Introduction:
In the 2011-2012 school year, 283,332 US students studied abroad. According to the Institute of International Education, the number of US students who study abroad has more than tripled in the last ten years. Studying abroad can impact a student’s worldview, culture, and broaden their scope of experience. Upon entering a country of sojourn, many travelers report experiencing symptoms of culture shock. But what about when travelers return? This research began as an exploratory study of “reverse culture shock”, or, reentry, for the study abroad population.

Available literature for study abroad reentry is largely anecdotal, providing theories and speculations about reentry but little data. Additionally, previous literature is inconsistent: some writes portray reentry as traumatic, while others see it as a slight adjustment. Lastly, existing works on reentry pertain to the traditional study abroad length of six months or one year. Many of today’s students are spending as short as one to two weeks abroad.

One common model of reentry is Gullhorn and Gullhorn’s (1963) W-curve. An extension of Oberg’s (1951) U-curve of culture shock, the W-curve includes arrival in the study abroad culture, crisis, culture shock, and adaptation, with the process mirrored in reentry with reverse culture shock. While many students resonate with this concept, the W-curve does not give detail pertaining to what students experience during this tumultuous time. The original goal of the present study was to uncover details regarding exactly what emotions and behaviors students experience during reentry. A subsequent moderation analysis following Barron and Kenny’s (1986), was undertaken to shed light on the complexity of the reentry process.

This study was focused on students returning to the United States due to ease of access and consistency. Data was collected regarding students’ emotional and behavioral experiences, and cultural components of the country of sojourn. Through surveys and student interviews, it was found that reentry is a multifaceted process with many interwaving factors.

Hypothesis
The general hypothesis of this study was that students who had more difficulty in behavioral adjustment during reentry would experience less positive and more negative emotions. Along with emotions and cultural adjustment, variables of interest included length of sojourn, perceived success of experience, nature and preparation for return home, and cultural distance between home and host culture.

Methods
Participants
Participants were university students from the United States who had studied abroad. Eighty one participants included 13 males and 68 females with a mean age of 21.23. The mean length of stay was 11.33 weeks and the mean length of return was 56.4 weeks.The average perceived success of trip was 89.70 on a 100 point scale. Study abroad locations included countries in Europe, Central and South America, Australia, Africa and Asia.

Measures
A two part survey was developed to measure emotional and behavioral factors experienced in reentry. An 18 item Positive and Negative Affect Scale (PANAS) adapted from Watson, Tellegen, and Clark, (1988) measured the emotional factors. An 18 item Reentry Scale fashioned after the socio-cultural Adaptation Scale (Ward and Kennedy, 1999) was created to measure behavior. Both scales used a 5 point Likert scale. Additional demographic and study abroad information was collected such as country of study abroad, length of study abroad, length of reentry, age, gender, and class standing. Perceived positivity of the study abroad experience was measured by a 100 point scale from 0= Extremely negative to 100= Extremely Positive. Cultural Distance was calculated using Kogut and Singh’s (1988) formula based on Hofstede’s (2001) nation scores for Uncertainty Avoidance, Power Distance, Individualism-Collectivism, and MASC- Femininity.

Results and Discussion
General hypothesis
The general hypothesis was supported since correlations reached statistical significance in the predicted direction between the level of difficulty in reentry as measured by the Reentry Scale and both Positive Affect and Negative Affect scales (see the table below). Reentry difficulty was not significantly correlated with any of the other research variables, nor with age, gender, or class standing.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Correlation Coefficient</th>
<th>p Value</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Positive Affect</td>
<td>&lt;.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative Affect</td>
<td>&lt;.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural Distance</td>
<td>&lt;.01</td>
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</table>

The slopes of the lines plotted in figure 1 indicated that for students in study abroad cultures that were quite distant from the U.S. culture, reentry difficulties were high regardless of the positivity of the study abroad experience. The difference of the culture trumped the positivity of the experience. For example, countries in this sample most culturally distant included South Korea, Ecuador, Greece, Uganda, Costa Rica.

Cultural Distance as a moderator
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For students in study abroad cultures that were very close to the U.S., cultural distance did not have much influence. The positivity of the experience related most clearly to reentry difficulties with higher positivity related to lower difficulties in reentry. For example, countries in the low range of distance in this sample included Australia, New Zealand, the UK, Germany, Italy, France.

Conclusions
The moderation analysis seems to indicate two parallel influences on study abroad reentry. The first is the positivity of the experience. The first order correlation between positivity and reentry difficulties is significantly positive, yet in culturally close countries it is inverse. In either case, the actual experience of study abroad has an impact on reentry.

The second influence seems to support the notion of “reverse culture shock” in that the moderation analysis illustrates its impact on reentry difficulties even though the first order correlation is nonsignificant. It may be that the more the student begins to identify with the study abroad culture, and the more different that culture is with his or her home culture, the higher the likelihood of reentry difficulties.

Clearly, more research needs to tease apart the various components associated with reentry difficulties. From such research, we can further understand the reentry phenomenon and know how to prepare and support students in reentry.