

**SIG Final Report Format**  
**Due date: August 15, 2015**

**Date:**

**A. Name & Title of Principal Investigators (include Department & College Affiliation)**

<u>Name &amp; Title of Principal Investigator(s)</u>	<u>Department &amp; College Affiliation</u>
Robert A. DeVillar	Dept. of Early Childhood and Elementary Education, BCOE
Binbin Jiang, co-PI	Dept. of Educational Leadership, BCOE
Darren Crovitz, co-PI	Dept. of English Education, CHSS
Kay Traille, co-PI	Dept. of History, CHSS

**B. Project/Program Name: The Effects of International Student Teaching Experiences on US Classroom Practice**

**C. Project ID: IRS 1501**

**D. Dates Covered by this Report: July 1, 2014 –June 30, 2015**

**E. Type of Grant: International Research & Scholarship Grant**

**F. Total Amount of Funding Awarded: \$20, 000**

**G. Total Amount of Funding Covered by this Report: \$44, 199.20**

**H. Report Certification:**

*I confirm that the information contained within this associated report for SIG Initiative funding is accurate and complete to the best of my knowledge. I further confirm my intention to continue implementation of this award according to the policies and procedures of the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia and Kennesaw State University.*

<u>Name &amp; Title of Principal Investigator(s)</u>	<u>Signature of Agreement</u>	<u>Date</u>
Robert A. DeVillar	<i>Robert A. DeVillar</i>	Aug. 15, 2015
Binbin Jiang	<i>Binbin Jiang</i>	Aug. 15, 2015

*\*Final written reports are due by August 15 for all awards*

**Narrative:**

1. Please describe the activities completed in support of the stated goals and objectives/outcomes for this grant. If your award required quarterly reports, please describe both the activities completed in the past quarter and the overall progress made toward the stated goals and objectives.
  - 1) Designed a survey instrument to examine the perceptions of the former international student teachers regarding the transfer, adaptation and integration of their international student teaching experiences to their current instructional practices in their US classrooms. The research received IRB approval.
  - 2) The survey's theoretical framework and format were designed, and items produced in the main by the principle investigator. A number of content-specific questions were generated and added by the co-principle investigators to complement and strengthen the survey. The survey was piloted and then distributed electronically to approximately 200 former international student teaching participants, 52 (26%) of whom participated in the online survey, representing current teachers in pre-K, elementary and secondary schools with contents ranging from language arts, art/music and social studies, to science and math. Nine males and forty-three females completed surveys. Forty-five (87%) participants self-identified as White Americans. Participants of the study are K-12 teachers who formerly completed their semester-long international student teaching experience offered by a large public university in the Southeastern US. The former student teachers student taught in one of the six countries: Belize, China, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Mexico, or Uganda. The preliminary survey data were analyzed by Dr. Woong Lim and reported to the research team.
  - 3) The research team developed the interview protocol based on the results of the quantitative survey and the protocol developed by DeVillar and Jiang in their previously published pilot study. The protocol received IRB approval prior to being implemented.
  - 4) The research team integrated new research team members to conduct interviews (Drs. Douglas Bell & Jennifer Dail; and Dr. Stacy Delacruz) and identified potential participants for the interviews and distributed assignments and projected completion dates.
  - 5) The last quarter of activities included interviewing, transcribing, and analyzing the interviews of twenty-two former student teachers, seventeen of whom (77%) were female and five (23%), male. Further, eleven of the interviewees (50%) completed their student teaching abroad within

the past five years, and the other eleven completed their student teaching abroad more than five years ago. Dr. Jiang and Dr. DeVillar focused on the analysis of the qualitative data and worked with two GRAs in this process.

- 6) Dr. Jiang and Dr. DeVillar completed the initial overall analysis of the qualitative data and the writing of the report. In addition, they have submitted proposals based on the findings of the study to two national conferences and have received acceptance notification from one of the conferences of the proposal. The accepted proposal was submitted under the names of the PI and all co-PIs.
2. What impact did your grant make toward advancing KSU's Strategic Plan for Internationalization? If your award required quarterly reports, please describe both the impact this past quarter as well as the overall impact.

This International Research & Scholarship Grant directly addressed KSU's Strategic Plan for Internationalization (SIG). Specifically, it addressed Goal 1, Objective 3 (improve quality of education abroad by developing formal assessment and evaluation mechanisms alongside recommendations for improving outcomes; Goal 2, Objective 3 (Support faculty and student research, scholarly and creative activity that significantly contributes to the internationalization of the local KSU community); Goal 4, Objective 3 (Promote community outreach to share KSU's globally-focused learning activities to the local community); Goal 6, Object 1 (Support profile-raising initiatives that directly advance one or more other strategic priorities for campus internationalization and build upon existing programs with a reputation for distinction and excellence); and Goal 7, Objective 2 (Develop new metrics and data collection tools to track, assess and evaluate the outcomes associated with individual internationalization activities).

The survey and interview protocol developed through this grant and the findings of this research not only address the above goals of the KSU's Strategic Plan for Internationalization but contributes knowledge and understanding of opportunities and constraints upon practicing teachers to transfer, adapt and integrate relevant aspects of their student teaching abroad experiences to various levels (primary and secondary, including distinct subject matter areas associated with the latter level of

schooling) of US classrooms especially as we present our research findings at national conferences and other venues.

3. Were there any unanticipated results, either positive or negative, that you have not already described above or in previous quarterly reports? If yes, please describe the implications as well as possibilities for follow-on programs/projects.

No.

**Budget Report**

*\*This is not a request for payment. This report should only reflect costs already submitted for payment through IGI and how the actual cost of items may have differed from the expected costs listed in your proposal.*

<u>Item</u>	<u>Expected Cost</u>	<u>Actual Cost</u>	<u>Funds from Other Sources</u>	<u>Total</u>
Survey Development	Summer Stipend: \$4,000	\$3,900 \$156 (Survey Monkey)	\$7,700	\$11,756
Classroom Observation & Interviews	\$10,000	\$12,043.20	b. BCOE Course Release Subtotal: \$12,000 c. CHSS one course release: \$3,000 c. Other support (data gathering equipment) \$500	\$27,543.20
Mileage (see Appendix B)	\$ 2,500			
Transcriptions	\$ 3,500	\$3,900		\$3,900
Office Supplies/Copies	–		\$1,000	\$1,000
Sub-Total	\$20,000	\$19,999.20	\$24,200	\$44,199.20

**Budget Narrative**

Use this space to explain clearly your use of funds for the duration of this program/project, as well as how and why your actual use of funds differed from your expected use of funds.

**Grant Funded Expenses:**

Spring 2015 Compensation (non-PI/co-PIs, but part of research team: Lim, for survey development and analysis: **\$3,900. In addition, there is a \$156 Survey Monkey fee.**

Interviews and Analysis: **\$12,043.20**

This includes Faculty interviewers Drs. Jennifer Dail, Doug Bell and Stacy Delacruz (\$1,300 each). In addition, Dr. Robert DeVillar's time in the summer 2015 analyzing the interview data.

Transcription: This includes the transcriptions of the interviews by Drs. Jennifer Dail, Doug Bell and Stacy Delacruz (\$1,300 each).

**TOTAL FUNDING REQUEST ..... \$19,999.20**

**Institutional Support/In-Kind Expenses**

BCOE:

- a. Summer Stipend of 10% salary stipend = \$7,700
- b. Course Release for PI (Fall & Spring) = \$6,000
- c. Course Release for Co-PI (Fall & Spring) = \$6,000
- d. Use of voice recorders = \$300
- e. Use of office supplies/copiers for the project = \$1,000

CHSS:

- a. One course release for Co-PI = \$3,000
- b. Use of voice recorders = \$200

**TOTAL INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT..... \$24,200**

**Assessment**

1. Describe progress made toward the Assessment Plan outlined in your proposal. Refer to the specific metrics listed in your proposal as a means to assessing and evaluating project outcomes at the end of the funding period. Explain if and how the results of the project/program differed from your expectations, as well as the implications of these differences.

One measure of the success of this proposed project is the degree to which adherence to the proposed timeline provided is respected. The project followed the timeline and expectations specified in the original proposal overall. The only difference is the proposed classroom observations were not implemented due to the extended time in getting participants in completing surveys; thus, there was not sufficient time to implement classroom observations due to the lengthy process of getting approval and permission from various school districts. This modification reduces a source of data collection in the qualitative research design. However, we designed a wide range of interview

questions to obtain multiple dimensions of content specific and professional as well as cultural development questions to enrich the data collected.

The summative metrics include the findings of the survey analysis and the findings of the interview analysis involving former student teachers, which will be presented in the next section of this final report. Summative metrics also include the two proposals submitted to highly competitive and national and international conferences. In addition, the findings will be shared through publications as journal articles and/or book chapters in the future.

2. If applicable, attach a copy of any assessment tool/instrument used for this project/program.  
NA.
3. If applicable, describe any data results collected and analyzed.

#### Survey Findings:

Fifty-two participants responded to STAX survey with nine male and forty-three female students. Overall, (1) the survey data demonstrate a high level of agreement (n=42; mean score = 5.3 with min=1 and max=6) to positive experiences through STAX. (2) The survey data also indicate diverse orientations among participants towards people, places, different cultures and languages with the majority of participants shaping positive global perspectives with more interests and open-mindedness for people, places, and languages and cultures. (3) Additionally, STAX data suggest that participants added STA experience to their content specific teacher knowledge and skill by transferring STAX to classroom teaching practice.

##### (1) Positive STA Experiences

STAX participants demonstrated a high level of agreement (i.e., agree or strongly agree) to statements about positive STA experiences. The mean score of the participants was 5.3 (with 1 = “strongly disagree”; 6 = “strongly agree”). The statements include: “If I had the opportunity to engage in student teaching again, I would choose to student teach abroad”;

“I took full advantage of my STA instructional experience”; “I took full advantage of my STA cultural experience”; and “My personal development was significantly increased as a result of my STA experience.” As for professional development skills, the ratings of agreement ranged from very few disagreements (n=3) to many agreements (n=29) with varying degrees. More specifically, participants indicated that qualities such as flexibility, open-mindedness, and resourcefulness were strengthened during STAX; and classroom management was identified as the least developed area during STAX compared with other quality areas.

### (2) Increased Understanding on People, Places, and Different Experiences

STAX participants indicated initial interest in new experiences during STAX, and their responses indicate that their appreciation of different cultures and languages increased during STAX. For example, 30 participants out of 47 responses stated they strongly agree that they took full advantage of the STA cultural experience; most participants (33 out of 47) stated that they strongly agree that their personal developments were significantly increased as a result of STA experience; and 44 participants out of 45 responses stated, “My STA experiences significantly increased my appreciation of a culture different from my own.” With regard to developing a sensitivity to language in classroom, most participants (41 out of 45 respondents) agreed that they realized the importance of using students’ native languages in the classroom to support their learning – 16 participants said it was before their STA experience and 21 participants said it was after their STA experience in reference to the timing of the realization.

### (3) Use of STAX skills in the Classroom

STAX data indicate that participants believed certain professional skills developed during STAX were more relevant in the qualities that impact classroom practice than others. For example, technology integration was most related to the participants’ skills of flexibility

(n=19); and interaction with students was most related to participant's open-mindedness (n=21). Lesson planning was identified most associated with participants' creativity (n=15). STAX data also demonstrate the ways participants incorporate cultural perspectives in classroom teaching: reading materials (n=9), various media (n=7), instructional examples (n=18), and activities (n=17). However, the following ways were found not being used as often as the ones previous mentioned: handouts (n=0), test items (n=1), guests (n=1), and field strips (n=0).

Regarding STAX and its impact on the content instruction, a statistically significant level of agreement ( $F(3,13)=16.4$ ;  $p < .05$ ) with one-way ANOVA test is found to support that participants agreed that skills related to teaching Problem Solving were rated the most developed during STAX (Mathematics); and skills related to teaching Literature ( $F(3,11)=9.4$ ;  $p < .05$ ) with one-way ANOVA test were rated the most used in current teaching (Language Arts). In Social Studies, it is statistically significant ( $t(17) = 1.74$ ;  $p < .05$  one-tailed) with student t-test with the participant group mean score vs. the group mean score of 3 ( $M=3$ ;  $SD=unknown$ ) that corresponds to a statement, "somewhat disagree" that participants have a high agreement to the following statements: (1) "I am now more aware that the social language proficiency of my students is not a reliable indicator of their understanding of history-specific language ( $M=5.7$ ,  $SD=0.43$ )," and (2) "I include more stories myths and legends from around the world to explain how events are viewed by world cultures ( $M=5.5$ ,  $SD=0.74$ )."

Additionally, STAX data imply that participants prioritized the skills developed during STAX unlike they did actual skills for instruction. For mathematics, participants ranked Problem Solving as the most developed skills during STAX followed by Numbers and Operations, Algebraic Thinking, Measurement and Data, Geometry, and Statistics/Probability. But they ranked Algebraic Thinking as the most used skill for instruction

after STAX, followed by Problem Solving, Statistics/Probability, Geometry, Number and Operations, and Measurement and Data. For English, participants ranked English Grammar as the most developed skills during STAX followed by Literature, Writing, and Multimodal Text; however, English Grammar was least used skills for instruction after STAX, and Literature (ranked first), Writing, and Multimodal Text were considered as important skills for instruction.

### Interview Findings

Twenty-two former student teachers were interviewed, seventeen of whom (77%) were female and five (23%), male. Further, eleven of the interviewees (50%) completed their student teaching abroad within the past five years, and the other eleven completed their student teaching abroad more than five years ago. The former student teachers student taught in one of the six countries: Belize, China, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Mexico, or Uganda. The preliminary findings include the following major themes.

#### Theme One: Appreciation of student diversity

While respondents differ in their discussion of the significance of their students' diversity relative to their classroom or their personal experience teaching, most share a sense that their awareness of this diversity was amplified by their STA experience. Different transcripts foreground different facets of their students' diversity, but a general model of diversity can apply to their variously-focused discussions. This model would define student diversity as variations among students in cultural background, language use, socioeconomic background, expectations about school, and individual work and learning styles.

Respondents indicated that student teaching abroad increased their awareness of diversity in student populations. Frequently, they directly indicate that the diversity of their STA

student groups and/or comparison of their STA students with those in contexts upon return raised awareness by a kind of contrastive demonstration of diversity.

With respect to an increased awareness, the respondents directly link their experience of differences among their students and cultural contexts and the respondents' own ability to develop responsiveness to cultural difference as practitioners. How they achieve this in their classrooms becomes a point of divergence, as the fact that diversity exists in the classroom is much more unified across various transcripts than views of what it looks like. These variations begin to distinguish potential sub-themes branching from a discussion of student diversity generally.

a. Student diversity and differentiation:

The more popular response to student diversity in the classroom is as a [catalyst] for differentiation. In the transcripts, respondents both mention differentiation explicitly, or discuss ways of altering curriculum and instructions to increase access and success specifically in conversation with their students' diversity. Where this occurs, it is usually as the direct follow-up to identifying a heightened awareness of the variations among their students.

b. Diversity as an instructional need

While other sub-theme defining models also consider how to respond to diversity in their classroom, they cast it in a different light. Rather than as a set of considerations for relevance and variety, some present diversity as presenting varying needs for the students.

“Cultural responsiveness is where you'll get more of what I got out of Costa Rica, or traveling anywhere. ...I thought the biggest thing is that we had kids from everywhere because it was an international school. So I've learned to try to approach kids and um try

to meet them at their level or wherever they are coming from and accommodate the best that I can.” (CR1)

While less prominent, this mode of considering diversity seems to suggest a view that centers the classroom, while varying instruction to bring differing students to the same place within it, which could approach a kind of “cultural deficit” conception of diversity. The significance of this conception (should it prove more prominent in the themes) would be in suggesting variations in how participants engage with their experiences of other cultures, whether they de-center their native cultures in the consideration.

#### c. Student diversity as a positive instructional asset

The opposing sub-theme mode of diversity in the classroom is one that positions it as innately a positive benefit to classrooms. Respondents in this category, though still considering how to respond to diversity, discuss the need for response as an opportunity for rich classroom experience, rather than a set of needs to account for in instruction.

It should be noted that each respondent is not limited in their discussion to one or another of the sub-themes, but may touch on different aspects of how diversity affects their classroom at different moments (assuming the themes are not actually contradictory).

Here, a close examination of pre-service teacher’s engagement with cultural difference could inform an understanding of early stages in student-teachers processing their experiences toward culturally responsive pedagogy upon return, especially if variations in how they process this information could be linked to variations in how culturally responsive education manifests in the classroom. More concretely, the sense of positivity marking these participants regarding experiences of cultural diversity align with this theme in the transcripts.

### Theme Two: Dissimilarity of School Environment

This theme describes a respondent who is expressing dissimilarity between their host and native context. This is cited as both a barrier towards transference/adaptation/integration and a bridge to transference/adaptation/integration, particularly when the respondent explains overcoming dissimilarity and adapting and transferring a skillset to their native context. Several respondents discuss the lack of resources available within the host context as a mechanism that encourages development of creativity and flexibility in instruction. There are several instances of respondents illustrating examples of adaptation of instructional materials within the native context to incorporate more creativity within the classroom, such as having students create their own posters and visual materials rather than using pre-produced supplies. Several respondents also discuss the dissimilarity of curriculum between the host and native context. This usually is cited as an observational difference, without indication of barrier or bridge to transference/integration/adaptation. Respondents did indicate the freedom of curriculum design in the host context, in comparison to curriculum shaped and restricted by standards (common core) within the native context limiting the ability for agency over curriculum design. Respondents also discuss dissimilarity of classroom structure as a barrier or bridge to classroom management. When discussing structure, most respondents refer to the arrangement of students by age and the overall policies and procedures enacted within the classroom as illustration of the difference in structure.

#### A. Resources

One of the more prominent areas in which respondents described the difference between their host and native context was the varying availability of resources. Items referenced by respondents when discussing resources include printed curricular material such as textbooks and workbooks, office supplies, and also digital resources used to support classroom processes (such as online lesson-plan databases). Often the emphasis of the description is on the comparative wealth of resources in the current context. Respondents

seem to show a sense of appreciation for this that presents as either a further opening of possibilities or a removal of the need to create original materials.

#### B. Curriculum

Respondents mainly discuss curriculum differences while comparing their instructional styles in their current context to those applied in the host context. The conception of curriculum is fairly consistent as an itinerary of topics or skills to address, though some push this to include the methods applied. Differences in curriculum, in the transcripts' descriptions, seem to impact what is possible in the classroom to varying degrees, in some cases wholly barring migration of experience to the present context in the respondent's description.

#### C. Structure

Discussion of structural variations in the classroom were typically focused on the makeup of student demographics. Respondents pointed to differences between the grade levels taught in the host context versus the current one, connecting this variation to instructional considerations that required adjustment to meet the needs of the new grade levels.

Respondents also discussed the different ways of grouping students in the host context, such as having a wide range of ages in one classroom.

#### D. Communication

Respondents addressing this theme discuss the variations in their experience communicating both with their students and with others in the school. They draw connections between their experiences in a novel language context and their considerations for student communication in the classroom.

### Theme Three: Student Assessment

This theme encompasses respondent discussion of the methods employed during their STA experience to assess their students learning, how the STA experience helped them to

refine their assessment strategies, and differences in assessment strategies and expectations among their students and between host and native contexts. One of the major considerations voiced by respondents in this theme was the effect of their students' diversity on their strategies for assessment. Varying language proficiencies, cultural backgrounds, and ability levels were key considerations for assessing the students. The differing expectations in the host context for assessment, particularly in contexts that allowed experimentation, also pushed respondents to attempt new methods of assessment, driving at giving students the opportunity to demonstrate their learning in authentic ways. Respondents suggest that having greater flexibility in their allowable assessment strategies prompted a closer consideration of assessment to ensure its efficacy.

#### Theme Four: Lesson planning

Respondents addressing this theme consider their instructional planning process in light of their STA experience. This includes specific discussion of the lesson-planning expectations in their host context, comparisons to their current context's expectations, and examination of how their lesson-planning processes have developed during their practice, as a direct result of the STA experience and also simply as ongoing practitioners. Curricular requirements and assessment considerations connect to these topics as forces impacting the lesson-planning process in any educational context. Some respondents share a kind of stream-lining effect on their lesson-planning process, with more formalized, detailed lesson plans characterizing their STA experience, rather than their more succinct current plans. Others report the opposite, with more formalized plans now being required by their current contexts. Context-specific expectations seem to be highly impactful for these types of shifts. Changes are also reported in the "direction" of the lesson-planning process, such as now building lessons around a required assessment, as opposed to an activity during their STA experience.

### Theme Five: Familial Interaction

For respondents addressing this theme, parents and families in their host context functioned as a key source of insight into their host context's culture. Observing their different expectations for interaction between students, families, and teachers gave respondents opportunities to connect their instruction to cultural values impacting it and compare these connections in their host context to their current one. Respondents experienced different levels of involvement among families depending on their host context, with some approaching them in warm, familial ways and others adopting more formal, professional approaches. Insight into students and their experiences outside of the classroom was another key impact of interaction with families reported by respondents.

### Theme Six: Transfer, Adaptation and Integration of Knowledge, Skills and Dispositions

Teachers report that they transferred and adapted certain skills, techniques, and knowledge to their U.S. school settings and classroom practices in accordance with classroom needs. They include the following:

- a) The transfer of flexibility and open-mindedness for success from the host context to their current practice. Connections drawn by respondents between their open-mindedness when encountering new cultural experiences and their ability to thrive in their host context, and, later, connections to their present contexts and the persistent utility of the same open-mindedness.
- b) The transfer, adaptation and integration of student assessment practices. Former STAs discussed their adaptation of assessment practices resulting from the STA experience on developing them, often as a response to encountering English-language learners or simply experiencing new assessment strategies in the host context.

4. Describe the long-term impact of the project/program.

The findings will be disseminated through future presentations, workshops, and publications. The dissemination pattern ensures a wider and more diverse audience, as well as multiple ways in which to present the findings to diverse audiences, from students to practitioners, to school and university administrators, to faculty for classroom purposes, and to researchers in the field. Dissemination includes the submission of the current final report, and, in the future, a seminar or presentation through BCOE/EPP in Spring 2016, conference presentations and papers at high visibility-high impact venues such as AERA and ATE during 2016-2017, submission of manuscripts to peer-reviewed journals in 2016-2017, and a possible symposium in 2018 on international student teaching and its impact on teachers and their classroom settings.