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Project Description I

Title:

Effect of Student Participation in Study Abroad on Persistence, Degree Attainment, and Time-to-Degree

Statement of the research problem and national importance:

Statement of the research problem

For nearly two decades, there has been an increase in the number of U.S. study abroad students. According to the 2011 Open Doors report, from about 50,000 students during the academic year 1985-86, the number jumped to more than 270,604 students for the academic year 2009-2010 (The IIE, 2011). This increase may be the reflection of the initiatives by many U.S. campuses to integrate global competence through international experience into their core educational mission (The IIE, 2005). Many scholars in the field of international education assert that intercultural interactions can lead to the development of intercultural competence (Deardorff, 2004). According to Hunter (2004), intercultural or global competence involves an intercultural awareness, respect and appreciation of diverse cultures, and the ability to compete globally. In other words, intercultural interactions provide an opportunity for students to move beyond comfort zones and develop a multiple perspective of the world through self-reflection (Brasskamp, 2009), which can potentially lead to intrinsic motivation for continuous enrollment in school until graduation.

Several studies have investigated perceptions of study abroad programs by higher education administrators, faculty, and students (Jean Francois, 2010; Stuart, 2007), as well as the impact of study abroad on global mindedness, and intercultural communication skills of students (Walton, 2002). However, some parents and even faculty have questioned the relevance of study abroad programs, and many students are concerned about the academic value of study abroad programs and the risk to delay their graduation (Booker, 2001; Bollag, 2004; Marcum & Roochnik, 2001). Some single institution studies have documented that students who studied abroad have higher graduation rates than those who did not (Office of Institutional Research, 2009; Posey, 2003; Sutton & Rubin, 2010; Young, 2008). However, no research has been conducted regarding whether a nationally representative sample confirms such assertion. Given the growing attention that study abroad has received from legislators (Commission on the Abraham Lincoln Study Abroad Fellowship Program, 2005), education administrators (American Council on Education, 2008), and the public at large (Year of Study Abroad, 2006), it is important to conduct more studies exploring its academic meaningfulness with respect to its effect on persistence, degree attainment, and time-to-degree. The proposed research aims to fill that gap.

National importance

Over the past decades, there has been an increase in student access to higher education (NCES, 2011). However, the academic success of such students has not increased at the same pace. Since 1972, there is little change in graduation rates among U.S. undergraduate students (Adelman, 2006; Horn & Nevill, 2006). Consequently, U.S. postsecondary institutions seek to increase their rate of degree completion, because access without success is a failure for both the society and the student (Gladieux & Perna, 2005). Therefore, understanding additional factors that can increase the probability of persistence, degree completion, and shorter time-to-degree is a key to respond to the ability of postsecondary institutions to meet the educational needs of the community at large. The proposed study will help provide evidence for possible persistence, degree attainment, and time-to-degree patterns of student participation in study abroad programs, and help validate the role of study abroad in shaping student postsecondary experience.

Research timeliness

This research will directly inform post-secondary institution policy-makers and administrators on the specific effect and the directionality of the effects of participation in study abroad on student persistence, degree attainment, and time-to-degree. The examination of relationships between participation in study abroad and persistence, degree attainment, and time-to-degree will support focused and targeted policies related to support, recruitment, and retention. The ability to target participation in study abroad as an asset for persistence, degree attainment, and time-to-degree will maximize benefits to both institutions and students.

Finally, this study uses data available as part of a long term effort by the National Center for Education Statistics to provide research databases that allow for examination of student success. The proposed research is timely, because the findings will serve to inform policy-makers, administrators and other scholars interested in issues pertaining to academic performance of post-secondary education undergraduate students. This study will supplement existing research on persistence, degree attainment, and time-to-degree, and will provide further evidence of relationships between participation in study abroad and the probability to finish post-secondary degrees.

Review the literature and establish a theoretical grounding for the research:

Literature review: The higher education community has increasingly focused on evidence-based outcomes about the academic value of study abroad programs (Gray, Murdoch, Stebbins, 2002; Hadis, 2005). Several studies argued that study abroad has positive effect on the cognitive, affective, and cultural development of participating students (Hadis, 2005; Button, Green, Tengnah, Johanson, & Baker, 2005; Ryan & Twibell, 2000). Some scholars asserted that study abroad programs contribute to increase the level of student cognition (Frish, 1990), enhance their international perspectives, global political concerns, and cross-cultural interests (Bates, 1997; Carlson & Widaman, 1988; & Ryan & Twibell, 2000), reshape their American identity (Dolby, 2004; Souders, 2006), and increase their interest in global issues, language skills, and personal growth (Hadis, 2005). Ryan and Twibell (2000) found that students who participated in study abroad programs showed evidence of enhanced international perspectives of global political and cross-cultural issues. In a quasi-experimental study on 300 undergraduate students who study abroad (in Europe), Carlson and Widaman (1988) found increased global political concerns, cross-cultural interests, and cultural cosmopolitanism among participants who studied abroad in comparison to those

who did not. However, there is an expectation among various stakeholders to provide further evidence of the effectiveness of study abroad programs (Gray, Murdock, and Stebbins, 2002). Pascarella and Terenzini (2005) have questioned the validity on research related to the effectiveness of study abroad programs, because such studies did not control for variables (full-time enrollment status, high grades, majoring in the arts and humanities, and the social sciences) that influence student participation in study abroad programs.

Conceptual Framework: The proposed study hypothesizes that student participation in study abroad programs would serve as an integrating factor and motivation for persistence, degree attainment, and time-to-degree of college students (Tinto, 1987; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005; Laanan, 2004). In the proposed study, persistence, degree attainment, and time-to-degree will be used in a student-centered perspective. Thus, students will be considered irrespective of whether or not they have transferred from one institution to another.

Participation in study abroad: Study abroad encompasses various structured and non-traditionally structured formats, such as, for credit programs of study, internship abroad, work-abroad, volunteer or service abroad, and teaching abroad (Dwyer, 2004; Rai, 2004). The term study abroad in the proposed study refers to a structured learning experience led by a faculty member in which student participants have to live and learn in a foreign country for a long (one semester or more) or a short period of time (one to six weeks). Research on international education have documented that study abroad provides students with unique opportunities for academic and social integration through intercultural interactions (Green, Johanson, Rosser, Tengnah, & Segrott, 2008), which can eventually contribute to persistence, degree attainment, and time-to-degree.

Persistence, degree attainment, and time-to-degree: Degree attainment is a key goal for stakeholders in higher education, because it tends to be the outcome rewarded by the labor market (Cabrera, Burkum, & Nasa, 2005). The correlation between degree attained and higher salary (Snyder, Tan, & Hoffman, 2006) stresses the value of college education as a path to social and economic opportunities for students. Persistence or continuing enrollment is considered as one of the most significant predictors of student time-to-degree and degree attainment (Adelman, 2006). Furthermore, the increase in time-to-degree over the last decades (Turner, 2004) has inspired the call for more accountability in higher education and greater interest to explore factors that can contribute to reverse the trend (Adelman, 2006).

The Tinto' student integration model is regarded as one of the most empirical tested explanations of attrition and persistence in higher education (Cabrera, Nora, & Castaneda, 1992). According to Tinto (1985), student's persistence results from their social and academic integration into the college environment. Variables related to student success recently identified by Engstrom and Tinto (2008) included commitment, expectations, support, feedback, involvement (academic integration and social integration), and learning. Tinto model has validated the consistency of the longitudinal nature of student retention as well as the role of institutional fitness on student persistence (Goel, 2002). However, critiques argued that the model failed to consider racial and ethnic minorities (Tierney 1992). Bean and Metzner (1985) found that Tinto's model posed some challenges to determine the directionality of the effects of the tested variables.

Consequently, Bean and Metzner (1985) developed the attrition model, which predicts student persistence through behavioral intentions and intent to stay. Bean and Metzner (1985) suggested that social integration is not a significant factor for the persistence of undergraduate students, and argued that their attrition result from academic integration and environmental variables (i.e. finances, hours of employment, outside encouragement, family responsibilities, and opportunity to transfer). The model asserted that environmental variables have greater influence on student attrition and retention than the academic variables. A test of the model conducted by Metzner and Bean (1987) found that environmental factors were not significant factors in student attrition. Stahl and Pavel (1992) conducted a study, using structural equation modeling, which revealed that the attrition model was not a good fit for their sample, which was constituted of students from an urban community college. A more recent study conducted by Zhai, Monzon, and Grimes (2005) found that only one environmental factors (hours worked) suggested by Bean and Metzner was a significant factor of student attrition.

Cabrera, Nora and Castaneda (1993) developed a hybrid model of student retention that combined both Tinto student integration model and Bean and Metzner's attrition model. Cabrera, Nora and Castaneda (1993) argued that environmental factors, including intent to persist and family and friend encouragement were the main factors of student persistence. Sandler (2000) insisted that persistence be approached in a systematic manner. Similarly, Atwell, Heil and Reisel (2011) found in a recent study that no single factor can explain attrition or persistence of undergraduate students. This suggests the opportunity for further studies investigating additional factors that contribute to persistence, degree attainment, and time-to-degree. Therefore, understanding the contribution of participation in study abroad to persistence, degree attainment, and time-to-degree can only strengthen existing literature.

Describe the research method that will be used:

The proposed study aims to understand whether participation in study abroad is associated with persistence, degree attainment, and time-to-degree of U.S. undergraduate students.

Research Questions: Controlling for relevant student characteristics, social integration, and academic integration,

1. Is participation in study abroad programs associated with the persistence of U.S. undergraduate students?
2. Is participation in study abroad programs associated with the degree attainment of U.S. undergraduate students?

3. Is participation in study abroad programs associated with time-to-degree for U.S. undergraduate students?

Data Analysis Variables: The dependent variables in this study are (a) persistence, (b) degree attainment, and (c) time-to-degree. Persistence is a continuous variable if continuous enrollment is considered. On the other hand, persistence is a dichotomous variable that equals one if student enrollment is progressive and zero if otherwise. The proposed study will use persistence as a dichotomous variable. A dummy variable will represent degree attainment, indicating whether a student attained a bachelor degree or not at the last institution attended. A dummy variable will be created for time-to-degree as well.

The independent variables in this study are participation in study abroad, student characteristics, social integration, and academic integration. Participation in study abroad is a dichotomous variable that equals one if student participated in study abroad and zero if otherwise. Student characteristics include variables such as race, family income, parent/sibling education level, major, and high school educational tract, which are correlated to persistence and degree attainment (Tierney, 1992). Many scholars have also validated the construct of academic integration (Sandler, 2000; Titus, 2004), and social integration as a predictor of student persistence (Braxton, Milem, & Sullivan, 2000; Titus, 2004). The academic integration index and the social integration index will be used to run the statistical analyses.

Research methodology: The proposed research study will use a hierarchical regression analysis procedure to assess the predictive effect of participation in study abroad on persistence degree attainment, and time-to-degree of undergraduate students, using the Beginning Postsecondary Students Longitudinal Study (BPS: 04/06/09) and the Baccalaureate and Beyond Longitudinal Study (B&B:08/09) maintained by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). Like numerous other national surveys produced by NCES, the BPS and B&B are characterized by data collection through complex survey design. As such, there are two analytical issues associated with the use of data collected through complex sampling designs: the representativeness of the sample being analyzed and the correct assessment of population variances that form the basis for the identification of statistical effects and hypothesis testing (Thomas & Heck, 2001). Because the surveys of interest were conducted using complex survey designs, involving stratification, clustering, and unequal probabilities of case selection (Cataldi, Green, Henke, Lew, Woo, Shepherd, & Siegel, 2011), analyses will take into account the complex sampling designs in order to estimate variances accurately. The first step in a multistage analysis process will be data cleaning, including examination of anomalous data patterns as well as missing data and distributions of the variables of interest. The statistical software PASW 18 will be used.

Then, I will conduct variable reduction, where applicable. This step is necessary because most of NCES surveys have a large number of variables, many of which appear to measure the same construct. In addition, variable reduction tends to simplify the analyses which, as a result, will increase the power of the study because fewer hypotheses will be tested. Variable reduction will be conducted by using principal component analysis in PASW. Also, application of sample weights and computing weight adjustment will be performed.

Data Analysis: To address research question 1, "After adjusting for student characteristics, social integration, and academic integration, does participation in study abroad programs predict the persistence of U.S. undergraduate students?", a sequential or hierarchical regression analysis will be used to measure the association between participation in study abroad program and persistence. Hierarchical regression enables to examine how much study abroad adds to the prediction of undergraduate student persistence, which can be accounted for by other variables as well (Cohen, 2001). Dummy variables related to student characteristics, academic integration, social integration, and participation in study abroad will be entered in predetermined sequences.

The first sequence of the regression analysis will adjust for student characteristics. According to the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE, 2007), study abroad students have more educated parents, better grades, are more likely to be enrolled full-time, and more likely to major in the arts and humanities and the social sciences. Dummy variables will be entered in the first sequence for age, gender, race/ethnicity, major, SES, parental education level, student goal, high school graduation track, and enrollment status.

The second sequence will add the academic integration index and social integration index, which are accepted in the literature as associated with persistence (Titus, 2004).

The third and final sequence will add a dummy variable indicating whether a student participated in a study abroad or not. Change in R^2 will help determine the effect of participation in study abroad program on persistence. Unstandardized regression coefficients will be examined with respect to their role in the prediction equation. Standardized regression coefficients will be used to assess the importance of each independent variable, especially participation in study abroad. To avoid the effect of shared variance of correlated independent variables on B weight of other variables, structure coefficients will be computed for all the independent variables, except participation in study abroad program. Squared structure coefficients of the independent variables will be used to determine the percentage of variance accounted for by each independent variable in predicting student persistence.

To address research question 2, "After adjusting for student characteristics, social integration, and academic integration, does participation in study abroad programs predicts degree attainment of U.S. undergraduate students?", the hierarchical regression analysis used for persistence will be repeated for time-to-degree.

To address research question 3, "Is participation in study abroad programs associated with time-to-degree for U.S. undergraduate students?", the hierarchical regression analysis used for degree attainment will be repeated for time-to-degree.

Uploaded Appendix Document(s):

Project Description II

Will you use NCES target dataset? Yes

Please check all NCES datasets that apply

- Baccalaureate and Beyond Longitudinal Study (B&B) and Transcript Data
- Beginning Postsecondary Student (BPS) Longitudinal Study and Transcript Data

Explain why each dataset best serves this research. Include a variable list for each dataset used.

The proposed research will use the restricted-use data of Beginning Postsecondary Students Longitudinal Study (BPS: 04/06/09) and the Beginning Postsecondary Students Longitudinal Study (BPS: 04/06/09) sponsored by the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES).

The BPS: 04/09 is a dataset built from a longitudinal study that tracks a nationally represented sample of students who began their postsecondary education for the first time during the academic year 2003-2004. The BPS is appropriate because it includes information that are longitudinal in structure, on U.S. undergraduate students, and provides data on demographic characteristics of students, school and work experience, persistence, transfer, and degree attainment that will enable to address the research questions in the proposed study.

The B&B: 08 is a follow-up to the National Postsecondary Student Ad Study (NPSAS), which focuses on "students completing requirements for their baccalaureate degrees during the NPSAS academic year (Cataldi, Green, Henke, Lew, Woo, Shepherd, & Siegel, 2011). The B&B:08 provides data on key postsecondary issues such as access, enrollment, curricula, attainment, educational experience, and social impact of education. The B&B:08 contains information about student participation in study abroad.

The proposed research will use sample weights, as suggested by Thomas and Heck (2001).

The study variables include:

a) For BPS

Persistence: SEGPAY1

Degree attainment: DGREHI2B

Age: SBAGFM

Gender: SBGENDER

Race/ethnicity: SBRACE

SES: DISADVAN

Parental education level: PAREduc

Student's goal: DGEVR09

High school graduation track: HSDIPLOM

Enrollment status: ENINFM

Academic integration index: ACAINX06

Social integration index: SOCINX06

b) For B&B

Major: MAJORS4Y

Study Abroad: NUSABEVR

Time-to-Degree: PSE_BA

Will you use NSF target dataset? No

Explain why each dataset best serves this research. Include a variable list for each dataset used.

Will you address the NPEC focus topic? No

If yes, please briefly describe:

<p>Project Description III</p>

Provide a timeline of key project activities:

The following illustrates the adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives on time, and within budget, as well as providing clearly defined responsibilities and milestones.

February 1 – April 30, 2012

Application for restricted-use BPS and B&B data from NCES.

Hire Graduate Assistant (GA).

Measurable outcomes: License for restricted-use data from NCES; GA hired.

May 1 – June 30, 2012

Preliminary data analysis.

Begin identification of participation in study abroad, student characteristics, academic integration, and social integration variables from transcript data in restricted-use datasets.

GA leads analyses of restricted-use files.

Measurable outcomes: Participation in study abroad, student characteristics, academic integration, and social integration variables.

July 2012

Create composite variables.

Run basic descriptive statistics.

Write and proofread conference paper proposals for AIR forum, the Association for Studies in Higher Education (ASHE), and another conference on study abroad (e.g. Association of International Education Administrator conference), or an international conference on global education (e.g. International Education Research Conference).

GA assists with all tasks, except writing.

Submit conference paper proposals.

Measurable outcomes: Conference proposals submitted.

August 1 – September 30, 2012

Conduct analyses relevant to Research question 1.

Begin sequential regression analyses predicting persistence through participation in study abroad.

GA assists with all tasks, except writing.

GA leads on copyediting results.

Measurable outcomes: Preliminary results for sequential regression analyses predicting persistence through participation in study abroad.

October 1- December 30, 2012

Conduct analyses relevant to Research question 2.

Complete Begin sequential regression analyses predicting degree attainment through participation in study abroad.

GA assists with proofreading, checking references.

Presentation at ASHE conference or a similar conference.

Prepare and submit AIR-grant mid-year progress report (December 14, 2012).

Measurable outcomes: Preliminary results for sequential regression analyses predicting degree attainment through participation in study abroad; AIR-grant mid-year progress report by 12/14/2012.

January 3 – March 30, 2013

Conduct analyses relevant to Research question 3.

Complete Begin sequential regression analyses predicting time-to-degree through participation in study abroad.

GA assists with proofreading, checking references.

Write up methods, discussions, and implications sections.

Present at a conference on study abroad or international education or an international conference.

Measurable outcomes: Draft of discussions and implications sections; presentation materials.

April 1 – May 30, 2013

Revise literature review and theoretical grounding.

Search for newly-published research.

Present at AIR annual Forum (May 18-22: Long Beach, California).

Measurable outcomes: Draft of introduction and background sections.

June 2013

Polish writing; revise all sections of manuscript, check references cited.

Write and submit final grant report.

Final polishing and submission of two manuscripts for journal publication.

Measurable outcomes: AIR presentation materials; three journal article manuscripts submitted; final grant report submitted by 6/30/2013.

List deliverables such as research reports, books, and presentations that will be developed from this research initiative:

The proposed research project will yield five main deliverables, including three research papers that will each be presented at national conferences and submitted for publication in refereed, peer-reviewed journals. The two major remaining deliverables will include the mid-year and final grant reports. More specifically, the deliverables will consist of:

- Three conference presentations (AIR annual Forum, ASHE conference, and another conference) focused on student structures that moderate the relationship between students' participation in study abroad and persistence, degree attainment, and time-to-degree.
- Submission of three manuscripts for publication in leading education journals, such as *Research in Higher Education*, *Journal of Higher Education*, *Educational Researcher*, *Review of Higher Education*, or *College Student Journal*.
- AIR-grant mid-year progress report by December 14, 2012.
- Final research report due to AIR by June 30, 2013. With this report I will provide an overview of each of the project's deliverables, formally present the research findings associated with the research questions, and discuss implications of our findings for policy, theory, and future research.

Describe how you will disseminate the results of this research:

Findings of the study will be presented at the AIR annual Forum 2013 and other conferences on study abroad or international education. Research findings will primarily be shared with post-secondary policy-makers, administrators and other scholars interested in issues pertaining to post-secondary education among U.S. students through papers delivered at professional conferences and other professional groups who seek information exchange and peer-reviewed publications. Manuscripts will be prepared and submitted to journals that have an audience that will be interested in this research, both practically and methodologically. A non-exhaustive list of targeted journals includes: *Research in Higher Education*, *Journal of Higher Education*, *Educational Researcher*, or *Review of Higher Education*, *American Educational Research Journal*, *College Student Journal*. Key findings will also be shared with policy-makers and administrators through news briefs which will be disseminated through the University's Office of Public Affairs. Lastly, information generated from this project will also be available on the principal investigator website.

Provide a reference list of sources cited:

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IRB Statement

Statement of Institutional Review Board approval or exemption:

According to the guidelines on human subject research by the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh (UWO), a project that uses existing data will require a "Request for Exemption" from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) within the Office of Research Support Services. The proposed research is qualified for exemption under exemption # 4, "Research involving the collection or study of existing data, documents, records, pathological specimens, or diagnostic specimens, if these sources are publicly available or if the information is recorded by the investigator in a manner that subjects cannot be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects." The PI will submit the required IRB documents for a "Request for Exemption" in March 2012. The regular process takes approximately four weeks before a response can be heard from the IRB. Thus, the PI expect the IRB review to be completed by late April 2012, which allows sufficient time to move forward with the project upon receipt of the data from NCES.

Statement of Use of Restricted Datasets

The proposed research will use the restricted-use data of the Postsecondary Students Longitudinal Study (BPS: 04/06/09) and the Beyond Longitudinal Study (B&B:08/09). The BPS and the B&B are among the national surveys sponsored by the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES). In order to protect personally identifiable information, researchers are required to apply for a restricted-use data license to access and use non-public survey data. The PI fully understands the compliance issues as set forth by the IES Data Security Office within the NCES regarding the use of restricted datasets, and will comply with the requirement that that all materials prepared for publication based on the restricted-use data must be submitted to the Data Security Office at the NCES for review and approval prior to disclosure to non-Licensed persons. The PI, on behalf of the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh, will submit a formal application on or before February 1, 2012 for the restricted-use data license via the electronic application system to provide information on data requirements, a research plan, a security plan, affidavits of nondisclosure, and other required documents as detailed in the NCES restricted use data guidelines.

Biographical Sketch

Emmanuel Jean Francois's Biography Sketch

Dr. Emmanuel Jean Francois is an Assistant Professor of Human Service and Educational Leadership at the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh. He teaches *Grant Writing and Program Evaluation*, *Financial Sustainability in Nonprofit Organizations*, and *Advanced Internship Seminar*. He earned a Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction (Concentration: Adult Higher Education) from the University of South Florida (USF), a graduate certificate in college teaching from USF. Prior coming to the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh, Dr. Jean Francois taught as an adjunct professor for three years at Springfield College and served as Campus Coordinator for an international program in Youth Leadership at the University of South Florida (in collaboration with Georgetown University). Also, he was Research Coordinator at the Moffitt Cancer Center and Research Institute (Tampa, Florida), managing two community-based participatory projects from the American Cancer Society and the National Cancer Institute, on cancer disparities among ethnic minorities. A manuscript from this project, titled "*Cultural perceptions of colorectal cancer among three ethnic subgroups of U.S. blacks: A qualitative study*, 103(8), 669-679" was published last year by the *Journal of the National Medical Association*. Other manuscripts from the same project are currently under review.

Dr. Jean Francois repertoire of publications includes more than 30 titles in English, French, and Haitian Creole. His last books include "*Global education on trial by U.S. college professors (2010)*" and "*DREAM model to start a small business, 2nd Ed. (2011)*". He has presented in various regional, national, and international conferences about his research on non-traditional college students, global education, globalization, transformative learning, scholarship of teaching and learning, and community based participatory research. Dr. Jean Francois is a fellow of the Association for Institutional Research (AIR), and has received practical and theoretical training about the utilization of the NCES and NSF datasets. He has just completed a study on *the transformative learning experience of students participating in short-term study abroad programs*, funded by a faculty development grant.

Budget Requirements

Emmanuel Jean Francois' Budget

Personnel-Time on Project
 %(FTE) Academic Year: 12.00
 %(FTE) Summer: 78.00

Personnel-Salary & Benefits
 Academic Year: \$ 55000.00
 Summer: \$ 18333.00

Graduate Research Assistant's Budget

Personnel-Time on Project
 %(FTE) Academic Year: 50.00
 %(FTE) Summer: 25.00

Personnel-Salary & Benefits
 Academic Year: \$ 20433.00
 Summer: \$ 10216.00

Total Salary and Wages: \$33670.24

Travel: \$1500.00
 Other travel related expenses: \$3500.00
 Other research expenses: \$1000.00
 Total Request: \$39670.24

Funding History

I have no current funding to support the proposed research. However, I received an AIR fellowship last year to participate in the 2011 National Summer Data Policy Institute. I am very grateful for that support, which will contribute significantly to my academic growth. Also, I have received a faculty development grant last year, from the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh, which enabled me to successfully complete a study on "*Transformative learning experience of students participating in short-term study abroad programs*". The proposed research is an additional expression of my academic interest to contribute to the literature on the academic value of study abroad programs. Finally, I have a pending application with the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) to conduct a study on "*Individual, institutional, and environmental assets associated with persistence and degree attainment of non-traditional undergraduate students in U.S. postsecondary institutions*". If funding is awarded by NCES, the research activities will start in July 2012. The pending project with the NCES concerns the BPS data sets while the AIR proposal concerns both the BPS and the B&B data sets.