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NESIYAH TOVAH:
AMERICAN JEWISH COLLEGE STUDENTS AND THE STUDY ABROAD
EXPERIENCE OUTSIDE OF ISRAEL

By

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Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master
of Arts in Jewish Communal Service in cooperation with the School of Policy,
Planning and Development at the University of Southern California

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HEBREW UNION COLLEGE - JEWISH INSTITUTE OF RELIGION
LOS ANGELES SCHOOL


SCHOOL OF JEWISH COMMUNAL SERVICE

NESIYAH TOVAH:
AMERICAN JEWISH COLLEGE STUDENTS AND THE STUDY ABROAD
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ABSTRACT

This study reports on the characteristics of American Jewish college students who choose to study abroad outside of Israel and contrasts them to American Jewish college students who study abroad in Israel. The hypotheses were tested using an online survey administered to American college students from November, 2006 to March, 2007. Students were invited to participate in the study by email. 157 Jewish students and 518 non-Jewish students participated in the study.

This study finds that Jewish students who study abroad in Israel have stronger Jewish identities and stronger adherence to concepts of Jewish "group cohesion" than Jewish students who study abroad outside of Israel. This study also presents a series of recommendations for the Jewish community to use the study abroad experience outside of Israel as a way to encourage the development of strong Jewish identities among American Jewish college students.

This study recommends that American Jewish organizations (including **Hillel, the American Jewish Committee, the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, American Jewish World Service and birthright israel**) develop a strategic network with WUJS, campus study abroad offices and Judaic studies departments to create meaningful Jewish experiences for Jewish students during their time abroad. The network should develop a comprehensive "Jewish Study Abroad" website and publicize the URL with campus Hillels and study abroad offices across the country, ensuring that every Jewish college student studying abroad outside of Israel has the opportunity to participate in holiday and other religious observances during their time abroad. The network should provide internships with foreign governments or nonprofit organizations, credit-bearing

courses on Jewish history integrated with existing study abroad programs, and a birthright israel trip mixing American Jewish students abroad and their foreign Jewish peers. This thesis reports on original research and makes practical recommendations to increase the Jewish connections of Jewish college students studying abroad outside of Israel.

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INTRODUCTION

"Studying abroad proved to me how I regarded my own religion. I had to take extra effort to find a Jewish community in Ireland, and many of my friends had no previous contact with Jews. I had to explain myself and my rituals, which helped me understand myself better, and I saw [that a Jewish environment] was important enough for me to take the extra effort to create. I hosted a Passover Seder to teach my friends about my religion, and I also had the opportunity to learn about many other religions that I hadn't thought about while [on my home campus]." – A female study participant who studied abroad for a semester during her third year of college

"I found being Jewish in France somewhat challenging, with very different attitudes about religion. On one hand, I felt that most French people didn't understand religion or Judaism at all, and on the other, the Jewish community available there felt far more traditional than I was used to. I felt judged on either side." – A female study participant who studied abroad for a semester during her third year of college

Many Jewish organizations encourage college students to participate in long term study abroad experiences in Israel. It is widely believed that long term study in Israel encourages the building of strong Jewish identity and meaningful connection with the Jewish people. However, despite pressure from the organized Jewish world, the majority of Jewish students who study abroad do not select Israel as their destination. The purpose of this study is to better understand the characteristics of American Jewish college students who choose to study abroad, to contrast Jewish students who study outside of Israel to those who study in Israel and highlight the need for the Jewish community to build a support system helping Jewish students who study outside of Israel create meaningful Jewish experiences abroad. This thesis also presents a series of recommendations for Jewish organizations to use the study abroad experience outside of Israel as a way to engage with American Jewish college students.

College is a time for young adults to challenge preconceived notions from their youth and explore the construction of a meaningful personal identity. As “emerging adults,” college students are engaged in an intense exploration and experimentation in everything ranging from worldviews to career paths. For Jewish students, the construction of identity requires defining the role that Judaism and involvement in Jewish communal life will play in their future. However, Jewish students do not come to college to embark on a Jewish journey. Rather, Jewish college students first and foremost attend college to be students (Sales and Saxe, 2006).

The prominence of peer social networks in college social life and the diversity and variation of cultures and climates at campuses across the country present huge challenges for Jewish organizations such as Hillel (Sales and Saxe, 2006). Jewish organizations operating on college campuses must think creatively in order to bridge the gap between their mandate to build Jewish community and Jewish student’s desire for individuality, exploration and integration into greater campus culture.

As members of Generation Y, the cohort of students presently enrolled in college has been defined as highly individualistic, diverse and politically independent (Greenberg, 2004; Ukeles, Miller and Beck, 2006). Members of this generation have been called “seekers....actively considering questions of identity, community and meaning- negotiating how important their religious identities will ultimately be- but doing so with their own friends, in their own homes, and in their own ways” (Greenberg, 2004). The supremacy of the individual among members of this generation stems partly out of the influence of new technologies such as the iPod. These technologies allow a user to bypass the “middleman” and take control of his or her own experience. Members of this

generation thus tend to have individualized world views and express a general lack of interest in traditional religious institutions (Greenberg, 2004). As a result, Jewish members of Generation Y are likely to seek out Jewish connections that are more personal, informal and episodic (Ukeles, Miller and Beck, 2006). Members of Generation Y also tend to separate institutional religious attachment from their own personal spirituality. Even though many young adults express a strong desire for spiritual meaning, they are more likely to seek out individual sources for their spirituality rather than traditional religious institutions (Greenberg, 2004).

ASSIMILATION, THE JEWS AND THE COLLEGE EXPERIENCE

The relative ease with which Jews have assimilated into greater society (evidenced by high rates of Jewish intermarriage) has led many to worry that Judaism and the Jewish community would cease to exist in the near future. This fear of the “disappearing Jew” has caused some to rethink the way Jewish students are experiencing Judaism during the formative years of college. “Judaism is just one of a myriad of options for Jewish students to pursue [and] the competition...is not made any easier by the fact that colleges are decidedly nonsectarian institutions devoted to empiricism and critical thought. Religion, to the extent it exists, is peripheral to campus life” (Sales and Saxe, 2006: 3). In addition to the fear of the decreasing number of Jews, one issue of special concern to modern Jewish academics is the decline in “group cohesiveness” among Jews (Cohen, 2006). “Group cohesiveness” can best be described as a sense of Jewish ethnic identity. According to Cohen, it is the centrality of “group cohesiveness” to Jews that sets Judaism apart from other religious identities. “Being Jewish is not only about God, faith,

rituals, worship, and spirituality. It is also about friends, neighborhoods, community, Israel, and Peoplehood. In fact, 'people,' 'nation,' and other variants of the Jewish collective appear repeatedly in the Bible; 'religion' does not" (Cohen, 2006: 5).

However, as Jewish ethnicity declines, creative developments in educational, spiritual and cultural Jewish life are taking place. Cohen cites these developments in arguing "religious stability," the notion that Jews today are no less likely to be religiously inclined than in the past (Cohen, 2006). According to Cohen, the "stability" in Jewish religious identity and the decline in Jewish "group cohesiveness" signal the polarization of the Jewish community into groups of more and less engaged Jews.

A prime example of the polarization of the Jewish community can be seen when examining American college campuses. Saxe and Sales identify three categories of Jewish involvement on campus: the unengaged, the engaged and the leaders (those who hold leadership positions in Jewish clubs or organizations). Away from their families, college students are left to determine the extent to which they will be involved with the Jewish community. One study has shown the more engaged students are in Jewish life on campus, the more important Judaism will be in their lives and the more proudly they will identify as Jewish (Sales and Saxes, 2006: 12). Many of the unengaged students simply place less priority on Jewish activity and thus are not involved on campus. Other unengaged students do not involve themselves on campus as a result of apathy, fear of not fitting in or fear of being judged or labeled as a "lesser Jew." Still others are not engaged on campus due to their lack of Jewish education and denominational affiliation. Over half of the students raised in Reform Jewish households or in families with no denominational identity are not engaged in Jewish life on campus (Sales and Saxe, 2006).

The study abroad experience is illustrative of the polarization of the Jewish community described by Cohen and the divide between engaged and unengaged students on campus described by Sales and Saxe. The current study finds that Jewish students who study abroad in Israel have stronger Jewish identities and stronger adherence to concepts of Jewish "group cohesion" than Jewish students who study abroad outside of Israel. Jewish students who study abroad outside of Israel have less Jewish education and less Jewish knowledge and are less likely to connect with organized Jewish community on campus.

Cohen (2006) suggests an increase in Jewish education as the primary way to end the emerging polarization of the Jewish people. Specifically he cites the potential for thinking creatively and increasing the linkages among various educational experiences by "expanding the flow of students between and among different venues for Jewish education" (Cohen, 2006: 16). Perhaps linkages could also be formed between venues for Jewish education and venues for secular education. Such would be the case for the creation of a program working to enhance existing study abroad experiences outside of Israel with Judaic content. The successes of a Jewish-infused secular study abroad experience outside of Israel would depend on the creation of an expanded partnership between the higher education and Jewish communities. Additionally, it would require Jewish organizations to heed the recommendations of Sales and Saxe and break out of their somewhat insular mindsets by embodying experimentation and by supporting an expanded role of Jewish Studies on campus (Sales and Saxe, 2006: 28).

DEFINING "STUDY ABROAD"

The term "study abroad," as defined by the Institute of International Education (IIE), a governmental agency funded by the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, applies only to students who receive academic credit from an accredited U.S. institution of higher education after they return from their study abroad experience. This definition does not include students who travel and take courses without transferring credit to their home institution or to students who are enrolled overseas in courses at non-U.S. colleges and universities. This definition of the term "study abroad" is widely accepted and will be the definition used in this study.

The 2006 Open Doors Report, IIE's annual publication of study abroad data, shows a record 205,983 students participating in study abroad programs during the 2004-05 school year.¹ That represents an 8% increase over the previous year and a 144% increase since 1994-95 (IIE, 2006). Open Doors data also shows that the number of American students studying abroad has increased by almost 20% since 2001. This fact suggests that the terror attacks of September 11, 2001, may have encouraged study abroad participation as young adults sought greater engagement with the world outside of the United States (IIE, 2004). Even though the number of students studying abroad has increased steadily throughout the past decade, the number of students participating in study abroad remains relatively low, as only 3% to 12%² of American college students study abroad each year (Gore, 2005).

¹ IIE data for the 2004-05 school year includes study abroad experiences that occurred during the summer of 2005. Data for the 2005-06 school year was not available as of the writing of this thesis.

² Depending on the statistics used to calculate the number of students enrolled in American college and universities.

While American college students are participating in study abroad programs in increasing numbers, the length of time students spend abroad has decreased over time (IIE, 2005). IIE data shows that students are opting more frequently to participate in short-term programs, including January term and other credit bearing abroad experiences that are less than one semester in length. In 2004-05 the majority of students studying abroad (56%) participated in short-term programs (IIE, 2006). "Short-term programs have played an important role in increasing the popularity of study abroad, offering flexible international study opportunities to students who might otherwise be unable to participate in traditional programs" (IIE, 2006). Data from the 2004-05 school year also showed a continued decline in enrollment in semester- and year-long programs. In 2004-05 only 38% of all students who participated in study abroad programs spent a semester abroad, and only 6% spent a full academic year abroad.

Study abroad trends show that the largest percentage of American college students (45%) study abroad in western European nations. The most popular destinations for study abroad in 2005 were the United Kingdom, Italy, Spain and France (IIE, 2006). However, trends also show a substantial increase in the number of students studying abroad outside of Europe, including a 53% increase in the number of American students studying in Argentina, a 35% increase in China and a 28% increase in Brazil in 2006. However, the IIE did not report an increase in students traveling to the Middle East. In fact, no Middle Eastern or African nations, including Israel, were listed among the top 20 most popular study abroad destinations for 2005.

IIE data also shows that over time large universities have sent the greatest number of students abroad, while smaller institutions have a higher percentage of their student

body who participate in study abroad experiences. In 2004-05 New York University sent the most student abroad (2,611), followed by Michigan State University (2,385), University of Texas at Austin (2,169), Penn State University Park Campus (2,084), University of Minnesota - Twin Cities (1,836), University of Florida (1,805), University of Pennsylvania (1,744), University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (1,739), University of Georgia (1,731) and University of Virginia (1,684). The top ten campuses sending the highest percentage of their students abroad (over 40%) were (in alphabetical order): Austin College, Colby College, College of St. Benedict/St. John's University, Davidson College, DePauw University, Dickinson College, Elon University, Lee University, Lewis and Clark College and St. Olaf College.

Study abroad data has also shown that female students with majors in the social sciences are the candidates most likely to study abroad. The prominence of female students in study abroad programs is a trend that has continued almost every year since colleges and universities began to grant credit for studying abroad in 1923. Recent data available shows that almost 65% of students who study abroad are female (Gore, 2005). The only time when the number of men participating in study abroad approached the number of women was following World War II when the number of men enrolled in colleges and universities increased as a result of the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944 (commonly known as the GI Bill). Over the course of the past century, between two-thirds and three-quarters of participants in study abroad programs have been female (Gore, 2005). Gore attributes the low male participation in study abroad programs to many male students' belief that studying abroad and professional education are mutually exclusive.

Since the majority of American Jews are well integrated into American society, before writing this thesis it was expected that Jewish students would mirror the study abroad trends exhibited by the rest of American society. Thus, it was expected that:

- ✧ The majority of American Jewish college students would study abroad during their third year of college
- ✧ American Jewish college students would be more likely to study in countries other than Israel than in Israel
- ✧ Europe would be the most popular study abroad region outside of Israel for American Jewish college students
- ✧ The majority of American Jewish college students who study outside of Israel would spend less than a semester abroad
- ✧ Women and social science majors would be more highly represented among American Jewish college students who study abroad

STUDY ABROAD AND TRAVEL TO ISRAEL

Research shows that travel to Israel encourages the building of strong Jewish identity and meaningful connection to the Jewish people (Sales and Saxe, 2006). In 2004 the Jewish Agency for Israel (JAFI) created the MASA Program, a partnership between the Government of Israel, United Jewish Communities, Keren Hayesod and private philanthropists. The goal of this program was to bring upwards of 20,000 young Jews from across the Diaspora for a semester or year study abroad experience in Israel. MASA represented the second formalized communal effort to build Jewish identity in young Jewish adults through travel to Israel. The first program, birthright israel, an intensive 10-day travel experience in Israel proved to have positive short-term effects on Jewish identity among young American Jews (Saxe, Sasson and Hecht, 2006). Although the MASA program is based on the same widely accepted and academically proven premise

as birthright israel (Saxe, Sasson and Hecht, 2006), the MASA program has yet to draw the same number of participants as birthright israel (Hoffman, 2007).

MOTIVATIONS FOR STUDYING ABROAD

American college students, both Jewish and non-Jewish, have a variety of motivations for choosing to study abroad as a part of their college experience. The increasing popularity of study abroad among college students may be partly related to the autonomous nature and the bottom-up, self-generated and decentralized culture among members of Generation Y. Study abroad may represent what Ukeles, Miller and Beck calls a "quasi community": a community built around common interests and shared experiences (in this case study abroad) rather than around organizations and established institutions. Members of Generation Y are motivated to affiliate with "quasi communities" due to their porous boundaries and their fluid and dynamic nature (Ukeles, Miller and Beck, 2006).

A second factor motivating college students to study abroad may be their desire to encounter foreign cultures (Goodwin and Nacht, 1988) and explore issues related to ethnic and cultural diversity. Study abroad experiences allow for students to develop a larger world view by exposing them to diversity and giving them a break from the "powerful continental culture of the United States" (Goodwin and Nacht, 1998: 12). Since Generation Y is highly ethnically, religiously and culturally diverse, members of this generation understand and empathize with concepts of pluralism more than any other generation. A 2004 survey of members of Generation Y showed the extent to which the generation is embedded in diverse social networks and intermixed religiously. Only 7%

of the survey's respondents reported that all of their friends were of the same religion (Greenberg, 2004). As a result of this religious integration, members of Generation Y have a respect for difference and diversity as a core value (Greenberg, 2004). Sales and Saxe refer to the mixing of cultures prominent among members of Generation Y as the "multiple and distributed identity of the post-modern era" (Sales and Saxe, 2006). This more global, modern identity may motivate students to encounter foreign cultures and cross borders both literally (in terms of study abroad) and figuratively to learn more about the world in which they live. Other prominent motivations for American students to study abroad include the desire to improve International Relations (Goodwin and Nacht, 1988) and the desire to acquire a foreign language (Freed, 1998).

A less prominent factor motivating American college students to study abroad is a desire to return to their ancestral homeland and explore their family roots. This motivation, driven by "a mixture of nostalgia, loneliness and a desire to understand oneself through contact with extended family" has been the impetus for the creation of several study abroad programs in Poland, Japan, Ireland, Canada, Taiwan and Israel (Goodwin and Nacht, 1988: 14). However, these programs are largely unpopular, as many of the potential participants have previous travel experience within countries of their roots. The presence of family members abroad also detracts from these programs, as family members may constrain a student's independence and reduce the sense of "foreignness" or newness that most students seek in a study abroad experience. Additionally, many students who share a cultural or national name and appearance but who are unable to speak the language may be dissuaded from studying abroad in their ancestral homeland out of a fear of embarrassment. It is also likely that roots-based

programs would be unpopular among children of immigrants, as their need to assimilate almost always trumps any desire they may have to explore their roots (ibid.). However this trend normally reverses among third and later generations after immigration. These individuals are usually more interested in returning to their ancestral homeland and learning about their roots. It is out of this desire that many Jewish students now choose to study abroad in Israel.

MOTIVATIONS FOR JEWISH STUDENTS TO STUDY IN ISRAEL

A study published in *Frontiers: The Journal of Study Abroad* in August of 2005 (Donostia-Schmidt and Vardish, 2005) examined how study in Israel influenced Jewish identity and Hebrew language proficiency. The study found that Jewish students choose Israel specifically to strengthen their Jewish identity, to immerse themselves in a Jewish environment and to become more familiar with Jewish heritage. The study found that students who study abroad in Israel also had strong Jewish identities and high rates of affiliation with the Jewish community before their study abroad experiences.

“...Jewishness brought them to Israel to begin with and being surrounded by Jews for five months did not change their position regarding their Jewishness (Donosita-Schmidt and Vadish, 2005: 50). 5 months into the study abroad experience students held more positive attitudes towards Jewish identity, Israel and the concept of preserving Jewishness among people around the world. There was no difference found in students’ self-reported identity, as in both the pre and post tests, study participants ranked their Jewish identity to be the strongest, followed by their North American and Israeli identities.

According to Sales and Saxe (2006), Jewish college students fall into three groups regarding their connection to Israel: no connection (43% of Jewish college students), extreme connection (34%), and moderate connection (23%) (Sales and Saxe, 2006). Sales and Saxe correlated the varying levels of connection with Israel to several social characteristics, including Jewish educational background, density of Jewish social network and denominational affiliation. Sales and Saxe found that study abroad in Israel only further engages students who have strong Jewish backgrounds and who are Jewishly engaged. Students with stronger Jewish educational background as a child (those attending Jewish Day School or Yeshiva) expressed a stronger connection with Israel than those who had supplementary or no Jewish education. Similarly, students who took college level Judaic studies courses reported having a stronger connection with Israel than those who did not. Also, students who identified as Orthodox or Conservative reported having stronger connections to Israel than students who identified as Reform or secular.

Considering these findings, this study began with the expectation that American Jewish college students who study abroad outside of Israel will report less involvement with the organized Jewish community in the United States than Jewish students who participated in study abroad programs in Israel. It was also expected that the majority of American Jewish college students who study abroad outside of Israel will have no denominational affiliation and that the majority of American Jews who study within Israel will identify with one of the three main denominations (Reform, Conservative or Orthodox). Last, students who identify as Conservative or Orthodox Jews will be more likely to study abroad in Israel than students who identify as Reform Jews. American

Jewish college students who study in Israel may also have more formal Jewish education than American Jewish college students who do not study in Israel. It was also expected that students who study abroad in Israel may be more likely to have previous experience traveling to Israel than students who study outside of Israel.

REASONS WHY JEWISH STUDENTS CHOOSE NOT TO STUDY IN ISRAEL

American Jewish college students may select to study abroad in countries other than Israel out of a lack of Jewish connection or identification with Israel. The opposite may also be true as some students may choose not to study in Israel because of their strong connection with Israel. These students may not relate to Israel as a foreign country but rather as their spiritual or cultural homeland. This would be reasonable considering that many students study abroad in order to encounter a new culture and their familiarity with Israel may drive them to study abroad elsewhere. In the publication "Kol HaOlam Kulo: Jewish Students Abroad," a booklet containing narratives written by Jewish students studying outside of Israel (distributed by the University of Pennsylvania Hillel), one student explained, "I went to a country where Judaism is foreign and rare. I wanted to live in a country where practicing Judaism would have to be an active choice..." (Bialystock, 2002). Considering the emphasis placed on Israel by the organized Jewish community and the prominence of Israel within Jewish education, it would be reasonable to assume that many Jewish students do not view Israel as "foreign" in the same way they would other countries. This may be the case even among Jewish students who have never been to Israel. Additionally, some Jewish students may assume that Israeli culture and Jewish culture are similar.

A third factor influencing this decision may have to do with students' sense of security and accessibility to study abroad programs in Israel. By the 1999-00 school year, the number of students studying abroad in Israel reached 3,898 (IIE, 2001). With the increase of Palestinian terror attacks in 2000-01 the number of students studying in Israel decreased drastically. The number of students studying in Israel continued to drop following the September 11, 2001, attacks and into the second Palestinian Intifada. During 2005-06 only 38 U.S. campuses awarded only roughly 1,000 students with academic credit for studying abroad in Israel.

At the beginning of the second Intifada many universities required that their students studying in Israel return to the United States (Reshef and Korycan, 2005). Following this action, many universities suspended their study abroad programs in Israel, citing the U.S. Department of State's new travel advisory. Beginning in 2002 many universities instituted outright bans on study abroad in Israel. These universities took several steps to ensure that American college students would not defy school policy and study abroad in Israel. In many cases, students who chose to study abroad in Israel would have to withdraw from their home university, apply directly to an Israeli university (to study abroad) and reapply for admission to their home university following their abroad experience. These students also had no guarantee that their credits earned abroad would transfer to their home university (Reshef and Korycan, 2005). Some schools also did not allow financial aid to apply to study in Israel while others banned any on-campus promotion of any travel experience to Israel (Reshef and Korycan, 2005).

Recently the Israel on Campus Coalition (a conglomeration of Israel-related organizations with national presence on American college campuses) has had some

success at lobbying colleges and universities to change their study abroad policy and allow study in Israel (Reshef and Korycan, 2005). Despite these successes, students wanting to study in Israel at most American colleges and universities still confront university-imposed barriers and restrictions.

JEWISH STUDY ABROAD IN THE DIASPORA

Judaism and Jewish identity have evolved and changed over time. Simon Dubnow, an early diaspora nationalist, came to understand Jewish history in terms of shifting hegemonic centers. According to Dubnow, the evolution of Jewish culture depended on interaction with foreign cultural forces outside of the Jewish community. As the Jewish people migrated across the world, they established “centers” where Jewish culture and learning thrived. Without the interaction between the Jewish people and foreign culture, the Jewish people would assimilate and erode (Dubnow, 1958). As a result, the Jewish people developed new Jewish cultures wherever they lived in the Diaspora.

Many countries with significant Jewish populations (including the United Kingdom, France, Australia, Germany, South Africa, Chile, Argentina and Brazil) are listed among the IIE’s top 20 top study abroad destinations. It is reasonable to assume that some Jewish students will be interested in developing an understanding of Jewish cultural diversity first hand by seeking out Jewish connections during their study abroad experiences outside of Israel. However, the extent to which American Jewish students express interest in learning about global Jewish diversity during study abroad is unknown. Research for this study began with the prediction that American Jews

participating in study abroad programs outside of Israel would express interest in taking a class for credit on the Jewish history of their host country. However, study abroad is often a short, intense experience during which students are faced with a myriad of choices for engagement in their new surrounding environment. It is therefore expected that many students will list a lack of time among their primary reasons for not seeking a connection with the Jewish community abroad. Time limitations, combined with the likelihood that most Jews studying abroad outside of Israel have less Jewish education and less connection to the organized Jewish community in the United States, make it reasonable to expect that most Jewish students who study outside of Israel will not attempt to connect to the Jewish community of their host country. However, since members of the generation currently in college are highly individualistic (Ukeles, Miller and Beck, 2006), it is expected that the majority of Jewish students studying outside of Israel will report making Jewish connections abroad on their own terms, away from communal involvement. It is also expected that the majority of the American Jewish students who did not connect with the Jewish community abroad will realize a certain missed potential in their study abroad experiences and thus report wishing that they had a stronger connection to the Jewish community abroad.

In the Penn publication, one student, Evie Dean, articulated her need to express her Jewish identity in response to anti-Semitism during her study abroad experience in Bolivia. Frequent visits of poorly behaved and uneducated Israeli tourists and the explicit class and economic differences between Jews and non-Jews in Bolivia fueled prominent anti-Semitic sentiments within Bolivian society. Dean's interactions with the Jewish community in Bolivia prompted her to experience a type of second culture shock as she

witnessed the stark differences between the Jewish community in Bolivia and the rest of the country she had come to know. "Walking into the synagogue in Cochabama, Bolivia was like stepping out of the Third World. The people were white. Their cars were new. Their homes were big and beautiful. After having become accustomed to the adobe huts of the countryside and child beggars of the city, it was sort of disorienting" (Bialystock, 2002). Despite feeling warmly embraced by the Jewish community, Dean's Jewish experience abroad was uncomfortable. While Dean did not hide her Judaism during her study abroad experience she did find herself defending Judaism and educating individuals she encountered on the "beauty and wisdom" of Judaism. "It truly saddened me when the mention of Jews elicited a sour expression...When we travel we represent not only the United States but also the Jewish people...Suspicion and resentment would be greatly allayed if Jews invested in their resident cities, perhaps by sponsoring service projects or public works like in the United States" (ibid.). American Jewish World Service currently sponsors programs similar to the ones Evie Dean recommends. However, these programs are often short-term non-credit bearing experiences abroad. American Jews studying outside of Israel could help educate local populations about Judaism and the Jewish people, as Dean suggests. While this effort would do little to decrease global anti-Semitism, Jewish organizations concerned with decreasing anti-Semitism could mount a campaign to encourage Jewish students to express their Jewish identity and educate others about Judaism as a defense against anti-Semitism.

While it is expected that most Jews studying outside of Israel will not connect to the Jewish community abroad, it is reasonable to assume that some students will seek out opportunities for Jewish engagement abroad. Students seeking a Jewish connection

abroad may be more likely to select a country with a significant Jewish population than countries with few or no Jews. The limited existing research has shown that some Jewish students spending time abroad outside of Israel have requested to be housed with Jewish families (ibid.), while others participated in some of the few short-term Jewish programs abroad such as alternative spring break with Hillel in South America or with the American Jewish World Service. However, these Jewish study abroad programs tend to be non-credit bearing and thus would not be counted as a "study abroad program" as previously defined in this study.

It is reasonable to assume that if Jewish students studying abroad outside of Israel do attempt to build connections to their host Jewish community they will encounter a multitude of issues that inhibit their successful integration into community. Another student at Penn, Rachel Rosenblatt, reported discomfort walking into a Spanish synagogue in Madrid for the first time on Rosh Hashanah. As is custom in many Jewish communities outside of the United States, admission to the synagogue required an ID, a body search and an interrogation. "...[They] asked why I was there, if I knew anyone in the congregation and even asked to explain the holiday to test whether I was actually Jewish." The situation, which would remind some Jews of a flight to Israel on El Al Airlines, would make most uncomfortable. Students who have not experienced travel to Israel or who do not fully understand the security differences between Jewish buildings inside and outside of the United States might find this experience traumatic. In addition to the security difference, Rachel found the services to be unfamiliar. Even though she attended both Ashkenazic and Sephardic services, the language barrier prevented her "from having the meaningful experience for which [she] was hoping" (ibid.). It is

reasonable to assume that other Jewish students studying abroad experience similar feelings of awkwardness and discomfort when seeking to attend religious services abroad.

A third Penn student, Ellie Lobovits, encountered differences between the Jewish values that were emphasized in her home community in the United States and in the Jewish community of her host country, Chile. During a conversation with a distant relative over the high holidays, Lobovits discovered that many of the Jews she encountered were defenders of Pinochet and the Chilean dictatorship:

[The Jews] supported [Pinochet] because they had kosher food and their synagogues were not shut down. I could not believe what I was hearing....I asked him whether kosher food was more important than human life. He had no response. I was furious- on the most important day of the Jewish calendar, the day we are supposed to ask for forgiveness (Yom Kippur), Jews were supporting crimes against humanity (ibid.).

Lobovitz contrasted the Chilean Jews' values to her own American, Jewish values of social justice and civil rights. Through additional research she discovered the role anti-Semitism and fear played in keeping the Jewish community from taking action against the dictatorship. The values that Lobovitz learned as "Jewish values" were not the same "Jewish values" embodied by the Chilean Jewish community. It is reasonable to assume that other students have similar disorienting experiences when they encounter Judaism in foreign countries.

It is expected that many Jewish students who make an effort to connect to the Jewish community abroad have stories similar to those of Rosenblatt and Lobovitz. These stories highlight the difficulty of making a Jewish connection abroad. It is expected that Jewish communities overseas are not as welcoming to American Jewish students as the

students might expect. Cultural differences, language barriers, the increased need for security and general mistrust and skepticism are all factors that may prevent Jewish students from successfully connecting to Jewish communities abroad.

METHODOLOGY

The hypotheses (as discussed above) were tested using an online survey. The survey was administered to American college students from November, 2006 to March, 2007. Survey design was modeled after Donsita-Schmidt and Vardish's 2005 survey of North American Jewish students studying in Israel and on Sales and Saxe's 2006 survey of American Jewish college students. Based on these two studies, the survey included 8 questions on being Jewish on campus, 2 questions about travel to Israel, 5 questions on Jewish education, and 13 points indicating life priorities. 16 questions on Judaism and the study abroad experience and a question about denominational affiliation and were original (see Appendix B).

The survey was designed so that all students — both Jewish and non-Jewish — would initially participate (data from non-Jewish students was used for comparison). However, the full survey was administered only to students identifying as Jewish — either by religion or by ethnicity or culture.

Students were invited to participate in the study by email (see Appendix A) and were contacted via study abroad offices' listservs of students who had expressed interest in studying abroad. Some of the students on these listservs had already returned from studying abroad, some were currently abroad and others were planning on studying abroad in the future. At schools where the study abroad office refused to distribute the

survey, students were invited to participate in the study by a blurb in the campus Hillel's weekly email. These methods of contact limited the sample to students on study abroad or campus Hillel listservs. Distributing the survey via campus Hillels increased the potential for the study results to be skewed more towards students who are highly involved in the organized Jewish community; many students who subscribe to the Hillel listserv are at least somewhat involved in the organized Jewish community on campus. Schools were dropped from the study when the campus Hillel did not respond to an email request asking them to distribute the survey to their listserv or refused to participate.

Priority was placed on achieving a large, diverse sample, representative of students enrolled at different types of institutions from different geographic regions across the country. Schools selected to participate in the study were based on the proportion of Jewish students enrolled, frequency of students studying abroad, size, geographic location and on whether or not the school was public or private. The following steps were taken to select schools to participate in this study:

1. Colleges and universities with high study abroad participation (using data from the Institute of International Education IIE 2005 and 2006) were cross-listed with schools with high percentages of Jewish students (using data from Hillel International's online guide to Jewish Campus Life –Hillel, 2007). This comparison yielded a list of ten schools with a large population of Jewish students participating in study abroad programs. However, schools contained in this list were mostly small, private institutions from the eastern United States. It was decided to include only the schools with an estimated Jewish study abroad

population at or above 10% of the total student body. Five schools met this criterion (see Figure 1).

Figure 1

Schools with the Highest % of Students Studying Abroad Compared to Schools with a High % of Jewish Students

Institution	Estimated % of Undergraduate Students Participating in Study Abroad	% Jewish	Estimated % of Undergraduate Jewish Students Studying Abroad
Goucher College	73.53%	29.63%	21.79%
Emory University	42.10%	33.33%	14.03%
The George Washington University	41.92%	31.61%	13.25%
Tufts University	39.60%	31.55%	12.49%
Colgate University	81.12%	14.82%	12.02%

Sources: Hillel 2007, IIE 2005, IIE 2006

2. A second list of schools was generated in attempt to expand and diversify the sample beyond smaller, private institutions on the east coast (see Figure 2). This list contained only colleges and universities with a high proportion of Jewish students from campuses with Jewish populations of over 1,000 students (using data from Hillel).

Figure 2

Schools with High % of Jewish Students with Campus Jewish Populations Over 1,000

	Jewish Students Enrolled	Undergraduate Campus Population	% Jewish
Brandeis University	1900	3081	61.7%
SUNY Oneonta	2000	5600	35.7%
New York University	6,500	19208	33.8%
University of Pennsylvania	3000	9730	30.8%

Source: Hillel 2007

3. Even though this list contained schools from across the country, the schools with the highest percentage of Jewish students were still primarily located in the east. A third list of schools was generated as a second attempt to diversify the sample. This list included all colleges and universities with a proportion of Jewish students over 10% of the student body. The list was divided into 4 regional categories: Northeast, South, Midwest and West. The three schools with the highest Jewish student population in each region except for the northeast were selected to participate in the study, adding 9 more schools (see Figure 3), yielding a total of eighteen schools to be invited to participate in the study.

Figure 3
Schools with a High % of Jewish Students Based on Geographic Diversity

	School Type	Jewish Students	Total Students	% Jewish
Midwest				
Northwestern University	Private	1800	7800	23.1%
University of Michigan	Public	4000	24547	16.3%
University of Wisconsin- Madison	Public	4000	28583	14.0%
South				
Tulane University	Private	2000	7862	25.4%
University of Florida	Public	5500	35000	15.7%
University of Central Florida	Public	5000	38000	13.2%
West				
University of California- Santa Cruz	Public	2600	12034	21.6%
University of California- Los Angeles	Public	3000	24811	12.1%
University of Arizona	Public	3100	28400	10.9%

Source: Hillel 2007

Even though eighteen schools were invited to participate in the study, only thirteen agreed to distribute the survey. Figure 4 shows how the survey was distributed at each school and frequency of Jewish responses from each school. Since the response rate

was rather low, an email inviting Jewish friends, colleagues and coworkers of the researcher to take the survey was distributed. These responses are listed in the last row of the table.

It was initially decided to limit the survey to fourth year students, based on the assumption that students would be more able to reflect on their study abroad experiences, Jewish connections abroad and Jewish experience on campus at the end of their college experience. The sixth survey question asked for respondents' current class year, and first, second, third and fifth year students were also given an abbreviated form of the survey. When the initial survey yielded only 139 responses from Jewish fourth year students, third year students were invited to fill out a "follow up" survey. The "follow up" survey elicited an additional 91 responses; 18 of these responses were from Jewish students. Responses to the "follow up" survey were matched with the responses to the first survey using email addresses. As a second attempt to expand the sample, an email was distributed to friends, colleagues and coworkers of the researcher. The responses from this email combined with the responses from the "follow up" survey and the responses from the fourth year students brought the total number of Jewish responses to 157. Figure 4 shows the distribution of student responses from each school asked to participate in the survey.

Figure 4
Survey Participation and Response

University	Participated	Distributed through?	Jewish Responses	% of Jewish Responses
Brandeis	Yes	Study Abroad Office	28	17.8%
Colgate University	No	—	—	—
Emory University	Yes	Study Abroad Office	4	2.5%
Goucher College	Yes	Study Abroad Office	7	4.5%
New York University	Yes	Hillel	2	1.3%
Northwestern University	Yes	Hillel	5	3.2%
SUNY Oneonta	No	—	—	—
The George Washington University	Yes	Study Abroad Office	22	14.0%
Tufts University	Yes	Hillel	1	0.6%
Tulane University	Yes	Hillel	3	1.9%
UC- Santa Cruz	No	—	—	—
University of Arizona	Yes	Hillel	18	11.5%
University of California, LA	Yes	Hillel	1	0.6%
University of Central Florida	No	—	—	—
University of Florida	Yes	Study Abroad Office	12	7.6%
University of Michigan	Yes	Study Abroad Office	13	8.3%
University of Pennsylvania	Yes	Hillel	4	2.5%
University of Wisconsin- Madison	Yes	Study Abroad Office	3	1.9%
Other		Emails to colleagues	34	21.7%
Total	---	---	157	100.0%

ABOUT THE SAMPLE

157 (20.3% of the 769 survey responses) Jewish students responded to the survey. This proportion was larger than the average proportion of Jewish students at all the colleges and universities participating in this study. Jewish students participated in 177 study abroad experiences during the course of their college career. The total sample contained 518 non-Jewish students who participated in 600 study abroad experiences (67.4% of the survey responses). 94 survey participants who never studied abroad were removed from the analysis and are not included in the numbers of Jewish and non-Jewish respondents reported above.

POTENTIAL SOURCES OF ERROR

The presence of a lower proportion of students participating in short-term study abroad experiences may be a result of self selection. Perhaps students who studied abroad for longer periods of time were more motivated to complete this. However, if self selection was to entirely explain this skew one would expect to see a higher proportion of students participating in year long study abroad programs in the sample than the national average. A more plausible explanation for the skewed sample may be the over sample of Jewish students in the study. In order to increase the number of Jewish responses the researcher invited friends, classmates and other acquaintances to participate in the study. This method may have skewed the data towards Jewish students who spent a semester in Israel.

Exaggeration in survey responses may provide a second source of error. It is reasonable to assume that Jewish students may have made overstatements distorting the data in a socially acceptable direction. For example, survey participants may have overstated the extent of their Judaic knowledge or their effort to connect to the Jewish community abroad, as possessing Jewish knowledge or engagement with the Jewish community may be more "desired" traits.

Additional distortion among survey responses may be related to the wording of questions. It is highly likely that some of the questions asked could have been interpreted differently among survey participants. In several cases, when asking students about their desire to connect with the Jewish community abroad, the researcher implied that connecting with the Jewish community abroad would require the involvement of a Jewish

organization. For example, one survey prompt read, "I wish there had been an organization working to help me build a connection to the Jewish community in my host country during my study abroad experiences." Since the participants in this survey are members of Generation Y, they tend to view religion and religious affiliation as highly individualist and tend to avoid organizational religious affiliation (Greenberg, 2004). This poor word choice may have contributed to a skew of the data. Responses may be more reflective of Jewish students' willingness to affiliate with religious organizations rather than showing their effort to connect with the Jewish community abroad.

RESULTS

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN JEWISH AND NON-JEWISH STUDENTS

YEAR OF STUDY ABROAD EXPERIENCE

There were few differences between Jewish and non-Jewish students in terms of when they participated in study abroad (see Figure 5). In both the Jewish and non-Jewish groups the majority of respondents reported participating in study abroad experiences during their third year of college. However, Jewish students were significantly more likely to study abroad during their third year of college than non-Jewish students ($p < .05$).³ Non-Jewish students were slightly more likely to study abroad during their second year of college than Jewish students ($p < .10$).

The similarity between Jewish and non-Jewish groups in terms of when they study abroad seems to make sense if one considers the high level of assimilation among Jewish students (Greenberg, 2004) and the importance of peer social networks in college culture (Sales and Saxe, 2006). However, explaining the difference in study abroad during third year between Jewish and non-Jewish students is more difficult. One possible explanation for this difference may be graduation rates. Perhaps Jewish students (influenced by Judaism's emphasis on study) are more likely to finish college in four years than non-Jewish students. It may be the case that during a four-year academic schedule, study abroad best fits during the third year of college. Thus Jewish students would be more likely to study abroad during their third year than non-Jewish students.

³ Unless otherwise indicated, all statistics are based on chi-square tests.

Figure 5
Year of Participation in Study Abroad Experience

Year	Non-Jewish Students		Jewish Students		Difference
	N	%	N	%	
First	28	4.7%	10	5.6%	0.9%
Second	102	17.2%	17	9.6%	7.6%
Third	361	60.9%	126	71.2%	10.3% *
Fourth	60	10.1%	16	9.0%	1.1%
Fifth or more	10	1.7%	1	0.6%	1.1%
Other	28	4.7%	7	4.0%	0.8%
Blank	4	0.7%	0	0.0%	0.7%
Total	593 ⁴	100.0%	177	100.0%	---

* Indicates Statistical Significance

LENGTH OF STUDY ABROAD EXPERIENCE

Jewish students in this study were slightly more likely to study abroad for longer periods of time (such as semester and year-long program) than non-Jewish students (see Figure 6). The difference among Jewish and non-Jewish students studying abroad for one academic year was significant ($p < .01$), and Jewish students were significantly less likely to participate in short-term abroad programs than their non-Jewish classmates ($p < .01$). The difference in length of experience between Jewish and non-Jewish students could show that Jewish students are more eager to expand their knowledge of cultural diversity. These differences could also show that perhaps Jewish students have the ability (financial, academic, etc.) to spend more time outside of the United States than their non-Jewish peers.

⁴ Blank responses explain all discrepancies unless otherwise noted.

Figure 6
Length of Study Abroad Experience

Length	Non-Jewish Students		Jewish Students		Difference
	N	%	N	%	%
Less than a semester	181	30.5%	30	16.9%	13.6% *
One semester	366	61.7%	118	66.7%	4.9%
One academic year	33	5.6%	22	12.4%	6.7% *
More than one academic year	4	0.7%	3	1.7%	1.0%
Other	9	1.5%	4	2.3%	0.7%
Total	593	100.0%	177	100.0%	---

* Indicates Statistical Significance

Unexpectedly, this sample (both Jewish and non-Jewish students) differed from data obtained by IIE on length of study abroad (see Figure 7). The difference between the IIE data and data from this study may relate to sampling. It is probable that students who study abroad for longer feel more affinity towards studying abroad and are thus more likely to fill out a survey on study abroad.

Figure 7
Length of Study Abroad Experience Study Results
Compared with 2006 IE Data

Length	Study Results	2006 IIE Data
Less than a semester	27.4%	56%
One semester	62.9%	38%
One academic year	7.1%	6%
More than one academic year	0.9%	---
Other	1.7%	---
Total	100%	100%

LOCATION OF STUDY ABROAD

Jewish students were significantly more likely to study abroad in the Middle East ($p<.01$) and in Oceania (Australia and New Zealand) ($p<.01$) than non-Jewish students (see Figure 8). Jewish students were also less likely to study abroad in Europe ($p<.01$) than non-Jewish students. The Middle East was such a popular region for Jewish students

because it contains Israel (see Figure 9). Almost 20% of the Jewish students chose to study abroad in Israel. It is interesting to note that the difference (in percentage) between Jewish and non-Jewish studying in Europe is roughly equal to the difference (in percentage) between Jewish and non-Jewish students studying in the Middle East. This data suggests that if not for their Jewish identity, many of the Jewish students who studied in Israel might have studied in Europe.

Figure 8
Locations of Study Abroad by Region

Region	Jewish Students		Non-Jewish Students		Difference
	N	%	N	%	%
Africa	4	2.3%	30	5.0%	-2.7%
Americas	23	13.0%	69	11.5%	1.5%
Asia	6	3.4%	40	6.7%	-3.3%
Europe	87	49.2%	417	69.5%	-20.3% *
Middle East	37	20.9%	12	2.0%	18.9% *
Oceania	19	10.7%	30	5.0%	5.7% *
Semester at Sea	1	0.6%	2	0.3%	0.2%
Total	177	100.0%	600	100.0%	

** Indicates Statistical Significance*

Figure 9
Most Popular Countries of Study Abroad

Jewish Students		Non-Jewish Students	
Country	%	Country	%
Israel	18.6%	United Kingdom	14.7%
Spain	13.6%	Spain	14.5%
United Kingdom	12.4%	Italy	13.5%
Australia	10.2%	France	9.8%
France	7.3%	Australia	4.5%
Italy	5.6%	Germany	4.3%

GENDER AND MAJOR

The sample mirrored study abroad trends identified by IIE (in 2005 and 2006) in terms of gender (77% of the sample was female) and major (38.4% had majors in the social sciences including psychology, political science and international relations). There

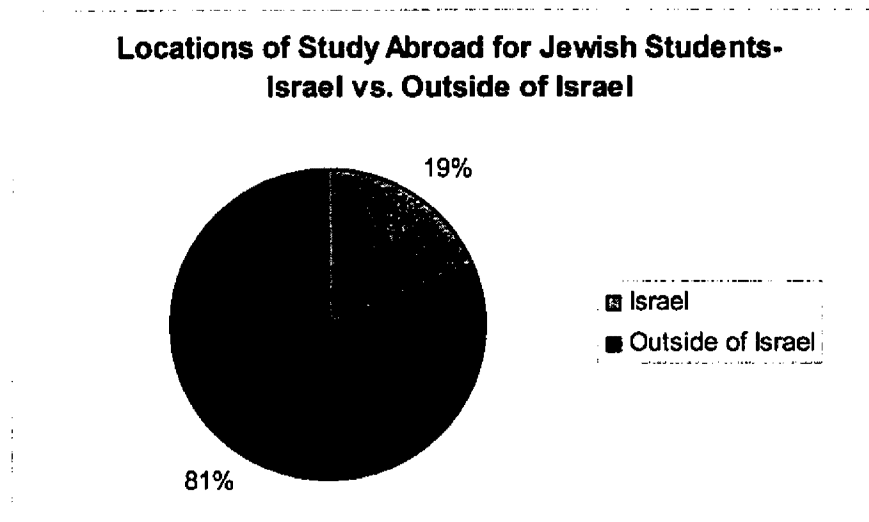
was no significant difference between the Jewish and non Jewish students in terms of gender and major.

DISTINGUISHING JEWISH STUDENTS WHO STUDY ABROAD OUTSIDE OF ISRAEL FROM JEWISH STUDENTS WHO STUDY ABROAD IN ISRAEL

LOCATION

Among the Jewish students taking part in this study, 144 (81.4%) reported participating in study abroad experiences outside of Israel and 33 (18.6%) indicated participating in study abroad experiences in Israel. Assuming that this population is at least somewhat representative of the larger community of Jewish college students, this study reveals that *Jewish students are over 4 times more likely to participate in study abroad programs outside of Israel than study abroad programs in Israel. Most Jewish students (60%) who study abroad outside of Israel study in Europe.* When figuring Israel into the analysis Europe is still the most popular region for Jewish students who study abroad with 49% of the Jewish students electing to study in Europe and 21% in the Middle East. The second most popular region is Oceania with 13% of the Jewish respondents selecting programs in either Australia or New Zealand. However, *Israel was the single most popular destination for Jewish students participating in study abroad programs* with 33 students selecting to study abroad in Israel. The second and third most popular study abroad destinations for Jewish students were Spain and the United Kingdom with 24 and 22 students respectively (See Figure 9). While it would make sense that the largest number of Jewish students study abroad in Israel, it is likely that this sample contained a larger proportion of Jewish students that study abroad in Israel than

actually exist in greater society. Aside from Israel, Jewish students mirror greater society in their selection of study abroad destination.



DENOMINATIONS

Among Reform and Conservative Jews there was no significant difference in likelihood to study in or outside of Israel (see Figure 10). Orthodox students were significantly more likely to select Israel as their study abroad destination ($p < .01$) than other locations. When examining only those who study outside of Israel, it was found that students' denominational affiliation is approximately equally divided among Reform, Conservative and no denomination.

Figure 10
Denominations of Jewish Students by Study Abroad Location

Denomination	In Israel		Out of Israel		Total
	N	%	N	%	
No Denomination*	6	18.8%	36	31.3%	42
Reconstructionist	1	3.1%	4	3.5%	5
Reform	9	28.1%	37	32.2%	46
Conservative	6	18.8%	30	26.1%	36
Orthodox/ Traditional	7	21.9%	4	3.5%	11
Don't know/ Other	3	9.4%	4	3.5%	7
Total	32	100.0%	115	100.0%	147

*Indicated No Denomination, Secular/Cultural Jew or Just Jewish

JEWISH EDUCATION AND KNOWLEDGE OF JUDAISM

There were very few differences in Jewish education between students who studied in Israel and students who studied abroad outside of Israel (see Figure 11). No significant correlation was found between study location whether students had a Bar or Bat Mitzvah (80% who studied outside of Israel and 90% who studied in Israel reported having a Bar or Bat Mitzvah). Only 4 of the 25 students who reported having no Jewish education chose to study in Israel. Responses were not high enough to determine statistical significance however the numbers suggests a relationships between Jewish education and study in Israel. One student who studied abroad outside of Israel commented on her lack of Jewish education due to political circumstances in her childhood. "I have never been exposed to active Jewish practices prior to emigration [to the United States]. My father is not actually Jewish...[and]....while I agree that goodness and spirituality are important in my life, I am also not in the habit of channeling them through Judaism."

One area of difference was found when examining day school attendance. Students who study in Israel were almost twice as likely to have attended day school or Yeshiva as students who studied outside of Israel. Of the 32 students who attended day school or Yeshiva full time until high school 10 (32.25%) studied in Israel and 22 (68.75%) studied in countries other than Israel. However, the proportion of students who attended Day school or Yeshiva full time and studied abroad in Israel was higher (21.74%) than students receiving the same Jewish education but electing to study in countries other than Israel (11.28%).

While there were negligible differences in Jewish education between students who studied abroad in Israel and students who studied abroad outside of Israel, there was significant difference between the groups in terms of knowledge of Judaism. Students in both groups were asked to rate their knowledge of 8 different aspects of Judaism (Jewish culture, Talmud, Jewish history, History of modern Israel, Jewish prayer services, Hebrew language, Jewish mysticism and Jewish Bible) on a 5-point Likert scale with 0 being no knowledge and 5 being extensive knowledge. ANOVA was performed to test the significance of the relationship between each area of Jewish knowledge and study abroad location (in Israel or elsewhere). Jewish students who studied abroad in Israel possessed significantly more knowledge ($p < .01$) in each area of Jewish knowledge tested than Jewish students who studied abroad outside of Israel.

Figure 11
Jewish Knowledge Areas for Jewish Students
Studying Abroad

Knowlegde Area	Students Average Score	
	Outside of Israel	In Israel
Jewish culture	3.84	4.66
Talmud	1.62	2.66
Jewish history	3.31	4.41
History of modern Israel	3.14	4.45
Jewish prayer services	2.94	4.17
Hebrew language	2.03	3.79
Jewish mysticism	1.37	2.28
Jewish Bible	2.51	3.90
Average of average scores	2.60	3.79

A possible explanation for this data is that Jewish students who studied in Israel were more likely to indicate a major in Judaic studies than Jewish students who studied outside of Israel. The significance of this difference cannot be measured because "Judaic Studies" was not given as an option on the list of majors survey respondents could choose

from. However, all of the 6 students that wrote in a Judaic Studies major studied abroad in Israel and 92% of the students who studied abroad in Israel reported taking Judaic Studies courses in college (see p. 44). A second possible explanation for the difference in Judaic knowledge is that Jewish students gained significant Jewish knowledge during their experiences in Israel. Donitsa-Schmdit and Vadish (2005) found that after five months in Israel, Jewish students were significantly more informed about Judaism and Zionism ($t=3.05$; $p<.01$) and felt more positively inclined towards the preservation of Jewishness ($t=3.05$; $p<.01$).

Students participating in the survey were also asked to rate the importance of 13 moral and ethical viewpoints or areas of community involvement to their lives (living a moral/ethical life, making the world better, being successful at work, remembering the Holocaust, providing care for the poor, countering Anti-Semitism, caring about Israel, supporting Jewish organizations, spirituality, making money, marrying Jewish, dating Jewish and observing the Sabbath). A 0 to 3 scale was used with 0 being not important and 3 being very important. ANOVA was performed to test the significance of the relationship between each priority area and study abroad location (in Israel or elsewhere). Analysis of the data shows that by and large students in both groups ranked specifically Jewish items lower than non-Jewish or ambiguously Jewish areas (values that could be perceived as either Jewish or non-Jewish depending on a student's world view, such as "making the world better"). When the two groups are compared, stark differences are revealed (see Figures 12 and 13).

Jews who study abroad in Israel place greater value on specifically Jewish items such as caring for Israel, supporting Jewish organizations, marrying and dating

Jewish and observing Shabbat than students who study abroad outside of Israel.

However, students studying abroad outside of Israel placed higher value on items related to professional success and wealth than Jewish students who studied abroad in Israel. However, it would appear that both groups relate primarily to universal values, as “living a moral or ethical life” and “making the world better” received the number one and number two rankings for both groups.

The “Jewish” area receiving the highest score from students studying outside of Israel was “remembering the Holocaust.” However, for Jewish students who studied abroad in Israel, “remembering the Holocaust” was ranked 10th, behind almost every other “Jewish” area except for “observing Shabbat” (which the group in Israel ranked 11th and the out of Israel group ranked least important or 13th). Jewish students who studied abroad in Israel also felt more passionately about marrying Jewish, caring about Israel, and dating Jewish.

Figure 12
Rankings for Priority Areas for Jewish Students

	Out of Israel	In Israel
Live a Moral/Ethical Life	1	1
Make the World Better	2	2
Success @ Work	3	9
Remembering the Holocaust	4	10
Care for the Poor	5	5
Countering Anti-Semitism	6	8
Caring About Israel	7	4
Support Jewish Organizations	8	6
Spirituality	9	11
Make Money	10	13
Marrying Jewish	11	3
Dating Jewish	12	7
Observe the Sabbath	13	12

Shading indicates a "Jewish" area

Figure 13
Average Scores for Indicators of Priority Areas for Jewish Students
by Geographic Area of Study

	Outside of Israel	In Israel	Difference
Live a Moral/Ethical Life	2.81	2.97	0.16
Make the World Better	2.77	2.90	0.13
Success @ Work	2.75	2.50	-0.25*
Remembering the Holocaust	2.57	2.48	-0.08
Care for the Poor	2.50	2.72	0.22
Countering Anti-Semitism	2.45	2.52	0.07
Caring About Israel	2.18	2.79	0.61**
Support Jewish Organizations	1.94	2.66	0.72**
Spirituality	1.89	2.46	0.57*
Make Money	1.89	1.68	-0.21
Marrying Jewish	1.71	2.86	1.15**
Dating Jewish	1.52	2.62	1.10**
Observe the Sabbath	0.93	1.97	1.03**

Shading indicates a "Jewish" area

**significant at the $p \leq .05$ level*
***significant at the $p \leq .01$ level*

SUMMER CAMP ATTENDANCE

Students who studied abroad in Israel were more likely to have attended Jewish summer camps than students who studied abroad outside of Israel. 85.71% of the Jewish students who studied abroad in Israel and 57.14% of the Jewish students who studied abroad outside of Israel attended Jewish summer camps (significant at the .05 level).

TRAVEL TO ISRAEL

51.3% of students who studied abroad outside of Israel and 85.71% of students who studied in Israel indicated participation in an organized travel/study program in Israel. This relationship was highly significant ($p < .01$). However, depending on how each student interpreted the phrase "organized travel/study program" the survey question could

have been inclusive of study abroad experiences or exclusively refer to previous travel to Israel. However, the ambiguity in question wording makes the results a bit suspect.

Since many students indicated more than one experience traveling in Israel, this study looks at incidents of travel to Israel in aggregate.⁵ Students who study abroad in Israel traveled to Israel more frequently than students who did not study abroad in Israel. 51.33% of the students who studied abroad outside of Israel reported having participated in an organized travel or study program to Israel compared to 80% of the students who studied abroad in Israel (1-tailed t test: $p < .01$). It is possible that previous experience in Israel, perhaps short-term experiences, may prompt students to select Israel as their study abroad destination.

Students who studied abroad outside of Israel were more likely to have participated in short-term programs in Israel than students who study abroad in Israel. Students selecting study abroad in destinations outside of Israel were 22.8% more likely to participate in birthright israel (36%) (a statistically significant relationship, $p < .01$) than students who studied abroad in Israel. Students who studied abroad outside of Israel were significantly more likely to participate in a family, middle or high school trip to Israel than students who studied abroad in Israel ($p < .01$). This data may explain the motivation for a group of students to not choose to study abroad in Israel. Several of the students sought out study abroad experiences in countries other than Israel since they had participated in Israel programs as youth.

⁵ Data was examined for each Israel visit rather than on a per student basis since many students visited Israel more than once.

JEWISH CAMPUS CONNECTION

Jewish students who study in Israel have a stronger connection to the Jewish community on their home campus than Jewish students who study abroad outside of Israel. This proved true in all areas tested: Jewish organizational involvement, enrollment in Judaic Studies courses, number of Jewish college friends, and dating patterns in college.

INVOLVEMENT IN JEWISH ORGANIZATIONS ON CAMPUS

Participation in Jewish organizations (looking at participation in all Jewish organizations on campus) during college was higher among students who studied abroad in Israel than those who studied abroad outside of Israel ($p < .01$). Difference in participation in Hillel was not statistically significant. Difference between participation in Jewish fraternities and sororities, involvement in other Jewish organizations, no involvement and location (in Israel or elsewhere) was not determined due to the low number of responses from students studying in Israel (see Figure 14). Orthodox groups such as Chabad or Aish HaTorah were the most frequently cited groups among students who studied abroad in Israel. Students who studied abroad outside of Israel did not list other Jewish groups on campus with the same frequency as students who studied abroad in Israel. Some of these students also mistakenly identified birthright israel and Shabbat services as Jewish campus organizations. It could be that Jewish students who studied abroad outside of Israel were not as familiar with the organized Jewish community on campus and thus had difficulty identifying campus Jewish groups other than Hillel. However, some students who studied abroad outside of Israel were able to identify other

Jewish groups on campus. Some of these students reported affiliation with secular and pluralistic groups such as a Jewish acapella group and Jewish Student Union. One student who studied abroad outside of Israel reported involvement with Chabad.

Figure 14
Involvement in Jewish Organizations on Campus

Organization	In Israel		Outside of Israel	
	N	%	N	%
Hillel	24	64.9%	66	53.7%
Jewish fraternity or sorority	2	5.4%	9	7.3%
Other	7	18.9%	17	13.8%
No Involvement	4	10.8%	31	25.2%
Total	37	100.0%	123	100.0%
Overall Campus Jewish Organizational Involvement				
	33	89.2%	92	74.8%

ENROLLMENT IN JUDAIC STUDIES COURSES

The majority (64%) of Jewish respondents reported taking a college level Judaic Studies course during their time at college. This was unexpected considering that other studies (Sales and Saxe, 2006) found that less than half of the Jewish students surveyed had taken a Jewish studies course. However, students who studied abroad in Israel were significantly more likely to have taken Judaic Studies courses in college (92.9%) than students who studied outside of Israel (56.6%) ($p \leq .01$).

JEWISH FRIENDS AND DATING

Almost all Jewish students in both groups reported having at least some Jewish friends in college (which may be a result of the survey going to schools with high percentages of Jews). However, there was a major difference between the two groups among those who report having mostly Jewish friends in college (see Figure 15). Similarly, there is a major difference in priority regarding Jewish dating. Jewish students studying in Israel were more than twice as likely to date only or mostly Jews than Jewish students studying outside of Israel.

Figure 15
Differences in Jewish Friends and Dating between Groups

	In Israel	Outside of Israel
% who report having mostly Jewish friends in college ($p \leq .01$)	60.7	25.0
% who report dating only or mostly Jews ($p \leq .01$)	91.3	43.3

JEWISH STUDENT CONNECTION TO THE JEWISH COMMUNITY ABROAD

The majority of the Jewish students responding to this survey did not make an effort to express their Jewish identity or connect to the Jewish community abroad. However, more students reported expressing their Jewish identity abroad than connecting to the Jewish community abroad. This difference may be explained by the individualistic nature of Generation Y. Expressing Jewish identity is something that can be done on individual terms while connecting to the Jewish community abroad may require more effort and organization to contact communal organization.

Other students reported having no problems connecting to the Jewish community abroad. One female who studied abroad in London commented:

While studying abroad, I tried many different Jewish communities and synagogues before I found the one that fit me best. There was nothing in walking distance to where I stayed, and so I had to set up home stays. These experiences allowed me to learn about the Jewish communities and the people in them. The community I stayed with I found through their Rabbi, whom I had met before. I found them the most welcoming and accepting.

EFFORT TO EXPRESS JUDAISM ABROAD

Jewish students who study abroad within Israel are almost twice as likely to report making an effort to express their Judaism abroad than Jewish students studying abroad outside of Israel. One student commented on how her highly Catholicized experience in Florence made her think about her Judaism. "It was hard not to think Jewishly as most of my time was spent in churches and cathedrals...studying art that centered around the New Testament." Among the Jewish students who studied abroad outside of Israel, there was no significant relationship between location (country or region) and effort to express their Jewish identity abroad. Students who identified with one of the four main movements of Judaism (Reform, Reconstructionist, Conservative, Orthodox) were more likely to make an effort to express their Judaism abroad than students who had no denominational affiliation ($p \leq .01$). Conservative students (66.67%) were more likely than Reform students (42.11%) to make an effort to express their Judaism abroad. Although there were only 4 Orthodox students who studied abroad outside of Israel, 3 of them reported making an effort to express their Jewish identity while abroad.

EFFORT TO CONNECT TO THE JEWISH COMMUNITY ABROAD

Jewish students who study abroad outside of Israel are less likely to make an effort to connect to the Jewish community abroad than Jewish students who study in Israel.

Figure 16
Differences in Expressing Jewish Identity and
Effort to Connect to the Jewish Community Abroad Between Groups

	In Israel	Outside of Israel
% who report expressing Judaism while studying abroad ($p < .01$)	82.8 (N=24)	43.6 (N=51)
% who report making an effort to connect to the Jewish community in their abroad location ($p < .01$)	82.8 (N=24)	33.0 (N=39)

One student who studied abroad in Australia commented:

My first priority during my study abroad experience was to have as much exposure to Australian culture as possible. Australia is an overwhelmingly secular society and so my Jewish identity for the most part did not factor in, one way or another.

In almost every region tested, approximately half of the students participating in study abroad did not make an effort to connect to the Jewish community of their host country (42% in the Americas, 49.37% in Europe and 47.37% in Oceania). Asia was an exception to this finding. Considering the almost non-existent Jewish community in most of Asia (and small Jewish community in Shanghai and parts of India) it is no surprise that students studying in Asia were almost two times less likely to make an effort to connect to the Jewish community of their host country as students in other regions. However one student did report making a Jewish connection through a local Chabad in Thailand. "A

Chabad in the city of Chiang Mai made it easy for me to celebrate Shabbat each week and meet Jews from around the world, in Thailand.”

Students who study abroad outside of Israel that affiliate with more liberal Jewish denominations are less likely to exert an effort to connect with the Jewish community during their study abroad experience than students who affiliate with traditional denominations. This trend was especially evident among the top most frequently reported affiliations; Conservative and Reform. Under half of the students who identified as Conservative (45.45%) and about one-third of the students who identified as Reform (30.95%) reported exerting effort to connect with the Jewish community during their study abroad experience, compared to only 15% of the students identifying with no denomination. Students with more Jewish education (those attending Day Schools or Yeshivot) were more likely to make an effort to connect to the Jewish community during their study abroad experience than Jewish students with less Jewish education (those attending religious school only one time per week), but this difference was not significant.

HOLIDAY OBSERVANCE ABROAD

In order to better understand Jewish students' religious practices during study abroad, the survey asked about observance of Passover, Chanukah and the High Holidays. Students who study abroad outside of Israel were much more likely to participate in holiday observance at their home campus than while they were abroad. This is an important finding that indicates the need for greater organizational attention to Jewish college students abroad outside of Israel. Students who study abroad in Israel are

no more likely to observe Jewish holidays abroad than on campus. 57.14% of the students who studied abroad outside of Israel indicated that they always participate in Passover Seders on campus. However, of these 66 students, only 46.97% reported participating in a Passover Seder during their time abroad. Some students found other American students with whom they could spend the holiday. One student commented "While studying in London, I was traveling in Greece during the first night of Passover. With friends, I found American college students in Athens who were having a Seder and [I] attended."

Participation in Chanukah observance abroad was similar to the observance of Passover abroad. However, only 20% of the Jewish students who studied abroad outside of Israel reported being abroad during Chanukah. Many Jewish students do not study abroad during the winter, and thus the majority of students are likely to be on campus for Chanukah. One of the methods used to measure Chanukah observance is the lighting of a menorah. Only 5 of the 23 students studying outside of Israel who were abroad during Chanukah reported lighting Chanukah candles. Among the 18 students who did not light candles 10 reported always or sometimes lighting Chanukah candles on campus. 45.7% of the students abroad in countries other than Israel during the High Holidays reported attending High Holiday services abroad. Among the students who did not attend High Holiday services while abroad, 40% reported that they attend services while on campus for High Holidays or special occasions. Some Jewish students who studied abroad outside of Israel also reported attending Shabbat services and Purim celebrations while abroad.

OTHER CONNECTIONS TO JUDAISM AND TO THE JEWISH COMMUNITY ABROAD

About one-third of the Jewish students who studied abroad outside of Israel reported making a connection with the Jewish community abroad. The most popular way that Jewish students reported connecting to Judaism abroad (see Figure 17) was by learning about the Jewish history of their host country. However, the survey did not specify as to whether students took courses that covered Jewish history during their abroad experience or if they learned about the Jewish history of their host country through methods of informal education such as museums or personal reading. Learning about Jewish history could have also included Jewish tourism such as visiting synagogues, old Jewish quarters or Jewish cemeteries while abroad. The second most popular way that students connected Jewishly during their study abroad experiences was by following news reports about Israel. It is interesting to note that both of these means for establishing Jewish connection are individual rather than communal pursuits, which is to be expected among members of Generation Y. The next two most popular ways Jewish students connect to the Jewish community abroad are through Passover Seders and Shabbat celebrations. One student commented, "I took a side trip to Scotland during my semester in Denmark. While there, I attended Shabbat services. I had two reasons: the first was that I was interested in what the service would be like; the second was that I wanted a free meal." Another student added "[it was an] interesting experience to attend a Jewish Shabbat Service in Spain. [It] provided a sense of community. Also, [I] enjoyed visiting Synagogues in the cities in Europe to which I traveled."

Figure 17
Jewish Student Connections during Study Abroad
Outside of Israel (N=143)

	% of Students*
Learned about Jewish history of host country	33.9%
Followed news reports about Israel	28.2%
Participated in a Passover seder	25.0%
Shabbat	22.6%
Made Jewish friends from the host country	19.4%
Other	16.9%
Kept kosher	16.1%
High Holidays	12.9%
Lit Hannukah candles	4.0%

**The sum of this column does not equal 100% since many students indicated more than one area of Jewish connection during their study abroad experience.*

Making friends with members of the Jewish community abroad was low on the list of ways that Jewish students connected with the Jewish community during their study abroad experience. Befriending members of the Jewish community abroad could help Jewish students better immerse themselves into the culture of their host country and provide them with a Jewish connection abroad. It is also an individualistic way of expressing Jewish involvement. It would seem then that encouraging friendships between American and native Jewish students abroad outside of Israel should be a priority of the Jewish community.

Almost 17% of the Jewish students who studied abroad outside of Israel reported participating in Jewish activity abroad not covered by the range of options offered in the survey. One student visited a synagogue in Havana, Cuba, and interviewed a Holocaust survivor there for an oral history project. Another student reported participating in a special ceremonial walk to commemorate the closing of the Roman Jewish Ghetto with both Jewish and non-Jewish members of the Italian community. A third student added that he expressed his Judaism abroad by teaching others about Judaism. A fourth student

explained that she expressed her Judaism while abroad in Chile by not eating pork products. Three students reported participating in Jewish studies programs abroad outside of Israel such as CET's (a private study abroad company) Jewish Studies program in Prague.

CHALLENGES TO ESTABLISHING JEWISH CONNECTIONS OUTSIDE OF ISRAEL

Only 12% (N=14) of the Jewish students participating in this study reported feeling that it was impossible to connect to the Jewish community during their study abroad experience. The most common factors cited impeding students from connecting to the Jewish community abroad were lack of time (42.84%) and cultural barriers (35.71%). Language barriers did not prevent Jewish students from establishing Jewish connections outside of Israel. Other reasons cited included personal ones. One student who studied abroad in London commented, "London had many synagogues, but I did not put the effort into a Jewish experience because I was preoccupied with a girl there that I met online."

FRANCE-SPECIFIC COMMENTS

Although France has the largest Jewish population in Europe with 491,500 Jews (DellaPergola, 2006), it is also one of the European countries with a problem of anti-Semitism. France was the country cited the most out of all the student comments received, and several Jewish students commented about anti-Semitic experiences while in France. France's mixed history in regards to anti-Semitism and the treatment of Jews is a likely reason prompting these students to comment on their experiences. One student reported difficulty in expressing her Jewish identity in France because of the Arab riots

that filled the headlines during the fall of 2006. "It was hard for me to express interest in Jewish life/culture while in Paris last year because of the riots that were going on in and outside of Paris by 2nd and 3rd generation Arab teens born in France." Another Jewish student spoke to how studying abroad in France so exposed her to anti-Israel sentiment that she became an anti-Zionist. "Going abroad was a great experience because I spent all my time with French atheists and Muslims, learning about perspectives that would never be considered on campus. I am now a fervent anti-Zionist and I am THANKFUL that my time abroad educated me as to this subject, though [my college] is probably more to blame for my underlying resentment of Israel and the American Jewish community." The idea that Jewish students could be so impacted by their study abroad experience that they become "anti-Zionists" and resentful of the Jewish community speaks to the need to not only work to improve the image of Jews and Israel in the world but also ensure that Jewish students are actively engaged in questions regarding Israel and Jewish identity both in the United States and during their study abroad experiences.

JEWISH STUDENTS AND "FULL IMMERSION"

Some students expressed a desire to use the study abroad experience as a time for full immersion into a new culture. Many of these students thus chose small, isolated locations in the third world with few similarities to western life. Students who chose to study abroad in these locations often expressed anger or confusion over the concept of integrating Judaism into their abroad experience, which for them was a chance to experience a new way of life. One student who studied abroad in Africa commented:

For my time in Africa it would not have been such a deep, meaningful experience if there had been a Jewish organization in the middle of a poverty stricken village. One of the strongest sentiments towards religion is finding faith on your own, and

not having a building or a book to hide in when life becomes too intense for comfort.

Another student commented: "Studying abroad is a time to really immerse yourself in a culture, and completely let go of any preconceived notions about what is right or necessary to do, in order to sustain order in one's life." Another student added, "I think I would have had a stronger Jewish identity abroad if I had been looking for it. I was thankful for the time away from such intense Judaism ([my college] is about half Jewish) and a chance to explore other aspects of myself."

WISHING FOR A STRONGER CONNECTION ABROAD OUTSIDE OF ISRAEL?

Among the Jewish students who studied abroad outside of Israel there was no noticeable difference between students who wanted a stronger connection to the Jewish community abroad (32.48%) and those who did not (35.90%). Many of the students who wished they had a stronger connection to the Jewish community during their study abroad experience outside of Israel made an effort to both express their Jewish identity (47.4%, N=18) and connect to the Jewish community abroad (42.1%, N=16). This data suggests that even though a sizeable percentage of the Jewish students are unsatisfied with their Jewish experience study outside of Israel, many are at least taking the initiative to establish Jewish connections abroad. Some of the students report that they would have rather expressed their Judaism abroad through connections with other American Jewish students abroad. One-third of the respondents indicated that they would have liked to have an opportunity to meet other American Jews studying abroad in their host country. Another one-third of the students expressed no interest in this option and the final third remained ambivalent.

DISCUSSION

Jewish students who study abroad outside of Israel are unquestionably less Jewishly affiliated, less Jewishly educated and less engaged with the Jewish community in the United States than Jewish students who study abroad in Israel. Jewish organizations and philanthropists seeking to counter the effects of cultural assimilation and declining group cohesion among Jews might better meet their goals by focusing their efforts on using the study abroad experience both in and outside of Israel as a way to engage Jewish students. Jewish students who study abroad outside of Israel have trouble building connections with Jewish organizations both on campus and while they are abroad. Whether out of lack of time, lack of effort or inability to manage the cultural differences between global Jewish communities, Jewish students are not engaging with the Jewish community during their study abroad experiences as much as they could or want to.

Despite the lack of central organization or of adequate information sharing concerning Jewish connections outside of Israel, about one-third of the Jewish students who study outside of Israel do find venues for connecting to the Jewish community. These connections range from the attendance of religious services and holiday celebrations, to learning about global Jewish history and following news reports about Israel. However, connections between American Jewish students abroad and local Jewish communities are tenuous at best. *In the spirit of klal yisrael (the shared sense of community among the entire Jewish community) the organized Jewish community stands to benefit from developing a method to engage and connect American Jewish college students to Jewish life during their study abroad experiences.*

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The majority of Jewish students will not seek out Jewish connections abroad for themselves. American Jewish organizations must inject and devise a calculated plan of action to increase the number of students engaging in meaningful Jewish experiences abroad. Even though there is much work to be done in this area, the Jewish community is not standing idly by. Recently, Hillel International began to take steps to develop a program to engage students in Jewish life during study abroad. A recent article published by the Jewish Telegraphic Agency (Spritzer, 2007) described this new initiative, in which the International Division of Hillel would make an effort to match Jewish students studying abroad in Prague to Passover Seders. The plan is to use newly established connections with the World Union of Jewish Students (WUJS) to provide a Jewish connection for American Jewish students abroad. While the Passover-in-Prague effort is an excellent start, it is only the tip of the iceberg for the development of a program for Jewish students studying abroad. The following are concrete recommendations for the Jewish community to begin to develop such a program:

CREATE A STRATEGIC NETWORK

HILLEL INTERNATIONAL SHOULD SERVE AS THE LEAD ORGANIZATION IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF A STRATEGIC NETWORK WHOSE COMBINED GOAL IS TO CREATE MEANINGFUL JEWISH EXPERIENCES FOR JEWISH STUDENTS DURING THEIR TIME STUDYING ABROAD. THE NETWORK SHOULD BE COMPRISED OF HILLEL, WUJS, THE JDC, THE AJC, AJWS, COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY JUDAIC STUDIES DEPARTMENTS AND STUDY ABROAD OFFICES.

Jewish organizations should seek ways to integrate Judaism and connection with the Jewish community into existing study abroad experiences. **Hillel** has expertise in developing successful programming for Jewish college students. However, they lack

knowledge of the infrastructure of Jewish communities abroad. While Hillel does have an International Division, their recent strategic plan seems to suggest that international expansion is not a priority for the organization. Creating meaningful Jewish experiences for American Jewish college students, however, is clearly a priority. Since American college students are studying abroad in increasing numbers and Jewish students seem to be following this trend, it would seem that Hillel has increasing vested interest in international expansion.

The renewed partnership between Hillel and WUJS is a promising beginning to this strategic network. WUJS understands global Jewry and young adults outside of the United States but cannot in all honesty refer to themselves as the “world union” of Jewish students if they do not effectively engage the 68.3% of Diaspora Jewry (DellaPergola, 2006) living in the United States. It is probable that WUJS, a mostly student run organization, would have no idea of how to expand into the United States, let alone understand what it means to be a college student at the average American college or university. The Hillel-WUJUS partnership seems to be *bashert* – a match made in heaven.

Other American Jewish organizations ideal for this strategic network include organizations that have an international reach outside of Israel. Organizations such as the **American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC)** that works to fund the development of Jewish communities abroad, the **American Jewish Committee (AJC)** that helps influence international policy and maintain high-level diplomatic relationships on behalf of the Jewish people, and the **American Jewish World Service (AJWS)** that works to involve Jews in global social action and social justice programs, have the

international resources and networking to be instrumental in the creation of a successful plan to engage Jewish students abroad. Additionally, most of these organizations stand to benefit from increased name recognition among a younger population.

The third component of this strategic network should be college and university **Judaic studies departments**. This study shows that high percentages of Jewish students are participating in Judaic studies courses. However, Jewish organizations have not yet taken advantage of the potential for the creation of academically based Jewish engagement opportunities in partnership with Judaic studies departments. The Association for Judaic Studies (AJS) – “a learned society and professional organization that seeks to promote, maintain, and improve teaching, research, and related endeavors in Jewish Studies in colleges, universities, and other institutions of higher learning” – might be a perfect partner to compliment this network. AJS and Jewish studies departments could help write curriculum or design courses for Jewish students to learn about the history or Jewish culture of their host countries. A fourth component of this network should be group of Jewish professionals and a team of dedicated lay leaders to manage the partnership, complete daily tasks and raise funding for programs and special initiatives.

A fourth component to this network should be the **study abroad offices** of colleges and universities with over 10% Jewish population. Initiatives to engage Jewish students are likely to be more successful at schools with large Jewish populations. Therefore some of the study abroad offices consulted to conduct this survey should be engaged in developing a creative way to integrate meaningful Jewish experiences into study abroad.

START WHERE THE JEWS ARE

PROGRAMMATIC INITIATIVES TO ENGAGE JEWISH STUDENTS ABROAD SHOULD BEGIN IN THE COUNTRIES WHERE JEWISH STUDENTS ARE MOST LIKELY TO STUDY ABROAD. THESE COUNTRIES INCLUDE THE UNITED KINGDOM, SPAIN AND AUSTRALIA.

The United Kingdom, Spain and Australia are all good choices for countries to begin programmatic initiatives aimed at engaging Jewish students during study abroad experiences. According to the 2006 American Jewish Yearbook, the Jewish community in the United Kingdom (the most popular study abroad destination outside of Israel for Jewish students) is the world's 5th largest with 297,000 Jews, and the Jewish community in Australia (the 3rd most popular study abroad destination outside of Israel for Jewish students) is the world's 9th largest Jewish community with 103,000 Jews (DellaPergola, 2006). Considering the sizeable Jewish populations in these countries and the fact that English is the official language in both of these countries, creating opportunities for Jewish students studying abroad to interact with the Jewish communities there seems highly feasible. Spain, the 2nd most popular study abroad destination for Jewish students outside of Israel, has a Jewish population of only 12,000 (DellaPergola, 2006). However, opportunities for Jewish engagement in Spain could focus on the rich Jewish history in the Iberian Peninsula.

DO WHAT STUDENTS LIKE

THE FIRST ACTIVITIES OF THE COALITION SHOULD BE IN LINE WITH THE INTERESTS OF THE JEWISH STUDENTS WHO STUDY ABROAD. TOP INTERESTS FOR THESE STUDENTS INCLUDE: LEARNING ABOUT JEWISH HISTORY (INCLUDING JEWISH TOURISM), FOLLOWING NEWS ABOUT ISRAEL AND CONNECTION WITH FOREIGN JEWISH PEERS.

One way that Jewish connections could be built into the study abroad experience is by encouraging American colleges and universities to supplement existing courses

abroad with Judaic Studies courses. The Judaic Studies offerings abroad could focus on country-, region- or city-specific Jewish history, Jewish thought or Jewish culture. Additionally, credit-bearing short-term programs could be built into the Judaic studies curriculum that offer students an intensive look at Jewish life or Jewish history abroad. These short-term programs could be designed so that they supplement existing programs and allow for the participation of students who are already abroad. For example, if a Jewish student studies abroad for the spring semester in Barcelona, he or she should be able to enroll in a 2 week credit-bearing program examining Jewish history in Cordoba. These credit-bearing programs could be organized by colleges and universities or by Jewish organizations. Organizations such as **American Jewish World Service** could also benefit by integrating their alternative breaks program into study abroad experiences. In addition, connections should be made to European Judaic Studies departments. According to the **European Association for Judaic Studies'** 1998 directory, there are nearly 300 European university departments and institutions teaching Jewish studies.

An opportunity exists to engage Jewish students studying abroad outside of Israel in meaningful Jewish experiences through travel to Israel. Almost 50% of the Jewish students who study abroad outside of Israel report having never traveled to Israel. Additionally, one of the most popular ways Jewish students reported connected to the Jewish community during their study abroad experience was through following news reports about Israel. These factors make it reasonable for programs such as **birthright israel** or other short-term travel programs in Israel to explore the idea of designing an experience especially for Jewish students studying abroad outside of Israel. These trips could be organized by study abroad country and integrate information about Jewish

culture and immigration from the student's host country. These programs to Israel could also integrate American Jews with Jewish peers from their host country. This way birthright israel could be used as an opportunity to engage students in developing a meaningful connection with Israel and a peer-based connection to the Jewish community of their host country.

The majority of the Jewish students studying abroad outside of Israel were social science majors. A disproportionate number of the students were studying either Political Science or International Relations. Presumably, these students are highly interested in learning about foreign politics, foreign governments and the way the way different groups interact abroad. The **American Jewish Committee** could play a role in helping Jewish students majoring in International Relations or Political Science develop a connection to the government of their host country by organizing an internship program that places academically gifted young Jews studying abroad in government offices for credit-bearing internship experiences. This experience could prove beneficial as it would expose young Jews to the extensive AJC network and the seemingly unlimited political possibilities that come with AJC affiliation.

DO WHAT STUDENTS NEED

ENSURE THAT EVERY JEWISH COLLEGE STUDENT STUDYING ABROAD OUTSIDE OF ISRAEL HAS THE OPPORTUNITY TO PARTICIPATE IN HOLIDAY AND OTHER RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCES DURING THEIR TIME ABROAD.

Jewish students need opportunities to celebrate Jewish holidays during their study abroad experiences. Whether individually, with other American students, or with foreign natives, steps must be taken to ensure that no student studying abroad seeking a Jewish connection goes without being able to celebrate Jewish holidays abroad. The **Joint**

Distribution Committee could play a role in helping students to better connect to Jewish communities abroad by implementing a program to match American Jewish students with foreign Jewish families for the holidays in countries with significant Jewish populations.

USE TECHNOLOGY

DEVELOP A "JEWISH STUDY ABROAD" WEBSITE. PUBLICIZE THE URL WITH CAMPUS HILLELS AND STUDY ABROAD OFFICES ACROSS THE COUNTRY.

Several Jewish students expressed looking for information on Jewish connections for their study abroad experiences but commented that they were unable to find the information that they needed about the Jewish communities abroad. The development of a "Jewish study abroad" website would alleviate this problem. This website could include:

- ✧ Information on global Jewish communities, including synagogue and community contact information and country-specific safety and security protocol (for example, in Argentina you are not allowed to take pictures of the synagogues unless you have approval, and in many European countries a passport is required for entry into synagogues, even during services].)
- ✧ A second-generation website interface (similar to MySpace or Facebook) so that Jewish students studying abroad could network among themselves and create Jewish community on their own terms. Instead of creating an entirely Jewish website, find ways to integrate Jewish study abroad with existing second-generation sites such as MySpace and Facebook.
- ✧ A listing of long- and short-term Jewish study abroad experiences outside of Israel and links to Judaic Studies Departments in those countries
- ✧ Country- and city-specific Jewish history and tourist attractions

- ✧ Blogs from Jewish students studying abroad and members of Jewish communities outside of the United States
- ✧ A monthly e-newsletter highlighting Jewish students abroad and Jewish study abroad programs

The growing number of college students participating in study abroad presents a new, untraditional opportunity for American Jewish organizations to reach out to Jewish college students. Hillel's recent efforts to connect American Jewish college students abroad to the Jewish community in Prague for Passover seders is a step in the right direction. Time will tell if Hillel and other Jewish organizations seize this opportunity and work collaboratively to provide Jewish experiences for American Jewish students during their time abroad, thereby enhancing their Jewish identities and increasing their connection to *klal yisrael*.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

TEXT OF EMAIL INVITING STUDENTS TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY

Looking for a way to win some free mp3s?!?

Fill out a survey about your study abroad experiences and be entered in a raffle to win one of four \$20 gift cards to I-tunes!

Click [here](#) to complete the survey.

This survey is being conducted as part of a graduate thesis at the University of Southern California and Hebrew Union College. The survey should take no longer than 20 minutes of your time.

Thank you for your participation.

Aaron

Aaron W. Pratt
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TEXT OF EMAIL INVITING THIRD YEAR STUDENTS TO TAKE "FOLLOW-UP" SURVEY

Thank you for recently completing the Study Abroad Survey that I am conducting for my thesis.

You probably didn't know it when you filled out the survey but **your responses are particularly important** to my study!

I ask that you **please fill out an additional short survey** about your study abroad experiences. The survey should take no longer than 15 minutes of your time.

Find the survey at:

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.asp?u=468803365553>

Again, this survey is being conducted as part of a graduate thesis at the University of Southern California and Hebrew Union College. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me at the email address listed below.

Thank you for your continued help and participation.

Aaron

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APPENDIX B

SURVEY

Study Abroad Survey

Introduction

This questionnaire is part of a study to better understand the religious and ethnic identification of American college students who spend a portion of their undergraduate experience studying outside of the United States.

This study is being conducted to fulfill the Masters Thesis requirement of the School of Jewish Communal Service at Hebrew Union College and the School of Policy, Planning and Development at the University of Southern California.

Complete the survey and win music from I-tunes!

Those completing the survey **before February 19th** will be entered in a raffle to win one of four \$20 gift certificates at I-tunes. To enter, simply provide your email address on the last page of the survey questionnaire. Your email address will be kept confidential and will not be attached to the results of the survey in any way.

Time involvement:

This survey should take no more than 20 minutes of your time.

Participants' Rights:

Participation in this study is voluntary. You have the right to withdraw your consent or discontinue participation at any time without penalty. Your individual privacy will be maintained in all published and written data resulting from the study.

If you have questions about your rights as a study participant, or are dissatisfied at any time with any aspect of this study, you may contact – anonymously, if you wish – Marla Abraham, Interm Director of the HUC-JIR School of Jewish Communal Service: mabraham@huc.edu, 3077 University Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90007, or toll-free at 800-899-0925.

If you are interested in finding out the results of the study, please contact Hebrew Union College, School of Jewish Communal Service in May, 2007 at 800-899-0925.

For questions about this study please contact the researcher, Aaron Pratt at apratt@usc.edu.

By completing this survey, you give permission for your responses to be included in the study and in any published results.

Please Click "Next" to get started with the survey.

**If you'd like to leave the survey at any time, just click "Exit this survey".
Your answers will be saved.**

Don't forget to press "submit" when you're finished.

About you

Please fill out the following questions about you.

What is your Gender?

Female
Male

What is your major?

Engineering
Humanities
Agriculture
Business & Management
Physical Sciences
Undeclared
Foreign Languages
Math or Computer Science
Fine or Applied Arts
Social Sciences
Other (please specify)

How many times did you study abroad during your undergraduate experience?

0
1
2
3
4+

Study Abroad- (2 times)

(Number of times depended on previous answer)

Please list the city and country of each of your study abroad experiences in chronological order:

Country 1:
City 1:
Country 2:
City 2:

During which year of college did you participate in your first study abroad experience?

First
Second
Third
Fourth
Fifth or more
Other

How long was your first study abroad experience?

- More than one academic year
- One academic year
- One semester
- Less than one semester
- Other (please specify)

During which year of college did you participate in your second study abroad experience?

- First
- Second
- Third
- Fourth
- Fifth or more
- Other

How long was your second study abroad experience?

- More than one academic year
- One academic year
- One semester
- Less than one semester
- Other (please specify)

More about Study Abroad

What college or University do you currently attend?

At what American college(s) or university(ies) were you enrolled during your study abroad experiences?

There are many ways that a person can describe his or her ethnicity. Would you describe yourself as any of the following:

	Yes	Partly	No
African American	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Asian American	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Hispanic / Latino	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Native American	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Caucasian	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Arab	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Middle Eastern	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

What is your current religious preference?

- Catholic
- Protestant
- Muslim
- Jewish
- Buddhist
- Other
- None of the above
- I have no religious preference
- I do not wish to share this information

Ethnically/ Culturally Jewish?

Students who answered "other," "None of the Above," "I have no religious preferences," or "I do not wish to share this information received the following question:

Do you identify at all as being culturally or ethnically Jewish?

Yes

No

Jewishness and the Study Abroad Experience

Select the Jewish holidays that occurred during at least one of your study abroad experiences:

Passover

Channukkah

Rosh Hashana

Yom Kippur

In which of the following ways did you express your Judaism during your study abroad experience:

Learned about the Jewish history of my host country

Followed news reports about Israel

Kept Kosher

Lit Hannukah candles

Made friends with members of the Jewish community in my host country

Participated in a Passover seder

I did not express my Judaism during my study abroad experience

Attended Shabbat services at a local synagogue

Attended High Holiday services at a local synagogue

Other (please specify)

Please select the option that best corresponds to your feelings about each statement on the left. When answering, please consider all of your study abroad experiences.

Strongly	Disagree	Neither	Agree	Strongly	Don't
Disagree		Disagree		Agree	know
		nor Agree			

I know nothing about the Jewish community in the country where I studied.

I made an effort to express my Judaism during my study abroad experiences.

I made an effort to connect to the Jewish community during my study abroad experiences.

I wish that my connection to the Jewish community had been stronger during my study abroad experiences.

Language barriers prevented me from making a strong connection to the Jewish community in my host country during my study abroad experiences.

Cultural barriers prevented me from making a strong connection to the Jewish community in my host country during my study abroad experiences.

I had no time to connect with the Jewish community during my study abroad experiences.

I wish there had been an organization working to help me build a connection to the Jewish community in my host country during my study abroad experiences.

I wish there had been an organization to help me find a Passover seder during my study abroad experiences.

I wish there had been an organization to help me find a synagogue during my study abroad experiences.

I wish there had been an organization to help me connect with Jewish peers from the country where I was studying.

I wish there had been an organization to connect me to other American Jews studying abroad in my host country.

I wish I had the option to take a class on the Jewish history of my host country for college credit.

Studying abroad gave me the opportunity to not be Jewish.

It was impossible to connect to the Jewish Community during my study abroad experience.

Your Jewish Identity

With which of these denominations of Judaism do you currently identify?

Orthodox

Traditional

Conservative

Reform

Reconstructionist

Secular/cultural Jew

Just Jewish/No denomination

None

Don't know

Other

For each of the following, please indicate your level of knowledge -- 0 being "No knowledge," 1 being "Very little knowledge" and 5 being "Substantial knowledge."

0 (No knowledge)	1 (Very little knowledge)	2 3 4	5 (Substantial knowledge)	Don't know
Jewish Culture				
Talmud				
Jewish History				
History of modern Israel				
Jewish prayer service				
Hebrew language				
Jewish mysticism				
Jewish Bible				

How important is each of the following to you in your life?

Not important	A little important	Somewhat important	Very important	Don't know
Making the world a better place				
Observing the Sabbath				
Having a rich spiritual life				
Countering anti-Semitism				
Caring about Israel				
Leading a moral and ethical life				
Remembering the Holocaust				
Caring for the poor				
Becoming successful in your professional (work) life				
Dating Jews				
Being very well off financially				
Marrying/Partnering with a Jewish person				
Supporting Jewish organizations				

Jewish Education

Which of the following types of Jewish education did you receive in grades 1 to 7? Check all that apply.

- One-day per week Jewish educational program, such as Sunday School
- A part-time Jewish school that met more than once a week, such as an afternoon Hebrew School
- I did not receive any type of Jewish education
- Don't remember/Don't know
- Bar/Bat Mitzvah Lessons/Tutoring
- Jewish Day School or Yeshivah (full time)
- Other (please specify)

Did you have a Bar or Bat Mitzvah?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know/ don't remember

During college, in which of the following Jewish organizations did you participate?

- Jewish fraternity or sorority
- Don't know/Don't remember
- Hillel
- Did not participate in Jewish groups at all
- Some other Jewish group or activity
- Other (please specify)

Have you ever taken any college level courses on Jewish subjects, such as Jewish history, the Holocaust or Hebrew?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know/ don't remember

Have you ever been on an organized travel or study program in Israel?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know/ don't remember

Travel to Israel

In which of the following types of Israel experiences have you been a participant?

- Don't know/ don't remember
- Youth group trip to Israel
- Middle or High School trip to Israel
- birthright israel
- Semester or year study in Israel
- Family trip to Israel
- College trip to Israel that is not birthright
- Other (please specify)

Being Jewish on Campus

How often have you attended some type of organized Jewish religious service during the past school year?

- Never
- Only on special occasions (bar/bat mitzvahs, weddings)
- Only on High Holidays (Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur)
- A few times
- Once a month
- Several times a month
- Weekly
- Daily

How often have you attended some type of organized Jewish religious service on campus?

- Never
- Only on special occasions (bar/bat mitzvahs, weddings)
- Only on High Holidays (Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur)
- A few times a year
- Once a month
- Several times a month
- Weekly
- Daily

When you're away at college how often do you...

	Always	Sometimes	Never
Refrain from spending money on the Sabbath?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Keep kosher?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Hold or attend a Passover seder?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Participate in the lighting of Hanukah candles during Hanukah?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

While on campus over the course of your undergraduate experience how often did you light Sabbath candles on Friday night?

- Weekly
- Monthly
- Never
- Once every few months
- Don't know

While on campus over the course of your undergraduate experience how often did you engage in Jewish study?

- Daily
- Weekly
- Monthly
- Once every few months
- Never

About how many of your closest friends from college are Jewish?

- None of them
- Some of them
- About half of them
- Most of them
- All of them
- Don't know

During the past year have you...

- Dated only Jews
- Dated mostly Jews
- Dated Jews and non-Jews about equally
- Dated mostly non-Jews
- Dated only non-Jews
- Not dated

Anything else...

In the space below please provide any other information that you would like the researcher to know about your religious and ethnic identity and your study abroad experience.

You're Done!

You have completed the survey. Thank you for your time.

Enter a Raffle to Win Music from I-Tunes!

As a thank you for completing this survey before February 19th you are eligible to enter a raffle to win one of four \$20 gift certificates for downloading music at I-tunes. To enter the raffle simply provide your email address below.

Winners will be contacted via email. Email addresses will not be attached to survey responses nor will they be shared in any way.

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