

Yale University



CENTER FOR INTERNATIONAL AND PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE (CIPE)

SURVEY RESULTS 2012-2013 / 2013-2014

FELLOWSHIP PROGRAMS,
OFFICE OF CAREER STRATEGY, AND
STUDY ABROAD

Robyn Acampora

Director, Strategic and Public Service Careers
Office of Career Strategy

Julia Bakes

Administrative Assistant, Light Fellowship Program
Fellowship Programs

Alan Baubonis

Assistant Director, Light Fellowship Program
Fellowship Programs

Katie Bell

Deputy Director, CIPE
Director, Yale Visiting International Student Program

Mary-Ann Bergstrom

Senior Administrative Assistant
Yale Summer Session

Lisa Blees

Senior Administrative Assistant
Office of Career Strategy

Julia Bourque

Assistant Director
Office of Career Strategy

James Brennan

Business Manager
Yale Summer Session

Denise Byrnes

Associate Director
Office of Career Strategy

Megan Carney

Senior Administrative Assistant
Study Abroad

Robert Clough

Director, Light Fellowship Program
Fellowship Programs

Samuel Cohen

Director of Information Technology, CIPE

Richard Collins

Online Learning Program Manager
Yale Summer Session

Meghan Connolly

Senior Administrative Assistant, CIPE

Julia Coppola

Senior Administrative Assistant
Office of Career Strategy

Katherine Dailinger

Director, National Fellowships
Fellowship Programs

Jeanine Dames

Assistant Dean, Yale College
Director, Office of Career Strategy

Jane Edwards

Senior Associate Dean, Yale College
Dean of International and Professional Experience
Director, CIPE

Susan Evans

Associate Director
Study Abroad

Lori Ferrara

Senior Administrative Assistant
Office of Career Strategy

Michael Fitzpatrick

Associate Director of Academic Affairs
Yale Summer Session

Brian Frenette

Associate Director
Office of Career Strategy

Michelle Gere

Associate Director
Study Abroad

Stephanie Glover

Senior Administrative Assistant
Office of Career Strategy

Kiera Keene

Senior Administrative Assistant, CIPE

Christina Kirk

Director
Study Abroad

Kenneth Koopmans

Co-Deputy Director, Director of Employment
Programs
Office of Career Strategy

Elayne Mazzearella

Co-Deputy Director, Director of Career Counseling
Office of Career Strategy

Kristin McJunkins

Director of Health Professions Advisory Program
Office of Career Strategy

Kelly McLaughlin

Assistant Dean of Assessment, Yale College
Deputy Director, CIPE
Director, Fellowship Programs
Director of Assessment, CIPE

Meredith Mira

Senior Associate Director, Global/Public Health and
Non-Allopathic/Non-Osteopathic Health Professions
Office of Career Strategy

Luz Miranda

Finance Coordinator, CIPE

Meg Palladino

Director, English Lang. Inst. and Int'l Summer
Programs
Yale Summer Session

Victoria Rinkerman

Senior Administrative Assistant
Yale Summer Session

Emma Rose

Assistant Director
Fellowship Programs

Lynn Saiers

Information Specialist, CIPE

Ellie Schmelzer

Associate Director
Office of Career Strategy

Ava Suntok

Senior Administrative Assistant and Registrar
Yale Summer Session

Kathy Trputec

Assistant Director for Study Abroad and
Global Summer Program Coordinator
Yale Summer Session

Katie Volz

Associate Director, Creative and Performing Arts
Office of Career Strategy

Stephanie Waite

Assistant Director
Office of Career Strategy

William Whobrey

Associate Dean, Yale College
Dean of Summer Session and Special Programs
Director, Yale Summer Session

Suzanne Wirak

Senior Administrative Assistant
Fellowship Program
Program Coordinator
Global Health Studies Program

Kathryn Young

Director
Yale Summer Session

COVER PHOTOS:

Photo 1: Katterra Logan, Class of 2017

Timothy Dwight College
Yale Summer Session Abroad:
Cusco Region, Urubamba Province, Perú

"At the point in which this photo was taken, there was a deep spiritual awakening that was impossible to describe, but one that everyone knew was present. In response to this magical yet sudden tranquility, I lifted my hands to the clouds, embracing the peace and serenity that Machu Picchu had to offer."

Photo 2: Yong Min Cho, Class of 2013

Pierson College
Wendy Blanning Fellowship
Bayan-Olgii Province, Mongolia

"As a boy sits on the back of a sheep and waits for his mother to finish the job, there is a lesson to be learned about the value of international experience: the experience of human diversity, but remembrance within it of heartwarming commonalities that underlies us all, love and care. That love and care, to be melted homogeneously in the hot, fresh cup of milk... and shared with friends and neighbors."

Photo 3: Office of Career Strategy

International Internship

The OCS International Internship programs take place in approximately 15 cities around the world and provide students with both a valuable work experience in an international setting and the chance to live in and learn about a culture different from their own.

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SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

A summary of findings from the Center for International and Professional Experience's (CIPE's) 2012-2014 survey follows, and the data suggest some of the ways that extra- and co-curricular activities can enhance student development.

STUDENTS' GOALS

Students who undertook opportunities through CIPE did so for the following top reasons:

- TO LEARN
- TO ENGAGE CROSS-CULTURALLY
- TO EXPLORE A CAREER
- TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

STUDENTS' MOST EFFECTIVE ACTIONS

Students indicated that the following actions proved most effective in achieving their goals for a CIPE experience:

- ENGAGING WITH PEOPLE AND THE LOCATION
- WORKING HARD AND STAYING ON TASK
- TAKING ON ACTIVITIES INDEPENDENTLY
- USING TARGET LANGUAGE / AVOIDING ENGLISH

STUDENTS' GREATEST CHALLENGES

Students indicated the following as the greatest challenges:

- HIGH DEMANDS OF THE WORK
- CULTURAL ADJUSTMENT

Students additionally indicated challenges such as engaging people, taking initiative, being flexible, lacking or using the target language, and handling the logistics of travel.

STUDENTS' NEW UNDERSTANDING

When asked what new understandings that the student might have gained as a result of undertaking activities through CIPE, top answers included:

- GAINED CAREER INSIGHTS
- GAINED SELF INSIGHTS
- GAINED GREATER ABILITY TO COLLABORATE
- GAINED BROADER PERSPECTIVE AND PATIENCE
- GAINED SENSE OF INDEPENDENCE / ADAPTABILITY

STUDENTS' ENGAGING DIFFERENTLY

When asked how the student might be engaging differently as a result of undertaking activities through CIPE, top answers included:

- TAKING NEXT STEPS IN STUDIES / CAREER
- ENGAGING MORE THOUGHTFULLY WITH PEOPLE
- ENGAGING MORE COLLABORATIVELY
- BUILDING ON RELATED COURSEWORK

REDUCING STRESS, INCREASING FULFILLMENT

Given the intense nature of students' time at Yale, which is often coupled with an anxiety-inducing compulsion to look effortlessly excellent, it is perhaps not surprising that taking productive time away from Yale offers students a chance to slow down and reflect in unique ways. The profoundly positive nature of such outcomes is worth special attention:

Sample Student Quote 1: "I approach friendship and work-life balance quite differently now, taking time for myself and having a healthier approach to relationships with the people around me. (It turns out real life is nothing like undergrad -- who knew, right?)"

Sample Student Quote 2: "Through interactions with older individuals in my program and people outside of my program and the university in general, I developed a new way of seeing my life (however cliché this sounds) so that I can see the 'big picture,' and not get overly stressed-out about the small things."

Sample Student Quote 3: "I feel like an adult, after having participated in the French program last summer, and I think time alone was a large contributor to this feeling."

PRIOR RESULTS: GLOBAL COMPETENCE

As CIPE's 2011-2012 report explained, the following developmental outcomes gave evidence of students achieving to varying degrees elements of what is often described as "global competence," including:

- IMPROVED INTERPERSONAL SKILLS
- A DESIRE to BUILD UPON the EXPERIENCE
- A GREATER SENSE of COMMUNITY
- INCREASED (and TEMPERED) CONFIDENCE

FORWARD: DEAN OF INTERNATIONAL AND PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

The national conversation about accountability in higher education is ongoing, and as accreditation bodies build expectations for assessment into their re-accreditation guidelines we are all increasingly aware of the importance of this work. Over the past 6 years those of us who work with international and professional experience in Yale College have systematically, as this report details, experimented with both qualitative and quantitative assessment instruments. We do this first and foremost to meet our own goals for accountability. Yale – with Yale alumni and friends – has made very significant investments to increase access to international experience for all students. Stepping back from the rush of our daily work, we wanted to be sure that the study, work and research experiences we were helping students to find were in fact having the kind of impact on their learning we imagine.

We have no interest in satisfaction surveys of the traditional kind; we believe, on the contrary, that some of the most significant learning happens when students are in situations they find very challenging. So we undertook a process of self-education in educational assessment, so that we could get the answers we really wanted. How do students make decisions about what they will do? What are their goals? What do they identify as the factors that most influence their learning?

Kelly McLaughlin, who has so effectively embraced the mission of thoughtful assessment, discusses in this report a model which lays obligations on us as advisers. We hold ourselves to:

- A clear statement of expectations, consistent and iterative;
- Consistent referral to student goals and expectations in any discussion of decisions to be made;
- Willingness to hold students accountable in ways that have real impact for them; and

- Empathy for the pressures under which our students work combined with vision of how to help them negotiate mature and responsible decision making.

We believe that the advising discussions that inform students' decision-making have long-term impact which is often recognized only months or years after they take place. This report is another step in the process of understanding our students experience as well as we can, so that we can foster choices that produce really powerful learning. Yale's resources are extraordinary, and the privilege conveyed by this education can be confusing as well as empowering. So, as we work, we keep in mind the goal of nurturing self-knowledge and personal responsibility as well as the will to pursue ambitious goals. We hope that as students graduate from Yale they will demonstrate:

- A sense of ownership of their own educational experience;
- Good judgment, or the recognition of the need to supplement their own judgment with that of a good source of advice;
- Confidence based on mastery and reflection, and not on external validation; and
- Understanding of their role in the social contract of a community and the implications of this for regulating their own behavior

Real leadership demands these qualities, and we take seriously the expectation that Yale graduates will lead. We want to do everything we can to help them do this with humility as well as confidence, with respect as well as authority, and with the empathy that derives from true understanding.

Jane Edwards

*Senior Associate Dean of Yale College
Dean of International and Professional Experience
Center for International and Professional Experience (CIPE)*

FORWARD: ASSISTANT DEAN OF ASSESSMENT

INPUTS, STUDENTS, AND OUTCOMES

Assessment discussions often feature a formula like:

Inputs -> Students -> Outputs and Outcomes

The conversation often splits, however, at the middle of the equation. In one direction the discussion deemphasizes or overlooks student agency, and the institution assumes primary responsibility for producing desired outputs and outcomes. In this view students are the recipients of what others plan for them, and outcomes have more to do with teaching and programming (what faculty and staff are doing) than with students' engagement in their own learning and well-being (what students are doing). In the other direction the discussion focuses on students' preparedness for college and on students' responsibility for utilizing resources responsibly. In this view students primarily drive outcomes.

Neither extreme captures the larger picture. Overemphasizing what faculty and administrators can do *to and for* students rather than *in partnership with* them encourages commodification of learning, which can disengage students from their own development. Likewise, deemphasizing the institution's role in promoting student development can easily distance faculty and administrators from proactively working toward students' long-term successes and fulfillment.

In one instance the institution might be doing too much for the student, straining resources while jeopardizing student self-sufficiency; in the other instance, the institution might be doing too little, letting students sink or swim. Both instances overlook co-articulating aims and sharing responsibilities. In such a partnership, students learn to become better swimmers while understanding that a lifeguard will not always be on duty.

CIPE's focus on students as they prepare for, undertake, and return from extra- and co-curricular experiences underscores this consideration. Individual student motivations, skills, agency, maturity, physical and mental health, personality, risk aversion, experience, ability to reflect critically, and any number of other variables will impact

developmental outcomes at least as much as, if not more than, institutional support. However, the institution has the capacity -the obligation- to impact students' development positively in myriad ways.

A few implications follow:

1. While students are not inert forces upon which outside influences can act with precision to manufacture desired results, such outcomes will occur most effectively when faculty, administrators, and students make clear their respective roles in promoting student development.
2. All stakeholders will benefit from an educational environment that promotes partnerships rather than dependencies or disengagements, and this partnership will work best when it is evidence-informed rather than anecdote- or inertia-driven.

ANECDOTES, DATA, AND INFORMING

THE PLURAL OF ANECDOTE IS NOT DATA.
DATA INFORM; THEY DO NOT EXPLAIN.

For the purposes of this report, CIPE analyzed student answers to critically-reflective survey questions that were developed within CIPE. The qualitative answers (large-scale anecdotes) were then coded into quantitative answer categories (data).

Despite this effort to produce data, however, CIPE does not fetishize data: sampling error, nonresponse bias, social desirability bias, reverse causality, leading questions, omitted or unobserved variables, and many other complexities make data collection and analysis an imprecise endeavor. However, correlations between CIPE's student support services and self-reported outcomes inform how CIPE seeks to impact students' academic, professional, and personal development.

So while CIPE does not fetishize data, its staff do respect data both for its strengths and its limits in informing and improving practice, preferring not to rely on anecdotes or inertia to propel its work.

FURTHER TENSIONS IN ASSESSMENT

As assessment poses tensions that go beyond correlations and causalities, CIPE has found it helpful to develop and periodically reference its own list of such tensions:

TENSIONS IN ASSESSMENT

Accountability <-> **Improvement**

Summative <-> **Formative**

Adopting <-> **Adapting**

Direct Measure <-> **Indirect Measure**

Quantitative <-> **Qualitative**

Aspirational <-> **Feasible**

Interdependent <-> **Independent**

Explaining <-> **Informing**

Causality <-> **Correlation**

Satisfaction <-> **Learning**

Through trial, error, and reflection, CIPE has come to focus on the **right side** of this list to pursue assessment processes that:

- place primary importance on improving its work (rather than on demonstrating accountability to an external group);
- help students reflect critically on their own development (rather than summarizing that development for them);
- adapt methodologies to suit CIPE's needs (rather than adopting tools);
- utilize indirect measures and qualitative data (student self-reporting rather than testing);
- are feasible and iterative given CIPE's limited experience and resources (rather than being overly aspirational);
- evolve independently from, but aware of, assessment efforts elsewhere (rather than joining efforts beyond CIPE);
- seek to inform CIPE's understanding of complex phenomena (rather than seeking to explain those phenomena);

- recognize that establishing correlations between inputs and outcomes is the reasonable extent to which assessments can lay claim to those outcomes (as opposed to asserting causality); and
- keep student learning and development at the forefront (rather than using student satisfaction as an indicator of learning or developmental outcomes).

Over time, the focus on items on the right-hand side of the tensions list has made addressing items on the left side of the list more feasible as well: CIPE is becoming more adept at turning a formative process into one that reliably summarizes student experiences; CIPE has made strides in explaining the impact that particular inputs *can* have on student development; and CIPE's improvement-based focus is lending useful material in demonstrating accountability to CIPE's many stakeholders.

CIPE'S MISSION STATEMENT

Assessment depends, in part, on clarity about desired outcomes. Such clarity often begins with a well-written mission statement, and CIPE staff developed the following after a strategic planning retreat at the Greenberg Center in 2011:

"The Center for International and Professional Experience (CIPE) offers guidance, support, and a range of educational and experiential activities for and in partnership with students and alumni. CIPE activities encourage the exploration and pursuit of personal, academic, and career goals in order to develop the capacity for thoughtful engagement with the world beyond Yale."

The principles laid out within this statement subsequently provide a framework for greater mission clarity through CIPE's vision statements, "North Star," terms of engagement, model of student engagement, and culture of assessment.

CIPE'S VISION

While crafting and periodically refining a mission statement is important for many reasons, including for assessment, it is easy to set and forget a mission statement without addressing the daily practices an organization takes to achieve that mission.

CIPE's vision statements lend greater specificity to its work for this reason. In an effort to ensure that CIPE is aligned with institutional aims, these statements also integrate President Salovey's goals of Access, Integration, Innovation, and Excellence:

1. **Outreach.** We will reach out to students and draw them into activities that are appropriate to each student's stage of personal and academic development. (*Access*)
2. **Student Development.** We will empower students to identify and reflect upon their personal and academic goals so that they can develop and pursue worthwhile and realistic action plans. (*Excellence, Access*)
3. **Connection.** We will develop and strengthen connections and engagement with collaborative partners outside of CIPE, including faculty, alumni, other divisions within Yale, and organizations and affiliates beyond the institution, to ensure smooth transitions and expanded reach. (*Integration*)
4. **Use of the Technologies.** We will identify appropriate technological tools that support students' educational and experiential goals, facilitate and promote CIPE offerings and increase organizational efficiency, and implement the use of these technologies. (*Innovation*)
5. **Assessment.** We will establish assessment efforts to define, deepen, and document: a) CIPE-led activities; b) CIPE vision statements; c) the range, variety, and relationship among CIPE activities and the overall success of the CIPE; and d) continuous improvement in all aspects of CIPE's work. (*Excellence, Innovation*)

CIPE'S "NORTH STAR"

Delving further into its practical interactions with students are principles that CIPE uses, together with its mission and vision, to form its "North Star" initiative. North Star aims to help students gain or improve upon:

- a sense of ownership over their own educational experiences;

- good judgment, or the recognition of the need to supplement their own judgment with that of a good source of advice;
- confidence based on mastery and critical reflection – not on external validation; and
- understanding of their roles in the social contract of a community and the implications of this for regulating their own behavior.

North Star has become shorthand in CIPE for a model of advising and support that works against student entitlement, learned helplessness, deferred adulthood, or passive consumption of administrative programming.

CIPE'S TERMS OF ENGAGEMENT WITH STUDENTS

As might be evident, CIPE takes efforts to go from a high-level mission statement to goals and interactions that can be implemented and assessed in practical ways. CIPE's "Terms of Engagement" provide another such example of working with students both to articulate learning outcomes and to define the shared responsibilities for achieving desired results:

To What End?

- To help students develop and actively pursue plans of action over time and across multiple experiences if possible.
- To help students build positive relationships with others through mutual respect.
- To help students understand the ways in which their experiences have contributed to meeting (or revising) their long-term goals and to their personal growth.
- To help students articulate and communicate this knowledge effectively.

CIPE Offers...

- The opportunity to discuss the students' plan of action with an advisor who will guide critical reflection, goal-oriented activity, and thoughtful program selection.
- Opportunities for experiences away from campus that offer quality, safety, and strong potential for meeting goals (the students' and Yale's).

- Support throughout the application process, after selection, during the experience, and upon return.
- One courtesy reminder to complete requirements.
- A culture of mutual respect for student and staff time.

Students Are Expected to...

- Be active participants in their own development by utilizing CIPE's resources (on-line tools, advising, peers, funding, etc.) to maximal and intentional benefit.
- Rely directly on CIPE for CIPE-related information.
- Be able to conceptualize and express how their plans connect to their own short- and long-term development.
- Engage with faculty, the Dean, and family members in a timely manner about plans for activity away from Yale.
- Act as positive ambassadors for Yale College in the U.S. and abroad.
- Respect peer and staff time by meeting deadlines, keeping appointments, and completing any requirements associated with the experience.

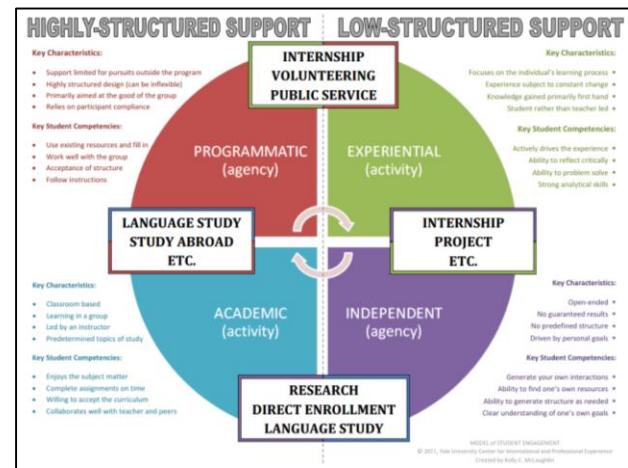
CIPE'S MODEL OF STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

How does CIPE help students to think critically about the range of experiences that CIPE offers?

This simple question drove the in-house creation of another advising tool called the “Model of Student Engagement.” This model first categorizes CIPE’s many opportunities for experiential learning into “highly-structured” and “low-structured” support categories. Levels of agency and types of activity involved form the next level of consideration.

For example, a study abroad experience in which a program determines most of the agenda falls into the PROGRAMMATIC / ACADEMIC category (red and blue below). Conversely, a research project that a student drives mostly or entirely on his or her own falls into the INDEPENDENT / EXPERIENTIAL category (green and purple below).

Understood this way, the range of CIPE’s opportunities can be mapped across confluences of agency levels and activity types:



Mapping CIPE’s opportunities onto this model has proven a powerful means of underscoring how CIPE’s units contribute to a shared landscape of student development. The model further allows for advising that begins by understanding the structure of a given opportunity, what type of activity will be given focus, and, significantly, what key characteristics and key student competencies typically accompany these experiences.

An independent internship or project, for example, would include the following points of consideration:

EXPERIENTIAL Key Characteristics

Focuses on the individual’s learning process
Experience subject to constant change
Knowledge gained primarily first hand
Student- rather than teacher-led

EXPERIENTIAL Key Student Competencies

Actively drives the experience
Ability to reflect critically
Ability to problem solve
Strong analytical skills

INDEPENDENT Key Characteristics

Open-ended
No guaranteed results
No predefined structure
Driven by personal goals

INDEPENDENT Key Student Competencies

- Generate one's own interactions
- Ability to find one's own resources
- Ability to generate structure as needed
- Clear understanding of one's own goals

This model empowers students and advisors to reflect with a heightened degree of specificity on opportunities that are a good fit for the students' academic and personal development given the student's current capabilities and aspirations. Freshmen, for example, often need more structured opportunities while a junior or senior might have built up the requisite skills and maturity necessary for taking on a project of his or her own design.

CIPE'S CULTURE OF ASSESSMENT

How does CIPE gauge whether or not its terms of engagement, advising models, and other efforts to promote student development are having the desired impacts?

While the survey reported on here represents an overarching assessment effort, it is useful to note that CIPE does not rely on a single survey but draws from a broad range of assessment activity, including:

OFFICE OF CAREER STRATEGY

Yale College First Destination Survey:

Surveys graduating seniors on plans immediately following graduation (Class is defined as per NACE as those graduating from July 1– June 30). This data is also used to create a specific Class List for alumni and student networking purposes.

Yale College Summer Activities Survey:

Surveys all returning undergraduate students on their prior summer activities and is used to populate the summer peer list and the password-protected employment evaluation database.

Employer Survey:

All employers hosting a summer intern through one of the OCS-coordinated internship programs complete a survey at the end of the summer about their experiences with the office and their student interns.

Yale Graduate School of Arts & Sciences Exit Survey (first survey will open in spring 2015):

Surveys graduate students in GSAS completing their degrees on plans immediately following graduation.

This data will be used to create specific Class Lists by department for alumni and student networking purposes.

Career Interest Surveys (for YC and GSAS):

This is a survey open for several months at a time to gauge students' interest in different employment areas (industry, function, and geographic) to help shape employer relations and cultivation efforts.

Workshop Surveys:

Every career workshop, program, and networking night is followed with a survey to all participating students.

Advising Appointments and Walk-in Surveys:

Students receive a quick survey after every appointment and every walk-in to share feedback on their experiences with the office staff. These surveys are anonymous and are shared monthly with advisors to build on strengths and to improve where necessary.

FELLOWSHIP PROGRAMS

Post-Experience Fellowship Reports:

Every student awarded a Yale fellowship is required to write a post-experience report that answers, in addition to whatever else the student wishes to share, critically reflective questions about the challenges and accomplishments that resulted from undertaking the experience. Fellowship staff review these reports for evidence of student learning as well as for insights that might improve advising. Reports are shared with Yale's Development Office, which sends copies to donors as part of evidence-informed stewardship.

Information Session Surveys:

At the end of every information session, students are asked to complete a flash survey while they are still in the room. This survey captures the questions students arrived at the session with, whether or not those questions were answered, and suggestions for additional material to be covered in future sessions.

On-Line Pre-Departure Surveys:

Fellowship Programs oversees the administration of on-line pre-departure sessions (primarily but not exclusively for students who might not have access to such information otherwise). Students who review the material are then surveyed about the degree to which the on-line contents helped them feel better

prepared for their upcoming experiences. Based on these responses, the on-line contents are modified yearly.

Longitudinal Tracking:

A long-term aim within Fellowship Programs is to track fellowship winners' outcomes post-graduation, including items such as career paths, subsequent awards that might have built off earlier fellowship experience, and critical reflection later in life on the impact such experience might have had on a sense of personal fulfillment and agency. Absent internal systems at Yale that make such alumni data readily available, however, Fellowship Programs tracks such longitudinal data as best it can, most often through publicly-available information and on-going communications with winners of national competitions such as the Marshall, Mitchell, Rhodes, and Fulbright.

National Fellowship Application and Interview Reports:

Consists of application advice and an interview report form distributed to finalists for national fellowships (whether current students or alumni). Applicants are asked to reflect on what they gained/learned from the application process. These answers are posted on the Fellowships Web site and shared with future Yale applicants by permission. Information collected is also part of iterative assessment and improvement of advising and other resources.

RICHARD U. LIGHT FELLOWSHIP

On-Line Information Session Feedback Surveys:

Questions address content coverage and suggestions for improvement, delivered in a brief online survey soon after each session.

End of Program Surveys:

These surveys are completed by all Light Fellows within two weeks of the end of their language programs. The survey includes 34 questions about their future coursework plans, feedback about the program(s) they attended, reporting on budget and expenses, and support from Light Fellowship staff.

Final Reports and Blogging:

All Light Fellows provide open-ended commentary about their experiences via a final report or blog. The report option allows students to remark on the

language programs they attended and their personal experiences; these reports are posted online to help inform future Light Fellows. Regular writing on an optional blog (two paragraphs and two photos per week) allows students to critically reflect on their learning and living experience in the short-term. Light Fellowship staff provide guiding questions for and respond to both the final reports and blog posts.

The Light Fellowship Student Advisory Committee:

This student committee is selected from returnees who are eager to share their experiences and enrich preparation for the next cohort of Light Fellows. Their regular meetings and activities provide qualitative feedback to Light Fellowship staff about the concerns and needs of students.

Site Visit Reports:

East Asian language instructors, Light Fellowship staff, and other select members of Yale's faculty and administrators perform site visits at language programs abroad. Language instructors provide thorough critique of language programs' teaching and experiential learning. Visitors also seek feedback from program directors and instructors about Light Fellows' progress and struggles. Visitors meet with students (usually in an informal, hosted dinner setting) to elicit qualitative feedback, typically in the target languages, about their experiences abroad up to that point.

A Light Alumni Survey:

Beginning in summer 2015, this survey will be sent to Light Fellows five, ten, and fifteen years after graduation. The survey will seek to track longitudinal data addressing long-term impacts of the fellowship experience.

Other Analyses:

Ongoing projects include conducting research to determine patterns in course selection among Light Fellows throughout their undergraduate years.

YALE SUMMER SESSION AND STUDY ABROAD

Global Summer Program (GSP):

Program assessment for the International Alliance of Research Universities (IARU) is conducted via surveys and IARU member input. Each university distributes surveys to the students who participated in

their GSP course(s). The results are compiled by the IARU Secretariat and redistributed to each university for analysis.

Online Courses:

All online courses participate in regular academic course and faculty evaluation. In addition, program managers send out post session in-depth information. This program assessment includes questions about teaching and learning, course technologies and a summative feedback. In many cases the surveys are tailored for specific courses that are experimenting with new ideas or practices.

Yale College Course Evaluations:

Standard Yale College online course evaluation sent to students as a link via email and linked to their SIS accounts. Questions students about general opinions of the course and instructor.

YSS Faculty Survey:

Qualtrics survey sent to all summer faculty to gauge their preparation for summer, suitability of summer students for their course, and their overall assessment of program outcomes.

Faculty Reports:

Collected from lead instructors of programs abroad with questions about program activities and enhancement of classroom learning, academic issues, and related comments.

Student Reports:

For designated (non-Yale) Year or Term Abroad and Summer programs to capture information not included on the Yale College Course evaluations.

Freshman Scholars at Yale:

Students receive a pre-program survey that focuses on their feelings about preparations for Yale, both academic and social. During the program, students are surveyed weekly on activities and events. Finally, the post-program survey asks about what progress students feel they have made with regard to their

preparedness for the fall semester. At present, one additional COFHE-type survey is done at the end of their freshman year.

ELI/YSS Student Survey:

Sent out during the final week of YSS B/ELI programs to Session A, B, and all ELI students. The survey collects information on how students heard about the programs, why they came, what their experience was like with the application process, pre-arrival communication, orientation / registration, the courses, the residential colleges, dining, and general activities.

Yale Writers' Conference:

Administered to all 2014 Writers' Conference participants to get feedback on the quality of the program including the courses, instructors, schedule, and residential experience.

WHAT DOES CIPE DO WITH ITS ASSESSMENT FINDINGS?

Survey data are the focus each year of several meetings in which CIPE staff review the results and ask how the findings might help improve CIPE's work. During these discussions staff also contemplate changes to survey questions for next year, often to capture more nuance on a current question or to explore new avenues of inquiry about student development.

Furthermore, staff routinely ask "What would North Star say?" whenever contemplating ways to address a challenge. As such, the results of CIPE's various surveys and reports feed iteratively each year into improvements of everything from information and advising sessions to strategic planning and reporting.

Finally, with the aim of encouraging transparency and wider discussions of its efforts, CIPE shares its survey results openly within Yale College, with donors, and, via its Web site, with anybody else who might be interested in CIPE's work.

QUICK FACTS: CIPE SURVEY

OBJECTIVES

CIPE's activities impact a full class size of Yale students and hundreds of students visiting campus each summer; administering those activities requires significant investments of resources. What are the results of those investments so far? This report offers an evidence-informed reply to that question.

AUDIENCES

CIPE's primary audience consists of its staff, who are tasked with utilizing assessments to improve CIPE's work, and the leadership of Yale University, who determine, among other things, the level of support given to CIPE each year. Additionally, CIPE makes public its annual reports and its assessment reports so that students, faculty, parents, peer institutions, and accrediting agencies might benefit from a transparent, evidence-informed view of learning outcomes.

PARTICIPATING OFFICES

The Center for International and Professional Experience (CIPE) consists of Fellowship Programs, Study Abroad, Summer Session, and the Office of Career Strategy.

SURVEY QUESTIONS AND CODING

The 2012-2014 CIPE Assessment Survey is a six-item survey consisting of five open-ended questions and one "Yes/No" question. Questions prompt critical reflection as students contemplate the learning outcomes, if any, they attribute to their experiences through CIPE-administered or approved activities. Answers to the open-ended questions are coded into response categories and reported on quantitatively.

TIMING OF THE SURVEY

Students were sent invitations to take the CIPE survey after the fall shopping period ended. CIPE chose this timing in order to give students a reasonable sense of whether or not the experiences from which they had returned impacted such things as subsequent course selection. While the long-term impact of experiential learning requires longitudinal assessments, delaying the survey invitation slightly (as opposed to immediately upon students' return to campus) allows

students a better opportunity for reflecting critically on their development.

RESPONSE RATES

The response rate for the 2012-2014 was a combined 29%: 4,602 survey invitations were sent to students over two academic years, and 1,284 responded.

VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

Confidence Interval: The margin of error, or "confidence level," for the survey is 5. Thus, if 35% of the selected sample picks an answer, there is "certainty" that, had the question been asked of the entire relevant population, between 30% (35-5) and 40% (35+5) would have picked that answer.

Confidence Level: The confidence level for this survey is 95%, which indicates how often the true percentage of the population who pick an answer lies within the confidence interval. Most researchers use a 95% target for confidence level in order to work with manageable sample sizes as opposed to analyzing survey responses in their entirety.

Response Rate: While a response rate of 33% or higher is desirable, a 29% response rate produced significant insights to how students view their learning outcomes.

Reliability: The survey questions, which have been tested and analyzed in CIPE surveys since 2010, were designed with clarity, generalizability, and other established principles of good survey practice in mind.

SURVEY SAMPLE

The survey was offered on-line to students who undertook an experience through CIPE during the 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 academic years and who were returning to campus. Completing the survey required approximately 15 minutes.

STUDENT QUOTES

The student quotes used after each data chart reflect a representative sample of all responses given for a particular survey item within that unit of CIPE. Generally the top three answers are shown with quotes except when there is little statistical difference

between the top 3 or top 4 answers, etc.; in such cases, a wider range of answers and quotes is given.

ADMINISTRATION

CIPE's Deputy Director, who also serves as Director of Fellowship Programs and as Assistant Dean of Assessment for Yale College, designed the survey, analyzed the results, and produced this report. Questions or comments can be sent to him at kelly.mclaughlin@yale.edu.

Aiding significantly in this effort were CIPE's Information Specialist, Lynn Saiers, who handled the technical delivery of the online survey and substantial organization of the resultant data. Additionally, numerous CIPE staff provided feedback on the survey's findings and implications.

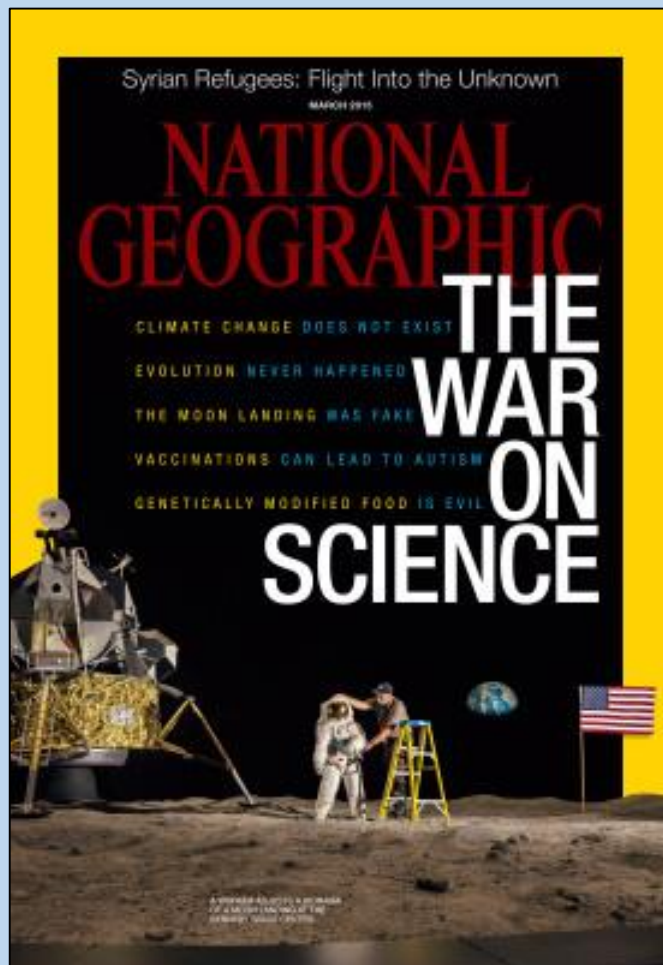
CIPE aims to take its data analysis to more sophisticated levels, including establishing correlations of results by class year, gender, major, and a host of other variables. These correlations would not point to causalities, but such results could prove helpful in CIPE's efforts to understand and support its students better each year.

Partnerships with Yale's Office of Institutional Research, Yale's Center for Science and Social Science Information, and other data experts would greatly aid such efforts. For the moment, however, such partnerships are more aspirational than feasible given the limits of time and resources across these offices.

Kelly C. McLaughlin

*Assistant Dean of Assessment, Yale College
Deputy Director, CIPE
Director of Fellowship Programs, CIPE
Director of Assessment, CIPE*

From an interview in National Geographic's March 2015 issue with Gilbert M. Grosvenor ('54, B.A. in Psychology), who retired as editor-in-chief of National Geographic Magazine in 2010:



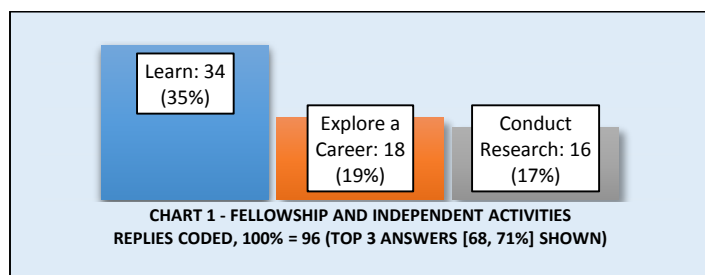
You studied premed at Yale. What made you change course and come to work at the National Geographic Society?

"Between my junior and senior years, I went to the Netherlands on a summer program to rebuild dikes washed out by the great flood of 1953. I photographed and co-authored a story that was published in the magazine. Although I'm not sure I realized it at the time, it changed my life. I discovered the power of journalism. And that's what we are all about—recording those chronicles of planet Earth."

RESULTS: FELLOWSHIPS AND INDEPENDENT ACTIVITIES (NOT INCLUDING LIGHT FELLOWSHIP)

I approach friendship and work-life balance quite differently now, taking time for myself and having a healthier approach to relationships with the people around me. (It turns out real life is nothing like undergrad -- who knew, right?)

CHART 1 - THE PRIMARY GOAL THAT I SET FOR THIS EXPERIENCE WAS:



Fellowship Programs administers or provides campus-wide support for 47 Yale College and 24 national fellowship competitions. Each year some 700 Yale students submit roughly 1,300 applications for these funds, which make possible wide-ranging experiences domestically and abroad.

The staff and faculty who oversee fellowship awards and nominations require that students first develop and articulate how their proposed experiences reflect and will contribute to their academic, personal, and professional development.

Additionally, many Yale students engage in a range of co-curricular activities without fellowship funding, and CIPE is interested in understanding students' goals and providing advising support for those experiences as well. These "independent activities" account for 4% of the responses reported here.

Students who undertake independent activities are not left entirely to their own devices as they receive invitations to attend one of CIPE's pre-departure meetings to help ensure that, funded activity or not, all Yale students who undertake these opportunities do so as thoughtfully and as safely as possible. Students who receive Yale funding for these experiences, however, are *required* to attend one or more of these meetings.

Chart 1 indicates that students are eager to learn something significant from high-impact activities for which CIPE and other staff and faculty on campus fund and/or provide advising support. The seriousness with which students approach these opportunities mirrors advising given in information sessions, one-on-one meetings, pre-departure sessions, and debrief surveys such as this one.

Yale students generally are also cognizant of utilizing their limited time wisely and toward useful outcomes; thus, to the degree that CIPE can both foster and report on those outcomes, the Yale community can better weigh the value of undertaking such activity:

LEARN

- "Improve my French language skills through cultural and workplace immersion in France."*
- "To learn about current research in chemical engineering, research in wet labs, how to live and navigate a foreign country."*
- "Learn about Irish theater."*

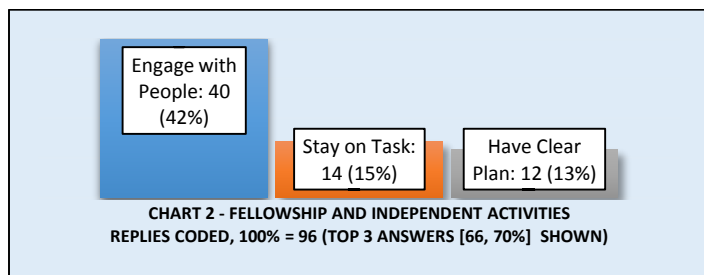
EXPLORE A CAREER

- "To see what it felt like to live and breathe the life of a researcher."*
- "Explore the field of particle physics and decide whether I liked the environment and the research to pursue it in grad school, or if I should change to another physics field."*
- "Start a business in Zambia."*

CONDUCT RESEARCH

- "My goal was to investigate Javanese birth rituals in rural regions surrounding Yogyakarta."*
- "To accomplish a qualitative research study on faith healing beliefs and practices among prayer camps in Ghana."*
- "To understand environmental factors influencing the health of community members in an urban slum."*

CHART 2 - THE MOST EFFECTIVE ACTION I TOOK TO TRY TO ACCOMPLISH MY PRIMARY GOAL FOR THIS EXPERIENCE WAS:



This question, which prompts the student to reflect critically upon his or her own efforts, yields insight to effective actions many students take; namely, when students engage with others, even if that means engaging outside of their comfort zones, a host of positive outcomes can follow. Staying on task and having a clear plan round out the top answers:

ENGAGE WITH PEOPLE

- *"I made contact, through recent graduates and administrators of the theater management program at the Moscow Art Theater School, with two urban planners that had worked on Flakon, one of the premier examples of these spaces, in its early stages."*
- *"Set up meetings with mid to late career professionals at NBC to give me advice."*
- *"I was able to work closely with a screenwriter in Taiwan."*

STAY ON TASK

- *"Give myself daily and weekly goals; arrange interviews and follow through even when reluctant or tired."*
- *"Immersed myself fully in the work I was doing, take advantage of every opportunity."*
- *"Making a calendar and constantly readjusting it as needed."*

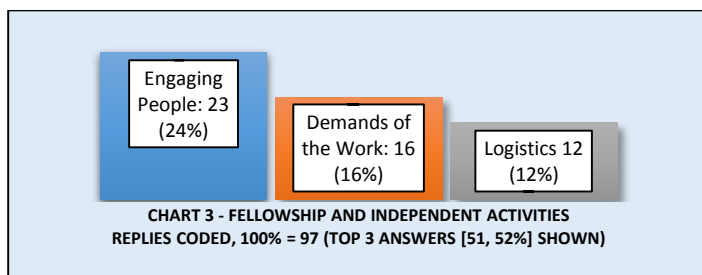
HAVE CLEAR PLAN

- *"Extensive research and brainstorming. Although it took a while to finally identify a course of action, proper research and planning allowed my project to flow smoothly throughout the summer."*
- *"Finding this unique school in Pardes Katz, Israel and going there to teach. I used various techniques and*

lesson plans that focused on teamwork to accomplish this goal."

- *"Creating a detailed itinerary."*

CHART 3 - ONE THING THAT I FOUND MOST CHALLENGING ABOUT THIS EXPERIENCE WAS:



Even as Chart 2 demonstrates that engaging with others was the most effective means of achieving one's goals for the experience, Chart 3 indicates that such engagement also proved the most challenging aspect of the experience overall; in some cases this challenge stemmed from largely predictable language barriers, but often the challenge went beyond just language. Students further indicated that the demands of the work itself, be that research or study, coupled with having to solve logistical issues, proved challenging:

ENGAGING PEOPLE

- *"My Yale education taught me to think about things in a very analytic way, and also to never admit failure. When I was having difficulty emotionally, I had a very hard time opening up to my advisers that would have had wonderful advice because a) I thought it was unprofessional, and b) I thought it was a sign of failure on my part."*
- *"Overcoming my shyness to talk with my coworkers; when I first started working, I was too scared to initiate conversations with my coworkers, but after a week, I felt comfortable enough to talk freely with them."*
- *"Although I knew language barriers would be a challenge, and I exceeded my own expectations by far, communicating informally with colleagues and formally by writing materials for publication was the greatest barrier to my work."*

DEMANDS OF THE WORK

- *"Navigating what it means to do research. The nature of public health research is often that you are trying to document things that you already know to be true. But*

it's one thing to understand that logically and another to learn to appreciate the steps (and many challenges) that come with conducting surveys and interviews with people about often very sensitive topics."

- *"It was difficult to keep myself motivated to transcribe almost every letter (6+ hours a day in silence at the Beinecke)."*
- *"I had to turn qualitative survey results into quantitative results...It was challenging to find a consistent system for turning words into numbers."*

LOGISTICS

- *"Logistical problems (ex. government delays and bureaucratic problems, the danger of recruitment sites, a national nurse and doctor strike, etc.)."*
- *"The difficulty of accessing archives and first-hand information regarding memorial sites."*
- *"Planning an entire international internship experience on my own. I did everything unilaterally rather than through an established internship program, so I had to coordinate transportation, housing, a visa, etc. on my own. I had never gone abroad alone before."*

CHART 4 - I EXPECTED TO ENCOUNTER THIS CHALLENGE PRIOR TO STARTING THE EXPERIENCE:

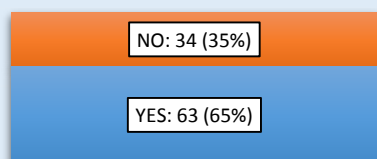


CHART 4 - FELLOWSHIP AND INDEPENDENT ACTIVITIES
REPLIES CODED, 100% = 97 (97, 100% OF ANSWERS SHOWN)

A primary use for the results of this survey is to determine not just what students are finding challenging but also whether or not they expected those challenges. Fellowship Programs is then able to ensure that its advising, most prominently through its pre-departure sessions, constantly reflects what students are reporting as challenges.

Fellowship Programs does not, however, aim for every student to anticipate and prepare for every possible challenge. Not only is such a mission impossible, but invariably students will be caught off guard by certain

challenges that only in retrospect seem obvious; this is part of learning.

That said, nearly two-thirds of students expected to encounter the challenges indicated previously in Chart 3; and Chart 4 below gives evidence that, while students are aware that these experiences can prove challenging, they undertake them despite (if not because of) the opportunity to struggle toward accomplishing something that they deem important:

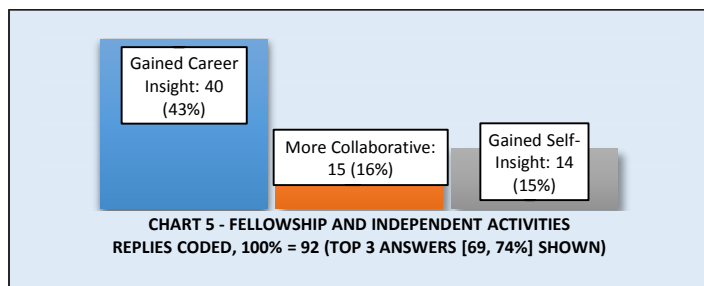
YES

- *"I believed that this was an excellent reason for undertaking the experience in the first place, by thrusting myself outside my comfort zone and testing the waters all at once."*
- *"I knew with whom and in what topic specifically I was going to work during the summer. Once I got to CERN, though, I had to spend some time with the grad students and my professor defining a very specific subtopic that hadn't been investigated, resources and a strategy to approach it. Then, I could follow the research plan to produce useful analysis in a short period of time."*
- *"There is only so much that planning can do - it is challenging to create a plan that is clear enough to provide direction, but open enough to encourage discovery."*

NO

- *"Although I knew in some part of my brain that a large portion of science can involve sitting around and waiting for organisms to grow or reactions to take place, it was different to actually deal with these things and find patience."*
- *"I decided to take on a project during the last week of my summer experience, which was hasty and hectic. However, I don't think there was anything I could have done to foresee that I would need to collect more data; it was a valuable lesson that field work can be fickle and change at the last possible moment."*
- *"The Portuguese I learned in the classroom setting was dramatically different from the dialect of Portuguese spoken in this slum community."*

CHART 5 - DURING THIS EXPERIENCE I GAINED NEW UNDERSTANDING ABOUT MYSELF IN THE FOLLOWING WAY:



“Self-discovery” is one of the more positive (even cliché) aspects of college experience generally, particularly within a Liberal Arts context. Can the same be said of students who are undertaking experiences beyond the campus or its classrooms? Based on the student answers and quotes that follow, one might argue that such experiences can, in fact, prompt self- or career-insight in ways that build upon the university’s mission to produce alumni who engage positively and collaboratively with the world:

GAINED CAREER INSIGHT

- “I realized that while I loved research, devoting my entire life to this topic was not something I wanted to do, which confirmed my decision not to pursue a Ph.D.”
- “I discovered that, even though I like particle physics, I should go into a newer field of physics, maybe one that is more applicable to current technology development. I also found out that I want to work on something that I can ‘see the results in front of me’, or rather, see the experiment itself.”
- “I found out that I loved teaching and that this is what I wanted to do for the rest of my life. I also came to understand a new culture and way of life that broadened my perspective on the world.”

MORE COLLABORATIVE

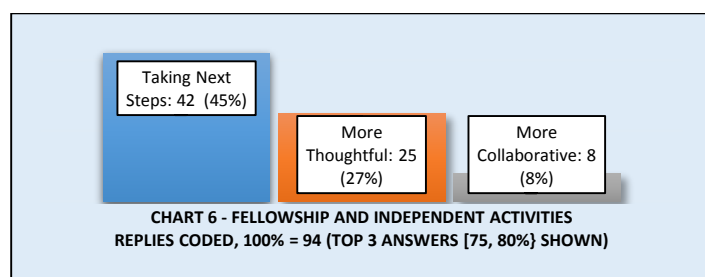
- “I learned a great deal about the mechanics of earning people’s trust in a foreign country with zero credentials or qualifications past enthusiasm. I learned about how best to represent myself, my project, and my institution on their own merits, and to encourage the people around me to work with me and help a shared interest along by using our qualifications together.”

- “I realized how uncomfortable I was asking for help but, after asking for help, found that I met and really go to know so many more people by collaborating and by helping them with their projects as well.”
- “I ... had this whole added piece of learning a lot from a few teammates who there with me from Yale. They influenced and taught me a lot as we were going through new experiences together. I got the chance to learn about things they would have changed looking back on their time in college as well as got to see how they deal with challenges because we were often all confronted with brand new difficulties that none of us could have anticipated.”

GAINED SELF-INSIGHT

- “It was the first time I had to really acknowledge to myself that I was overwhelmed, scared, and unsatisfied, and make changes accordingly; this taught me how to recognize those signals in myself and have more confidence that I can change my circumstances when I need to.”
- “I discovered that I am more extroverted than I initially thought, that at Yale I have developed research and writing skills applicable to areas outside of my major (e.g. compiling a recommendation report for Red Ribbon for a new university-level HIV/AIDS prevention program), and that I know very little about the world and cultures outside of North America.”
- “I realized how sheltered I am.”

CHART 6 - I AM ENGAGING DIFFERENTLY WITH MY COURSEWORK, COMMUNITY, CAREER PATH, FAMILY, OR FRIENDS AS A RESULT OF THIS EXPERIENCE IN THE FOLLOWING WAY:



This question seeks to gauge the degree to which students find themselves engaging differently with the world around them, including the subsequent courses they elected to take. Among the fellowship and independent activity cohort, the results lean heavily

toward students indicating that their experiences led directly to taking the next steps in the academic and personal development. Once again, students report being more collaborative in their approach as well:

TAKING NEXT STEPS

- “I am in the process of creating a project for independent study based entirely on the material gathered this summer. This is a focused opportunity for study by which I feel engaged, motivated, and excited. It has provided a source of inspiration and renewed energy for all my other coursework.”
- “My project this summer helped my think more deeply about what kinds of interdisciplinary projects can arise out of academic fields. I would like to pursue more projects that bridge the gap between theory and culture, philosophy and journalism. I've already written a feature for a magazine on campus, empowered by my reporting experience this summer.”
- “I have discovered that my coursework is resonating with me a lot more than it used to. I created an immense amount of passion this summer for understanding the problems of inner-city fathers, and I keep being surprised at how many connections I am finding in my course work.”

MORE THOUGHTFUL

- “I am now much more interested in taking classes with a broader focus on the world and world events. I also go about my life thinking more about the big picture of life after Yale rather than worrying about each test and small obstacle I face at school.”
- “I think I have become way more interested in nonprofit work. I was very scared for a long time that I wouldn't be able to pursue this path because I didn't want to be poor for the rest of my life. But after working here, I've been rendered aware of how much more important it is to do something that I love than to make money.”
- “I have been to the location 4 times now, but I came back much more devastated by the poverty. I am much more conscious about what I spend and how incredibly lucky I am to live where I do.”

MORE COLLABORATIVE

- “I have a more active approach to asking questions of professors and teaching assistants in my courses, more willing to seek them out during office hours to clarify issues and ensure that I properly understand the material. I want to know what I'm doing, so that I can understand how it relates to other things and how to apply it, and my experience with learning botany by practical work has encouraged me.”
- “I am continuing to meet with people involved in the field of international relations and have made a concerted effort to meet with professors to discuss their work in the field of international relations.”
- “I'm now focusing my course work and my interaction with people around me (especially with other physics majors and grad students) on finding out more about different physics fields, so I can find a field that I don't simply like, but that I'm truly passionate about.”

Griffin Collier, Timothy Dwight 2013
Mary Hotchkiss Williams Travel Fellowship for the
Visual Arts
Kye Village, India

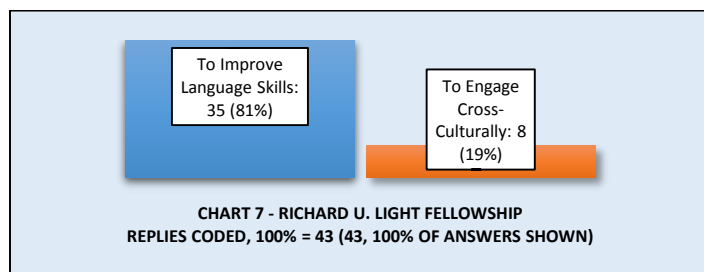


“Suddenly distracted, young Stanzin looks up from his grandfather's lesson and down the Baralacha valley towards the roadwork that will soon change his life and his family's life forever. Only miles away, the bulldozers of the new motorway continue to crawl a little closer each day. For now though, daily life in the Himalayas carries on as it always has. Still three days by horse from the nearest motorable road, the small Buddhist village of Kye remains nestled deep in its century-old traditions. With the men of the household out tending to the livestock, an elder sits tutoring his grandchildren as the mother makes preparations for dinner. Yet, the sun is not quite as warm today. The sky is gray. The road is coming.”

RESULTS: RICHARD U. LIGHT FELLOWSHIP

Through interactions with older individuals in my program and people outside of my program and the university in general, I developed a new way of seeing my life ... so that I can see the 'big picture,' and not get overly stressed-out about the small things.

CHART 7 - THE PRIMARY GOAL THAT I SET FOR THIS EXPERIENCE WAS:



The Richard U. Light Fellowship sends nearly 150 students abroad each year for intensive, fully-funded language study in East Asia. So appealing are these opportunities that some entering freshmen indicate (at Bulldog Days, in advising meetings, etc.) that the possibility of winning a Light Fellowship was a deciding factor in their choosing to attend Yale.

Thanks to the generous support of the Richard U. Light Foundation in Kalamazoo, Michigan, and coupled with additional support from Yale University's Greenberg Scholars Program, the Light Fellowship, even beyond providing fellowship awards, has the ability to send Yale faculty on site visits abroad, to invite alumni back to campus to speak at key events, and to undertake a host of pioneering examples of engaging the Yale community in both the short- and long-term impacts of this unique program.

Perhaps as a consequence of students' focus from the outset when it comes to learning an East Asian language, and perhaps owing also to how the Light Fellowship engages its applicants in critical reflection, the primary goal for Light Fellows in this survey fell into just two categories:

IMPROVE LANGUAGE SKILLS

- "As a second time Light Fellow, knowing what challenges I was going to encounter while in China, my primary goal was to gain as much knowledge of the*

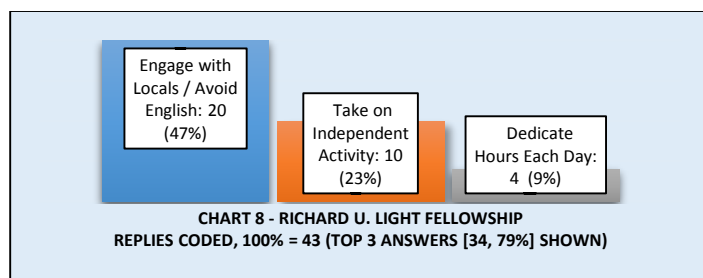
Chinese language and culture while in Beijing, while also gaining firsthand experiences with the people."

- "To improve my level of understanding of Korean, primarily spoken, through daily immersion."*
- "To learn Japanese, specifically ... my reading skill."*

ENGAGE CROSS-CULTURALLY

- "To experience a foreign country first hand from a non-tourist perspective."*
- "To engage culturally and academically with the Chinese subcontinent. My motive was to study Chinese in Beijing and learn the rich traditions and history of the country through my travels."*
- "To explore a part of the world (society and culture) that I had never experienced before."*

CHART 8 - THE MOST EFFECTIVE ACTION I TOOK TO TRY TO ACCOMPLISH MY PRIMARY GOAL FOR THIS EXPERIENCE WAS:



Light Fellows' realization that hard work must be coupled with engaging non-English speakers and undertaking activities independently of the language programs reflects CIPE's "North Star" advice that effective learning happens when students take ownership of experiences that might take them outside their initial comfort zones.

ENGAGE WITH LOCALS / AVOID ENGLISH

- "Spend as much time as I could with Korean friends (or friends learning Korean who didn't speak English)."*
- "Live with a host family. Through living with a Japanese host family for an entire year I became a part of a community with different backgrounds and*

experiences. This environment gave me a more broad understanding of Japanese culture and Japan.”

- “I set high expectations for myself and worked hard to meet these expectations, while at the same time engaging with the local culture in creating a daily routine.... For example, I joined a gym near the University and I have been able to meet a lot of friends through the gym and talk to them about my experiences in China and their thoughts on China, the US, etc.”

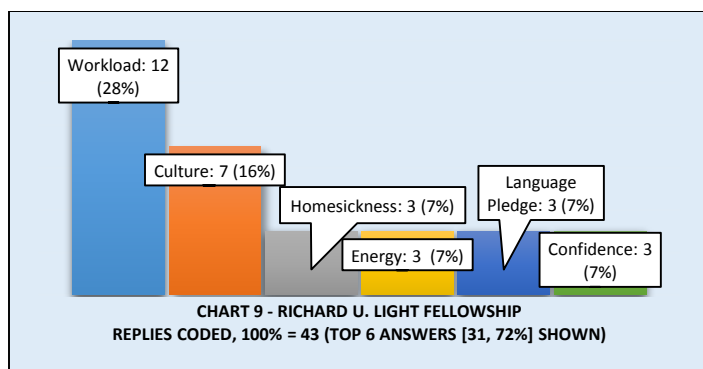
TAKE ON INDEPENDENT ACTIVITY

- “I organized an independent trip (that the director did know about) with a couple of friends and we went to a different city by ourselves and managed everything without the assistance of our program director.”
- “Traveling within the country. Language is best used and best tested when you use it for survival. There were times when I was backpacking through the Southern provinces with no teacher, no books, nor guide to help me out. My full reliance on my Chinese ability was my sole protector and my greatest teacher.”
- “Joining a dance studio and learning how Korean was spoken naturally every day.”

DEDICATE HOURS EACH DAY

- “I studied several hours of Chinese in addition to having 5 hours of Chinese class every day.”
- “I studied for hours every day to make sure that I was prepared in class so that I could participate fully the next day. I also engaged in countless conversations with locals in order to improve my listening and speaking abilities.”
- “Diligent studying.”

CHART 9 - ONE THING THAT I FOUND MOST CHALLENGING ABOUT THIS EXPERIENCE WAS:



As the Light Fellowship funds full-time language study at approved programs in East Asia, the intense workload challenges even the most capable of Yale students. It is not surprising, then, that students consider workload as the most challenging aspect of a Light Fellow’s experience, followed by the challenge of adapting to a new culture. Additional challenges include missing home, having the energy to keep up a strenuous pace, keeping the language pledge (avoiding English), and keeping up confidence in the face of these challenges:

WORKLOAD

- “The workload was extremely heavy, probably more so than during the academic year.”
- “The sheer amount of characters we had to memorize each night. For example, each night we would have approximately 70 characters that we would have to memorize for a quiz the next day.”
- “The most challenging aspect about this experience was making the most of my time there. For the first month, I had not yet struck a balance between work and exploring. By the second month however, I figured out how to divide up my time wisely and effectively to get all my studying and homework in and go out to the city the same day.”

CULTURE

- “Overcoming cultural differences - people seemed to be generally more rude, less friendly, but I realized it was just difference in culture and not anything personal.”
- “I never noticed how important little things like having fresh water and fresh air were until I didn't have them for two months. It was also just difficult adjusting to a new culture and new everyday practices.”
- “Adapting to a new living style and schedule. My old comforts and habits of how I acted, dressed, what I ate, how I interacted with people, all needed to be changed to match the culture of the country I was living in, China.”

HOMESICKNESS

- “Not being able to return home for an extended period of time was difficult. Also, reconciling the fact that this year abroad meant that I was delaying graduation for a

year and thus seeing my friends leave before me was especially difficult.”

- “As a second-time Light Fellow knowing what challenges you're going to encounter, it is almost as hard when you do encounter these challenges, because there's no certain way to get around them even when you can identify them as challenges. It was at times frustrating knowing that I was going through a rough period that would eventually go away but not knowing exactly how to return to an optimistic point, but what I ended up learning was that time and patience are required at times like these in order to move past the homesickness and the frustrations with learning a new language and to be able to succeed.”

ENERGY

- “Staying physically rested.”
- “Maintaining the mental and physical energy to complete all of my work.”

LANGUAGE PLEDGE

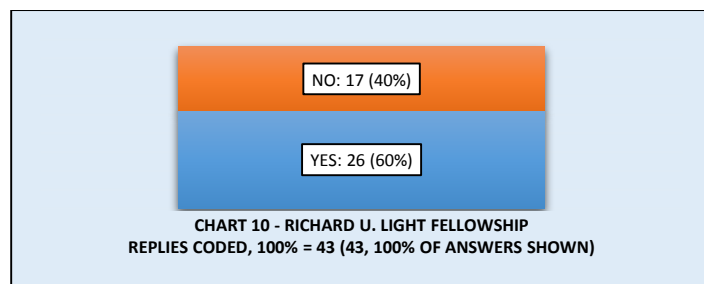
- “Keeping to the language pledge. There were so many things that I wanted to express that I couldn't in Chinese.”
- “There were other students in the program who never wanted to speak Japanese outside of the classroom. It was difficult choosing between spending time with them/being social with them, and looking for friends with whom I could practice language skills.”

CONFIDENCE

- “The most challenging part for me is definitely speaking. I dislike making mistakes which leads me to stay silent rather than try to stumble my way through and get the overall meaning across. As such, my decision to stay with my host family for the duration of the summer program was a difficult one but ultimately something that gave me the most benefits.”
- “Starting out, I wasn't very confident in my language abilities, so I think the most difficult part of my experience was gaining the experience and confidence I needed in the language which usually entailed failing miserably in trying to ask someone for something then trying to solve the problem through using what little of the language that I knew at that point. Later as I got better with the language, these problems naturally went

away or I had begun to understand how to go about solving this problem when it came up again.”

CHART 10 - I EXPECTED TO ENCOUNTER THIS CHALLENGE PRIOR TO STARTING THE EXPERIENCE:



Students often get caught off guard with culture shock, even though the phenomenon is covered in great detail and Light Fellowship pre-departure meetings. The physical demands of intensive language study abroad also tend to surprise students, even though this also is covered in pre-departure meetings and in other ways. No doubt these surprises capture the difficulty of “teaching” something that ultimately cannot be appreciated until it is experienced firsthand:

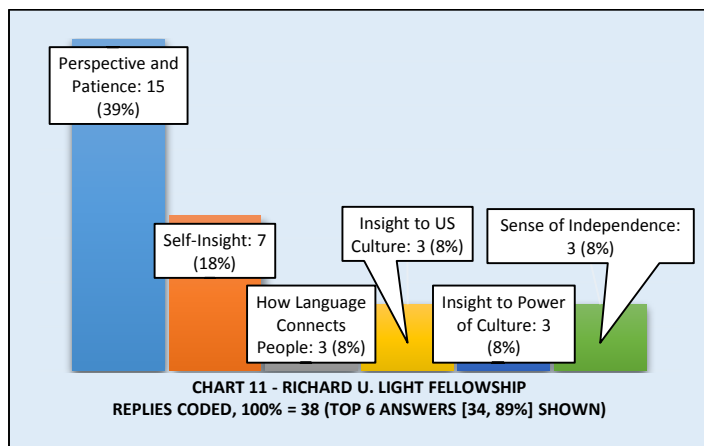
YES

- “I definitely knew I would struggle with balancing work and play; I wanted to make the most of the fact that I was IN CHINA studying Chinese, but I also wanted to do well in my classes and be prepared. In the end I think the perfect balance was found!”
- “It was my second time doing the same program, so I was able to manage this challenge well.”
- “I expected that there would be changes that I would have to make in order to live in a different country.”

NO

- “I had lived in Beijing before for the summer, so I figured I knew it well enough to not have that initial shock. But living with HBA in their dorms was very different from living on my own in an apartment.”
- “Heard the 'culture shock' warning but didn't really think I would feel it.”
- “I found the summer to be more physically taxing than I expected.”

CHART 11 - DURING THIS EXPERIENCE I GAINED NEW UNDERSTANDING ABOUT MYSELF IN THE FOLLOWING WAY:



Light Fellows routinely returned from their experiences in East Asia reporting having gained greater perspective and patience, first about others but also about themselves. These insights extended to the power of language to connect people, the complexities of U.S. culture, the power of culture in general to impact societies, and a heightened sense of independence:

PERSPECTIVE AND PATIENCE

- “Being here, I’ve become much more able at putting things in perspective and knowing what situations are worth stressing over and which are not. Being immersed in a different culture allows you to realize what things about yourself are really important for you to maintain and which characteristics can be improved by the culture and people around you, and being here has really helped me become more patient and open.”
- “I definitely learned how to interact with different types of people and how to be more understanding of cultures. I also learned that I have a lot to learn. Being a higher level Chinese speaker, I had to be patient and helpful rather than irritable at the more inexperienced speakers, and at the same time I was humbled going out into other towns and seeing the lives of those living in Beijing.”
- “I lived in different cultures and I thought I had some cross-cultural experience, but I realized I haven’t even begun, as there are so many different experiences and points of view.”

SELF-INSIGHT

- “I learned about the type of environment I want to be in.”
- “I know more about myself in terms of my likes and dislikes, how I adapt to new situations, and how best to introduce myself to new people.”
- “I discovered that contrary to the haphazard way that I deal with life in college, a regimented schedule can work wonders for making me more productive. This is something I took back and implemented in my life style here as well.”

HOW LANGUAGE CONNECTS PEOPLE

- “Spending a lot of time practicing Korean with friends from Japan who didn’t speak much English, I enjoyed seeing the flexibility and creativity we all could employ to get our exact feelings across to each other in a foreign language.”
- “Learning Mandarin is crucial to understanding Chinese culture.”

INSIGHT TO U.S. CULTURE

- “I learned so much about my own culture and language by learning about China, and the deep friendships that I made with the other students at my language program taught me a lot about myself.”
- “How the US is perceived by other nations, as well as the different ways foreigners can be perceived.”

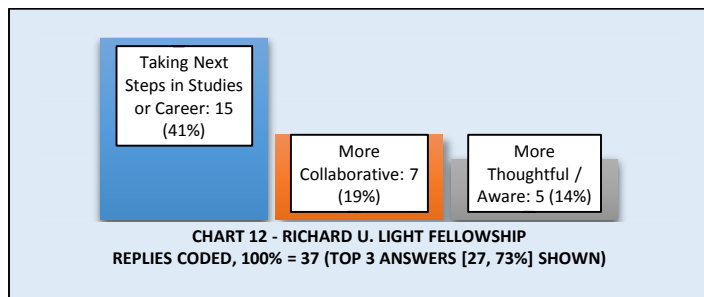
INSIGHT TO POWER OF CULTURE

- “I understand that culture really impacts us and plays a significant role in shaping our beliefs.”
- “Many of the habits, customs, and everyday experiences I take for granted are not inherently part of everyone in the world’s lifestyle.”

SENSE OF INDEPENDENCE

- “I’m more adaptable than I thought. I surprisingly was able to make do without many of the comforts of living in the US.”
- “I felt more independent and comfortable with traveling in strange areas alone. I felt more able to connect with people with wildly different cultural backgrounds to my own.”

CHART 12 - I AM ENGAGING DIFFERENTLY WITH MY COURSEWORK, COMMUNITY, CAREER PATH, FAMILY, OR FRIENDS AS A RESULT OF THIS EXPERIENCE IN THE FOLLOWING WAY:



Light Fellows return to the United States taking the next steps in their studies or careers, and they do so with a deepened ability to engage more collaboratively and thoughtfully with the world around them:

TAKING NEXT STEPS

- “I won't put myself through boring courses. I have the rest of my life to do something boring. My time here at Yale is better spent doing things that I actually like.”
- “I used to think that I needed a set path figured out for post-Light Fellowship before even getting here. Being here, I'm realizing more and more that opportunities that you never expected suddenly appear, and so while my passions and goals have not changed, I've become more open to the idea of building my career path little by little as I go further in my language study and as I learn from the experience of being abroad here.”
- “I am taking classes which will develop my skills and have stopped taking classes that others just happen to recommend to me. I have only two more years at Yale and I realize after my time in China that the skills we take from our Yale experience will be more valuable than the facts and figures we try to memorize.”

MORE COLLABORATIVE

- “I try to incorporate more of the sense of respect and consideration I received from so many in Japan. As well, I am trying to remind myself that achievements and individual goals are not ultimately as valuable as fostering relationships.”
- “I am finding new ways to connect to people. This impacts the people I choose to associate myself with, as well as the career paths I see myself going down.”

MORE THOUGHTFUL / AWARE

- “The experience has definitely helped me expand my social circle. In addition, I am much more prone to engage in anything related to Chinese or Chinese culture.”
- “I feel that I have a better understanding of how international students or non-native English speakers feel and have been trying to make more friends from these kinds of backgrounds.”
- “Learning from all the other international students living in the same hostel, many of whom work and study simultaneously and view coming to Korea as a chance at a better life, was a significant insight into the lives of others which I did not expect to gain,”
- “I have a different understanding of the lives of my Chinese-American friends.”

Jiahe Gu, Berkeley College 2016
Richard U. Light Fellowship
Huanyin, China

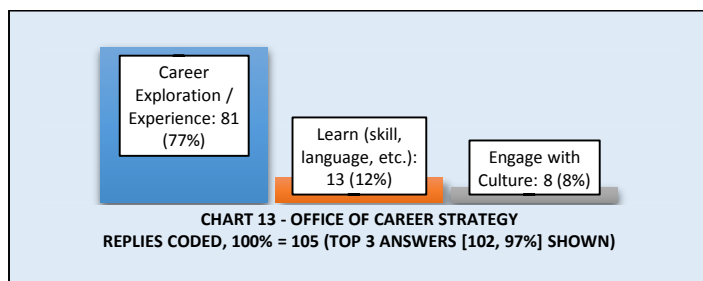


“I passed this gentleman while hiking through Mount Hua in Shaanxi province. Inspired by my summer program to practice speaking Chinese whenever possible, I struck up a conversation with him. With a rather difficult regional dialect, he told me about how his children moved away to the city and about how much he misses them. Pointing to his dog, he laughed about how it keeps him company these days. Having waved goodbye to my grandparents after visiting them just few days ago, I really empathized with him. Today, this photograph helps remind me of the pain urbanization and emigration can inflict on the people left behind. It reminds me to call far away family often and to always keep them in my thoughts.”

RESULTS: OFFICE OF CAREER STRATEGY

I learned that it's not just about discipline--it's also about hard work, being humble, and being assertive not only with others, but also with oneself (knowing what direction to go). I realized I was incredibly immature in my years at Yale.... If I want to earn my Yale degree with pride, I need to become a better person in all aspects of life. One thing that helped me realize that was being in the workforce, having expectations and responsibilities given to me. I needed more accountability, and working in the private sector this summer gifted me that.

CHART 13 - THE PRIMARY GOAL THAT I SET FOR THIS EXPERIENCE WAS:



The Office of Career Strategy offers career advising, professional school advising, employment and internship opportunities, and career development resources. The office works with Yale students and alumni of Yale College and Yale Graduate School of Arts and Sciences (GSAS) to clarify career aspirations, identify employment and educational opportunities, and offer advising and support at every stage of career development.

In July 2014, the career offices of Yale College and GSAS merged, and since that time the Office of Career Strategy has worked closely with the Graduate School Dean's Office and graduate student groups to create and implement programming and career resources for students pursuing non-academic careers. The office has also collaborated with the Yale Teaching & Learning Center, the Office of Postdoctoral Affairs, and the GSAS faculty to provide resources and programs for students pursuing academic careers.

Between July 2014 and January 2015, the Office of Career Strategy had more than 9,100 student and alumni contacts through individual advising

appointments, career workshops, employer events, and the resume review program.

As with students who undertake fellowship experiences through CIPE, the students who seek internship experiences do so with seriousness of purpose that, not surprisingly, focuses on career exploration, learning a skill, and engaging with a different culture inside and outside of the workplace:

CAREER EXPLORATION / EXPERIENCE:

- *"To expose myself to a career/field of work that I had not yet experienced, nor would I experience at Yale."*
- *"I wanted to learn about a real-world job, more."*
- *"To learn what it is like working in a global health NGO and develop my idea of what I want to do after college."*

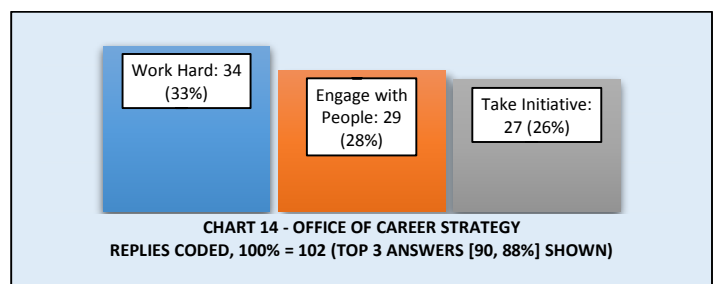
LEARN

- *"To develop technical design skills in Adobe Illustrator and Photoshop."*
- *"To develop hard analytical skills."*
- *"To gain the basic skills of Public Affairs."*

ENGAGE WITH CULTURE

- *"Travel to a new place and experience somewhere very different than the US."*
- *"To immerse myself in Israeli culture."*
- *"Live in a foreign country independently."*

CHART 14 - THE MOST EFFECTIVE ACTION I TOOK TO TRY TO ACCOMPLISH MY PRIMARY GOAL FOR THIS EXPERIENCE WAS:



Students on internships reported that hard work, engaging with others, and taking initiative were effective actions toward achieving their goals for the

experience. Such self-motivated and self-directed activity is surely good practice for students who will soon join the world after Yale:

WORK HARD

- *“Work as hard as I could at my job.”*
- *“Try my hardest at my job and ask as many questions as I could.”*
- *“I worked hard in my internship to learn through experience.”*

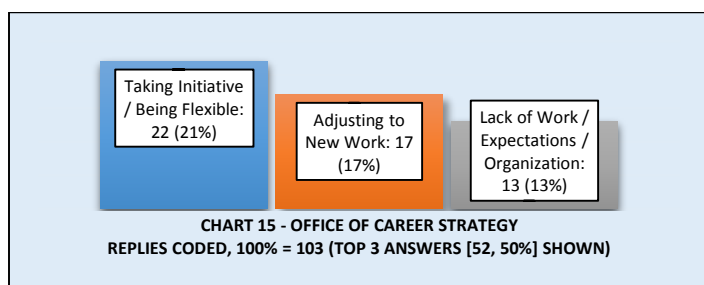
ENGAGE WITH PEOPLE

- *“Speak personally to the social entrepreneurs and leaders I met during my internship to find out more about their experiences.”*
- *“I had long lunches with one of my bosses where we discussed macro and micro dynamics in the Chinese economy.”*
- *“Speaking one on one with higher level staff members in order to take the lead on more individual projects, such as working with one energy fellow on longer term climate policy research.”*

TAKE INITIATIVE

- *“During my time at work, I made sure to take full advantage of any opportunities to work on more projects and gain more exposure to different parts of the code base and how they related to the bigger picture of the business.”*
- *“I told my editor when I had too few tasks and when I needed to delay the printing of certain articles, so that I could have additional time to report.”*
- *“Getting involved in as many aspects of the department as I could (e.g. offering to help each lawyer in the department with a task).”*

CHART 15 - ONE THING THAT I FOUND MOST CHALLENGING ABOUT THIS EXPERIENCE WAS:



Students on internships reported that taking initiative and being flexible were particularly challenging, at least at first. As previously mentioned, the ability to take initiative also proved most effective for students in achieving their goals for the experience, which suggest that many students successfully rose to a challenge and benefitted as a result. Students also noted challenges associated with adjusting to new work and in managing a work environment that might have lacked structure or clarity.

TAKING INITIATIVE / BEING FLEXIBLE

- *“I think one of the most challenging things was to be self-directed in my work as most of the work did not have a specific deadline and a lot of planning was required to make the project proceed.”*
- *“What I found most challenging was trying to find more work without bothering co-workers. When I completed a project, I was always looking for more work to do, but that meant asking around and distracting fellow workers. I eventually realized that this was counterintuitive, and that they should want the help, so a quick albeit distractive ‘hey, do you need help with anything?’ went a long way in terms of completing a big project.”*
- *“Setting my own goals and working somewhat independently.”*

ADJUSTING TO NEW WORK

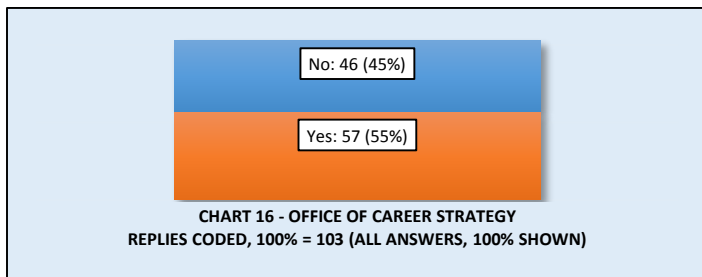
- *“Learning lots of new computer terminology and adjusting to many widely varying project deadlines.”*
- *“Navigating the professional world for the first time.”*
- *“Understanding the health partnerships model pioneered by the nonprofit where I was interning, and how to effectively communicate that to various constituencies within the British national healthcare system.”*

LACK OF WORK / EXPECTATIONS / ORGANIZATION

- *“Perhaps because we weren't paid, I suspected our boss did not fully utilize our skills or give us serious work because we were there at no cost to him.”*
- *“I didn't realize the firm I was working at was a start-up, so it was a bit disorganized.”*

- *“Not having enough engaging work to do, I felt like I was on the outskirts of the actual program.”*

CHART 16 - I EXPECTED TO ENCOUNTER THIS CHALLENGE PRIOR TO STARTING THE EXPERIENCE:



A number of students reported frustrations with sedentary “desk” work, but this challenge was mostly anticipated. Students seemed primarily surprised that the internship was either overscheduled or not scheduled enough. Some students also imagined that they would be more involved in the work of the company or organization than they ended up being:

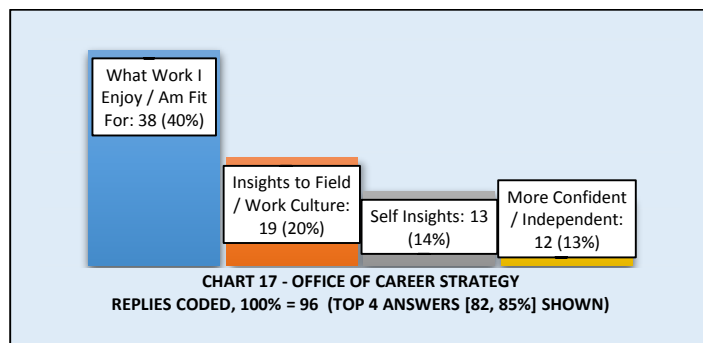
YES

- *“I expected that doing desk work would sometimes be a little boring but I did not expect to be as frustrated by it.”*
- *“It was my first professional experience, so yes, I knew this would be a challenge.”*
- *“Immigration policy is an extremely controversial issue. We cannot expect that one non-profit would be able to strongly sway the opinions of political leaders.”*

NO

- *“I didn't realize how many events were planned for us - though they were well planned and enjoyable, I would have preferred to devote my time more to professional development.”*
- *“I got the impression I would be deeply involved in the running of the organization.”*
- *“In the beginning ... there were some frustrations and growing pains as I found myself doing errands (I also must admit that those errands were something also expected of my more senior colleagues in the workplace, and I understand I am not exempt from that).”*

CHART 17 - DURING THIS EXPERIENCE I GAINED NEW UNDERSTANDING ABOUT MYSELF IN THE FOLLOWING WAY



A majority of students (60%) reported that as a result of their internship experiences they gained a better understanding of the work that they might wish to pursue and what the work actually entails in a particular field or culture. Students also noted having gained some general self-insights and a heightened sense of confidence and independence as a result of their internship experiences:

WHAT WORK I ENJOY / AM FIT FOR

- *“I learned what it was like to work in industry and got to understand exactly what I liked and didn't like about the industry. This has allowed me to take a step back when searching for future career opportunities and ask more effectively, ‘Will I be interested in this job?’”*
- *“I learned that I do not want to do business as an occupation. I also learned that seeing the world from another culture's perspective can be extremely educational and refreshing.”*
- *“I gained new understanding about my career goals. Which is definitely really helpful for me.”*

INSIGHTS TO FIELD / WORK CULTURE

- *“I have realized what it means to work 8am-5pm every day - that is hard work. I now understand how to effectively ‘work hard’ and it has been helping me tremendously in my classes this semester!”*
- *“Your workplace personality is not your personality in your private life.”*
- *“Before this internship, if someone had asked me if I thought someone with a developmental disability could enter the workplace, my answer probably would have been ‘no’ or ‘I don't know.’ I would say this not because*

I ... believed people with developmental disabilities were incapable of working, but because I did not know better. I had never considered it, and for that matter, I would have been dismissive of the idea. Now I know to not be as dismissive, to not underestimate others. People are capable of more than I would expect them to be if they are just given the chance."

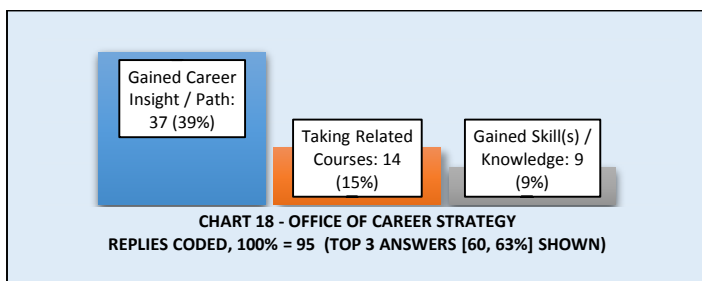
SELF INSIGHTS

- "I now understand that not everyone will be as driven as me, but that I need to learn to play to every team members' strengths instead of trying to work around them; ... and that I am more creative and more capable than I give myself credit for."*
- "I need to set both short and long-term goals and need to constantly be doing something."*
- "I learned that I was not experienced in [a certain] form of communication and I came to understand various ways that different people prefer to be communicated with."*

MORE CONFIDENT / INDEPENDENT

- "I realized that I have the capacity to adjust and meet new people more than I thought that I did. I also realized that I am capable of living on my own with really no authority figure or immediate safety net."*
- "I found that I adjusted to new situations and/or adversity more easily than I would have thought, or perhaps I just had the right mindset going into the experience, which really helped."*
- "I learned how to navigate transportation systems, communicate with people who did not speak English, and how to be self-sufficient."*

CHART 18 - I AM ENGAGING DIFFERENTLY WITH MY COURSEWORK, COMMUNITY, CAREER PATH, FAMILY, OR FRIENDS AS A RESULT OF THIS EXPERIENCE IN THE FOLLOWING WAY:



Here, too, students indicated that they returned from their internship experiences with much better insight to what they might do after Yale and how. In many cases, these insights contributed to students' taking related courses with a heightened sense of engagement. Finally, students indicated a range of skills and knowledge gained along the way:

GAINED CAREER INSIGHT / PATH

- "This job informed me on the type of career I might ultimately want to end up in as well as the location I might want to work in. My bosses sat me down and explained to me the importance of extremely hard work as a young professional, and made me realize that many jobs out there that I may have discounted may be for me."*
- "I decided to NOT follow consulting as a career option and I am now very much set on following an academic career after graduation."*
- "I'm now much more in-tune with the independent press scene: I check for news from independent presses around the country more often; I have more of an idea of what a career as a writer might look like. The experience really helped me think about what work I like to do. For example, next summer I might look into internships at other small presses or larger publications."*

TAKING RELATED COURSES

- "I am taking classes that are related to international development (Gateway to Global Affairs) and I am looking for career paths that allow me to be interactive with people and closely connected to work in the field."*
- "I'm taking a seminar on Contemporary Issues in Africa this semester, and I think my new interest in Africa stems partially from my MP's interest in the continent. I also think that I'm more able to understand the perspective of non-American (particularly European) countries in terms of international issues, while before I was definitely only able to look at foreign policy challenges through the American lens."*
- "I feel much more engaged with my Computer Science education in programming intensive courses as a result of my summer experience. Day to day experience and*

focusing on sustainable architecture of systems prepared me for a strong Senior year in programming courses.”

GAINED SKILL(S) / KNOWLEDGE

- *“My internship influenced me in a way that I now approach political issues and with a different mindset based on the background knowledge I gained this summer. This becomes very obvious in the class ‘Politics of Migration’, which I am taking this semester. By experiencing the poor living conditions in developing countries, I can better understand the reasons why people have to migrate.”*
- *“I gained new insight into the ways in which community events can impact homicide rates.”*
- *“I know more about architecture and now notice it and relate it to various aspects of life.”*

Hailey Winston, Ezra Stiles College 2017
Office of Career Strategy Internship
Cappadocia, Turkey

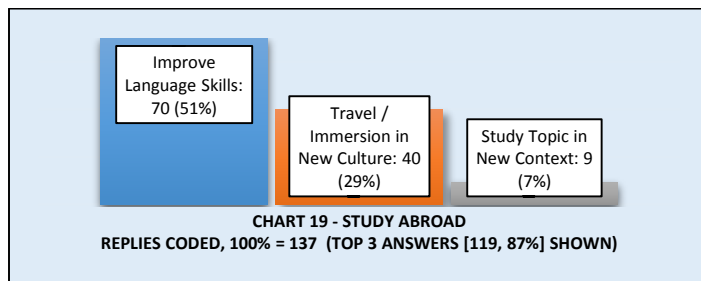


“Every corner turned in Turkey presented a new adventure. From roaming the Grand Bazaar to riding the ferry between continents to marveling at the Hagia Sophia, every new day spawned excitement. When traveling to near and far corners of the country on the weekends, we saw several niches of Turkey. Many of us had the chance to explore Capadoccia, a highly historical region lush with underground cities, fairy chimneys, and cave homes. A highlight in Capadoccia was exploring the city from above by hot air balloon.”

RESULTS: YALE SUMMER SESSION – STUDY ABROAD

Being in Paris helped me figure out what I want in life. That is a tall order, but outside of the 3 hours of class each weekday we had an enormous amount of freedom. I tried many new things and discovered what I liked. Riding the Metro and living with a host family provides lots of alone time, something I was not used to before the program. This sounds vague, but I think being alone with my thoughts has made me a much more mature person. I feel like an adult, after having participated in the French program last summer, and I think time alone was a large contributor to this feeling. Interacting with Paris and its citizens, I realized that life is best lived when you are reasonably carefree. The happiest people were those who could handle serious issues without stress and who knew how to have a good time no matter what they were doing.

CHART 19 - THE PRIMARY GOAL THAT I SET FOR THIS EXPERIENCE WAS:



The Study Abroad Office offers individual advising appointments, walk-in hours, and information sessions with program representatives throughout the year for more than 250 designated study abroad programs, all of which award general transfer credit to Yale students. Advisers emphasize the need for students to identify clear academic and personal goals for their experience abroad with consideration of realistic strategies for attaining them.

The study abroad staff also work closely with faculty and administrators to advertise and manage over 30 Yale Summer Session courses abroad for which students receive Yale credit. Faculty-led programs take place around the globe and include opportunities for language study at all levels, the creative arts, economics, global health, and the social sciences. In 2015, an intermediate Arabic language program in Morocco will be launched.

The staff process application materials for nearly 1000 students annually, and a total of 942 Yale students and recent graduates participated in a range of study abroad experiences in 2013-14, which represents an increase of nearly 12% from the previous academic year and is slightly higher than statistics from 2010-11 and 2011-12.

Whether through in-person pre-departure orientation sessions or online presentations for summer students, staff share information about goal-setting, cross-cultural expectations, as well as health and safety as important components of inviting students to take ownership of their experience abroad. The study abroad team is currently devoting considerable energy to redesigning the office Web site structure and updating online content to better reflect this goal-oriented advising philosophy, which is reflected in student's primary goals for a study abroad experience:

IMPROVE LANGUAGE SKILLS

- *"Honing language skills for career."*
- *"I wanted to improve my auditory and oral fluency in Spanish."*
- *"To learn how to speak French much more quickly and colloquially."*

TRAVEL / IMMERSION IN NEW CULTURE

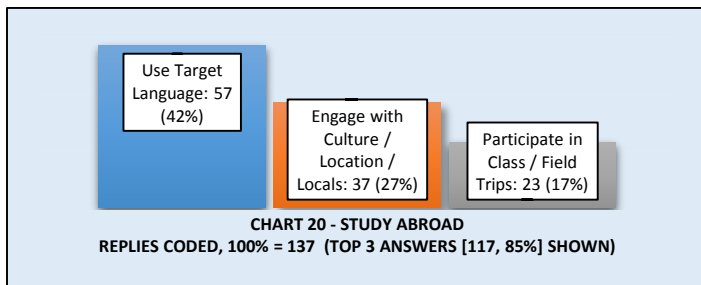
- *"Gain an international travel experience. I had never been outside of the US previously."*
- *"My primary goal was to fully immerse myself in a culture different from my own."*
- *"To get a newfound cultural understanding of the world."*

STUDY TOPIC IN NEW CONTEXT

- *"My primary goal was to acquire a deeper understanding of the Belle Époque in the city that best represents it: Paris."*
- *"The primary goal that I set for this experience was to learn more about the intersection of media and global health, and how that relationship plays out in the real world."*

- *“To see a new part of the world from an academic perspective.”*

CHART 20 - THE MOST EFFECTIVE ACTION I TOOK TO TRY TO ACCOMPLISH MY PRIMARY GOAL FOR THIS EXPERIENCE WAS:



Investing the time required to learn a new language requires sustained commitment. For Yale students, the decision to devote so much time learning a language does not always come easily, particularly as there are already so many excellent topics and activities to be undertaken instead. However, students who return from study abroad experiences note – by far – that using the language of the host country was the most effective action they took in order to accomplish their goals for international experience and fostering connections with others.

This personal investment continues in engaging with the local culture, location, host nationals, and in generally participating in classwork and field trips. Put simply, students report that they get out of the experience what they are willing to put in, and this is a message that bears repeating before students apply for study abroad, while they are abroad, and once again after they return to campus:

USE TARGET LANGUAGE

- *“When in Paris, restricting the languages I use to just French. After a week or so, when the novelty of being in a new country/city starts to fade, my classmates and I began to feel the mental burden that was speaking only French, so we started to slip back into our English habits outside of class. After that we would drift in and out of speaking English/French, but my French fluency increased so rapidly during that week of only French I wish I could have kept that up for the whole month.”*
- *“I always insisted on using Spanish during my time in Ecuador even when people would try to use English*

with me because they knew I was from the United States.”

- *“Buying a book of French idioms and expressions and trying to use them on a day-to-day basis.”*

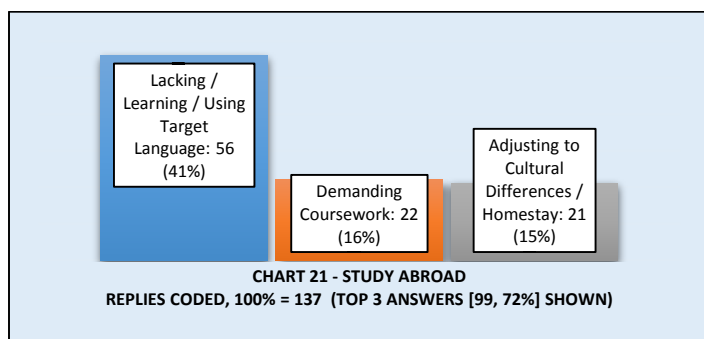
ENGAGE WITH CULTURE / LOCATION / LOCALS

- *“Taking it upon myself to really explore the city and take advantage of all the things I could do while I was there. For example, I spent all my free time running the parks, utilizing my museum pass to visit over 20 museums, familiarizing myself with the subway system, never eating in the same place twice, and always choosing to walk when I could and it wasn't raining.”*
- *“Spend as little time as possible with Yalies, favoring interactions with native Italians.”*
- *“Trying to spend every free moment of time exploring Prague to try and expose myself to as much culture as possible.”*

PARTICIPATE IN CLASS / FIELD TRIPS

- *“The program pushed us to work harder than most of us ever had before. I indeed accomplished my goal by working as hard as I could and pushing myself to achieve my highest potential. I also respected Professor Reed greatly and believed his vast experience as an educator and artist would serve to help us in the completion of the program.”*
- *“I strictly followed the syllabus of the course to understand the period as best as possible. This implied doing all the assigned readings and participating in all the excursions. Both aspects of the course were great, since they allowed me to better understand the reality of the time. For example, we went to the Musée d'Orsay and visited Edouard Monet's house when we were studying the Impressionist movement.”*
- *“Be as active a participant as possible in all of the field trips, discussions, and readings. This was especially important during the actual visits to the Cathedrals as it became possible to wed what had been done during readings and sections with the actual structures as they appeared in person.”*

CHART 21 - ONE THING THAT I FOUND MOST CHALLENGING ABOUT THIS EXPERIENCE WAS:



If using the language of the host country proved the most effective action students take in accomplishing their study abroad goals, so, too, does such language learning and use prove to be the most challenging aspect of the experience. Study abroad courses also prove more intense than students often initially realize, and adjusting to cultural differences, particularly in a homestay setting, is no easy feat.

Such insights from students, even if they often confirm what study abroad staff already expect to prove challenging abroad, provide peer-based feedback that can carry more relevance to prospective study abroad applicants who benefit from understanding up front what types of challenges typically come with studying abroad:

LACKING / LEARNING / USING TARGET LANGUAGE

- “Sometimes the language barrier was a bit difficult, as we were living in a very local part of Paris so many people didn’t speak English. I remember trying to purchase more minutes on an international cell phone I bought at a local store, and it was hard to communicate exactly what I needed in my broken French. But eventually they understood and I was able to get by.”
- “Learning the language - the barrier was tough to get over and it was pretty tough to learn it.”
- “Speaking only in Spanish. I would often get very tired and agitated after days of only speaking Spanish, but finally everything got so much easier and fun! I put myself out there and loved every minute of it.”

DEMANDING COURSEWORK

- “The program is a lot of work. Two semesters’ worth of work condensed into two months, to be exact. This

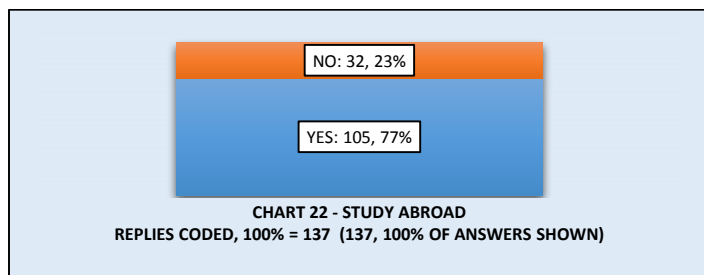
may not seem like much because it is likely the only class a student is taking but when we arrived in Paris and there were countless things to do and places to go it became very hard to motivate yourself to keep up with the work instead of experiencing the culture firsthand.”

- “I was not prepared for the intensity the German course began at. I thought that my skills from L1 and L2 would have readied me more than they did before the course began. Also the time away from home along with feeling upset about my performance did not make things more manageable.”
- “The thing I found most challenging about the experience was the quite extreme amount of work we had to complete for the program. We were in the studio for sometimes 16 hours a day, and had no weekends.”

ADJUSTING TO CULTURAL DIFFERENCES / HOMESTAY

- “Being in a complete foreign country with people with different values and ways of life that I had to adjust to. e.g., the ‘buddies’ paired with us at the University we were studying at expected us to be able to hang out all the time and didn’t understand that we’d ever prioritize homework. It was often hard to communicate, but ultimately sharing our different values resulted in learning more.”
- “I felt uncomfortable around my host family sometimes. It wasn’t anything that they did that made me uncomfortable (they were super nice and welcoming!) but it was never clear to me how much time I was supposed to spend with them. I didn’t want to be antisocial but I also didn’t want to impose on their time.”
- “Communicating and surviving in [a] different culture especially in the host family environment or anytime I was apart from the Yale group.”

CHART 22 - I EXPECTED TO ENCOUNTER THIS CHALLENGE PRIOR TO STARTING THE EXPERIENCE:



The study abroad cohort clearly anticipated the challenges they would face abroad, and this awareness likely reflects both good advising and students' taking ownership of the experience. Even when students encountered an unexpected challenge, they were generally grateful for it. Once again, the demanding nature of study abroad courses does seem to catch some students by surprise:

YES

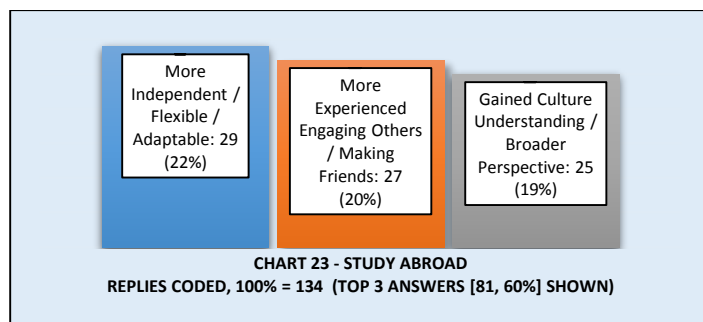
- *"I have never lived with a host family, so I assumed it might be a challenge."*
- *"I had an idea that it would be a great time and a hard one to leave behind, but no idea that it would be one of the best summers of my life."*
- *"The amount of work we do is central to the philosophy that Auvillar is built upon. The idea is that by immersing ourselves in this all-consuming quest to create--to draw and paint images that are meaningful to us--we can make our best works, and learn more about ourselves in what is a truly transformative experience. I found this to be very valuable, and I have no regrets in spending four weeks in Auvillar to complete the program. However, I found that this sort of mentality is not one that I believe to be suitable for myself--and this very realization largely a part of the "transformation" that Auvillar helped to inspire, and so even if I had taken nothing else away from the experience, learning this about myself would have been valuable in itself."*

NO

- *"I am glad I encountered this challenge because I have now narrowed my academic focus and made a discovery."*
- *"I never expected there to be so much work."*

- *"Before travelling to South Africa, I thought that our work would have immediate returns and impact. Of course, our films and advocacy has created change since we have returned, but results take time, and it was hard for me to realize that at first."*

CHART 23 - DURING THIS EXPERIENCE I GAINED NEW UNDERSTANDING ABOUT MYSELF IN THE FOLLOWING WAY



The field of study abroad periodically does itself a disservice with unsubstantiated proclamations that experience abroad can be "transformational" or "life changing." That said, looking at students' answers to this survey item, it is difficult not appreciate the impact that time abroad clearly can have on young adults. Yale students return from abroad reporting a greater sense of independence, adaptability, flexibility, ability to engage others more effectively, expanded cross-cultural understanding and broader perspectives. In that sense, even if we avoid speaking of the "life changing" nature of these experiences, these self-reported outcomes speak to some of the fundamental aims that Yale College has for fostering positive impacts on students before they graduate:

MORE INDEPENDENT / FLEXIBLE / ADAPTABLE

- *"Following my five week stay in Paris, I found that I viewed myself as a more adventurous person than I previously thought myself to be. Just a year prior to my trip, I wouldn't have even considered undertaking such an ambitious-sounding journey, but over the previous school year, I found myself increasingly drawn to the idea of an adventurous summer trip that would allow me to exercise more independence than I usually do. After a successful five weeks in Paris, I was proud of myself for having taken a chance and stepped outside of my comfort zone, and as a result, my own perception of*

what my natural 'boundarie' are was significantly altered."

- "I learned that when I am pushed into new and possibly uncomfortable situations I learn and remember the most. Lessons that are learned from experience are usually learned the best."
- "I found that I can cope with situations in which I am not comfortable and that exploration of the human condition through cultural understanding is something that really interests me."

MORE EXPERIENCED ENGAGING OTHERS / MAKING FRIENDS

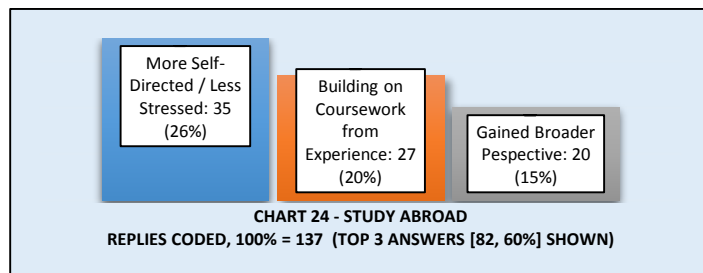
- "Being a 'tourist' is a very particular balance of what I as an individual expect out of an experience, and the expectations of the 'native' people I am interacting with. I learned on this trip many fruitful things about negotiating language, respect, and the consciousness with which one can travel."
- "I become close friends with Yale students I most likely would not have met on campus because they are in different residential colleges and interested in very different academic fields (which means I probably would not have met them in a Yale class on campus)."
- "I definitely have become more aware of how I present myself to other people, and how every word I say is weighed and interpreted. I also realize, in that same vein, people are more tolerant that you believe them to be, especially to non-native speakers."

GAINED CULTURE UNDERSTANDING / BROADER PERSPECTIVE

- "Italians place a great deal of emphasis on working to live, instead of living to work. That they work hard at whatever they do - be it banker or street cleaner - without letting their occupations define them, keeping in mind that work is simply means, of which the end goal is spending time with family and friends, is a perspective that Americans would do well to understand."
- "Finding out about how my own culture is perceived in another country allowed me to take more distance from it and enabled me to engage with it in a different way, just as I have been able to better understand the German culture."

- "I became more open minded and creative with a new perspective through language and thoughts."

CHART 24 - I AM ENGAGING DIFFERENTLY WITH MY COURSEWORK, COMMUNITY, CAREER PATH, FAMILY, OR FRIENDS AS A RESULT OF THIS EXPERIENCE IN THE FOLLOWING WAY:



Here again we see students reporting significant gains in becoming more self-sufficient (and less stressed), more directed in their studies, and more likely to take a broader view of the world and their place in it:

MORE SELF-DIRECTED / LESS STRESSED

- "I am more independent from the judgment of friends and family than ever before in my life. I think this is a good thing. I now take their opinions as advice from a loved one, not demands. I no longer fear disapproval."
- "Knowing that I could've done better in the summer course has made me reevaluate my life and coursework. In a sense it has motivated me to become harder working and more aware of the struggles I am dealing with in regards to coursework or other personal aspects that affect my life."
- "Yes, after travelling to South Africa, I take more time to reflect, to enjoy life and to put passion into what I do."

BUILDING ON COURSEWORK FROM EXPERIENCE

- "The experience spurred me to continue more advanced study in Spanish in a discipline I never would have considered previously, the law. I have a very close bond with the group that traveled together and we have dinner weekly. It was a very special time that I think about every day."
- "I have incorporated methods of analysis derived from the humanities into my primarily science-focused coursework."

- *“I now have a new outlook on many concepts of political theory thanks to this trip. Additionally, I have a much stronger and more coherent notion of 'Russia' and Russian identity as a result.”*

GAINED BROADER PERSPECTIVE

- *“I find myself questioning my sweeping assumptions about different countries and cultures. My experience this summer taught me that there is often more diversity with a group than I had previously assumed there to be. Also, I work at the only bilingual school in New Haven so I often find myself making use of the conversational Spanish I worked on this summer when I talk with students, parents or teachers.”*
- *“This class changed how I see my future. It showed me that there are many careers in global health, not just medical doctors. It opened up my mind to countless other career possibilities.”*
- *“I appreciate the finer intricacies of culture since going to Europe to see some of the original pieces of artwork. I also eat more balanced meals and healthier due to my exposure to Mediterranean cuisine.”*

Anna Evtushenko, Yale-NUS 2017
Yale Summer Session: Santiago - Introduction to
Observational Astrophysics
Atacama Desert, Chile – Summer 2014



“Traveling, as well as learning, may be simply letting yourself get lost — in unfamiliar places, ideas, and people. Letting go and holding on all at once. At times, alone, at others — together. Being mesmerized by the Southern stars and stunned by the beauty of mountains during the day. Feeling sick, cold, off your feet, out of bounds and whatever it is they call the comfort zone. Only half a world away finally realizing what is closest, most needed, most longed for. And watching scattered thoughts take shape.”

COMPARISON OF TOP ANSWERS ACROSS CIPE (QUESTIONS TRUNCATED TO FIT THE PAGE)

| FELLOWSHIP PROGRAMS | RICHARD U. LIGHT FELLOWSHIP | OFFICE OF CAREER STRATEGY | STUDY ABROAD |
|---|---|---|---|
| THE PRIMARY GOAL I SET WAS: | THE PRIMARY GOAL I SET WAS: | THE PRIMARY GOAL I SET WAS: | THE PRIMARY GOAL I SET WAS: |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Learn 2. Explore a Career 3. Conduct Research | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Improve Language Skills 2. Engage Cross-Culturally | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Career Exploration 2. Learn (skill, language, etc.) 3. Engage with Culture | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Improve Language Skills 2. Travel/Immersion 3. Study Topic in a New Context |
| THE MOST EFFECTIVE ACTION I TOOK WAS: | THE MOST EFFECTIVE ACTION I TOOK WAS: | THE MOST EFFECTIVE ACTION I TOOK WAS: | THE MOST EFFECTIVE ACTION I TOOK WAS: |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Engage with People 2. Stay on Task 3. Have a Clear Plan | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Engage Locals 2. Independent Activity 3. Dedicate Hours Each Day | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Work Hard 2. Engage with People 3. Take Initiative | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use Target Language 2. Engage with Culture 3. Participate in Class/Trips |
| ONE THING THAT I FOUND MOST CHALLENGING WAS: | ONE THING THAT I FOUND MOST CHALLENGING WAS: | ONE THING THAT I FOUND MOST CHALLENGING WAS: | ONE THING THAT I FOUND MOST CHALLENGING WAS: |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Engaging People 2. Demands of the Work 3. Logistics | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Workload 2. Culture | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Initiative/Flexibility 2. Adjusting to New Work 3. Lack of Work | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Target Language 2. Demanding Coursework 3. Adjusting to Culture |
| I EXPECTED THIS CHALLENGE: | I EXPECTED THIS CHALLENGE: | I EXPECTED THIS CHALLENGE: | I EXPECTED THIS CHALLENGE: |
| <p>YES: 65%</p> <p>NO: 35%</p> | <p>YES: 60%</p> <p>NO: 40%</p> | <p>YES: 55%</p> <p>NO: 45%</p> | <p>YES: 77%</p> <p>NO: 23%</p> |
| I GAINED NEW UNDERSTANDING IN THE FOLLOWING WAY: | I GAINED NEW UNDERSTANDING IN THE FOLLOWING WAY: | I GAINED NEW UNDERSTANDING IN THE FOLLOWING WAY: | I GAINED NEW UNDERSTANDING IN THE FOLLOWING WAY: |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Gained Career Insights 2. More Collaborative 3. Self-Insight | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Perspective and Patience 2. Self-Insight | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What Work I Enjoy / Am Fit For 2. Insights to Field / Work Culture 3. Self-Insights | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. More Independent / Adaptable 2. More Able to Engage Others 3. Gained Broader Perspective |
| I AM ENGAGING DIFFERENTLY WITH MY COURSEWORK, COMMUNITY, CAREER PATH, FAMILY, OR FRIENDS IN THE FOLLOWING WAY: | I AM ENGAGING DIFFERENTLY WITH MY COURSEWORK, COMMUNITY, CAREER PATH, FAMILY, OR FRIENDS IN THE FOLLOWING WAY: | I AM ENGAGING DIFFERENTLY WITH MY COURSEWORK, COMMUNITY, CAREER PATH, FAMILY, OR FRIENDS IN THE FOLLOWING WAY: | I AM ENGAGING DIFFERENTLY WITH MY COURSEWORK, COMMUNITY, CAREER PATH, FAMILY, OR FRIENDS IN THE FOLLOWING WAY: |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Taking Next Steps 2. More Thoughtful 3. More Collaborative | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Taking Next Steps 2. More Collaborative 3. More Thoughtful / Aware | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Gained Career Path / Insights 2. Taking Related Courses 3. Gained Skills / Knowledge | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Self-Directed / Less Stressed 2. Building on Coursework 3. Gained Broader Perspective |

Over 3,000 open-ended student replies yielded the following Wordcloud, which displays larger fonts for the words that students used most often in the survey. Included in the image below are replies from students who were advised or who participated in programs offered by Fellowship Programs (including the Richard U. Light Fellowship), the Office of Career Strategy, and Yale Study Abroad:

