distinction between private and public universities. Lake and Jackson, both private colleges, do not have minority recruitment priorities, but neither does Belle, a public university. Again, in this comparison Wilson is the exception as the only university with minority recruitment priorities and initiatives.

Conclusions

I feel that this study could have benefited from additional research into institutional priorities. As Hossler (2000) notes enrollment management follows the priorities of the university. The examples by Picard et al. (2009) show that in order for true change to effect study abroad minority recruitment it should be an institutional wide priority. Belle follows this example. With a statewide scholarship initiative increasing the study body minority and underrepresented population and an institute wide study abroad scholarship fund the study abroad minority participant numbers closely match the university student body. This success rate was achieved without a dedicated minority recruitment policy within study abroad.

However, I would not diminish the role of enrollment management. The institution sets the priorities and enrollment management sees them through. My research has shown that Belle, Lake, and Jackson are all following recruitment procedures similar to their enrollment management offices. Belle’s enrollment management minority recruitment was drastically improved from state funded scholarships. Belle’s study abroad minority recruitment was drastically impacted by the increased numbers of minority students entering the college directly from high school with fewer financial obligations, which similarly was based from the state funded scholarships. The study
abroad scholarship increased their overall numbers as well. The impression was given
that Lake’s enrollment management does not prioritize minority recruitment, and neither
does the study abroad office. Wilson’s study abroad office uses pipeline and peer-to-peer
programs both inside and outside of enrollment management. The pipeline program is
along side the OMA, which also houses some peer-to-peer relationships. Inside,
enrollment management Wilson’s study abroad staff attend open houses and orientation.
Jackson’s enrollment management does not prioritize minority recruitment more than
general recruitment, which was implied as the policy of the study abroad office.
Marketing, inquiries, and open houses and fairs are the primary recruitment tools for both
offices.

This study shows, on the one hand, an example of successful institutional
financial support with the scholarship fund and perceived office cooperation at Belle,
and, on the other hand, strong peer-to-peer relationships and look of office cooperation at
Wilson. Two distinct models are created that foster successful programs.

Whether the offices are cooperating or not they are using each other’s tactics, but
does this truly help minority recruitment for study abroad? Without the earliest possible
information and perhaps encouragement would a potential student have enough time to
plan for finances, course study, and the “fear factor?” Those questions will need to be
addressed at a later date with a longer-term study. Additional case studies in the nature of
Picard et al. (2009) may uncover more themes, such as institutional support, pipeline
programs, and strong peer-to-peer relationships. Will they take the same form, or like in
the cases of Belle and Wilson produce similar products with different means?
REFERENCE LIST


VITA

Carla Ruffer earned her Bachelor of Arts in History from Centre College and her Master of Arts in Cultural and Educational Policy Studies from Loyola University Chicago. She currently works in Student Life at Memphis College of Art. Carla lives in Southaven, MS.