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*A Sojourn Abroad:  
How an international  
experience impacts the  
career decidedness of  
college students*

**Julia Kronholz, M.Ed**  
**National Career Development Association**  
**Annual Conference, Long Beach, CA**  
**June 20, 2014**

MONDAY TO FRIDAY 9AM TO 5 PM  
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# Presentation Overview:

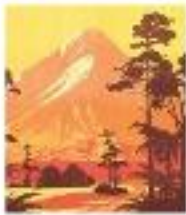
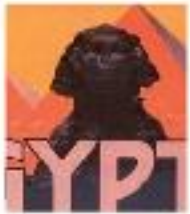
Introduction of variables

Current research

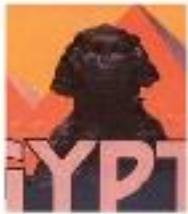
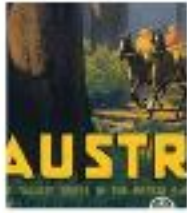
Present Investigation

Implications & Conclusions

Questions







# Definition of variables



## Study abroad

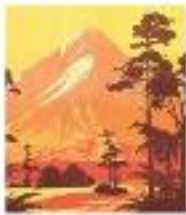
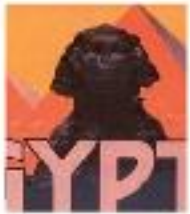
- study abroad, international experience, and international education used interchangeably
- defined as “U.S. citizens and permanent residents who received academic credit at their U.S. home institution for study in another country” (Chow, 2010)

## Career decidedness

- confidence in one’s ability to make a career decision (Gordon, 1998); an individual's certainty about the career decision (Osipow, 1978)
- career decidedness is impacted by an individual’s self-knowledge, occupational knowledge, decision-making abilities, and metacognitions. (Sampson, Reardon, Peterson, & Lenz, 2004)



## Prior research:



75% of study abroad participants asserted that they acquired skill sets abroad that influenced their career path (Dwyer & Peters, 2004)

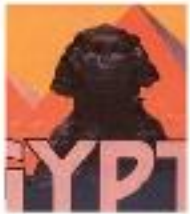
Business students who study abroad are more receptive to the idea of working abroad than those who did not study abroad (Orahood, Woolf, & Kruze, 2008)

90% of participants believe that study abroad helped build skills to be successful in a future career. Themes included Interpersonal skills, resume booster, language skills, career self-efficacy, global competence (Chapman, 2011)





# Present study:



What changes of vocational identity are attributed to the study abroad experience?

How do students report the impact of the study abroad experience on career decision-making variables?



## Method:

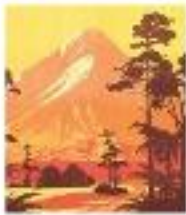
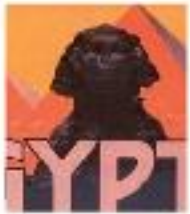
Create survey questions  
based in cognitive  
information processing theory



Distribute Survey via  
International Programs  
Office



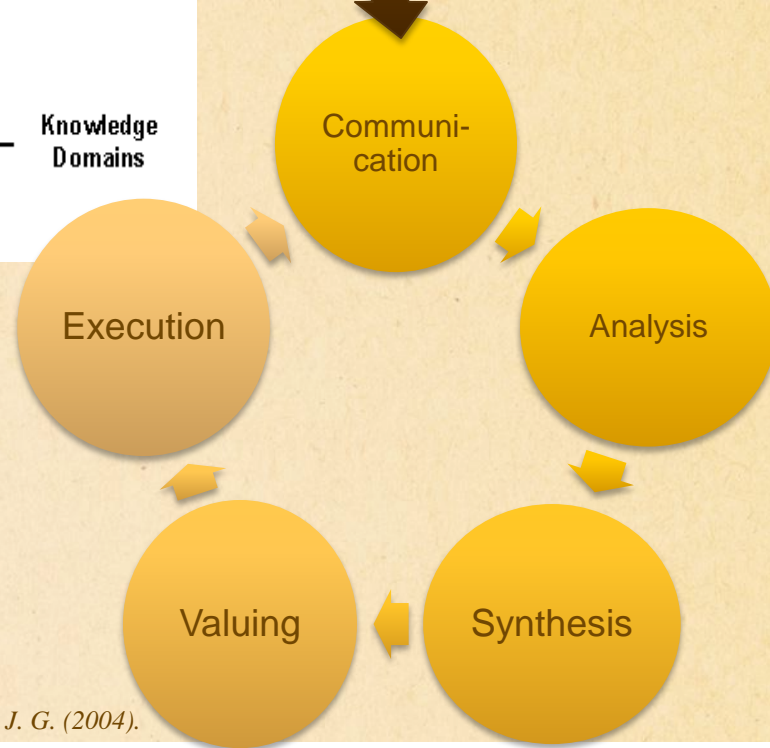
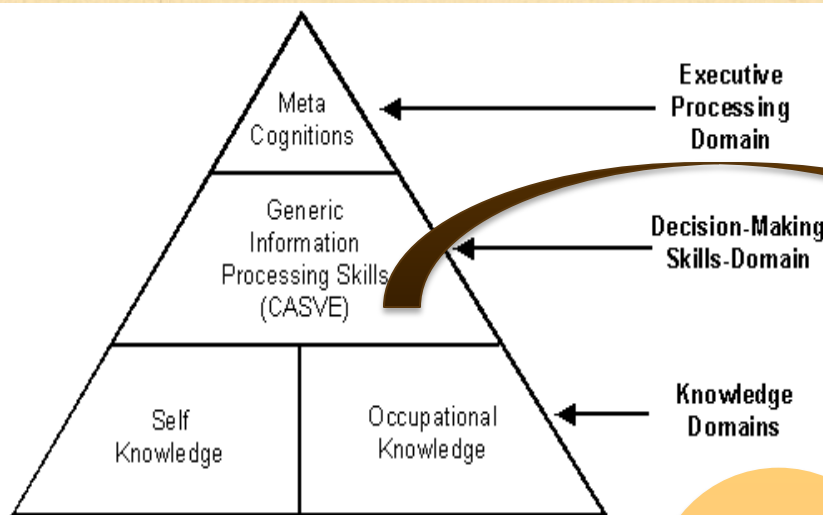
Analyze results!







# Cognitive Information Processing theory:



*Sampson, J. P. Jr., Reardon, R. C., Peterson, G. W., & Lenz, J. G. (2004).*



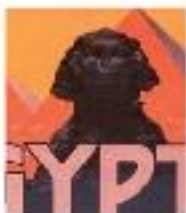
# Population of study:

**65 students** enrolled in a study abroad program in Spring 2013 affiliated with a large, public research university in the Southeast United States.

**AGE RANGE:** 18 to 22, with an average age of 19.9 years old. 33% male, 66% female, and 1 student identifying as transgender.

**ETHNICITY:** Caucasian (64.6%), Hispanic (15.4%), Asian (4.6%), African American (4.6%), American Indian (4.6%), multiracial (1.5%) and prefer not to say (4.6%).

**LOCATION OF STUDY:** 41.5% of students studied in Valencia, Spain, 33.8% in London, England, 18.4% in Florence, Italy, 4.6% in Panama City, Panama, and 1.5% in Tianjin, China.





# Results:



Prior to  
study abroad



After study  
abroad



# Results:



Metacognitions

Valuing



*Significant at the .05 level*





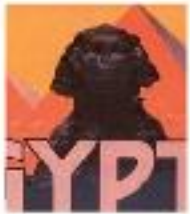
# Limitations & Implications for future research:

## Limitations

- Sample
- Reflective responses
- Researcher bias

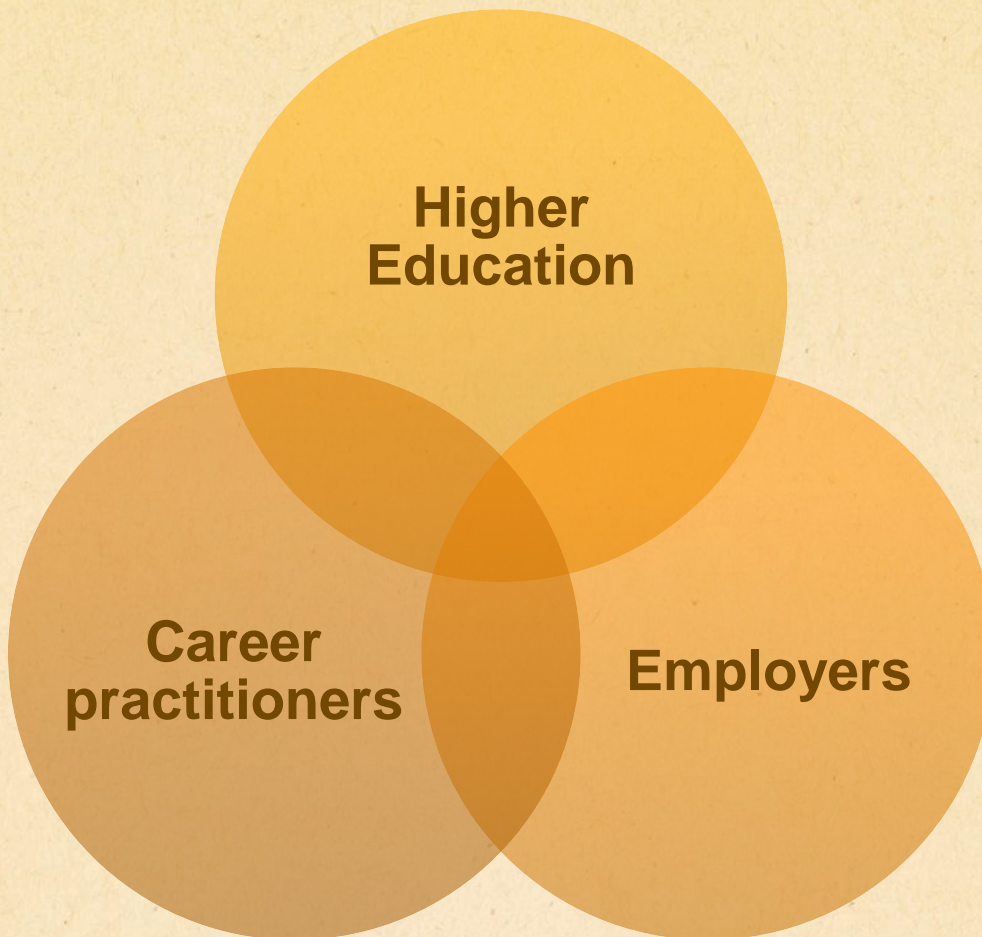
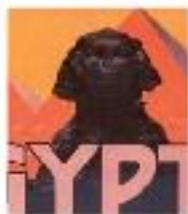
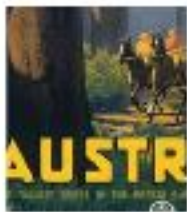
## Implications

- Expand study to pre-post with control group
- Differences between institution type
- Other factors – GPA, major, international internship, location of experience





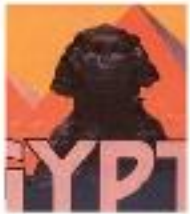
# What does this mean for...







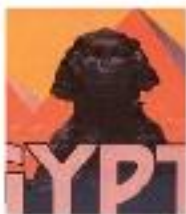
# Concluding discussion and questions... and thank you!



Julia Kronholz, M.Ed  
Ph.D program, Counseling Psychology and  
School Psychology  
Career Advisor, FSU Career Center  
100 South Woodward Avenue  
Tallahassee, Florida, 32306  
[jkronholz@admin.fsu.edu](mailto:jkronholz@admin.fsu.edu)



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