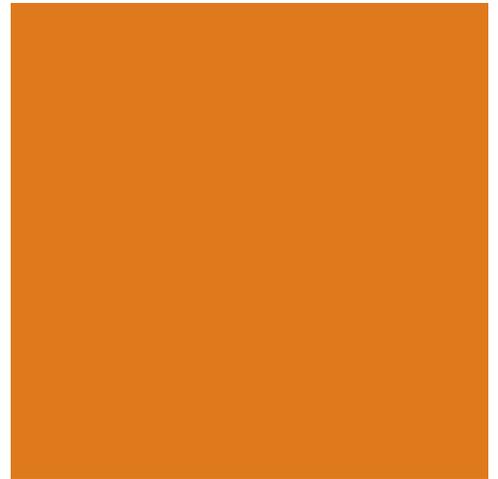
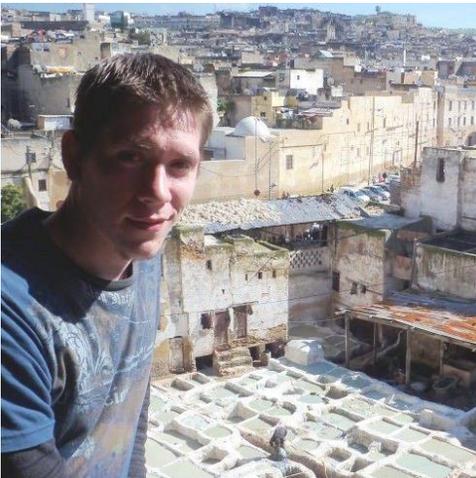


## IIE Alumni Re-Entry & Career Development Packet



We recommend using a **SELF-ASSESSMENT**, which will help you reflect on the many transferable skills gained while abroad. Below is a checklist of skills returnees gain while abroad. Check off what applies to you.

### SKILLS & ATTRIBUTES

- Adapt to new environments
- Handle difficult situations
- Demonstrate flexibility
- Function with a high level of ambiguity
- Manage time and prioritize tasks
- Communicate effectively (written and oral)
- Conduct research despite language and cultural differences
- Gain foreign language skills/proficiency
- Understand a different culture (includes an organization's culture)
- Develop intercultural awareness
- Communicate despite language barriers
- Identify career objectives
- Lead others in formal and/or informal groups
- Take initiative; be confident in skills and ideas
- Handle difficult situations diplomatically
- Be self-reliant and function independently
- Crisis management: identify problems and utilize available (often limited) resources to solve problems (quickly)
- Work as part of a team (often with members with different perspectives and approaches)
- Approach issues with tolerance, open-mindedness, and cultural sensitivity



### QUALITIES

- Flexibility
- Independence
- Self-reliance
- Appreciation of diversity
- Tolerance/Open-mindedness
- Cultural Sensitivity/Awareness
- Inquisitiveness
- Self-confidence
- Self-knowledge
- Perseverance
- Assertiveness

Source: University of Minnesota, *Maximizing Study Abroad: A Student's Guide to Strategies for Language and Culture Learning and Use*, 2012

## SKILLS SURVEY

Below is an example of a survey that can be used to evaluate your skills upon your return in order to help you become more aware of ways that you may have changed as a result of studying abroad. Evaluate skill levels before and after studying abroad (1 = lowest and 10 = highest)

### ANALYSIS & PROBLEM SOLVING

Capacity to ask for and receive help from others

<b>Before</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>After</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>

Willingness to confront problems and look for alternative solutions

<b>Before</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>After</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>

Ability to listen and observe carefully

<b>Before</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>After</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>

Ability to think critically

<b>Before</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>After</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>

### INTEGRATIVE & ADAPTIVE SKILLS

Experience and capability in balancing two or more cultures

<b>Before</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>After</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>

Awareness of values and lifestyles in the United States

<b>Before</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>After</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>

Ability to interact with and relate to many different people

<b>Before</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>After</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>

Source: Levinger, Morrison, & Jouannelle. *Beyond "It was awesome!" Enriching the Student Experience after Re-entry*. CIEE 2011 Annual Conference, New Orleans. [http://www.ciee.org/conference/downloads/past/new-orleans/skills\\_survey.pdf](http://www.ciee.org/conference/downloads/past/new-orleans/skills_survey.pdf)

Aptitude to perceive things from another person's point of view

<b>B</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>After</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>

### COMMUNICATION/LANGUAGE SKILLS *(in foreign language, if applicable)*

Oral Proficiency

<b>Before</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>After</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>

Written Expression

<b>Before</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>After</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>

Ability to listen and observe carefully Listening and comprehension skills

<b>Before</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>After</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>

### OPENNESS

Ability to compromise and be flexible

<b>Before</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>After</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>

Tolerance for differences

<b>Before</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>After</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>

Openness to new experiences and activities

<b>Before</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>After</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>

Awareness and respect for beliefs of others

<b>Before</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>After</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>

Source: Levinger, Morrison, & Jouannelle. *Beyond "It was awesome!" Enriching the Student Experience after Re-entry*. CIEE 2011 Annual Conference, New Orleans. [http://www.ciee.org/conference/downloads/past/new-orleans/skills\\_survey.pdf](http://www.ciee.org/conference/downloads/past/new-orleans/skills_survey.pdf)

**RESILIENCE**

Patience and adaptability

<b>Before</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>After</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>

Ability to keep a sense of humor in stressful situations

<b>Before</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>After</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>

Capacity to deal with failure

<b>Before</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>After</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>

Strength in handling unpredictable and unfamiliar situations

<b>Before</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>After</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>

**CONFIDENCE**

Ease in establishing relationships with people from a different culture

<b>Before</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>After</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>

Willingness to take risks

<b>Before</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>After</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>

Awareness of personal strengths and weaknesses

<b>Before</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>After</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>

Self-sufficiency

<b>Before</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>After</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>

## RÉSUMÉS

A résumé should effectively communicate why an applicant is an ideal candidate for a specific position or field. We recommend that you add your transferable skills and knowledge gained from studying or interning abroad to your résumés in order to show why you would be a valuable employee.

If your program was primarily academic, we advise that returnees list the program information under the **education section**. If the program abroad entailed an experiential learning component, such as an internship, work experience, or volunteer opportunity, this can be listed under **experience**. Students may also choose to list leadership achievements, honors, and skills developed abroad under the appropriate headings. (*Example résumé on the following page*).

### Education section

- Name of university, city and country of program
- Term of enrollment (i.e. Spring 2012)
- Description of program to highlight the academic, professional, and personal impact
- Relevant coursework

### Experience section

- Experiential education abroad components and achievements can be listed under experience
- i.e. internships, independent research, service-learning

### Skills

- List foreign language acquisition and level
- Add any further abilities acquired from experience abroad

### Additional Heading Options

- Separate "*International Experience*" section can be added to highlight experiences abroad
- Additional "*Leadership*" section can include any leadership opportunities from abroad
- Honors and scholarships linked to programs abroad (such as the Gilman Scholarship or Fulbright Grant) may be listed under "*Honors and Awards*" or added to the education section

## Further Résumé Recommendations

### Focus on what you achieved

- Use action verbs, describe tasks or situations, and highlight the impact
- Example for an Editor-in-Chief of a university newspaper: "*Managed volunteer submissions, provided topic guidance, and compiled and reviewed 20 articles per week, increasing campus readership by 45%*"

### Tailor your résumé to fit job descriptions

- Analyze a job description and highlight background and experiences that are pertinent to the position
- Refer to job descriptions and use the organization's terms when describing your responsibilities and accomplishments

**Education****Bachelor of Arts in Journalism & Middle Eastern Studies****University of Texas at Austin**, Austin, Texas (*cum laude*), May 2013

- *Relevant Coursework*: Intensive Arabic, Arab-Israeli Politics, Gender Politics in Islamic World, Entrepreneurial Journalism, Audio Visual Storytelling, Long-Form Feature Writing
- *Thesis*: Falling Dominos: The Spread of Democracy from Tunisia to Egypt

**University of Jordan, Amman, Jordan**, Fall 2012

- Semester-long academic experience which included home-stay with non-English speaking family; gained fluency in colloquial Arabic
- *Relevant Coursework*: Development Economics and the Middle East, Political Structure and Dynamics of the Middle East Regional System

**Professional Experience****Media Development Intern****United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)**

Amman, Jordan, September 2012 – December 2012

- Worked as part of a close team in managing the EU funded initiative titled “Enhance Professional and Accurate Media on the Electoral Process in Jordan”
- Helped to develop and coordinate strategies for enhancing the Jordanian online media
- Created an online toolkit to spread awareness of the essential role of the media in the electoral process and provide tips regarding best practices for online journalism

**Barista****Mozarts on the Lake**

Austin, Texas, December 2010 – January 2012

- Provided excellent customer service in a fast-paced environment where multi-tasking was critical
- Rotated through various positions and duties from making specialty drinks to handling money

**Leadership****Student Union Communications Department Representative**, *UT Austin*, 2010-2011

- Main departmental emissary between students, faculty, and student government

**Co-chair of campus Model United Nations Middle Eastern Crisis Simulation** *UT Austin*, 2011

- Helped organize and facilitate a realistic simulation for international relations students

**Orientation Leader**, *UT Austin*, September 2013

- Facilitated transition to college experience for freshman through tours and mentorship

**Relevant Skills**

- Expertise using WordPress and Microsoft Office Suite
- Proficiency in Final Cut Pro X
- Experience with Adobe InDesign, Photoshop and Dreamweaver
- Fluency in Arabic and beginner Spanish language

You must also be prepared to describe how your transferable skills from abroad can be applied to a potential position or field in your cover letters. If relevant, you should produce a cover letter that highlights your study abroad experience, such as the one below.

### SAMPLE COVER LETTER

March 3, 2013

Name of Individual  
Title  
Company  
Company Address

Do not use "To whom it may concern." Research to find out the appropriate person to address.

Show interest in position & succinctly articulate why a best fit. Include details about why this specific company/organization.

Dear Dr./Mr./Mrs./Ms.:

Describe qualifications & skills for the position (matching job description). Cite transferable skills from abroad & use examples.

The International Finance position with Bank of America is an excellent fit for my background in finance, experience handling investments, and knowledge of Chinese business operations. Bank of America has built outstanding relationships with multinational businesses and it would be an honor to have the opportunity to help enhance the global reach of the company.

My undergraduate studies at New York University allowed me to focus on Finance and International Business and complete an internship with Wachovia Securities. This internship advanced my analytical skills and provided an in-depth understanding of handling investments. In addition, studying in China allowed me to develop a cross-cultural perspective on business etiquette. My knowledge was further enhanced as a Fulbright grantee in China as it awarded me with the invaluable opportunity to work with Chinese colleagues and conduct research on the expanding Chinese market. Bank of America has done an excellent job in the foreign market arena, and my knowledge of Asian markets would help strengthen ties with Asia.

My subject knowledge as well as my ability to adapt to changing environments will make for a smooth transition from the classroom to a corporate setting. My internship with Wachovia Securities and experiences in China taught me how to adapt quickly to an office culture and intuitively learn new systems.

It would be my pleasure to speak with you and learn more about the position. You may reach me at (212) 555-4076. Thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Margot A. Broad  
809 United Nations Plaza  
New York, NY 10017  
(212) 555-4076  
[marGoAbroad@gmail.com](mailto:marGoAbroad@gmail.com)

Close the letter, noting confidence in their response. Show gratitude for the consideration.

## INTERVIEWS

Once you have been able to identify transferable skills from abroad through self-assessments, you can also practice answering mock interview questions by using the S.T.A.R. approach (acronym for Situation, Task, Actions, and Results). This will help you come up with specific examples to show how your skills and experiences will translate into the professional world.

**Situation:** Describe the backstory to a challenge you have overcome.

**Task:** What was your exact role or responsibility in this situation? What was your end goal?

**Action:** Explain the sequence of actions and thought process to how you dealt with this challenge. Why did you choose this method?

**Results:** Summarize the tangible results and impact of your work and decisions. How were things better off because of your input? Use a high level of detail and concrete evidence to show the full impact of your initiatives.

Below are a few examples of interview prompts that advisors can guide students in answering. Many of these can be answered by giving examples from experiences abroad:

- Tell me about a time that you had to adapt to a difficult situation. How did you handle this challenge?
- How has your education prepared you for this job?
- What accomplishment has given you the greatest satisfaction?
- What is the toughest challenge you have faced? How did you overcome this challenge?
- Can you work independently and take risks? Give an example.
- Tell me about a time when you were flexible and adaptable to a rapidly changing situation.
- Describe a situation where you had to work under pressure. Were you successful?
- What motivates you to put forth your best effort? Give an example.
- Why did you decide to study or intern abroad? What did you gain from the experience?
- Tell me about a time that you worked with someone you disliked and how you managed this situation.
- Describe a time when you had to juggle multiple projects and deadlines at the same time. How did you manage these projects?
- Give an example of a time that you contributed to an ethnically diverse team.
- Tell me about a time that you worked with someone who did not share your communication style. How did you handle this situation?

### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- ❖ Berdan, Goodman and Taylor. [\*\*\*A Student Guide to Study Abroad\*\*\*](#)
- ❖ Hachey, Jean-Marc. "[\*\*Marketing Study Abroad.\*\*](#)" *Transitions Abroad*

### FURTHER OPPORTUNITIES

**[Institute of International Education](#)** – IIE administers over 200 programs for students, scholars and professionals to participate in some type of international exchange. IIE has 5 regional offices in the U.S. and 18 international offices.

**[Generation Study Abroad](#)** – This IIE initiative seeks to double the number of Americans who study abroad by 2019. Through Generation Study Abroad, IIE hopes that every high school and college student will think of study abroad as an essential part of their college education.

**[U.S. Department of State](#)** – visit the U.S. Department of State’s website to learn more about the various employment opportunities.

**[U.S. Fulbright Program](#)** – Sponsored by the U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of Educational & Cultural Affairs, Fulbright is the largest U.S. international exchange program offering opportunities for post-baccalaureate students, scholars and professionals to undertake international graduate study, advanced research, university teaching, and teaching in elementary and secondary schools worldwide.

**[Language Flagship Program](#)** – Sponsored by the U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of Educational & Cultural Affairs, these intensive language instruction programs for undergraduate and graduate students enhance academic degrees through language proficiency and cultural competence.

**[Boren Scholarships & Fellowships](#)** – Funding from the National Security Educational Program (NSEP) supports U.S. undergraduate and graduate students to study less commonly taught languages in world regions critical to U.S. interests: Africa, Asia, Central and Eastern Europe, Eurasia, Latin America, and the Middle East.

**[The Critical Language Scholarship Program](#)** – Sponsored by the U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of Educational & Cultural Affairs, the Critical Language Scholarship

**[NAFSA: Association of International Educators](#)** – NAFSA is one of the leading professional associations promoting the exchange of students and scholars. Visit NAFSA’s website and career center.

**[Forum on Education Abroad](#)** – The Forum is an organization whose exclusive purpose is to serve the field of education abroad.

