

# Practice Presentation Proposal

**1. Name of Presenters:** M. Balschweid, L. Vallade, C. Brady, E. Pajor, and M. Russell

Mark Balschweid, Associate Professor of Youth Development & Agricultural Education  
615 W. State St., Room 214, Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN 47907-2053  
[markb@purdue.edu](mailto:markb@purdue.edu), 765-494-8423, Fax: 765-496-1152

**Co-Presenter's names**

Linda Vallade, Program Leader for Study Abroad in International Programs in Agriculture.  
AGADM Building, Room 26, 615 West State St., West Lafayette IN 47907-2053  
[valladel@purdue.edu](mailto:valladel@purdue.edu), 765-494-9690, Fax: 765-494-9347

Mark Russell – \*Contact Person\* because Dr. Balschweid is on sabbatical in Jamaica.  
125 S. Russell St., # 112, West Lafayette, IN 47907-2042  
[mrussell@purdue.edu](mailto:mrussell@purdue.edu), 765-494-7677, Fax: 765-494-9347

**2. Title of Presentation:**

Assessing Leadership Development Impact of International Experiences

**3. Presentation track:** Practice

**4. Description:** The use of international travel and study abroad has been used by many universities as a method of developing multicultural skills and global leadership. Purdue University has initiated assessments to determine the impact of international experiences on multicultural and leadership skills such as open mindedness, flexibility, and understanding of culture.

**5. Professional Biographical Profile**

Dr. Mark Balschweid is an Associate Professor of Youth Development and Agricultural Education at Purdue University. He has extensive experience leading undergraduate students and agricultural education teachers on domestic and international study programs. His research expertise is in the area of learning assessment and the importance of context to the learning process. His leadership has directed an outbound program for agricultural education undergraduates to Jamaica's College of Agriculture, Science, and Education.

Linda Vallade is the Program Leader for Study Abroad in International Programs in Agriculture. Vallade became involved in the administration of study abroad programs fourteen years ago when the College of Agriculture determined more of its students needed to participate in an overseas experience. During that time the programs and courses offered through agriculture grew from two to 31 opportunities and from 20 to 170 students. Vallade provides overall leadership for the COA study abroad programs. Her extensive experience in administering and managing the programs includes budget development, assisting faculty, setting up new study abroad programs, timing, program development; administrative approvals for new programs.

**6. ALE Conference Proceeding Paper**

## **Assessing Leadership Development Impact of Academic International Experiences**

M. Balschweid, L. Vallade, C. Brady, E. Pajor, and M. Russell  
Purdue University College of Agriculture

### ***Introduction***

An important challenge to Purdue University's Colleges of Agriculture (COA) and all sister agricultural institutions is to prepare its faculty, staff, and students to function professionally in culturally diverse communities and in an increasingly global economy. All of the missions – learning, discovery, and engagement – must be informed by the global imperative. The Colleges must graduate individuals who know and appreciate other cultural histories, languages, and institutions and who can function effectively and appropriately in this new context. These educational outcomes cannot be effectively achieved within the confines of classrooms, libraries and laboratories; faculty, staff, and students must be afforded opportunities for meaningful learning in international settings. Student participants in these programs not only build their resumes, but also acquire valuable intercultural skills. The purpose of this effort and presentation is to share experiences in assessing these leadership skills and behavior changes as a result of these international experiences. We have used commercially developed and validated instruments as well as our own IRB-approved instruments. The goals of this session are that the learner 1) become aware of the variety of international academic methods used; 2) consider the expected learning outcome when planning the international experience; 3) develop assessment instruments specific enough to accurately draw the desired comparisons, and 4) develop skills in designing assessment instruments and methods that show the behavior and attitudinal changes of the participants.

### ***Background***

As the demographics of our communities change dramatically and the world of agricultural trade, global economy, and social interconnectedness increases our graduates must have global flexibility and leadership skills to work across cultures. In addition, these international experiences must be shared with colleagues, communities, and clientele in order to engage Indiana, the Midwest, and the world. Purdue is responding to the global imperative through programs in learning, discovery, and engagement, utilizing study abroad, collaborative research programs, and new initiatives in international extension. Study abroad programs are rapidly moving from the academic margins to the core of U.S. higher education. The mission of agricultural study abroad at Purdue University is to help prepare agriculture students for the global nature of our modern world by increasing opportunities for participation in study abroad, overseas internships, and international studies. Purdue College of Agriculture students can now choose from 31 study abroad and internship programs, partnering with 25 institutions in 21 countries. With 23.6% of Purdue College of Agriculture undergraduates' studying abroad, the College now has the highest percentage of its students studying abroad of any school at Purdue University. However, this is not sufficient. The goal is to have 30% of COA graduates participate in at least one significant international experience.

“On many U.S. campuses, international education consists of a series of disconnected activities that are weakly integrated into the core academic mission” ... “the result is a fragmented

hodgepodge of programs and activities that are rarely significantly intergraded to create maximum institutional impact or to advantage learning” are the opening lines in a 2003 article by Madeleine Green of the American Education Council. Our model is designed to address many of the strategies for internationalization highlighted in the American Council on Education project “Spotlighting Excellence in Comprehensive Internationalization” (funded by Carnegie Corporation), and the “Internationalization Collaborative” (funded by Kellogg Foundation). Previous research of leadership development processes and the employability characteristics combined with other university models we refined the program and presented this to the faculty in the fall of 2004. In a 2004 article, “Developing Intercultural Competence for the Masses,” Mark Ashwill states that many education abroad experiences are more akin to an introduction to country X rather than a meaningful opportunity to become interculturally competent. He highlights growth in awareness of cultural differences, in knowledge of cultures, and in skills that are based on practice interacting across cultures. These can be set as expected learning outcomes of the international method and then measured. Ashwill shares best practices in developing these intercultural competencies for a larger number of students, faculty, and staff. Instruments developed by these investigators and others include the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI), the Development Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS), Cross-Culture Adaptability Inventory (CCAI), Cultural Orientation Indicator (COI), and others. Little has been done to allow us to compare the leadership development impact of the wide variety of programs offered. How does one determine and compare the impact of the following options available?

- Short 1-3 week study abroad partners
- Summer student study/work programs
- Semester/year-long student exchanges
- Extension staff development programs
- Graduate student/researcher opportunities
- Agribusiness/citizen international study tours
- Service learning international opportunities

This project utilizes these assessment instruments and others which we created to evaluate learning in existing international opportunity models as well as the total growth and then share these results with the participants of the ALE Conference.

### ***How It Works***

We are interested in evaluating the impact of international experiences on behaviors, attitudes, and skills in two different approaches. One was to assess the level of international experiences and attitudes of incoming freshmen and then later compare that with the outcomes as evident in graduating students at the end of their degree program. The second was to evaluate the impact of individual courses/experiences on specific learning outcomes using a pre- and post-test design. Examples of actual surveys will be shared at the conference but the incoming “*International Experience & Interest Survey*” asked about general demographics, any international travel experiences you have had prior to coming to Purdue University (and purpose of experience), outcomes of attitudes, and behavior relative to flexibility and open-mindedness, and their rank of plans for international travel program while at Purdue, and the barriers that students perceive will keep them from participating in an international study experience. Freshmen are also asked how they think an international study abroad/academic experience would benefit them. This survey is optionally offered to students in AGR 101 in the fall semester.

A similar survey is optionally completed by graduating seniors in their senior capstone courses and/or exit interviews. The *“International Experience & Outcomes Survey”* asks the same basic demographic questions and then students indicate the number of international experiences they have had in each category while at Purdue University, and if they had no international experience and reasons why not, and their feeling about that outcomes. Those with international experiences are asked to reflect and respond when the experience occurred, how they paid, how their perspective of the world changed as a result of the experiences, and many questions about attitude toward interacting with people different than you, behavior relative to flexibility and being open-minded, effect on career preparation or choice, and effect on interest in international current affairs. The responses to these surveys are averaged and compared with not attempt to match individual participants.

To assess the impact of individual courses/experiences we have used the Intercultural Development Inventory, the Cultural Orientation Inventory, and a *“Behavior, Culture, and Attitude Outcomes of International Experiences”* instrument created here. The challenge of these assessments is to align the instrument with the expected learning outcomes of each individual course. Some common goals across all international experience can be generalized, but a one-week travel course in Ireland will have very different specific learning outcomes that a three-week service project in Ecuador, a summer in Honduras, and an individual exchange experience in Spain or Australia. We have attempted to use variations of the “Behavior, Culture, and Attitude Outcomes of International Experiences” instrument as a pre- and post-test with coded surveys to match individual change. We will share copies of this instrument at the presentation but in general we ask general demographic information including state of residency of parents, growing up environment, major and gender. The survey is a five-scale response format of strongly agree to strongly disagree with a series of 20 statements about expected learning outcomes related to technical content, communications, culture, problem solving, diversity, international travel, international current affairs, and interest in working across cultures in their career.

These instruments have been used with a wide variety of courses this pilot year including a Serving Communities: Principles, Practices and Process class in Tumbabiro, Ecuador, an animal sciences industry course to Poland, Slovakia, and Czech Republic, an undergraduate research course in South Africa, a graduate student agribusiness course to Costa Rica, and an agricultural education class in Jamaica. Before and after responses to the surveys will be analyses using a paired t comparison and specific outcomes assessed.

### ***Results to date***

Initial data summarized indicates that 53% of all incoming freshmen have had some international experience and this is largely family-led on vacations or associated with a group through school or a faith-based mission effort. This is approximately double the level of international experience of students entering Purdue College of Agriculture in 1995, the last similar date of results. 86% of incoming freshman plan to have some international experience while at Purdue and they list a semester-long experience as their first choice and interestingly, a week-long spring break as their second most popular choice. Time, money, and relevance to career goals are listed as most common barriers to going. Currently we know that 24.5% of the graduating seniors have an international experience while at Purdue and most of that occurs in their fifth or

sixth semester. Additional outcomes in leadership development through multiple international experiences will be shared at the conference.

Baseline results from the pre-test use of the surveys in specific class indicate that females are more likely to participate in study abroad programs than are males. As a percent out-of-state students are more likely to participate, and students from urban and suburban areas are more predominant. Specific comparisons using the “*Intercultural Development Inventory*” and the “*Behavior, Culture, and Attitude Outcomes of International Experiences*” will be shared at the conference.

### ***Conclusions/Recommendations***

Assessing changes in attitudes, behavior, and culture skills of students is always difficult even when you have many antidotal observations of huge changes in people as a result of time spent outside their comfort zone. This accounts for the dearth of research that has been reported on the leadership outcomes of international experiences. If international engagement is to be used as a learning method of higher education, we must develop both quantitative and qualitative methods of assessment. Many commercial culture assessments are excellent and validated but have not been designed to be used in pre and post type research. The study abroad and international education industry has many instruments and it is our intent to better first define the expected learning outcomes from these leadership development activities and then determine the best way to assess their impact. As more and more universities develop leadership programs and increasingly use international learning methods it is essential that we are accountable and able to present data that shows the impacts of these efforts.