Though study abroad programs have various advantages, some may argue that a semester or year overseas may be regarded as only a vacation by the students. It bears some truth in claiming that some students treat studying abroad as a time for leisure rather than a rich academic experience (The student is missing a detailed explanation of the counterargument here. He is also missing a citation for the counterargument - Conrad). However, the inappropriate actions of a few students should not invalidate study abroad programs as a whole or cause colleges to abandon their efforts in this regard. In fact, in a long-term study of 3,400 students, Dwyer and Peters (2004) found that the predominant participants said studying abroad had an impact on their world view (96 percent), increased their self-confidence (96 percent), and gave them the skill sets they needed for the career they chose (76 percent). The frequent comment from the students is, “It will change your life. You’ll come back a new person” (Dwyer & Peters, 2004, p. 56). Clearly, studying abroad is not just a party but a precious learning opportunity for most students. Moreover, to ensure that students make the best use of this experience, students’ home institutions should offer preparatory workshops and orientation seminars so that they can better utilize the opportunity by being prepared for the program and having a deeper understanding of how it connects with their current academic work. Studying abroad unites academic demands with the thrill of discovering a new culture, and students will gain immeasurably more from the experience if they are prepared prior to departure for what they will discover there.

