



## **Student Seminar:** Ten Ways International Study can Advance your Learning and Future Career

Dr. Jennifer MacDonald



山東財經大學  
SHANDONG UNIVERSITY OF FINANCE AND ECONOMICS



# Today's Agenda

---

Slides of today's presentation



- What do we mean by International Study?
- Ten Ways International Study can Advance Your Learning and Future Career
- Q&A (Question and Answer Period)

By the end of today's seminar I hope you will be able to:

- See connections between the skills developed during study abroad and the job market
- Reflect on whether international study could be right for you.



# About Me

- Linguist and Language Teacher, Education Professor
- Have created, taught and participated in international education programs for over 25 years
- I've been in your shoes!



Note:  
Not an  
actual  
picture of  
me





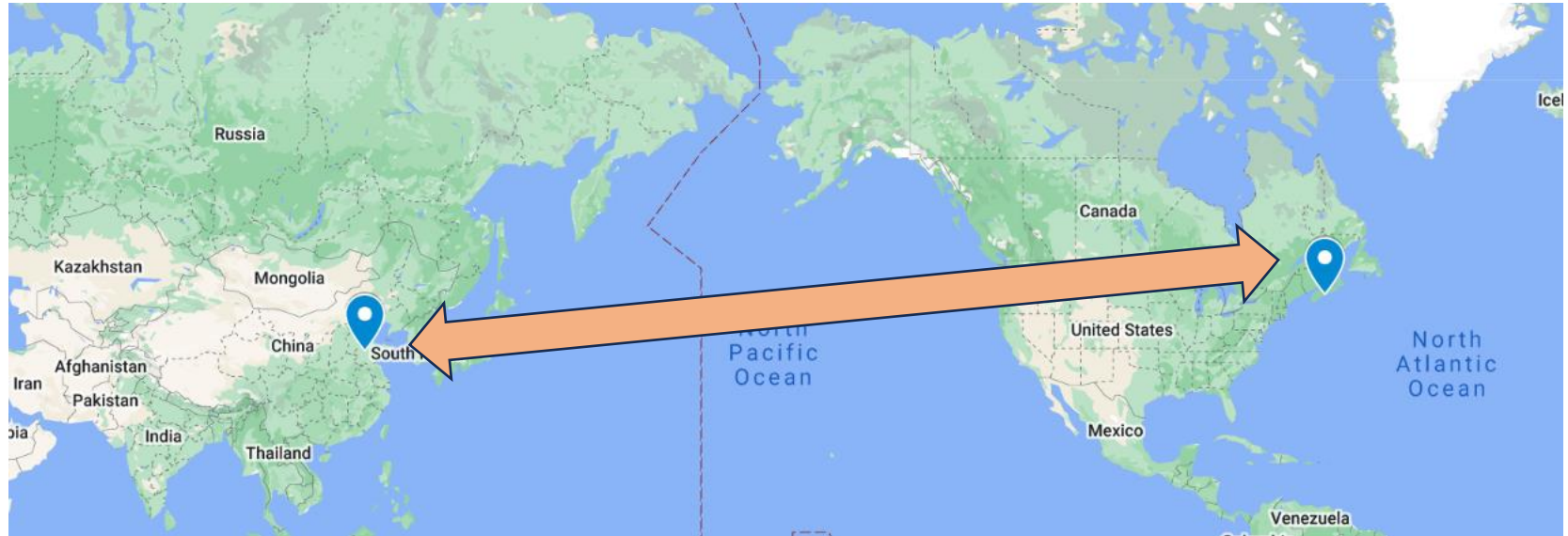
# From Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada to Jinan, Shandong



山東財經大學  
SHANDONG UNIVERSITY OF FINANCE AND ECONOMICS



**DALHOUSIE**  
UNIVERSITY





**Join this  
Mentimeter.  
Please  
introduce  
yourself.**



Join at [menti.com](https://menti.com) | use code 2952 1060

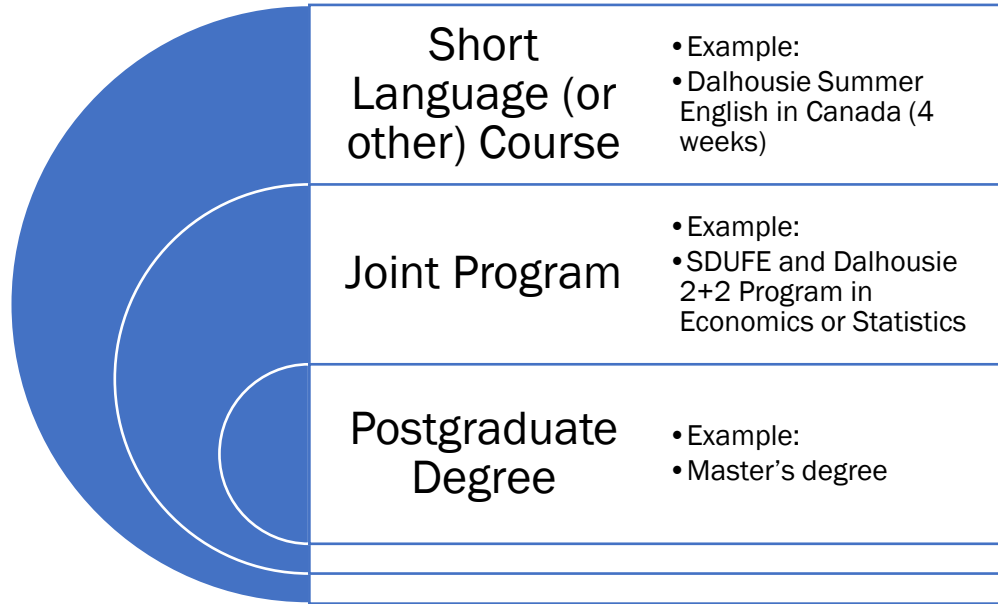


# **What do we mean by ‘International Study’?**

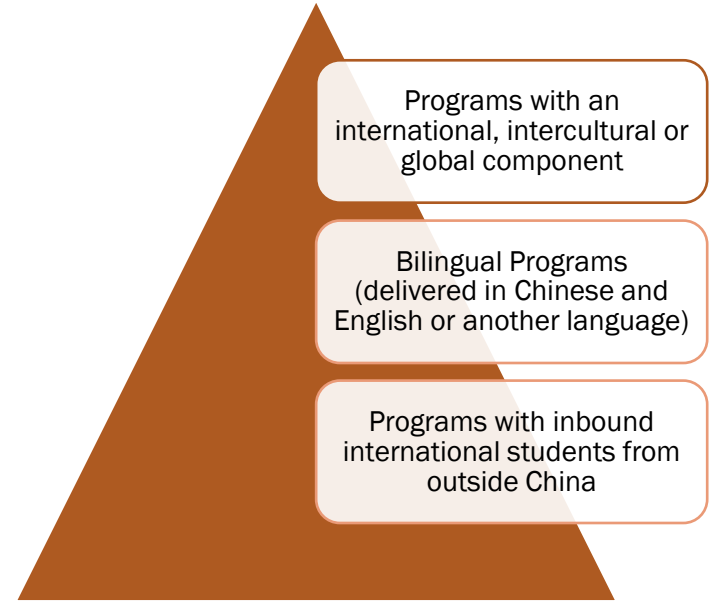


# Types of International Study

## Studying outside China (“Mobility”)



## Studying inside China (“at Home”)





---

# **Ten Ways International Study can Advance your Learning and Future Career**

1. Immersing yourself in a Language
2. Using Real-Life Communication Strategies
3. Learning English as an International Language
4. Experiencing a New Culture (Inside and Outside the Classroom)
5. Developing Intercultural Skills
6. Learning Discipline-Specific or Technical Language
7. Making Friends and Building a Professional Network
8. Adapting to a New Natural World
9. Experiencing Personal Development
10. Having Fun!





# **1. Immersing yourself in a Language**





# Language Immersion = Faster Learning

- **Language Immersion:** Living in a place where the language you're learning is used for daily life and studies
- You can learn a lot in a language class! But **living in that language all day, every day**, usually makes you learn faster.
- **Linguistic Risk-tasking. Learning happens** when you want to do something using that language but you don't know how to do it. (Slavkov, 2020)
  - It can lead to advances in your listening comprehension, communication, pronunciation, confidence and fluency

Slavkov, N. (2020). Where the magic happens: Fostering language learning, bilingualism and multilingualism through linguistic risk-taking. In T. Tinnefeld (Ed.), *The magic of language: productivity in linguistics and language teaching*. Vol. 11 (pp.47-69).



## **2. Using Real-life Communication Strategies**





**“I never  
learned this in  
a textbook!”**

- There is a gap between what can be taught in a classroom or via a textbook and real-life language in use.
- Examples:
  - Quick pronunciation and connected speech
  - Pragmatics: How language is used in social interactions and communication
  - Informal language and slang
- Real life is different than the IELTS exam! 😊
- Living abroad forces you to develop strategies to communicate in real-life contexts. (Diao and Tretman, 2021)

Diao, W. & Trentman, E. (2021). Language Learning in Study Abroad: The Multilingual Turn. Bristol, Blue Ridge Summit: Multilingual Matters. <https://doi.org/10.21832/9781800411340>





# “Teacher, how do I order at Subway?”



“I’ve learned the names of vegetables, cheeses, and condiments at school, but I don’t know what to say while ordering! I get so nervous with everyone waiting!”

→ Students deeply learned vocabulary, and social interaction in a restaurant in English.



### **3. Learning English as an International Language**





# **Beyond British/North American English, to International English**

## **Did you know?**

- Every day, most interactions in English in the world are between non-native speakers of English.
- There are more people in the world who use English as a second/additional language (1.077 billion) than who use it as a first/native language (380 million). (Wikipedia, 2024)
- Being able to use English effectively with other non-native speakers is just as important (or maybe more important) as using it with native speakers.

[Jenkins](#), J. (2012). English as a Lingua Franca from the classroom to the classroom. *ELT Journal*, 66(4), 486–494. <https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/ccs040>



## **Example: Using English as an International Language**



Photo from Dalhousie  
Summer English in  
Canada (2019)

Students and staff  
from China, Thailand,  
Germany, Norway,  
Mexico, Chile,  
Philippines, Japan and  
Canada.





**Do you have  
any questions  
or comments  
so far?**



Join at [menti.com](https://menti.com) | use code 2952 1060



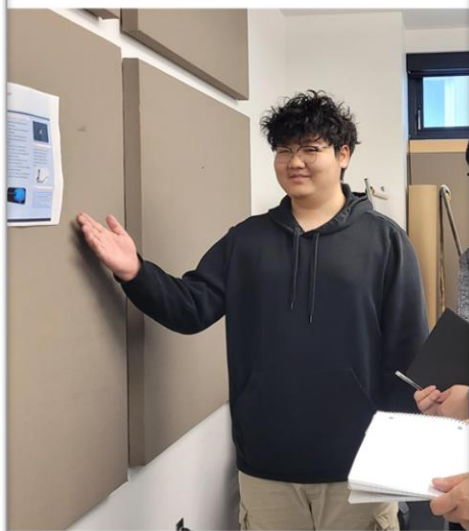
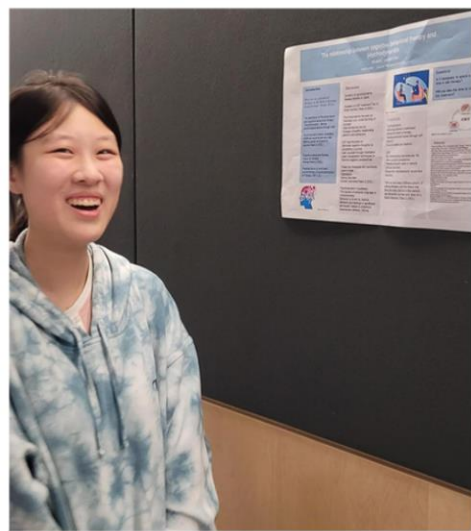
## **4. Experience New Cultures (Inside and Outside the Classroom)**





# Different Ways of Living and Learning

- Some countries (such as Canada), are very multi-cultural. There are people from different national, cultural, religious, racial, and linguistic backgrounds.
  - Example: Dalhousie University has students and staff from 110 countries.
- Learning about Canadian **cultures** as well as sharing Chinese culture is an enriching part of international study.
- **Educational Cultures.** University learning is different in different places.



# Poster Presentations

Speaking Assessment in the Academic English course at Dalhousie





## **5. Developing Intercultural Skills**





# Intercultural Competence at Work

The modern workplace is increasingly globalised and competitive. Communicating with customers, colleagues and partners across international borders is now an everyday occurrence for many workers around the world. Consequently, employers are under strong pressure to find employees who are not only technically proficient, but also culturally astute and able to thrive in a global work environment.

(British Council, 2013)



# Aspects of Intercultural Competence in the Workplace

British Council (2013). Culture AT WORK: The value of intercultural skills in the workplace. <https://www.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/culture-at-work-report-v2.pdf>





# Which aspects of Intercultural competency do you think are most important?

1. Respectful
2. Multilingual
3. Flexible
4. Builds trust
5. Accepts cultural differences
6. Adjust communication
7. Understands cultural differences
8. Aware of own culture
9. Tolerates ambiguity
10. Works in diverse teams
11. Adapts to different cultures
12. Continuous learner
13. Open to new ideas
14. Listens and Observes



Join at [menti.com](https://menti.com) | use code 2952 1060



## **6. Learning Discipline-Specific or Technical Knowledge and Language**







# Developing Specialized Language

- The more you advance your studies, the more you specialize your knowledge of your discipline/major/field
- You also have to develop the specialized English of your field

General English	Specialized English
General topics	Specialized, technical topics
Vocabulary related to life, travel, general things	Vocabulary related to your field, with specific meaning. Example: Inflation as a general definition, vs. physics, vs. economics
Writing short essays or paragraphs	Writing the type of documents you need to produce in your field (research, memos, emails, etc.)



# English for Economics



Dalhousie-SDUFE 2+2  
Student in Economics

Presenting some  
research she carried  
out on economics, in  
English.

She is using the  
technical English of  
economics.



# English and Marine Biology

English in Canada Program





**What is an example of some vocabulary related to your major?**



Join at [menti.com](https://menti.com) | use code 2952 1060





## **7. Making Friends and Building a Professional Network**







# Meeting People from China and Around the World

- Making friends is fun and is an enriching part of international study. 😊
- They can also be helpful professionally.
- You are building your **professional network** around the world.
  - Helpful for finding jobs or opportunities, or sharing professional information.
- “In leadership, relationships matter most.” (Molinaro, 2018)
  - If you become a manager, this is an important skill.



Molinaro, F. (Oct. 24, 2018). In Leadership, Relationships Matter Most. *Forbes*.  
<https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbeshumanresourcescouncil/2018/10/24/in-leadership-relationships-matter-most/?sh=48af1f404207>

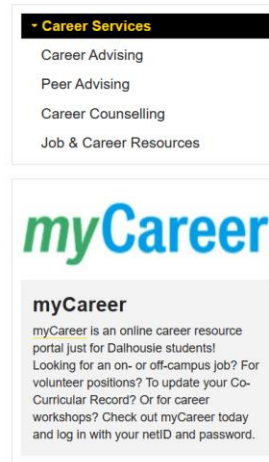


# Working Part-time and Building your Network

## Career Services



The Bissett Student Success Centre is here to assist you in finding jobs and developing your career path. With career advising, peer advising, career counselling, and our online resources,



- Many programs allow you to work part-time while studying.
- A part-time job can allow you to
  - Earn extra money
  - Gain work experience and build your resume
  - Gain professional contacts and relationships
  - Build leadership skills



# **8. Adapting to a New Natural World: Climate, Landscapes and Weather**





# Swapping Mountains for the Sea

- International Study forces you to adapt to new geography, climate and weather.
- Adaptability and flexibility are important skills for the workplace.



**“There’s no bad weather, just bad clothing!”**



Source: CityNews Halifax







## **9. Experiencing Personal Development**





# Become a Stronger Person

- Studying in another country is not always easy.
- International students report developing the following:
  - Independence
  - Resilience → being able to meet challenges
  - Open-mindedness
  - Problem-Solving skills
  - Empathy
  - Leadership skills
  - Self-confidence





# 10. Having Fun!







# The Benefits of Fun

- Studies suggest that having fun in life and at work can increase confident and creativity.
- This bolsters innovation.



LinkedIn Advice. (2024). How can you add fun to work and life to boost confidence and creativity?  
<https://www.linkedin.com/advice/0/how-can-you-add-fun-work-life-boost-confidence>

# How does all this advance my career?

21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills



**DALHOUSIE**  
UNIVERSITY





---

# Twenty-First Century Skills

A broad set of knowledge, skills, work habits, and character traits believed to be critically important to success in today's world, particularly in contemporary careers and workplaces.

[\(UNESCO-TVET Glossary of Terms\)](#)

---





# Twenty-First Century Skills

List of Skills mentioned today:

- Bilingualism in Chinese, English (and other languages), including technical English
- Intercultural Competence
- Networking and Relationship Building
- Independence
- Resilience
- Open-mindedness
- Problem-Solving skills
- Empathy
- Leadership skills
- Self-confidence
- Creativity
- Innovation

## Twenty-First Century Skills

- They are in demand by employers.
- Look for them in job postings
- Include them in your resume and cover letters
- Demonstrate them in job interviews
- Apply them doing your work to stand out





## **Some Statistics Around International Study/Study Abroad**

- 97% of students who study abroad find employment within 12 months of graduation and 25% earn higher salaries than their peers.
- 84% of study abroad alumni felt their studies abroad helped them build valuable skills for the job market.
- 80% of study abroad students reported that study abroad allowed them to better adapt better to diverse work environments.
- 70% of study abroad alumni claimed that because of study abroad they were more satisfied with their jobs.
- 59% of employers said study abroad would be valuable in an individual's career later on with their organization.



**Do you think  
these  
statistics  
would be  
similar in  
China?**



Join at [menti.com](https://menti.com) | use code 2952 1060



# Preparing for a World of AI







# Staying Relevant in the Face of AI

- Master AI and other technologies
- “Be a better human”
- Become skilled at the things AI cannot do well:
  - Relationship-building
  - Creativity
  - Critical thinking
  - Adaptability
  - Linguistic nuances of context, field, etc.
  - Empathy



**What other  
questions do  
you have about  
international  
study?**



Join at [menti.com](https://menti.com) | use code 2952 1060



# Discussion



# Recap

What did we cover today?



**DALHOUSIE**  
UNIVERSITY





# **Information Session for Students and Parents about Joint Program in Economics or Statistics with Dalhousie University:**

Saturday, March 30: Statistics Majors.

Sunday, March 31: Economics Majors.

You can join online or in person. In Chinese and English.







**For More Information**  
**English in Canada Program**  
**July 15 to August 9, 2024**

**[liuti@sdufe.edu.cn](mailto:liuti@sdufe.edu.cn)**

**Liu Ti, Program Officer,**  
**School of International Education**

**[www.dal.ca/els](http://www.dal.ca/els)**

**[els@dal.ca](mailto:els@dal.ca)**  
**(can email in Chinese or English)**







# For More Information about Dalhousie University

[www.dal.ca](http://www.dal.ca)



# THANK YOU

[jennifermacdonald@dal.ca](mailto:jennifermacdonald@dal.ca)



Link to today's slides