Beyond

n.4

Beyond

The ISI Florence & Umbra Institute
Studies in International Education

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Beyond Covid
We're back! The fourth issue of Beyond

The joke around the office when we all returned after eighteen months of close-down due to the Covid pandemic was "So, how was your long weekend?". Because yes, that's what it felt like – booting up the computer, taking our places at our desks, and preparing for the arrival of our beloved students just like we always have. Nothing seemed to have changed, and yet, everything has changed.

We pick ourselves up, brush off the dust, and disinfect our wounds along with everything else we must now disinfect. We forget how much we loathed the crowded streets and now cheer at the sight of tourists and other visitors again. We have taken a beating but we are once again on our feet, perhaps limping, but ready to lead the way, ready to go beyond.

We especially thrive at seeing the latest generation of study abroad students arrive. There is something different about them as well. The disappointed faces of those we had to rush home back in March 2020 have been replaced with glimmers of hope, bravery, and adventure. These students are the new pioneers – the first to adventure out of their lockdowns, homes, and comfort zones. They are eager to move on and their enthusiasm gives us all new drive.

The drive to go beyond was evident during these eighteen months as well. Professors and administrators quickly mastered digital media as we continued our classes, research, and conferences online. In anticipation of the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead of us, we never really stopped at *Beyond* either. *Beyond n. 3* was published in late-July 2020, albeit online only, and was dedicated to the learning experience abroad and the teacher-student role.

And now, from behind the masks and sanitized keyboards, we are proud to bring you our fourth edition – also online for now, but soon we hope to be able to print copies of both n. 3 and this current one.

We close this chapter and open a new one by starting to accept contributions to Beyond n. 5!

Nina Peci, *co-editor 'Beyond',*
Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Officer, ISI Florence

academics

Yes, You Can (too)!

Post-pandemic Messages of Gender Equality, Inclusion and Diversity in Italian Language Courses and Beyond

Francesca Calamita

Abstract

The global health crisis has shown extreme inequalities across the continents, particularly in the USA, where the healthcare system and social injustices have taken centre stage since the appearance of the virus. After the pandemic, many countries will have to recover not only financially but also socially. Learning a world language can have a predominant role in shaping globally-oriented generations willing to improve the current social scenario, pursuing gender equality, inclusion and diversity transversally and at all levels; therefore, language departments worldwide have an important card to play not only to recover from the decrease of enrolment numbers which has affected many institutions, but also to re-emerge from the global crisis as an essential humanities subject to shape a fairer world. Furthermore, world languages lie at the core of the study abroad experience and should prepare students to deal with any aspects of the country they wish to visit, including issues concerning race, gender, and social class, to quote just a few of them. In this article I shall show that working on the evolution of a targeted language (Italian), and being updated on how the socio-cultural context influences it and vice versa is an essential step to pass students the appropriate tools to be successful in the discipline not only as language learners but also as globally-oriented citizens of the post-pandemic world.

Scholars in the area of foreign language pedagogy have been suggesting for a long time that teaching a world language has little to do with technical skills, as commonly perceived in the past; on the contrary, educating students in this area is a form of sophisticated pedagogy. At university level, researching in the field of second language acquisition

has increased exponentially over the last few decades. The creation of a number of journals exclusively devoted to this subject and a variety of conferences in the same area organized yearly are also evident elements of this evolution. Furthermore, several universities have invested in centers fully devoted to the cause, such as the Institute of World Languages at the University of Virginia, where educators in this field have created a lively, cross-cultural and globally-oriented community focused on teaching and researching languages across all latitudes.[1] However, the rise of far-right parties and conservative leaders on both sides of the Atlantic and beyond have played a prominent role in framing diversity as an attack to national identities and values rather than a form of enrichment; as a consequence, languages (symbols of cross-cultural communication, inclusion, diversity, integration and mutual exchange, among many other positive points I could briefly mention) have also suffered from this interpretation. Coupled with a tangible global decrease in enrolments and other administrative and financial issues which have been affecting universities for a long time, many institutions have decided not to support the discipline and several language programs have been closed or drastically reduced (in terms of faculty members, funds and courses offered) around the world in recent years.[2] Due to the pandemic, this scenario will be inevitably more challenging in the upcoming years; however, world languages are

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1. "The University of Virginia's Institute of World Languages is an initiative of the College and Graduate School of Arts and Sciences. The Institute brings world languages to the forefront of our educational mission and promotes innovative collaboration for research, instruction and outreach activities in languages and cultures across departments and disciplines. The Institute is intended to: Prepare students to be linguistically proficient, culturally competent, and thoughtful global citizens. Strengthen research and collaboration across language programs and interdisciplinary areas through programmatic, departmental, and institutional initiatives that will further enhance language teaching and learning at UVa. Create, exchange, and expand language resources and innovative technologies for language learners and educators in the international language community at UVa and beyond. Organize activities promoting world languages and second language acquisition in order to support prospective and current language educators in enhancing their professional development". For further details on IWL at UVa, see https://iwl.virginia.edu/

2. For further details on the crisis of foreign language programs in the USA, the UK and globally, see: https://www.chronicle.com/article/colleges-lose-a-stunning-651-foreign-language-programs-in-3-years/; https://www.theguardian.com/education/2013/oct/09/university-language-departments-10-things-to-know

a key-discipline to rebuild a more inclusive and diverse post-pandemic world, as I shall try to demonstrate in this short contribution. The global health crisis has shown extreme inequalities across the continents, particularly in the USA, where the healthcare system – largely dominated by insurance companies – and social injustices have taken center stage since the appearance of the virus[3]. After the pandemic a number of nations would need to recover not only financially but also socially. Learning a new language can have a predominant role in shaping globally-oriented generations willing to improve the current social scenario, pursuing gender equality, inclusion and diversity transversally and at all levels; therefore, language departments worldwide have an important card to play not only to recover from the decrease of enrolment numbers, which has affected many institutions, but also to re-emerge from the global crisis as an essential humanities subject to shape a better world. Furthermore, languages lie at the core of the study abroad experience and should prepare students to deal with any aspects of the country they wish to visit, including issues concerning race, gender and social class, to quote just a few of them, that might shape all societies. Undeniably, a central point in learning a new language is also understanding its culture(s).

Despite its unquestionable advantages, mastering a language and/or being native speaker does not imply guaranteed excellence in teaching this discipline; while researching in the area of second language acquisition, including pedagogy, specific post-graduate specialisations and/or trainings are necessary to achieve high standards as educators. In particular, in this essay I shall show that working on the evolution of a targeted language and being updated on how the socio-cultural context influences it and vice versa is an essential step to provide students with the appropriate tools to be successful in the discipline not only as language learners but as globally-oriented citizens of the (post-pandemic) world. Framing class-discussion

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3. As of October 2020, the American health care system is a complex mix of public and private programs. Many citizens and sponsored foreign workers who have health care insurance rely on employer-sponsored plans. However, the federal government insures veterans, federal employees and congresspeople, those without financial resources (Medicaid) and elderlies (Medicare).

and lectures in sociolinguistics, linguistics anthropology and sociology of language is crucial not only to be innovative in the field of foreign language acquisition, but -- as I have already pointed out in other articles -- also to pass onto students crucial messages of gender equality and social justice that these linguistic variations very often suggest.[4] In other words, language classes give educators the opportunity not only to teach vocabulary, grammar, and syntax and engage in everyday conversation (as commonly perceived in the past and sometimes still today) but to use words to brainstorm with their students on present-day issues in an often international and diverse setting, thus helping them to become global and active citizens of the world.[5] As a consequence, educators in the area of languages have the opportunity to rethink themselves also as cross-cultural mediators and innovators, connecting people around the world and creating spaces where diversity, inclusion and gender equality are the norm rather than the exception. This interpretation of the discipline is one of the possible approaches languages departments should capitalize on in a post-pandemic world.[6] Indeed, as Michel Foucault already suggested in the 1970s: "Discourse transmits and produces power; it reinforces it, but also undermines and exposes it, renders it fragile and make it possible to thwart" (1978, pp. 100-101). Furthermore, with specific references to gender issues, already in 1990 Catherine Lalumière (former Secretary General of the Council of Europe) wrote in the recommendation adopted by the European Committee for Equali-

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4. In particular see Francesca Calamita (2018), "Sexism and Gender Stereotypes in Italian Language Courses: No, Grazie!", TILCA, *Teaching Italian Language and Culture Annual*, pp. 126-138. I also worked on this topic in a recent essay with Roberta Trapè (University of Melbourne), "Virtual Exchanges and Gender-inclusive Toponymy: An Intercultural Citizen Projects to Foster Equality" forthcoming with *Edizoni Ca' Foscari*, University of Venice.

5. Active citizenship in the classroom was introduced by Michael Byram (2008, 2011) and developed, among others, by Robert O'Dowd (2019). Intercultural citizenship links education with initiatives/outcomes outside the classroom to improve the world.

6. For recent articles on a similar approach see Turebayeva, Klara, Salima Seitenova, Meiramgul Yessengulova, Aigulden Togaibayeva and Shynar Turebayeva, "Nurture of Multiculturalism of Future Teachers in the Process of Foreign Language Teaching", *Talent Development & Excellence*, vol. 12, no. 1, 1 Jan. 2020, pp. 960 – 969; Abreu, Laurel, "Awareness of Racial Diversity in the Spanish-Speaking World Among L2 Spanish Speakers," *Foreign Language Annals*, vol. 49, no. 1, 1 Mar. 2016, pp. 180-190.

ty: "It was inevitable […] that the Council should turn its attention to language […], the languages spoken in its member states subordinate women to men by giving the masculine gender precedence over the feminine. […] it is no longer possible […] to tolerate a retrograde style of language which enshrines and perpetuates men's power over women" (1990, p. 5). More recently (2013), Melissa Bocci in an article on foreign language acquisition and community-based language learning suggests that together with gender, also the debate on race should be included in the classroom: "By privileging whiteness, white normativity in service learning can lead to assimilative, discriminatory, and / or exclusionary practices that reinforce oppressive socioeconomic power dynamics" (p. 8). Learning a language is undoubtfully about learning new words. However, words matter and shape the way we think about the world; the political and cultural messages that words bring with them have the power to shape students' future choices, widen their horizons, and in turn create a more inclusive and diverse world with less social injustices. As educators, it is part of our job to help students to think critically about the world. A language class gives teachers the invaluable opportunity to do so. Finally, it is precisely by giving the required importance and value to this discipline in academia that world languages can (re)gain visibility and center stage in university settings.

        In 2018, I wrote an article at the intersections of Italian language, gender issues and pedagogy, where I pointed out that I was not raised with linguistic gender equality, but I reached this level of awareness during the years of my doctoral studies. When I was studying in Italy in the 1980s and 1990s, almost all teachers at elementary, intermediate and high schools used to say "Buongiorno ragazzi [good morning guys]" while greetings their students, therefore employing the masculine form to address a group of people made up of women and men. This grammar rule is commonly referred to as "maschile universale [universal masculine form]" and as every Italian I learned it as such. However, when I was a pupil I always wondered why the masculine form prevailed over the feminine and at the time I never received a satisfactory answer at school or elsewhere. The typical answer was often "perché è grammaticalmente corretto [because it is grammatical-

ly correct]". Today, if educators want to share a message of gender equality while greeting students, they would say "Buongiorno ragazze e ragazzi [good morning girls and boys]". In a forthcoming contribution that I co-authored with Roberta Trapè (Univeristy of Melbourne) for a volume by Edizioni Ca'Foscari (University of Venice) we also suggest a further detail: while using this more inclusive formula, the word "ragazze" should also come first, thus helping female students to realise that they can be ahead of their male counterparts in all fields. This is an important detail that girls at school and other settings should hear, thus being led to think that the masculine form does not necessarily prevail over the feminine form either in language or in everyday life. However, not all teachers wish to convey such messages of equality; for a variety of reasons, they often use the masculine form to refer to a group of students made up of women and men.

A similar scenario happens when addressing colleagues in written and verbal exchanges with "carissimi, cari colleghi, gentili professori [dear all, dear colleagues, dear professors]", which I always perceived as exclusive. If we think about the Italian language being used on a daily basis in institutions and administrative contexts, we can find plenty of similar examples. Some educators might also argue that they simply apply the traditional grammar rule according to which the masculine form is used to address a group of people where at least one man is present. However, if the masculine form prevails, all students except those identifying as men, might think at some point that the language excludes them or sees them as second-class learners.

Furthermore, the issues of pronouns for the LGBTQ community in romance languages still requires much attention also from scholars who actively work towards linguistic gender equality. A variety of solutions have been proposed, such as the use of the asterisk and the neutral vowel "ə". These proposals are encountering much criticism from public opinion, while – on the contrary – some activists and academics welcome their use.[7]

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7. For the latest debate accessible to public opinion on the "schwa" see https://www.ilpost.it/2020/08/25/asterisco-lingua-italiana/

Moreover, traditional textbooks to teach and learn Italian often give more visibility to male protagonists of history, literature, cinema and arts. This is not only true of Italian but of other languages too (such as French and Spanish) and – more generally speaking – of the traditional curriculum at all levels. Indeed, the canon has usually been written by (white) men and it focuses on (white) men revolving around heteronormative discourses. However, it is also time to re-think a refreshing post-pandemic education that might help to dismantle socio-cultural patriarchal traditions trough the language. Today, almost all – if not all – textbooks to learn Italian mention Dante; however, how many textbooks give visibility at least to one well-known woman writer such as Dacia Maraini, Elsa Morante or Elena Ferrante? Why students taking one semester or more of Italian should not be acquainted with Igiaba Scego or Matilde Serao as they are with well-known male writers? Why language learners must study Michelangelo's life but never learn about masterpieces by Artemisia Gentileschi? Although the traditional curriculum keeps them hidden, as we know, women and the LBGTQ community have made history, contributed to literature, arts, cinema, and much more. It is only a matter of rethinking the canon to include many more, diverse angles, which in turn might be more representative of the current world. With these remarks I am not suggesting that canonical male writers, artists and intellectuals should not appear in textbook, but that there should be space for diversity and inclusion.

I have been left wondering many times how female and LGBTQ students feel about what I call the "invasion of male authority" while studying Italian and if this unbalance (affecting both language and content) is one of the reasons for having less enrolments in Italian language classes at university level in comparison with the past. In particular, to answer these questions, we should reflect on the following points from my 2018 article and forthcoming essay with Trapè: "Has the university population changed from the typical wealthy white boy to a diverse and inclusive community who prefers to study subjects from their perspectives (not all males related, not all white related, not all heteronormative related points of view)? Why teachers are not usually trained yet to pay attention to issues

of inclusion and diversity, including language related debates on linguistic equality? Why publishing houses have not been questioning the content of language textbooks? Why do we maintain this *status quo*?" And today I would add: how come these questions do not become central in reshaping the curriculum of Italian Studies across countries? Teaching a language requires training and this training must be designed to be "al passo coi tempi [to keep up with the times]". Both institutions and faculty from all kinds of departments should value a language PhD. Language educators should not be perceived only as teachers; they should be regarded as scholars and researching should be a central part of their career. It is essential in every department that professors teaching upper level courses in literature, cinema and cultural studies (just to mention some options) collaborate with professors teaching second language acquisition to strengthen the curriculum. It is precisely on this point that Italian Studies must (re)gain visibility at university level. The divisive approach (language vs content class) used in most US universities might have worked in the past, but it is not valid anymore. Content must be integrated in language classes as an "appetizer" – so to speak – to deepen discussion in the upper level curriculum.

Feminist scholars have been addressing sexism in languages since the late 1960s: initially, it was explored in the UK, the US and other Anglophone contexts (such as New Zealand and Australia). Only later it started to involve Romance languages, including Italian. Sexism in languages referred originally to the discriminatory way of representing women with respect to men through words; currently the notion should address also the matter of (in)visibility of those who do not identify themselves with this binary system. Therefore, I would rethink a more wide-ranging definition which could frame sexism in languages as the discriminatory way of representing everyone, except heterosexual men. It is very evident that sexism is inherent in the Italian language and other Romance languages based on similar grammar structures and rules, such as French and Spanish.

Despite being less visible for those outside the area of linguistics, English can be a very sexist language too and recent valuable changes have also been introduced to make it more inclusive; I am referring to the

use of the pronoun "they" and the word "person" rather than "woman" or "man" as well as neutral terms, as it happens in "police officer", rather than "policeman" and "policewoman". However, some discriminatory words are still used: for example, the very exclusive "freshmen" to refer to first year-students.

At university level, the interconnectedness between gender and linguistics is a major field of research. Yet, it is very seldom addressed in second language acquisition courses despite this interdisciplinary field having been founded several decades ago.[8] As Michela Menegatti and Monica Rubini remark: "[v]erbal communication is one of the most powerful means through which sexism and gender discrimination are perpetrated and reproduced […]. The use of expressions consistent with gender stereotypes contributes to transmit and reinforce such belief system and can produce actual discrimination against women" (2017). As a professor committed to pass messages of gender equality to my students, I often find challenges on my path due not only to the traditional grammar norms that shape the Italian language, but -- as mentioned above -- also owing to the resistance shown by some educators at university level who have not given the required importance to this issue. This remark is also related to the fact that, particularly in US universities, teaching languages has been often framed as a subject related to technical skills and at times getting a position in second language acquisition does not require a terminal degree. In doing so, departments have also devalued the importance of a PhD in languages and/or applied linguistics, which -- paradoxically -- is one of the most important "products" sold in tertiary education. Blending second language acquisition with relevant cultural content indeed requires a sophisticated background that cannot be fulfilled by "technical skills". Since the publication of Alma Sabatini's *Il sessismo nella lingua italiana* (1987), linguistic gender equality has been progressively promoted and sometimes

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8. Deborah Cameron (2006), one of the leading voices in the field, reminds us that gender and linguistics came together as a university discipline in the 1980s.

achieved. However, in and outside the academia, scholars and public opinion continue to remark that inclusive language is cacophonic and too complicated to be used every day. This interpretation often seems an excuse to not use a less unequal language and -- as a consequence -- promote a less unequal society. If sexist language is at the base of the iceberg to illustrate gendered violence,[9] rethinking its sexist connotation is the first step not only to achieve gender equality but to contribute to reduce violence against women and the growing number of feminicides which have reached record numbers during the lockdown in March and April 2020.[10] The word "femminicidio" has been misinterpreted for a long time in Italy by public opinion and this is symptomatic not only of the cultural resistance to frame gender issues in the appropriate context (anthropologically, socially and linguistically)[11] but also of the tangible unfamiliarity of people with certain gender-related matters. The works by Cecilia Robustelli and her collaboration with a group of journalists (G.I.U.L.I.A) have done much to improve this complex scenario. Nevertheless, many journalists on major Italian TV channels, radio and in newspapers, politicians and those who might have an impact on public opinion are still adamant about linguistic equality. For example, you might hear journalists saying "avvocata" in one instance and in the second one come back to the traditional "avvocato" to refer to a woman. The recent volume by Anna Lisa Somma and Gabriele Maestri (2020) also recalls this debate, attempting to create a dialogue, not only among academics, but with a wider audience too. As Trapè and I suggest in our forthcoming article on social media feminist collectives ("Non una meno" and "Abbatto muri", for example) as well as other associations

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9. I am referring to this widely-known image https://www.nap.edu/visualizations/sexual-harassment-iceberg/ There are several variations of it.

10. For data on Italian society see in particular this article from *La Repubblica*, which summarises the scenario very clearly: https://www.repubblica.it/cronaca/2020/07/18/news/aumentano_i_femminicidi_il_77_delle_donne_uccise_in_famiglia-262247587/

11. Paradoxically English words enter our everyday language very quickly; think, for instance, about the use of the word "lockdown" when Italians could have said "confinamento".

and well known activists and writers (such as Michela Murgia, Michela Marzano, and Lorella Zanardo), there is an attempt to pass messages of equality. Yet, a part of Italian society seems reluctant to progress, particularly with using professions of power in the feminine form and the use of a more inclusive language in general.

How can we help students to question and fight gender stereotypes in (and beyond) a language class? Do educators feel comfortable telling their students that the masculine agreement always prevails? How can professors convey a message of gender equality if sexism is embedded in the Italian language? Where can students find a textbook to learn Italian in an inclusive way, if they wish? As I suggested in my 2018 article, it would be surprising (yet refreshing) to see the word "casalingo" in a textbook, while "casalinga" is usually mentioned several times. In most textbooks, positions of power (such as directors of a museum, an institute or a bank) are assigned to a man. I never came across the depiction of same sex-couples and the word "lesbica [lesbian]" in a textbook, not to mention transgender issues. The portrayal of the heteronormative family pervades many textbooks that educators use daily, thus suggesting an old – and patriarchal – idea of Italy (often dominated by the Catholic Church, whiteness and its traditions) that does not reflect this country in the 2020s.

Furthermore, in most cases the portrayal of social class and status is also debatable: professions and lifestyles addressed in textbooks often belong to the upper or middle classes. For example, I never came across an exercise in a language textbook where a factory worker or a taxi driver takes center stage. As Joan Clifford and Deborah S. Reisinger suggest: "As educators […] it is our responsibility to maintain an atmosphere that does not discriminate, stereotype, tokenize, privilege, or somehow treat students unfairly". To improve this scenario in my courses and beyond, from 2017 onwards, I have been working on a project in intermediate Italian (ITAL 2020) at the University of Virginia titled: "A Gendered Wor(l)d: Grammar, Sexism and Cultural Changes in Italian Language and Society". This initiative (which I discussed in my 2018 article) is a multimodal learning experience that allows students to engage critically with Italian media and to be-

come sensitive to the gendered politics of language. The aim of this module is to discuss with students how sexism is inherent in the Italian language. Every two weeks, selected sections of ITAL 2020 are required to close-read and analyse a number of newspaper headlines and rewrite them in such a way that they do not reflect any gender stereotypes through language. Students create a blog page in the course platform to collect the analysed materials. In their blog, they assemble scanned copies of the articles, the rewritten headlines, and also their reflections on the project. Students also present their work at the end of the semester, using a variety of media to showcase the outcome of this new learning experience. Since 2017, I have tried to open a productive debate on teaching Italian with gender equality and to inspire colleagues to engage in related projects.

The collaborative initiative on gender-inclusive toponymy I lead with Roberta Trapè represents a further step towards this effort and it fosters women's visibility in Italian language, culture, society and beyond. This new project, based on a virtual exchange, involves students of intermediate Italian at the University of Virginia and students of English at Liceo Adelaide Cairoli, an upper-secondary school in Pavia.[12] Study materials on gender and toponymy have been uploaded onto the university and school platforms[13] and students meet virtually on Skype and/or Zoom to discuss these resources in Italian and English. They create a transnational group which closely considers the issue of gender equality in relation to streets' and relevant places' names, which are rarely named after women on both sides of the Atlantic. Seeking others' perspectives and advice, they propose changes in their local communities. In particular, students write down proposals to name a new or unnamed street/place in their towns after women who gave a meaningful contribution to the local community and then present them to the respective mayors.

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12. We are grateful to Deborah Ricci whose 2015 contribution on gender and toponymy has inspired our project.

13. In Spring 2020 we asked students to read several articles in preparation for the project: these include -- but are not limited to -- newspapers' articles from *The Guardian* and the BBC news: "Next stop…Nina, Simone" (*The Guardian*, June 2018) and "Are our street names sexist?" (BBC, April 2012).

While I am writing this article, Trapè and I are about to send students' letters to the mayors in Charlottesville and Pavia.

Reflecting on gender issues in the Italian language over the years also inspired me to work on a textbook to learn Elementary Italian with a focus on inclusion and diversity, jointly with Chiara De Santi (Farmingdale College, CUNY) and with the collaboration of several other language specialists worldwide, including a number of UVa colleagues on campus and in our study abroad programs in Siena and Florence. The manuscript, entitled *DiversITALY* (the contraction of the words "Diversity+Italy") is under contract with Kendall Hunt and should be completed by the end of 2021, thus being ready for adoption in the academic year 2022/2023. This textbook will be the first one to teach Italian with inclusion, diversity and gender equality. As such, it will give an opportunity to Italian Studies Programs to reconsider their offer in their language classes. Furthermore, the textbook will have an accessible price. With this publication covering the first two semesters of Italian, De Santi, our collaborators (which also include David Marini and Serena Baldini from ISI Florence) and I hope to give students and colleagues the bases to create a better world and give more relevance to Italian Studies in the Twenty-first Century. We need to rebuild a more equal world after the pandemic and languages can be one of its foundations. Italian language (which is often regarded as a sexist and non-inclusive language) has its chance to thrive. Join us to make it happen!

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Curricular Internships:

Opportunities for Innovation in a Knowledge-based Society

Paola Cascinelli and Joanna Simos

Abstract

In a context where universities are approaching the reality outside the classrooms to produce "useful knowledge", national and international curricular internships are an interesting tool to increase and promote the connection of the learning process with the application to practical cases. In an ideal scenario the benefits are evident for all the interested parties: for the student, as an internship gives a first glance into the professional world; for academia, being exposed to the real world and pushed to adapt the curricula and the teaching methods; and for the host organizations that can access the innovative thoughts developed in the academia. In sum, a curricular internship can activate the circulation of ideas at the core of the knowledge economy we live in, as well as amplify our understanding of how knowledge is produced and how we may tune into this exchange.

Introduction

The purpose of this work is to provide an initial answer to a problem that we have encountered in our professional experience as coordinators of training internships and instructors of a seminar class for international interns. In the search for contacts and the right matches between students and host organizations, we wondered what was the practical utility of the presence of young students in the workplace, not so much from a pedagogical point of view (and therefore for the student) but as a contribution to "civil society".[1] The ethical responsibility[2] for educational institutions

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1. We use the term "civil society" in the broader sense of a community of citizens linked by common interests and collective activites towards the better use of shared resources. It includes NGOs, parastatal entities, third sector organizations but also companies interested in the external impact of their private initiatives.

2. Forum on Education Abroad (2020).

to contribute value to host cultures (whether they be a location, a school or an organization) is large; yet, it is often preceded by the pedagogical emphasis on value for students at institutional levels.[3]

At the same time, we have been confronted with a series of criticisms that are leveled in the media debate and in scattered conversations that see internships as a further way of exploiting youth work. Free intellectual enquiry, a hallmark of impactful education, mandates careful institutional intervention. In our effort to reconcile these critical components of the curricular internship, the need emerges to deepen the debate and examine this growing phenomenon within the category of analysis and research data at our disposal.

This article is a piece of a larger work in which we are considering curricular internships in the US and in our respective countries (Greece, Italy, and the UK) to offer a comprehensive understanding of practices and global citizenships and how we might foster the latter through curricular design, a careful consideration of stakeholders and how their interactions inform our findings. Although geographical mobility in international education for cultural exchange, internships, and apprenticeships has long been recognized by globalization supporters as a remedy against cultural stereotyping, prejudice, and racism, the discourse of this privileged mobility carries and imposes a series of impactful events,[4] namely the disruption and transformation of the host culture.

To develop these topics, we analyze the implementation of curricular internships in recent years, the number of internships completed, and the type of hosting organizations. Research data from a localized study and from interviews with university administrators, students, academics, and delegates are continuously collected in our everyday work about curricular internships. The interviews aim to capture the perceptions of these privileged actors on the following features: 1) the advantages of adopting community of practice principles among all the players involved, 2) the

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3. Zemach-Bersin, T., (2007).

4. Zemach-Bersin, T., (2007).

main organizational and financial difficulties 3) potential improvements.

The research data presents findings from a community of practice exploring the impact of curricular internships through an action research approach.[5] In this article we will mainly focus on the theoretical debate. The two contributions that we found most relevant to the theme were the Triple (or quadruple)[6] Helix for territorial development and the debate on the fourth mission of the university. Both of these approaches discuss the contribution that the university can make to society in general, without – however – including curricular internships, if not for broad categories. The purpose of this article is, therefore, to investigate the following: 1) whether in theory the curricular internship can fit into the tradition of the triple helix and therefore contribute to create knowledge; 2) what specific characteristics the training internship must have to, theoretically, fulfill this function; 4) policy indications to improve the internships' design and implementation.

As regards the subject of our investigation, we preferred to limit its focus to curricular internships (whether credit bearing or not) that students do as undergraduates (usually in their second, third or fourth year) or when they pursue a Master's Degree. It is believed that these internships still take place in the middle of the training course. Therefore, the following set of beliefs applies: 1) the accompanying role of the academy should still be present, as the trainees return -- with their new experiences -- to the traditional study path; 2) trainees do not have strong recruitment expectations (therefore, they mainly see their internship experience as a

5. Using AR, this CoP aimed to offer insight into the evolution of curricular internships. The meetings took place weekly during February 2020 and February 2021 and consisted of 6 members from Higher Education Institutions located in Greece, the UK, the USA and India. The study by Simos, J. will be published in August 2021.

6. For a debate on the role of the fourth helix, see. Borkowska K. & Osborne M. (2018). Throughout the text we will continue to mention this tradition, for simplicity, only with its most recurring name, namely that of Triple Helix, based on the classic contribution of economists Henry Etzkowitz and Loet Leydesdorff (1997).

form of training)[7]; 3) internships are usually unpaid, which leads all the parties involved to believe that this kind of relationship should be some kind of educational exchange.

1.1 Creating knowledge through the interaction of universities, industries, and the State; the Triple Helix theory

One of the prominent theories highlighting the virtuous interactions that can arise between the academic world and the "real world" is the Triple Helix approach. According to this theory, the collaboration between the State, universities, and businesses (or, more generally, civil society)[8] can become the triple helix that favors the generation, circulation, and application of knowledge, thus stimulating innovation and territorial competitiveness in a knowledge-based economy[9]. The overlap among the fields of intervention and interest of universities, industries, and the State, would serve as the basis for the promotion of knowledge and innovation: that is, it would be the best way to revolutionize some schemes and to foresee new potential productive structures.[10]

This theoretical approach is particularly interesting as it claims to be

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7. This is particularly true in contexts where the integration between the university and the business world is not complete, like in Mediterranean Europe. The situation is different in the US, as described later in this article.

8. See note 1 above.

9. A Knowledge Based Economy is one where the creation, distribution, sharing and use of knowledge become decisive factors for the successful reach of organizational goals, no matter if private, public, business or community oriented. Given the explosion in available information, the rare resource becomes the ability to select and give meaning to relevant data. Knowledge workers are versatile, autonomous and highly skilled and are able to leverage and build knowledge to produce useful action with very strong and analytical skills in order to come up with integrated solutions that meet increasingly complex and differentiated needs. They are flexible and have a high tolerance for ambiguity. As a consequence, a "new" notion of workplace literacy emerges, making the relationship between employers and employees more horizontal. The countries that thrive are those that encourage their people to develop the skills and competencies they need to become better citizens, workers, managers, entrepreneurs and innovators and that encourage economic actors to combine global and local knowledge to accentuate comparative advantage. For a discussion on the role of Governments in promoting knowledge economy, see Ghirmai T. Kefela, (2010).

10. D'Alessandro, L., (2016).

the counterpart to Shumpeter's theory of creative destruction.[11] While the latter in the 40s demonstrated how antiquated economic regimes disappear, the triple helix systems outline how new regimes appear through a process of creative reconstruction in which all institutions can participate.[12]

To fully realize this potential, the three actors involved must be equally responsible for conflict resolution and ready to switch roles when one of the actors is weak or its activities are not maximally consistent with the collective purpose.[13]

This involvement is critical because all three of them are direct custodians of the culture of a society that promotes knowledge, innovation, and entrepreneurship.[14] In addition, the three actors -- who interact on an equal basis -- balance and compensate each other in their (opportunistic) interests, thus creating a useful system for the entire community. Through their repeated interactions, the three actors also learn to acquire each other's point of view[15], thus developing a shared culture[16]. An entrepreneurial mentality would then spread, favoring the development of an approach that is favorable to risk, creativity, innovation, and the drive to excel.[17] Mu-

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11. Schumpeter, J., (1942).

12. Ranga, M. and Etzkowitz, (2013). "By revealing the 'working of the engine', they provide new insights into the process of knowledge-based development that is often considered opaque and hidden, such insights encouraging initiatives and practices that carry the seeds of innovative developments. [...] The Triple Helix systems can help accelerate the transition from the low-risk, low-gain development model that is currently in place in many regions and countries and is conducive to slow, incremental innovation patterns with low economic returns, to a higher-risk, higher-gain development model that could favor more radical innovations and the accelerated creation of new markets, new growth opportunities, new jobs and new skills.'' p. 257.

13. Ranga, M. and Etzkowitz, (2013). For example, in the case of an internship, a company that takes on the training role that should be held by the university.

14. Matlay, H. and Mitra, J, (2002).

15. Viale, R., Etzkowitz, H., (2007) "Universities develop some business capacities as firms increase their academic capabilities, including the ability to share knowledge with each other" p. 7

16. Unfortunately, the authors do not give further definition of "shared culture". We will refer to the definition given by E. Katrini (2010): "Sharing culture relates to social networks that grow informally within a region and have as their goal to co-produce, manage and share resources, time, services, knowledge, information, and support based on solidarity rather than economic profit." p. 425.

17. Matlay, H. and Mitra, J, (2002).

tual boundaries still exist but are permeable to the point of creating hybrid structures.[18]

Within such a context, relationships are not specifically defined, but remain mobile and flexible instead, sharing in an evolutionary confusion of the borders that divide the three institutions. As a consequence, interactions among the partners increase, although they are not linear. Examples of this type of collaboration are: academic involvement in activities outside the university walls, such as partnerships, formal and informal networks with professionals, collaborative research, consultancy, work camps, but also -- from a more commercial point of view -- the establishment of specialized structures (technology transfer offices, science parks and incubators).[19]

To understand if there is an impact on territorial competitiveness, it is necessary to measure the collective effects of the collaboration, not just the individual ones. This would be the core of the matter. The more the collaboration works, the more there would be circulation of knowledge and innovation, for the benefit of all and not just a narrow minority.[20]

It is precisely this attention to the co-responsibility of all the actors involved that has prompted us to dwell more on this academic tradition than on the one that analyzes the third mission of universities. This approach sees universities no longer as an isolated land of knowledge, but as an economic actor with a direct involvement in social and economic progress. Although perfectly consistent with the first, the theory of the third mission focuses mainly on universities, underlining the need for a change in their organizational structure to serve the system. Instead, the

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18. Viale, R., Etzkowitz, H., (2007). The relationship should be circular, although authors who qualify as part of this tradition seem to insist on academia's delivery of innovation to business (e.g., Matlay, H. and Mitra, J, (2002), p . 15). On the contrary, we insist on the circular relationship between the three subjects in the production of innovation, bearing in mind, for example, how innovation takes place in small Italian companies where the innovator is not so much the academic world, but the vendor of machines, the newly hired former employee of a competitor or the specialized subcontractor.

19. AA.VV., (2012).

20. Singer, S., Peterka, S. (2010).

role/responsibility of the other actors is underrepresented. [21]

The fact that consensus is a fundamental prerequisite in the creation of a virtuous exchange is particularly important for the purposes of this research. In open systems, such as the one in which the triple helix moves,[22] progress can only be obtained if a consensus is achieved that unifies the different actors and if each one of them develops a sense of responsibility for the fate of the entire system.[23] Consensus would come when businesses (or, more generally, civil society), universities, and local governments begin to see themselves as part of a single, larger entity. Reaching this dimension can make a difference between an environment with untapped resources or potential that has not yet emerged and one in which opportunities have been used virtuously for both economic and social development. This theory concretely describes a few tools that can help create consensus. The latter can be described as the perilous path that leads to building trust among all the social actors. It mainly refers to a difficult process of regulatory change that takes hold as disputes are resolved and new and old tasks are reinterpreted in a complementary way.[24]

The thesis of this article is that curricular internships can be one of

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21. In particular, the university is attributed "the mission of territorial animation", with universities that climb international rankings thanks to the contribution they are able to give, in a global economy, to local economic and social development. See D'Alessandro, L., (2016). The aim of this tradition is to trigger the virtuous circle "in which the academy is transformed from a cultural entity that consumes the surplus of a society into a productive force that generates new resources" Viale, R., Etzkowitz, H., (2007), p. 21.

22. This system is open as it is a social system, that is, a system in which different behaviors of different organizational actors coexist, operating through different trajectories and with different initial conditions. See Von Bertalanffy, L. (1968) quoted in Singer, S., Peterka, S. (2010). In other words, there would be less possibility of tracing cause-effect relationships between the initial and final conditions of the system (as is the case in closed systems). The open system also works on the principle of equifinality, since 1) the same goal can be achieved starting from completely different initial conditions and 2) the initial conditions do not determine the potential to achieve the intended aims. This means that the actors of the triple helix enter into continuous mutual relationships with different attitudes, actions and aspirations that contribute (build) or discourage collaboration. Singer, S., Peterka, S. (2010).

23. Singer, S., Peterka, S. (2010)

24. Viale, R., Etzkowitz, H., (2007) and Ranga, M. and Etzkowitz, (2013). "This is not an easy process, because setting joint agendas often involves changes of vision, crossing organizational silos, thinking beyond the boundaries of a single institutional sphere, harmonizing institutional and individual objectives, resources, cultures, and so on. […] Individual and collective Organizers […] are key to overcoming institutional inertia ". Ranga, M. and Etzkowitz, (2013), p.256

the tools made available for the creation of consensus.

1.2 Curricular internships and the potential benefits for the ecosystem

Indeed, curricular internships can be, in our hypothesis, a concrete example of connection between companies, universities, and government institutions.

First, it should be emphasized that internships are not explicitly discussed within the tradition of the triple helix as a method of promoting innovation, even if they are mentioned by some authors in the description of the tools available to the system. Also, internships are not directly part of the discussion on the third mission and the entrepreneurial university.[25] On the contrary, a literature not immediately attributable to these analytical traditions recognizes internships as useful to businesses, universities and students.

From the student's point of view, which literature primarily focuses on, internships should be able to improve hard and soft skills, help students become a new propulsive workforce, develop relationships with the business community, and introduce them to the practical aspects of what they learn from books.[26] For universities, the main benefit of participating in an internship program is having the opportunity to learn about the key employability skills their students should possess to compete effectively in the job market.[27] Internship programs, then, would help universities to access companies and to be in line with the constant changes taking place in the real world. They would be an opportunity for the teacher who su-

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25. For example, Matlay, H. and Mitra, J, (2002), p.14, Ranga, M. and Etzkowitz, (2013), p. 245.

26. Mgaya K., Mbekomize C., (2014), p.130. Soft skills are defined as "teamwork, relationship building, leadership, human relationships, presentation skills, communication, time management, initiative, enterprise, problem solving and persuasion. Students also improve the use of technologies, the critical ability and the ability to see the big picture." Mgaya K., Mbekomize C., (2014) p. 131-132. Furthermore, other studies show that the academic performance upon returning from an internship experience is generally higher than that of those who have not undertaken the same path. Trainees also get a clearer idea of the world of professions, have more information on which career to pursue, spend less time on job placement, have higher early career wages and higher job satisfaction. See Coco, M . (2000) and Mgaya K., Mbekomize C., (2014).

27. Meredith, S., Burkle, M., (2008).

pervises the trainee to identify new areas of research, to manage distant and different conceptual frameworks, and to see both the practical and theoretical implications of their work, in line with the dictates of the third mission.[28] Finally, curricular internships can favor the development of a continuous relationship between academic departments and host organizations, so as to define, improve, and bring innovations in the courses offered to students (i.e., invite experts during lessons, organize practical workshops, etc.).[29] Our findings suggest a further correlation between trans-institutional collaboration for internships and research underlining an added level (or, at least, the potential) of knowledge production through the dynamic exchange between placement providing organizations and the academic institutions.

As our study shows, trainees can be a remarkable opportunity for host companies/organizations. More specifically, trainees can help to achieve the following objectives:

- gain new perspectives and technologies: trainees represent campus emissaries and host organizations can benefit from the knowledge students transfer from their university experiences, using information technology, new ideas and perspectives on how to conduct business;
- attract talent: internship programs are seen as a low-cost and cost-effective means of recruiting potential future employees;
- realize social responsibility by training responsible citizens and future professionals who contribute to the community;
- enhance corporate image by offering internship positions to college students, establishing links with universities, sponsoring certain kinds of university activities or providing guest lecturers;
- define academic paths in line with competitive needs: intern-

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28. Viale, R., Etzkowitz, H., (2007).

29. Meredith, S., Burkle, M., (2008).

ships can be a useful way for companies to be involved in the definition and implementation of academic curricula and programs to prepare a competent workforce.[30]

- Understand the marketability of practice by interacting with student interns (and using them as a means for diversifying staff bodies).
- save on running costs: most students are highly motivated during an internship, work hard, try to impress supervisors, and can be used as low-cost labor to compensate for backlogs. Interns relieve full-time employees of routine tasks, resulting in cost savings for the organization by not having to pay for overtime or use temporary employees.[31]

In the case of international training internships, for civil society there is the benefit of socializing with a different culture and the potential insertion -- through networking -- in international production and distribution networks. For academia, international internships can help to build connections with other universities, to compare the theories studied in different cultural contexts and to understand which factors are fundamental in preparing students in view of an international career. For the students, international internships promote intercultural sensitivity, enhance the ability to work in a more challenging environment, and stimulate curiosity for the big picture (cultural, historical or geographical factors) by understanding how an organization operates.

Interestingly these findings suggest that for the host organizations participating in our study, it is the intercultural exchange that plays a piv-

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30. Mgaya K. and Mbekomize C., (2014) tested some of these categories in a survey of 150 organizations that hosted interns in Botswana. It emerged that most of the organizations adhered to an internship program for corporate social responsibility and to reduce management costs.

31. In our view, this is the least desirable outcome of an internship. Also, in our experience, the time and dedication needed to follow an intern often overcomes the cost savings in terms of free work done by the intern.

otal role in offering organizational opportunities for development.[32]This exchange typically comes in the form of dialogue between individuals of different cultural backgrounds. In the global internship context specifically, collaborations and working relationships are also enhanced in terms of this diversity. According to several organizations, intercultural interaction directly impacted team outcomes, organizational communication and raised cultural awareness, ultimately informing and updating organizational culture in terms of inclusivity.[33]

We therefore believe it is possible to consider training internships as one of the tools available to an ecosystem for the creation and sharing of knowledge and innovation.[34] Internships can induce a virtuous circuit that calls: 1) universities to urgently define learning tools and methods that are consistent with the ongoing change process; 2) companies to include in their products and services the technological and organizational changes suggested by the academia (thanks to the trainees) and 3) the government body (or the offices in charge of the universities) to make the regulatory side ever more coherent and selective in order to favor this circular movement. Furthermore, curricular internships help to strengthen the link between the place where knowledge is produced and its possible use; this is another fundamental element through which the triple helix can promote local competitiveness.

In the case of international curricular internships, then, these would also allow to go beyond the single region to aim – as the reference authors

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32. One explanation may be the fact that the interns placed in these organizations came from English speaking countries and universities (contrary to the organizational dominant language of Greek and Italian).

33. This study by J. Simos (titled "Insight into the evolution of curricular internships") is slated to be published in the December issue of the MDPI journal.

34. By innovation we mean, following the debate on the subject, the ability to successfully transform an idea or knowledge into new products, processes, services or organizational forms. The innovations on which an intern can act are: the use of new technologies; new relationships or new ways of managing the relationship with customers / suppliers; new information or new ways of managing information; improved products and managerial methods; evolving or revolutionizing organizational forms; improved market penetration or presentation of the product / service. See Matlay, H. and Mitra, J, (2002).

of the triple helix tradition prescribe – at a multi-regional collaboration. The latter is a key factor in creating a 'critical mass' of human and financial resources for broader spectrum projects. It would then be a kind of innovation finally released from national dynamics and much more in line with the dynamics of regionalization and globalization of the knowledge economy.[35]

However, we have seen that one of the prerequisites for the triple helix mechanism to work is that there be a basic consensus and trust between the players involved. The research, as expressly recognized by the founders of this tradition, has not yet clearly outlined what the mechanisms for creating consensus may be. One of the hypotheses of this work is that internships can become one of those ways in which -- in contexts where the interaction between the three actors is not yet consolidated -- trust and consensus are created through a progressive experimentation of relationships that can lead to long-lasting relationships. That is, they would be useful, for the reasons previously identified, to start a gradual change of vision, sharing and harmonization of organizational objectives. Internships can be a tool to break organizational inertia; thanks to subsequent interactions, they can build trust between the key players in economic development, thus serving as harbingers of new and more important cooperation projects for the creation of knowledge and innovation. But is all this possible in any condition, or is there a need for specific application features for this tool to perform its full potential?

1.3 The conditions to succeed

Discussing the need for consensus, Ranga and Etzkowitz, (2013) argue that "this result can be accelerated by top-down and bottom-up initiatives that not only need a supportive environment but also specific policy measures that know how to integrate innovation and entrepreneurship with the broader socio-economic context, and especially with research,

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35. Ranga, M. and Etzkowitz, (2013).

education, the labor market and development policies."[36]

Indeed, the functions described cannot be carried out in any context and the three actors involved (universities, students, and civil society) should put in place specific practices to realize the advantages promised by the theory. This is also true considering that most research on the subject has been carried out in the Anglo-Saxon context, in industrialized countries with a large industrial base and where there is a significant public/private investment on training/work alternation.[37] Our localized study includes findings emerging from our experiences constructing the landscape for internships in two localized contexts with little to no formal investment in the curricular internship, thus establishing our roles as dynamic in this evolution.

In the United States, for example, there is a long tradition of academic promotion of the interaction between theory and practice. As a consequence, internships are a very widespread reality and companies are directly active in the research and promotion of internships.[38] The public is not very involved, and the universities (private or almost private) have developed an efficient and well-established support system (with dedicated, experienced staff) that is based on continuous relationships with the various partners. The company generally plays an active role in trainee research, often being the promoter of collaboration with the universities. Consequently, a real competition has developed among companies in search of the best talents, who can potentially be the best hires of tomorrow. This competition begins earlier and earlier, reaching

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36. Ranga, M. e Etzkowitz, (2013), p. 256.

37. Furthermore, the tradition of the triple helix is mainly based on an evolutionary approach, in which the Anglo-Saxon model represents, as always, the reference model.

38. NACE reports that, from the mid-1980s to the mid-2000s, the ranks of graduates who participated in at least one internship rose from 10 percent to 80 percent. At the same time, those who manage to get their first full-time job thanks to an internship have risen from 5 to 30 percent; see Coco, M. (2000). As per international internships, "over 260,000 American students studied abroad in 2007/2008, representing an increase of four times the number of study abroad students in 1987/1988" and "When including students who did not receive credit for these experiences (ndr. Abroad internships) in the equation, it has been estimated that the number is closer to 50,000 Americans participating in international internships annually" Malerich J., (2009), pp. 3-4.

up to the first year of university.[39]

Notwithstanding that, our years of teaching and working with US universities, the interviews, and a search of the media coverage on the topic all show that there have been many criticisms[40], up to the point of defining these experiences as "internships to nowhere". In addition to that, it is often underlined that there are no national guidelines regulating this tool, in terms of number of working hours / acquired credits, kind of host organizations, direct link between educational needs and tasks at work. This makes the system highly variable and does not clarify the expectations that students may have with respect to the proportion of hours worked / training credits attributed. For international internships, the regulatory system is even more vague, and many complain about the difficulties to measure the results and the advantages for the students, the companies, and the universities, except for a general higher awareness of the intercultural environments.

Similar criticisms can be raised in other socio-economic contexts, like Mediterranean Europe,[41] where the two authors of this article are from. Here, in addition to a lack of national (or European) regulations, most internships are mainly managed administratively. In particular, it is revealed that there are no guidelines on the correspondence of hours / type of training internship and on the characteristics of the host organizations. Furthermore, a *posteriori* evaluation of the results of the experience

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39. Cummings, R. & Tataman W. S., (2007). The authors underlined that this can be defined as a free enterprise system or an employer-driven model. Conversely the student driven model is a model where students are given the opportunity of picking an internship employer among many employers, with a much higher involvement of the University by setting guidelines on student and employer expectations.

40. For example, Perlin R., (2012) for USA Today. Perlin is also the author of *Intern Nation: How to Earn Nothing and Learn Little in the Brave New Economy*.

41. As per Italy, there is no official data on curricular internships, as universities are not obliged to communicate curricular internships carried out by their students to public bodies. The only information available on a national basis is that provided by the Almalaurea inter-university consortium to which 91% of Italian universities belong. Before a recent reform to promote curricular internships (2000), the students who carried out internships recognized by their course of study did not exceed 20%. In 2006 they were 43.7%, while starting from 2010, this share has grown continuously to stabilize on values close to 57%. Almalaurea (2017).

is not a rule. As for companies, they do not see or perceive the role of the university in what young people can do, also because they do not have direct relationships with the university tutor either during the definition of the role, throughout the internship, or at its conclusion. The training project that the company tutor must present at the beginning of the experience and the final report are mostly regarded as bureaucratic documents. For companies, trainees (even if graduates) are "juniors"; as such, they can only learn.[42]

Indeed, South European companies and institutions have an organizational culture that is different from that prevailing in the Anglo-Saxon context. A medium-small structure, limited propensity for innovation, the scarce habit of considering universities as a place where innovation can be created, and the idea (typical of small companies) that entrepreneurship cannot be a learned behavior are all factors that limit the ability of the company to make the most of the internship experience. Furthermore, an organizational culture much more based on the transmission of knowledge in a practical, tacit,[43] experiential, informal and idiosyncratic rather than codified way[44] would make our context less close to that in which the theory of the triple helix was developed (that is, the Anglo-Saxon one).

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42. The only positive exception, both in the assessments of companies and of academic and administrative staff, are the curricular internships carried out as part of the degree thesis. During these experiences, companies seem to derive much more from the student and there are stories of fruitful interaction between the professors and the host organizations, which then turned into ongoing relationships. The reasons for the greater success of these experiences are listed the older age of the trainees, their greater theoretical knowledge, but above all the presence of a university professor who guides the student throughout his/her experience toward the production of a final paper, which is often presented to the host institution.

43. By tacit knowledge we mean uncoded knowledge, i.e. not contained in texts or manuals, not managed through structured communication flows; a knowledge that exists in the heads of individuals, which arises from work experience and which – as such – is connected to the ability to understand the contexts of action, intuitions, and sensations that can hardly be understood by those who do not share this experience.

44. Which is typical – according to Viale, R., Etzkowitz, H., (2007) – of the first part of the industrial revolution. Knowledge was therefore less easy to protect. On the contrary, in the third industrial revolution, knowledge became mainly codified, theoretical, formal and communicable.

1.4 Best practices

Based on experiences in different cultural contexts and having had the possibility to observe successful curricular internship programs, in the following paragraphs we will introduce some practices that should be put in place to realize the benefits prescribed by theory. These practices, according to the authors, should be more and more institutionalized to make the most of curricular internships and their international versions.

A good internship program begins a few months before the actual internship takes place, with a series of mandatory meetings that help students prepare their CV, search for companies, make appointments for interviews, and agree on reimbursements or payment. Undergraduate university students (both juniors and seniors, coming from different universities and disciplines) are put in contact with qualified companies. The latter are selected based on the previous experiences of other trainees and on consistency between the educational objectives of each student and the roles to be covered. Students are interviewed from selected companies and matches are created based on student and business rankings, business needs and student skills. The onus to match students to organization falls to the program provider. Our study confirms that a thorough process combined with active consideration and contact with placement opportunities can offer a fruitful experience for each stakeholder.

In addition, students who join the program must take a seminar class that helps them integrate their internship experience and academic background. During the course, the student participates in small group discussions with other trainees and has to present a small research at the end of the course to describe the results of the specific project to interested colleagues and community members. Finally, students must submit a report comparing their expectations and opinions before starting the internship with their actual experience. In addition, students participate in mid-term interviews first and then focus groups at the end of the internship, in order to have the opportunity to articulate and identify their goals, challenges, perspectives, and opportunities for growth. In this way students reflect on the internship and make sense of their experience. This

is particularly true of international curricular internships, where there is the need to introduce the students to a different cultural environment.

Students must also evaluate the entire path, from the selection process (preparing for the interview, the interview, the classification of the company, the whole experience), to the transition from the training path to the internship position (which will be shared with future interns), and the learning experience during actual work. This process allows students to assess their abilities and, at the same time, evaluate the changes that can be made in the internship project for future students.[45] At this stage, students will also have to declare if they have been offered a full-time position after graduation.[46] Likewise, companies too have to do their own evaluation, evaluating whether or not the students met their expectations,[47] as well as the effectiveness of the internship program, the selection and interview process, and the academic role in the implementation of the process itself.[48]

Also, our localized study presents insights into how this potentially mutually beneficial experience can be recognized as such and gain greater investment of time and consideration by hosting internship organizations. Several characteristics emerge in our identification of placement providers who are willing to collaborate in establishing robust outlines to

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45. Cummings, R.& Tataman W. S., (2007)

46. The authors reported that in the internship program of spring 2007, 71% of the interns stated that they received an offer of full-time employment form their internship employers and were leaning toward accepting the position. Cummings, R.& Tataman W. S., (2007)

47. The employers, too, assess the students and are asked if the student interns have met or exceeded their expectations (following eight criteria: Accounting Knowledge/Technical Skills, Computer Knowledge/Technical Skills, Oral Communication Skills, Written Communication Skills, Ability To Work Well With Others, Dependability, Organizational Skills, General Business Knowledge). It is interesting to note that the results of the employers' evaluations for spring 2007 stated that interns exceeded employer expectations in all categories except written communication skills. This is taken as a clear indication of what to improve in the university career. Cummings, R.& Tataman W. S., (2007).

48. To this end, the employer is asked to comment on the following sentences: the Career Services Office is organized and helpful in scheduling Students for interviews; students are well-prepared for the interviews; the on-campus interview process met your needs; the matching process is an efficient method for placement of interns; the communication with the Internship Director is sufficient to meet our needs. See Cummings, R. & Tataman W. S., (2007). A particularly interesting case is the Interns for Indiana program, a government project openly aimed at promoting regional economic development by supporting companies that are in their early stages of development.

encourage an enhanced, vivid work experience for interns:

Enhancing institutional relationships through collaboration: In most cases, organizations willing to develop actionable memorandums of collaboration and to refer to these in practice during an internship placement had already realized the benefits of a long term association with our educational organization. This included collective research projects, access to archives and library resources and – in some cases – an exchange of classes[49].

English speaking, international companies or NGOs tended to embrace intern development with greater ease. However, they offered less support during the introductory period in comparison to family type organizations that ultimately entailed a greater involvement for interns.[50]

Conclusions

In a society increasingly worried by the trend towards deregulation – in the presence of increasingly all-encompassing competitive strategies, which eat up the individual –[51] the possibility of carrying out an internship is a very controversial issue. Some observers fear that the university's involvement with organizations and businesses could shift researchers' interests and priorities towards more practical and applicative issues, in favor of commercial projects and at the expense of the long-term benefits of basic science. The linear Mertonian model of science-technology-innovation, in which science is independent and separated from its practical purpose, would be called into question with dangerous consequences on

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49. An exchange of lectures can be a simple way of keeping this exchange dynamic. Also, it can serve as a significant contribution from the host organizations.

50. These differences can be attributed to the specific workplace cultures and their dominant practices; for instance, a multinational fast pace and developmental route embedded within practice compared to a welcoming smaller family business that may include a familial, more supportive environment for individuals.

51. "These Silicon Valley leaders propose a society in which personal freedoms are near absolute and government regulations wither away, where bold entrepreneurs amass billions of dollars from their innovations and the rest of us struggle in a hypercompetitive market without unions, government regulations, or social welfare programs to protect us." See Financial Times 1.

the production capacity of a universal science.[52] The third mission would distance the university from educational objectives with uncertain and undesirable outcomes, serving the market and unbridled neoliberalism, thus creating a "McUniversity".[53] In this type of approach, curricular internships would be nothing more than a further example of the transformation of knowledge into "marketable products": free workforce for businesses that eat profits.

Etzkowitz and Leydesdorff (founding fathers of the triple helix approach) instead believe that the best interaction model among university-business-governmental bodies would be the original format of science before its institutionalization in the 19th century. In that model relations are spontaneous and not regulated / bound by the state.[54] In it, the scientist is not separated from society and science serves collective interests. The Mertonian model, therefore, would be an unnatural construct, which was justified by the need to give autonomy to science when the latter was still a fragile institution and had to protect itself from political intrusiveness.[55] Today, however, we are witnessing a return to the natural interaction between the three actors involved with incubators, laboratories, internships, and university patents becoming an integral part of the pedagogical modalities not only to improve the employability of students

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52. "The theoretical resistances are linked not only to the always fascinating echo of the idealist heritage, but also to the concern, only partially ideological, of subservience to the market". See D'Alessandro, L., (2016), p. 85.

53. Hayes, Wynyard (2002) cited in Riviezzo, A. and Napolitano, M. R, (2015).

54. Model 2 "consists of separate institutional spheres with defined boundaries that interact in a very detailed way" Etzkowitz, H., Leydesdorff, L. (2000), p. 111.

55. Merton, according to the authors, wrote in 1942 when there was a need to protect "pure science" from the corruption of the Nazi doctrine of the racial base of science and the Lysenko attack via genetics in the Soviet Union. Etzkowitz, H., Leydesdorff, L. (2000), p. 116. The article also underlines how the university cannot be compared in its ability to produce knowledge and innovation to any other institution and in its leadership in knowledge. A consultancy firm, for example, "brings together widely dispersed personnel for individual projects and then disperses them again after a project is carried out by satisfying a specific client's problem. Organizations like these lack the organizational ability to pursue cumulative research (...). The unique comparative advantage of the university is that it combines the continuity and memory of previous research with new people and new ideas, through the passage of generations of students ". P. 118.

but also to promote economic and social development.[56]

So, some would hold, today there are no dangers to protect science from. But is this true? What about the exploitation we are witnessing? In our opinion, and on the basis of the readings made and the interviews carried out, the possibility of doing a training internship (both well-regulated and accompanied) represents a potential solution to this ideological controversy, provided that it is adequately constructed. The hypothesis of this work is that the benefits for the three players involved can only occur when internships are followed by a well-identified training path and when there is a strong connection with the academy upstream and downstream of the experience. On the contrary, internships would contribute to the competitiveness of companies in a limited way and would not contribute at all to that of the territory when used as a replacement for other paid workforce and when there is no deep connection with the university system. Even considering the best experiences of the US model, the internship cannot be considered a pure administrative matter. There is a need for the active involvement of teachers and specialized skills.

That is, the importance of a well-done training project is felt, in which attention is focused on expectations, on the real availability of time, on motivations, on training needs, on work ambitions, on the life path that one wants to take. This leads us to understand the context, the sector, the project, and professional imagination in a lasting, personal, intimate (not occasional) relationship between teacher and trainee, in a personal space shared with the university tutor, where one can establish a reflec-

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56. The scientist will become like the goddess Kali, specialized in different aspects and with arms in the theoretical and practical to solve problems. See Viale, R., Etzkowitz, H., (2005). According to this prediction, experiential learning will increasingly become part of academic methods.

tive space that lasts before, during and after the internship experience.[57]

The same attention, however, should be reserved for accompanying host companies, especially considering that in cultural contexts not immediately related to the Anglo-Saxon model, production fabric does not have a long-term vision or management strategies close to those identified by the tradition of the triple helix. From the selection to the construction of the role to be covered by the student in the company (also based on previous experiences and an ex-post evaluation), a database should be built where to collect data on the reliability of the structure in terms of local positive impact, effectiveness, quality of the projects carried out, and congruence with the students' training needs. Companies should consider the trainee not as a junior worker, but as a link with the university system. Universities, in turn, should see internships as an important opportunity to better serve pedagogical and research objectives. Furthermore, those who define development policies should establish guidelines and train skills capable of guiding both partners during the design, implementation, and final evaluation of internships.[58]

This article, therefore, aims to demonstrate how training internships can turn out to be an expensive and complex path. Only under certain conditions and with a different investment approach (and greater awareness) on the part of universities and companies can they become excellent opportunities for the benefit of all.

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57. For a description of the importance of the training project and the "responsibility of university teaching" in its formulation, see Lozupone, L., (2011). "The certification of skills takes place through the internship report. (...) In most cases, as in the educational sciences class, it becomes an integral part of the thesis work. The report is not simply a logbook in which the student tells how the experience went, what he/she did, how he/she felt. In the internship report, the student must demonstrate knowledge of the structure, its organization, vision and mission, on which legal provisions it is based, which funding does it benefit from, must then explain the training project, its conditions, in what consisted, how it took place: this reflection on experience constitutes junction with the theory: it is not enough for the student to try to clarify the theoretical presuppositions of his action, looking for the appropriate bibliography: what you want is a passage from indeterminacy to specificity, to the use of appropriate concepts to express what has been done, avoiding easy stereotypes and clichés ". Lozupone, E., (2011). According to this author, independent internships should be reserved for students with a Master's Degree.

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An Oral History of Study Abroad

Octavio di Leo

Abstract

Living abroad (whether studying, working, or both) is a memorable way to learn with others and to challenge nationalisms, by listening to the diversity of human stories and developing an ear to global polyphony. The art of storytelling has been a universal practice from times immemorial, and a creative way to understand and bridge conflicts. This narrative is an attempt to show how students and educators abroad make that lasting conversation happen and draw together a story map (whether experiential, virtual, or both) as inspiring mediators and future ambassadors.

Over the years and in different locations, my colleagues played with the idea of recording study abroad stories as told by their protagonists, thus producing an oral history of sorts. Whether in diaries or blogs, students have always looked for ways to graft a life-changing experience onto their Bildungsroman. Yet, once at home, after the initial excitement of family and friends about their adventures in faraway places, the only ones left to share their stories with were their journey companions —their *dear fellows*, as Harold Bloom used to call his assistants on campus. At the same time, faculty and staff – busy as they were attending to the wellbeing of students – may have not kept journals of the day-to-day operations, but they did rely on storytelling as a way of dealing with human conflicts, an observational comedy of sorts. So here and there, every member of the study abroad community has a story to tell, and some of these stories would meet the requisites for a case study. A funny example of cultural misunderstanding was a student in Barcelona who bought a plane ticket to join his father in Nice for a weekend and landed in Tunisia instead. Or a student who had an affair with a famous actor at a Budapest hotel and

was surrounded by paparazzi on her return to Rome, as a local paper in Texas broke the news to the world —and to her fiancé.

Storytelling, however, may be used for a more lasting impact on the community. While setting up a school by the Tiber – dealing on a daily basis with real estate agents, architects, lawyers, and mother superiors – or while struggling to explain to a US attorney the intricacies of colonial Portuguese administration, working abroad has given me the chance to interact with people from all walks of life and to build a bridge between locals and foreigners —not by chance, students with intercultural skills are called "ambassadors" by our marketing staff. Yet, in my experience, there is another way to walk that bridge: by participating in collaborative projects, such as the production of documentaries that bring sensitive topics to the students' attention. On a recording session about the Roma heritage in Italy (the largest ethnic minority in Europe) we came to interview the late Piero Terracina, a Jewish survivor from Auschwitz-Birkenau, who witnessed a massacre that went unnoticed in history and remains to this day a unique testimony of the *Porrajmos* or Devouring, the equivalent of the Shoah for the Gypsies:

> The camp next to ours was called *Zigeunerlager*. There was so much life there. To begin with, there were children. They were living in families. So much life, so many noises, children playing. They even kept their musical instruments. At night, when we came back to the camp, we would hear that they were making music, singing. It seemed to us like an oasis of happiness, so we asked ourselves why this was not also possible for us. We knew that our loved ones who had arrived with us were sent to death in the gas chambers.
> The night of August 2nd, 1944 we were in our compound, and there was curfew. We heard the SS arrive shouting, and the barking of dogs. There was an incredible chaos, because they began to use their clubs to get order, like they always did. The children cried, they had been woken up in the middle of the night; people were calling each other, they were searching for relatives or friends. We also heard some gunshots. This chaos lasted quite a long time; at least a couple

of hours, perhaps more. This is just a hypothesis, of course, because I could not see anything; yet, I think there was an attempt of resistance. And then silence. Not a sound could be heard.

The morning after, wake-up call was at 4:30. As soon as we got up and left the compound, the first thought was to go and see the other side of the barbed wire. And there was no one. There was only silence. There were some doors left open, slammed by the wind; it was always windy at Birkenau. It was so different from the noises we heard the evening before, the songs and children playing. The camp now was empty; there was no one anymore. We looked at the chimneys of the crematorium ovens going at full power. There was high smoke, sparks, flames. They say there were around 5,000 gypsies at the camp. That night they were all sent to death. [1]

Listening to this first-hand account triggered the students' curiosity to learn more about the Roma migration that had left India a thousand years ago and eventually reached the New World. Given the lack of written documents, the only way to reconstruct that exodus was for linguists to study their language (Romani), which incorporated words from every language on its path through Persia, Armenia, Greece, the Balkans, and Spain.

Also thanks to an audiovisual production, but in a quite different setting, students in Rio de Janeiro were inspired by four rowers with disabilities who overcame every adversity in life, crossed the Guanabara Bay and paid tribute to the Paralympic movement worldwide.[2] And yet, at the end of the day one wonders: What is exactly the role of educators abroad? Can we facilitate a 360-degree interaction in a local context?

Herodotus's travels would not have been possible without the institution of the *proxenos* — "the guest's friend." The *proxenos*, or, abbreviated, *proxen*, was a type of consul. Voluntarily or for a fee, he took

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1. *I Am Roma, What Can I Do?,* 2010 (http://soundcloud.com/user-713187559/i-am-roma-what-can-i-do)

2. A Travessia, 2015 (http://vimeo.com/133107151)

care of visitors who hailed from his native city. Feeling at home and well connected in his adoptive city, he took under his wing fellow countrymen who were newcomers there, as a fixer, a source of useful information and new contacts.

Other valuable sources for Herodotus were all types of ubiquitous guardians of memory, self-taught historians, itinerant fiddlers. To this day in western Africa one can encounter and hear a griot, who walks around villages and marketplaces recounting the legends, myths, and stories of his people, tribe, or clan. In exchange for a small payment, or for a humble meal and a cup of cool water, the old griot, a man of great wisdom and exuberant imagination, will relate for you the history of your country, what happened there once upon a time, what accidents, events, and marvels occurred. And whether what he says is the truth or not, no one can say, and it's best not to look too closely.[3]

Whether we knew it or not, by engaging in challenging conversations and honoring a diverse memory, we have acted as *proxens* and mediators between different and even conflicting *modi vivendi.* Living if only for a brief period of time among people who share a language which is not ours can be an antidote against nationalisms, right and left of the political spectrum. A most important lesson of study abroad is that everyone should experience living as a minority to be at least once in the shoes of those who are not from there, so that when they get back they may treat minorities with the same rights and duties as are expected of a majority. And they may be even fortunate enough to run into a griot, an accomplished storyteller whose job is to bridge the gap between generations and perform what Elise Boulding called the 200-year present.[4]

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3. Kapuscinski, Ryszard (2007), *Travels with Herodotus*, New York, Alfred Knopf, 265.

4. "That present begins 100 years ago today, on the day of birth of those among us who are centenarians. Its other boundary is the hundredth birthday of the babies born today. We are linked by the people among us whose life began or will end at one of those boundaries, five generations each way in time. This is our space, where we can move by touching the lives of the young and the old around us." Boulding, Elise (1988), *Building a Global Civic Culture: Education for an Interdependent World*, New York, Teachers College Press, 4.

This being said, as important as the act of telling a story is the act of actively listening to it. Educators abroad are meant to set up the conditions for this conversational narrative to happen. Martin Buber argued that in the beginning is the relation, and to the philosopher every encounter (or rather, every conflict) was a learning opportunity.[5] We have learned through never-ending episodes of violence and war that relationships are the basis of both the conflict and its long-term solution, and our contribution to a more peaceful and just world are such fundamental skills as mediative capacity[6] or accelerated intimacy[7]. But what is the extent of our impact? How many people can we actually relate to? Based on his comparative research on the neocortex ratio in monkeys and apes, primatologist Robin Dunbar proposed that our capacity to relate to other human beings can be indeed quantified before groupings become hierarchical in structure:

> Human societies contain buried within them a natural grouping of around 150 people. These groups do not have a specific function: rather, they are a consequence of the fact that the human brain cannot sustain more than a certain number of relationships of a given strength at any one time. The figure of 150 seems to represent the maximum number of individuals with whom we can have a genuinely social relationship, the kind of relationship that goes with knowing who they are and how they relate to us.[8]

This cognitive limitation, which can be found at organizations of all kinds —schools, churches, corporations, or the military— may be used as a framework to understand group dynamics in international education as

5. Buber, Martin (1996), *I and Thou*, New York, Touchstone, 69 [1922].

6. Lederach, John Paul (2005), *The Moral Imagination*, Oxford, Oxford University Press.

7. Wilkerson, Isabel (2007), "Interviewing: Accelerated Intimacy", in: Kramer, Mark and Wendy Call, *Telling True Stories*, New York, Penguin, 30-33.

8. Dunbar, Robin (1996), Grooming, *Gossip and the Evolution of Language*, London, Faber and Faber, 55-79.

well, once the student population goes beyond the 150 mark and risks to break the quantity / quality ratio of a program. Now, does the 150 ceiling apply to virtual relationships too?

Like an endangered species, study abroad faces the chance to record its colorful pre-Covid past while the iron is hot. In a new era of human relationships, we try to square the circle of virtual education and feel trapped in an oxymoron —is it really possible to have one's life changed without leaving home? Since Herodotus we know that stories guide us through the whims of history, but we seem to navigate an unchartered territory with the bare help of statistics and science fiction. Were we to join forces and launch a storytelling project across borders, turning a swan song into an opportunity for growth, it would not only

Apartments of Eleonora of Toledo, Palazzo Vecchio, Florence.

give continuity to the lessons learned by thousands of students from all over the world, but it may also cast light on how international and interpersonal relations used to be, a mapping memory of how people, organizations, and states related to each other since study abroad became an industry. Without this story map, online education may be a giant with feet of clay.

Finally, a personal memory from a not too distant past. During a trip to the Amazon, my 8-year old son joined a group of American students who instantly adopted him as a mascot. The rainforest opened like a fan: they swam with pink dolphins and listened in silence to a choir of howling monkeys from a canoe. But it wasn't until he visited Florence that the experience abroad made complete sense to him. There was a multisensory tour at Palazzo Vecchio on the history of chocolate and how it was brought from Mexico in the 16th century. Walking through a room that was decorated in the 1540s for Eleanor of Toledo (an early enthusiast of macaws), my son stopped suddenly and pointed at a fresco: "*Arara!*" And so the guide invited him to share the story of how he fed a bright-colored macaw in the Amazon. Only there and then, standing in awe, two experiences 5,000 miles apart had come full circle, and for a moment everyone stood in silence on that invisible bridge between the New and the Old World.

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Best Practices for Leading Part-time Faculty at Study Abroad Programs:
A Literature Review

Alan Earhart

Abstract:

In the 2017-2018 academic year, 332,727 U.S. university students participated in a study abroad program in a foreign country (Institute of International Education, 2018). Many of these students attended courses taught by part-time faculty, hired locally by study abroad centers with affiliations to U.S. universities. The directors of these centers have responsibility for all aspects of the study abroad programs, including academics and the faculty. This paper reviews best practices for leading part-time faculty from the research literature.

Introduction

In the 2017-2018 academic year, 332,727 students left their universities in the United States to participate in a study abroad program (Institute of International Education, 2018). The number of students studying abroad each year has increased significantly for decades. In the 1962-1963 academic year, the number of students leaving the United States for a study abroad experience was 3,174 (Freeman, 1964). More than five decades later, in the 2017-2018 academic year, New York University alone sent 4,436 abroad (Institute of International Education, 2018). These students are often taking courses that they could have taken on their home campuses. Yet, the explosion in participation rates evidences the rich academic experience that students encounter while taking these courses abroad. What makes these educational experiences unique is the host culture and often the local faculty that teach classes (Stephenson et al., 2005).

Studying abroad has generally been associated with peek student experiences. However, Thomas Jefferson (1785) writing a letter from Europe to his acquaintance John Bannister could see no benefit from an education in Europe other than language acquisition, and listed many reasons

why it was probably a bad idea. Jefferson was particularly disparaging of English education, writing that a student learns drinking, horse-racing, and boxing. Today this negative opinion of study abroad is not widely held, and the participation rates support that. However, as Wallace (1962) pointed out, it is not enough to merely send students abroad for them to be positively affected by their travels. A quality study abroad experience is facilitated by on-site staff and instructors.

A study abroad program permanently based in a foreign country is a complex, mini-campus led by a director who from moment to moment may function as a dean of students, a contracts specialist, or department chair (Goode, 2007; Goodwin & Nacht, 1988; Hornig, 1995; Lucas, 2009; O'Neal & Krueger, 1995). In any case, the study abroad program director is critical to the success of the program and should be an expert administrator, an accomplished academic, fluent in the host culture, and sympathetic to the U.S. American undergraduate learner (Freeman, 1964; Stephenson, 2005).

The problem is that despite all of the competing demands placed upon study abroad campus directors, the key to any study abroad program's success is in the director's ability to effectively lead the academic program, which is often taught primarily by part-time faculty hired locally (Borgioli & Manuelli, 2013; Freeman, 1964; Stephenson et al., 2005; Wallace et al., 2005). Despite the importance of the director's ability to lead the academic program, the contemporary research agenda for study abroad does not include organizational aspects such as management and leadership in the position of the director (Ogden, 2015). Furthermore, this information is vital for directors who, through leadership, hope to improve the work experiences of the part-time faculty and thereby improve the academic and cultural experience of the study abroad students they serve. This paper presents a review of the research on leading part-time faculty.

Review of Literature on Leadership of Part-time Faculty

The researcher conducted an extensive review of the literature on academic leadership of part-time faculty with the purpose of identifying

best practices for leading and supporting part-time faculty in the higher education context. The inclusion criterion for the literature in this review required that the work be narrowly focused on leading and supporting part-time faculty in a higher education context.

The researcher collected journal articles and books using the search terms "academic leadership" and "part-time faculty" from the Colorado State University library, *ERIC*, and *Google Scholar*. Some authors refer to part-time faculty as 'non-tenure track faculty', 'contingent faculty,' or 'adjunct faculty,' and so the researcher included these terms in the literature search. The researcher also included the scant body of writings on part-time faculty at study abroad centers specifically, as well as writings about part-time faculty at study abroad centers in Italy specifically.

Part-Time Faculty in Higher Education

Part-time faculty are typically considered to be non-tenure track faculty that work less than full-time (Biles & Tuckman, 1986; Gappa & Leslie, 1993). These individuals are diverse groups who come to an institution with unique perspectives and motivations for their work (Biles & Tuckman, 1986; Leslie et al., 1982). The American Association of University Professors (2006) identified four classifications for part-time faculty: those preferring full-time employment, part-timers by choice with no other employer, those with a full-time job elsewhere, and those who are retired.

Colleges and universities have increasingly relied upon part-time faculty because of the flexibility that their employment affords in terms of costs, scheduling, and staffing (Bergquist & Pawlak, 2008; Gappa et al., 2007; Leslie et al., 1982). Because department heads are required to balance the demands of institutional policies, curricular requirements, and budgets, the use of part-time faculty provides an advantage (Leslie et al., 1982). However, this advantage of greater flexibility should be balanced with suitable working conditions for the part-time faculty member (Biles & Tuckman, 1986).

Despite the advantages of using part-time faculty compared to full-time tenured faculty, many have argued that the practice is often exploit-

ative (American Association of University Professors, 2006; Bergquist & Pawlak, 2008; Biles & Tuckman, 1986; Gappa et al., 2007; Gappa & Leslie, 1993). To earn a living wage, some part-timers teach at multiple institutions (American Association of University Professors, 2006). Part-timers may feel a calling to the teaching profession and will endure low pay and poor work conditions, which they find dissonant with the academy's spirit and its mission (Gappa & Leslie, 1993). Some institutions may be driven toward greater reliance on part-time faculty precisely because of the challenging fiscal environment in which they operate (Fryer, 1977).

Practices and Policies for Part-Time Faculty

Researchers have noted that institutions and academic leaders can improve part-time faculty's working environment and job satisfaction by enacting policies that foster a culture of respect for the part-time faculty (Eagan et al., 2015; Leslie et al., 1982; Waltman et al., 2012). Eagan et al. (2015) found that merely recognizing excellence in teaching among part-time faculty contributed to job satisfaction. Waltman et al. (2012) found that part-time faculty job satisfaction and institutional commitment were enhanced by policies that promoted job security, allowed advancement opportunities and fostered inclusive environments. Researchers suggest that greater integration of part-time faculty into the campus community is vital to improving their experience at an institution (Eagan et al., 2015; Gappa & Leslie, 1993; Waltman et al., 2012).

Researchers have found that the institution's physical working conditions for part-time faculty will influence their job satisfaction (Eagan et al., 2015; Leslie et al., 1982). Leslie et al. (1982) found that part-time faculty felt alienated and less supported when small things were missing from their working environments, such as office space, access to copying equipment, or nearby parking. Eagan et al. (2015) found that those with a private office space were significantly more satisfied than those that did not have one. The study also found that part-time faculty with shared office space were substantially more satisfied than those with none. Finally, the study found that part-time faculty with a personal computer provid-

ed by the institution were more satisfied than those who did not have one.

The use of part-time faculty at institutions of higher education may continue to increase. The scholarship has provided indications and guidelines which administrators can employ to work more effectively with part-time faculty to address some of the disparities between part-timers and tenured faculty. Table 1 provides a synopsis of some of these findings from the works reviewed.

Table 1
Practices for Managing Part-Time Faculty

The invisible faculty (Gappa & Leslie, 1993)	Factors for satisfaction of PT faculty (Waltman et al., 2012)	New policies for PT faculty (Fryer, 1977)	Supporting the majority (Eagan et al., 2015)
Publicly recognize achievement	Support teaching efforts	Compensation recognizes out-of-classroom work	Recognize excellence in teaching
Seek feedback on supervision	Promote job security and advancement opportunities	A planned development program for PT	Provide access to professional growth opportunities
Treat PT faculty with respect	Create an inclusive climate	Full range of support services	Provide office space, shared office space
Invite to departmental social events		Invite to departmental meetings and committees	Integrate into department and institution

Part-Time Faculty in Overseas Study Abroad Programs

The scholarly work on the use of part-time faculty at overseas study abroad programs is limited. Garraty and Adams (1959) surveyed the state of affairs of U.S. study abroad programs in Western Europe 60 years ago. They quipped that instructional costs were significantly reduced compared to the home campus. In 1959, a highly qualified instructor from France could be hired for $300 to teach a French Composition course (Garraty & Adams, 1959). Freeman (1964) mentions local tutors in discussing models of delivering the curriculum at overseas study abroad programs in Europe. Freeman (1964) noted that study abroad programs employ one

or a combination of the following models: instruction provided by the local university, instruction provided by local university augmented by contract tutors, instruction provided solely by contract tutors, or instruction provided by faculty from home campus.

Scholars have also raised concerns about the quality of education provided by local part-time faculty at study abroad programs (Freeman, 1964; Garraty & Adams, 1959). Some have commented on the differences between the United States and Western Europe in the teaching style of faculty, characterizing European faculty as more distant and tending not to coddle students as much as their American counterparts (Garraty et al., 1976). More recently, scholars have highlighted the importance of the cultural ambassador role to students held by local part-time faculty in study abroad programs (Stephenson et al., 2005). In general, there is a lack of scholarly commentary on the organizational aspects of managing part-time faculty at overseas study abroad programs.

Some news outlets more recently covered the perceived exploitation of part-time faculty at study abroad programs in Italy (Guttenplan, 2012; Redden, 2013). Part-time faculty in Florence, Italy that tried to organize better contracts through local labor organizations, reported professional consequences (Guttenplan, 2012). After the introduction of new labor laws in Italy, at least one large study abroad program faced lawsuits from disgruntled part-time faculty over how the institution handled the matter (Redden, 2013).

Scholarship on Leading Part-Time Faculty

A search for scholarship on leading and supporting part-time faculty yielded several studies. Eleven were selected for review, as shown in Table 2, where they are sorted by the method and then the publication year: five employed qualitative methods and six used quantitative methods.

Table 2
Characteristics of U.S.-Based Studies Examining Organizational Aspects of Non-Tenure-Track Faculty (NTTF)

Reference	Purpose	Methods	Participants & setting
Gappa and Leslie (1993)	Identify practices and policies to support NTTF.	Qualitative case study	467 participants (administrators, faculty deans, department chairs, faculty leaders, and part-time faculty) at 18 different universities.
Cunningham (2010)	Identify practices and policies to support NTTF.	Qualitative case study	17 contingent faculty at extended campus locations of a central university.
Waltman et al. (2012)	Identify practices and policies to support NTTF.	Qualitative focus groups	24 focus groups with 220 non-tenure-track-faculty (both full and part-time) at 12 research universities.
Kezar and Sam (2013)	Identify practices and policies to support NTTF.	Qualitative case study	45 faculty leaders (40 contingent and 5 tenured) at 30 institutions that either have positive institutional policies for contingent faculty or are working towards them.
Kezar (2013)	Identify practices and policies to support NTTF.	Qualitative case study	107 non-tenure-track faculty in 25 departments at three large four-year public universities.
Hoyt (2012)	Identify factors predicting NTTF satisfaction and loyalty.	Quantitative survey	358 adjunct faculty at one satellite campus of Brigham Young University.
Eagan et al. (2015)	Identify factors predicting NTTF satisfaction.	Quantitative, secondary data	4169 respondents on original survey who identified as part-time faculty. 279 four-year colleges and universities.
Gehrke and Kezar (2015)	Understand decision-making process of leaders supporting NTTF.	Quantitative, secondary data	278 deans of either colleges of arts and sciences or colleges of liberal arts across many institutions.
Delotell and Cates (2017)	Correlate leadership of chairs and commitment of NTTF.	Quantitative Survey	560 online adjunct faculty at a single, for-profit institution.
Ervin (2018)	Identify practices and policies to support NTTF.	Quantitative survey	309 adjuncts at two extended campuses of a central university.
Barnett (2018)	Correlate leadership and satisfaction of NTTF.	Quantitative survey	77 online adjunct faculty at one for-profit university.

The five qualitative studies in Table 2 vary somewhat in their discreet purpose, but for the most part, they are seeking to identify practices and policies that support non-tenure-track faculty (NTTF) at higher education institutions in the United States. NTTF are usually working on a part-time contract.

The book by Gappa and Leslie (1993) provides very little information about the data analysis techniques used for the case study. It does reproduce the questionnaires directed at different stakeholders for the interviews. It describes the participants and institutions only generically. The study does boast a large population across many institutions, which adds strength to the findings and their generalizability. The conclusions produced 43 recommendations for supporting NTTF. Some of these are listed below in bullet points. Some were omitted because they were not central to the relationship between a supervisor and a part-time faculty member.

- Recommended practice 25: "Develop objective performance criteria and procedures for evaluating part-time faculty and use the results as the basis for decisions about reappointment" (p. 259).
- Recommended practice 26: "Provide support services to part-time faculty" (p. 260).
- Recommended Practice 27: "Communicate the message that part-time faculty are important to the institution" (p. 263).
- Recommended practice 30: "Invite part-time faculty to share their perceptions of effective supervisory practice at department chair training sessions" (p. 265).
- Recommended practice 35: "Appoint part-time faculty to committees" (p. 268).
- Recommended practice 37: "Invite part-time faculty to social events" (p. 269).
- Recommended Practice 38: "Publicly recognize part-time faculty for their achievements and contributions" (p. 270).
- Recommended practice 39: "Orient part-time faculty to the in-

stitution and to the expectations the institution has for them"
(p. 271).
- Recommended practice 41: "Provide in-service professional development opportunities for part-time faculty" (p. 273).
- Recommended practice 42: "Provide incentives for good performance" (p. 274).
- Recommended Practice 43: "Use teaching evaluations to help part-time faculty improve" (p. 275).

The dissertation study by Cunningham (2010) and the research article by Waltman et al. (2012) found somewhat conflicting results between them. Cunningham's case study interviewed 17 contingent faculty at one extended campus, and in contrast Waltman et al. conducted 24 focus groups with 220 NTTF at 12 research universities. Waltman et al. found four themes that emerged, two for satisfaction and two for dissatisfaction among NTTF. Satisfaction was associated with "teaching and students" and "personal life and flexibility." Dissatisfaction was associated with "terms of employment" and "respect and inclusion." The results for respect and inclusion contradict the findings from (Cunningham, 2010) but the study sites and participants are very different. The study by Waltman et al. (2012) included 12 institutions and Cunningham (2010) included only one with extended campuses. Waltman et al. (2012) found that the level of satisfaction with integration into the campus and departmental culture was directly tied to the department chair's activities and leadership, just as Gappa and Leslie (1993) had found.

The final two qualitative studies in Table 2 by Kezar (2013) and Kezar and Sam (2013) approach the topic of supporting NTTF in two novel ways. Both studies employ a qualitative case study methodology. Kezar focused on NTTF in teaching roles in departments that had either implemented favorable policies for NTTF or failed to do so and asked how this affected the NTTF's perceived ability to teach well and create a positive student learning environment. The study used the concept of "opportunity to perform" which competes with Herzberg's Motivation-Hygiene the-

ory (1959) to measure job satisfaction. Kezar argued that the work environment can have a direct influence on work performance. In Herzberg's model, work satisfaction is a mediating variable whereby the environment influences worker motivation (satisfaction or dissatisfaction), which in turn influences work performance. Table 3 lists the results.

Table 3
Kezar's (2013) Departmental Policies that Positively or Negatively Impact NTTF Perceived Ability to Create a Positive Learning Environment

Negative impact	Positive impact
Last-minute course scheduling	Departmental orientation and onboarding
Working at multiple institutions plus lack of departmental commitment to rehire	Provide academic freedom and encourage experimentation in pedagogy
Lack of input into curriculum	NTTF coordinator or advocate
Lack of learning resources Lack of feedback or meaningful input from the administrative leadership Lack of office support	

The six quantitative studies from Table 2 examine the relationships between organizational aspects such as policies or leadership and specific outcomes for NTTF, such as commitment or job satisfaction.

Hoyt (2012) conducted a study at a single satellite campus of Brigham Young University in Utah. The regression analyses used data from a single survey administered to the adjunct faculty at the satellite campus. Several variables significantly predicted job satisfaction with an adjusted R^2 of .57. These variables included pay, work preference, quality of students, faculty support, teaching schedule, collaborative research with tenured faculty, classroom facilities, and teaching load. The study also found several variables that significantly predicted job loyalty with an adjusted R^2 of .45. These variables included work preference, pay, facilities, autonomy, faculty support, and quality of students. The study is

limited by a number of factors.

Although Hoyt (2012) did include data from 358 adjunct faculty, these are all at one satellite campus for Brigham Young University. Adjunct faculty may have felt a sense of calling or duty to teach at the institution because of religious beliefs. This is a mechanism that may not be present at most institutions, and therefore the results are less generalizable. Finally, the study suffered from common-rater bias where both the independent and dependent variables for the regression analyses were derived from a single survey administered on one occasion, which can significantly inflate correlation values (Meier & Toole, 2012).

Eagan et al. (2015) used data from the 2010-2011 administration of the HERI faculty survey and sought to ascertain institutional characteristics and NTTF characteristics that predict job satisfaction. The researchers found that only 3.5% of the variance in workplace satisfaction was attributed to differences between institutions. Despite this low percentage, they argue that hierarchical linear modeling is appropriate because their model has more than one level and the data are nested. McNeish et al. (2017) point out that researchers in psychology tend to overuse hierarchical linear modeling (HLM) for clustered data. They offer that other techniques may be just as appropriate to use, robust, and can handle clustered data. Population-averaged methods (PAMs) account for clustered data without splitting the model into multiple levels. Clustered robust standard errors (CR-SE) are another technique that does not require multiple levels and uses more straightforward calculations that produce more standard outputs like R^2. Furthermore, compared to these more straightforward techniques, HLM carries a more extensive list of assumptions that introduce more potential for flawed analysis if not met. HLM may be overly complicated and unnecessarily powerful for the context in the study by Eagan et al. (2015).

Despite potential issues stemming from HLM, Eagan et al. (2015) found that involuntary part-timers who wanted full-time appointments (underemployed) were less likely to have a positive working relationship with administration compared to voluntary part-timers. The involun-

tary part-time faculty were less satisfied with their work than voluntary part-timers. The underemployed part-time faculty were also less likely to feel respected by full-time faculty. The researchers report that the lower levels of workplace satisfaction among involuntary part-time faculty are associated with more mediocre relationships with administration and less respect from full-time colleagues.

These findings may not translate into the context of study abroad programs in Italy, where workplace satisfaction among part-time faculty may be linked to their perception of their relationship with the director. It is less likely that their workplace satisfaction will be linked to perceptions of lack of respect from full-time faculty because as Borgioli and Manueli (2013) report, part-time faculty at these programs are in an overwhelming majority.

Also included in Table 2 is a quantitative study by Barnett (2018) that examined the predictive relationship between administrators' leadership behaviors and the job satisfaction of online adjunct faculty at a for-profit university. The results showed that transformational leadership was a significant, positive predictor of job satisfaction (t (73) = 4.85, $p <$ .0005; 95% CI (1.78, 4.26)), and transactional leadership was a significant, negative predictor of job satisfaction (t (73) = -2.81, p = .006; 95% CI (-7.61, -1.29)). The coefficient for transformational leadership was B = 3.02, indicating that overall job satisfaction increases by 3 for each 1-point increase in the transformational leadership scores. The results may be inflated due to the issue of common-rater bias as previously mentioned.

The quantitative study by Gehrke and Kezar (2015) is included in Table 2 and investigated the decision-making process of deans of colleges of liberal arts or colleges of arts and sciences in supporting NTTF. The study found that deans more strongly support the deployment of policies and resources to support full-time NTTF than they do policies to support part-time NTTF. For example, on a 5-point Likert scale, the deans were supportive of providing orientation (M = 4.67, SD = 0.81), office supplies (M = 4.65, SD = 0.81), medical benefits (M = 4.63, SD = 0.83), and office space (M = 4.61, SD = 0.83) for full-time NTTF. On the other hand, for part-time NTTF deans supported only orientation (M = 4.30, SD = 1.05),

office supplies (M = 4.19, SD = 0.94), and administrative support (M = 4.12, SD = 1.01). Considering most instructors at study abroad centers in Italy are part-time, outnumbering full time instructors ten to one on average (Borgioli & Manuelli, 2013), the results from the study by Gehrke and Kezar (2015) may not be as meaningful in the context of the study abroad centers in Italy.

Also included in the quantitative studies in Table 2 is a correlational study by Delotell and Cates (2017) that administered a survey to online adjuncts at a single institution, seeking to measure the relationship between the transformational leadership of departmental chairs and the continuance commitment of the faculty. The analysis results showed that the transformational leadership component of the MLQ-5X was the only one that exhibited a statistically significant relationship to the continuance commitment of the online adjunct faculty that responded (R = .487, R^2 = .237, F = 34.249, $p < .001$). This large correlation for a social phenomenon as complicated as leadership and continuance commitment is likely inflated due to common rater bias problems, as discussed above. The study results also found that transformational leadership accounted for 42.8% (partial correlation coefficient) of the variance observed in the outcome variable (continuance commitment). This percentage is unusually large.

Finally, the last study to be discussed from Table 2 was a dissertation by Ervin (2018) studying the motivation (Work Extrinsic and Intrinsic Motivation Scale) from Tremblay et al. (2009) and perceived organizational support (POS) from Eisenberger et al. (1986) among adjunct faculty at two extended campuses of a single university. The results showed that most adjunct faculty members perceived being supported by the institution (M = 5.039, SD + 1.342, 7-point Likert Scale). The study also found that adjunct faculty members who were more self-determined (intrinsic motivation) reported higher levels of POS (r = .272, $p < .001$).

The studies in Table 2 provided some indications about the relationships between the leadership of the director and the experiences of the part-time faculty. The studies provided useful information on the leadership behaviors that might bolster job satisfaction or the policies that might

positively affect their work experience. None of the studies addressed the specific context of study abroad centers in Italy.

Many of the researchers listed in Table 2 have called for research studies at more institutional types on the policies and practices supporting part-time faculty (Hoyt, 2012; Kezar & Sam, 2013; Waltman et al., 2012). Delotell and Cates (2017) called for research that considers the specific dimensions of transformational leadership in the context of leading adjunct faculty. Deyo (2018) called for an investigation, specifically in the context of overseas study abroad programs that consider the training and rules that directors give to local staff, including faculty. One well-known scholar in leadership and part-time faculty stated that she could not recall ever seeing any scholarship specifically on part-time faculty leadership at study abroad centers (A. Kezar, personal communication, May 31, 2019). A thorough literature review corroborated Kezar's statement of a lack of any studies specifically on the leadership of PT faculty at study abroad centers. The researcher recently published a dissertation research study specifically on the leadership of part-time faculty at study abroad centers in Italy.

Discussion

Leadership scholarship has advanced significantly over the last century and has been identified as strategically important in the higher education context (Kezar et al., 2006; Ramsden, 1998). Leadership, specifically in the context of overseas study abroad programs, has not been adequately addressed. Some scholars have provided descriptions of the role of the director or noted the job complexity and the many hats that directors must wear to lead a program successfully (Goode, 2007; Goodwin & Nacht, 1988; Hornig, 1995; Lucas, 2009; O'Neal & Krueger, 1995; Stephenson & Forward, 2005; Stephenson et al., 2005). Still, these commentaries do not address leadership specifically.

The increased reliance on part-time faculty appointments in higher education has spawned a body of research on these individuals' plight and the policies and practices that might improve their station within the academy. Due to various scholars cited above, these individuals are no

longer invisible in the higher education landscape in the United States of America. There is an echo of this trend among part-time faculty of U.S. study abroad programs in Italy too. In 2009 the Association of Scholars at American Universities in Italy (ASAUI) was formed and had recently partnered with the Sociology Department of the University of Florence and an Italian labor organization to conduct the first-ever exploratory poll to understand the situation of these professionals in Italy better.

The part-time faculty teach the majority of courses at study abroad centers in Italy (Borgioli & Manuelli, 2013) and are often the primary facilitator of the study abroad experience for program participants. This literature review has offered some insight into the leadership practices and policies that might provide greater support and satisfaction to the part-time faculty at study abroad centers. Future research should be conducted at study abroad centers that include information from both administration and faculty on effective leadership practices.

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students/alumni

Diversity in Italy
Annie Ferguson

Growing up, Italy was a place of dreams. I thought of rolling hills, unfathomably good food, breathtaking red wine, and gorgeous people. I dreamt of getting swept off my feet by a Giuseppe or an Alessandro and growing old together in Tuscany. I fantasized about places like Venice, trying to imagine how a city could really be on the water. All of it seemed far off, almost impossible, much more so a fantasy world of perfection and euphoria, rather than simply another country across the Atlantic.

As I matured, Italy transformed from a land of fantasy to a distinct possibility. I learned of family that still lives in Italy, I understood the potential of study abroad, and I realized that personal travel was also possible with the right budgeting and planning. However, even as a journey to Italy became more likely, my critical thinking and my efforts to understand the country more holistically remained stagnant. I know now that I, like so many other American tourists, was completely entranced by a "romantic myth of Italy."

In the fall of 2018, I committed to spending the following semester, the spring of 2019, studying in Florence. During that same fall semester, I had the immense privilege of taking a course entitled "Italy on Screen: Sex, Gender and Racial Identities in the Glocal Context," taught by Francesca Calamita at the University of Virginia, which allowed me to begin unpacking the romantic myth of Italy. Professor Calamita's course opened my eyes in a plethora of ways. I had never stopped to consider how issues relating to diversity and identity may manifest in the fantasy land that I had contrived in my head. Through thorough investigations of media created by Italians and/or set in Italy, the course illuminated the experiences of LGBTQ+ individuals, people of color, immigrants, women, and other minority communities across Italy. Films such as *Passo a due, Viola di mare, Le fate ignoranti, Bianco e nero, Fuocoammare,* and *La pazza gioia* taught us

that while, sure, there are dominant ideas and sweeping generalizations about a "true Italy," the country is much, much more complicated and multi-faceted than its olive oil, wine, and beautiful people. We used these films and the discussions they catalyzed to reflect on topics of diversity and inclusion and grapple with realities of racism, sexism, corruption, and homophobia in Italy and across the globe. Ultimately, I ended the course so immensely appreciative of the opportunity to challenge my stereotypes of Italy.

As that fall semester finished up and my semester in Florence approached, questions began swirling around in my mind. How would all of these diversity related issues impact my experience in Italy? Would I get to meet people from diverse walks of life, or would Florence be more homogenous? What would life be like for me, a queer woman from outside of the country? How did attitudes towards diversity manifest in Florence, in contrast with the rest of the country?

Thankfully, when I arrived in Florence, I had the pleasure of taking a class called "Diversity in Italy," taught by Federico Damonte at ISI Florence, that served as a fitting accompaniment to the knowledge I had begun to develop in Professor Calamita's class and provided a perfect space to work through all of the questions I had brought with me to Italy. It was in this course that Professor Damonte provided us with the language to refer to the "romantic myth of Italy" and directly tasked us with challenging our preconceptions. Like in Professor Calamita's class, we interacted with media created by Italians and/ or based in Italy, and engaged in discussion regarding the manifestation of issues related to diversity. In Professor Damonte's class, these discussions became all the more poignant as they related to the events of our daily lives in Florence. And truly, from very early on in my stay, it was evident that the learning opportunities in Professor Damonte's class would be essential, as observations related to diversity were abundant during my trip.

The first instance related to diversity that really stuck out to me occurred within days of arriving in Florence. We had been informed by our school, ISI Florence, that a group of women were putting on a "Florence

From mid-January, 2019 – Florence Women's March.

Women's March" in honor of the two-year anniversary of the Women's March on Washington that attracted the participation of millions following the inauguration of Donald Trump. While I certainly wasn't expecting millions of people, I figured there would be a sizable crowd gathered to honor such a monumental event. To my utter shock, there was a group of less than ten activists filling a square, waving flags calling for peace and an end to gender-based violence.

Now, in my communities in the U.S. – from school, to work, to family, to friends – an event related to the Women's March and women's rights in general would be immensely popular. I would expect huge crowds of people to come out, and the space we were occupying to be dedicated to the activism related efforts. With this background in mind, processing the reality of this iteration of a women's march proved to be all the more complex. Nevertheless, after a fair bit of analysis, it became clear to me that the smaller size of this march did not make it any less powerful and important. Activism and diversity manifest in different ways depending on context, so the context of a country like Italy that is rooted in traditional gender roles and stereotypes inevitably impacts activist efforts. Observ-

ing this march proved to be an awesome introduction to my everyday observations of activism and social justice work in Florence.

Near the end of the semester, Professor Damonte took us on an outing that continued to highlight the uniqueness of the work for women's rights and feminist efforts in Florence. As a class, we took an afternoon trip to an organization located right outside of Florence called "Centro Uomini Maltrattanti." At the center, we had the incredible opportunity of speaking with two women who dedicate their lives to ending gender-based violence through their work. One extremely interesting element of the shelter was the fact that it is focused on treating men who have abused their partners, rather than providing a shelter for survivors of abuse. I was super interested in this model, as I have volunteered at a domestic violence shelter in Charlottesville, Virginia throughout undergrad which instead provides housing and support for women who have survived abuse. Through interacting with these women, I learned that while their methods may be different, these women are fighting the same fight as the individuals I've worked with in the U.S. Gender-based violence is a worldwide issue, and it was extremely empowering and inspiring to learn about these women fighting the problem through counseling and reforming troubled men.

In expanding our understandings of a more diverse Florence, Professor Damonte also took us on a fascinating tour of places of worship around the city. I found this tour to be absolutely unforgettable. One of our first stops on the tour was the Lutheran church in Florence, which is a small building right on the stunning Arno river. After Professor Damonte explained a little bit about the history of the church, I promptly asked him where the other Lutheran churches were in the city. He replied with: "That is such an American question. This is the *only* Lutheran church in the city." I was so immensely appreciative of his response, as it set the tone for a tour full of learning in an entirely new context. Faith is inevitably variable across locations and cultures, and Florence is no exception.

The rest of the tour took us all over the city, and step-by-step we unpacked the stereotype of Italy as an entirely Catholic country. While Catholi-
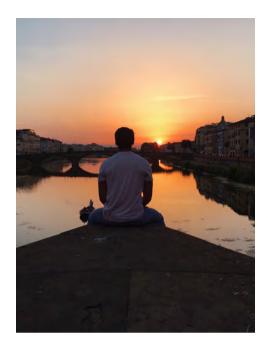
From early-January, 2019 – The Lutheran Church in Florence.

cism is certainly the dominant religion of the country, experiences of faith range vastly. Among the magnificent Catholic churches that create such a picturesque city, Florence is home to other places of worship as well. The city hosts a breathtakingly beautiful Jewish temple, which is located in a neighborhood that hosts members of the Jewish population. The city also has a developing Muslim population, and a permanent mosque is in the works that will be located near the airport. While Catholic spaces like the Duomo and Santa Croce are crucial parts of the city, I will be forever thankful for the opportunity to learn about a faith experience in Florence that is more diverse than I previously imagined.

Ultimately, there are a number of truths about Italy that are undeniable. It *is* breathtakingly beautiful. Its food and wine *are* phenomenal. It *is* dominantly Catholic, white, and straight. However, these realities do not negate the existence of diverse communities and experiences in Italy that stray from the stereotypical mold. I am so immensely thankful for my semester in Florence and the courses I have taken with both Professor Calamita and Professor Damonte and the ways in which my experiences have taught me to challenge my preconceived stereotypes in all situations. Ultimately, my time in Italy *was* a fairytale in a magical land, but for so many more reasons than I ever could have anticipated.

Beyond

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