

# *The Experience of U.S. Fulbright Scholars from Business Disciplines: 1998 – 2005*

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## **Abstract**

The Fulbright Scholar program provides a long-standing and externally-funded means for internationalizing college and university curriculum. Over the past decade there has been an increasing emphasis on internationalization among faculty, administration and accrediting agencies. This manuscript is drawn from survey data which examines self-reported experiences of recent Fulbright Scholars from business disciplines in AACSB accredited business programs. An overview of the perceptions and experiences of program participants and an exploratory model identifying factors impacting these experience are presented. Specific policy and process measures to improve the experiences of future Fulbright Scholars are suggested.

## **Introduction**

This paper reports on the experiences of U.S. business discipline Fulbright Scholars who received grants between 1998 and 2005. Although the Fulbright Program has been in place for 60 years, relatively little research has been conducted to assess outcomes and perceived benefits of the program from the perspective of U.S. Scholars participating in the program or on their home academic institutions and communities.

As the pace of business globalization expands, the major business college accreditation agency -- the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business International (AACSB) -- has continued to emphasize the need to increasingly internationalize business programs. In 2003, the organization revamped its entire set of standards to reflect its support of business education developing a more global perspective. Internationalization encompasses a number of activities including adding international business components to existing courses and creating new courses with international business as a primary objective. In addition, encouraging international exchange opportunities for both students and faculty have been strongly emphasized. As a result, business programs must ensure that they are providing faculty and graduates with the international skills they will need for borderless careers. This goal is much more difficult if faculty themselves are unequipped to develop these skills in their students. All of these developments have added urgency to the need for more U.S. faculty to acquire global perspectives and international experience.

Unfortunately, creating institution-specific international exchange opportunities can be expensive and take years to establish. In addition, funding for such programs by state legislatures is rare, particularly within the context of continually, fiscally-constrained legislative environments. However, the Fulbright Scholar program is one of the few, and perhaps most well known, federal sources for funding international activity among faculty. As a result, the Fulbright Scholar Program offers an efficient and affordable way for individual faculty to gain essential international experience with little or no cost to his or her home institution.

Traditionally, a relatively low number of faculty members in business disciplines have applied for a Fulbright Scholar grant. According to the *2003 Fulbright Scholar Annual Report* only 40 out of a total of 810 U.S. Scholar grants, or about 5%, were awarded to business faculty during the 2002-2003 academic

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year.<sup>2</sup> While low levels of participation in these programs by business faculty are probably due to a variety of factors, the lack of information about the program and feedback from colleagues in the business disciplines who have participated in this program likely serves to limit participation by many business faculty.

To determine the efficacy of the Fulbright Program in providing an international experience for business faculty, this paper provides an overview of the perceptions and experiences of business discipline Fulbright Scholars (accounting, computer information systems, finance, management, and marketing) from AACSB accredited business programs to help others considering application make informed decisions about applying. We also offer a model that identifies factors grantees perceive as being significantly important to having a positive grant experience. The results of this survey should be useful to business faculty considering applying for a grant through the Fulbright Scholar Program and to business school administrators interested in internationalizing their faculty.

## Overview of the Fulbright Program

The Fulbright Program is the United States government's flagship program for international educational exchange. The Fulbright Program was proposed to the U.S. Congress in 1945 by, then, Democratic Senator J. William Fulbright of Arkansas in the aftermath of World War II to promote mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries of the world. The Fulbright Program was approved by Congress and signed into law by President Harry Truman in 1946.

Fulbright grants are made to U.S. citizens and nationals of other countries for a variety of educational activities, including university lecturing, advanced research, graduate study and teaching in elementary and secondary schools. From inception through 2005, over 279,500 scholars and students have participated in the Fulbright Program. Of these participants, 46,100 have been overseas academics and professionals who have conducted research or taught in U.S. universities as Fulbright Visiting Scholars, and more than 44,400 U.S. faculty and professionals who have engaged in similar activities abroad. The U.S. Scholar Program sends approximately 800 scholars and professionals each year to more than 140 countries, where they lecture or conduct research in a wide variety of academic and professional fields ranging from journalism and urban planning to music, philosophy, and business administration.<sup>3</sup>

The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs under the United States Department of State sponsors the Fulbright Program. Under a cooperative agreement with the Bureau, the Council for International Exchange of Scholars (CIES) assists in the administration of the Fulbright Scholar Program for faculty and other professionals. Overseas, the program is administered by binational Fulbright Commissions or by the Public Affairs Section of the U.S. Embassies. In the United States, the J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board, which is appointed by the President, is responsible for the final selection of all Fulbright grantees and the supervision of the Fulbright Program worldwide.

The primary source of funding for the Fulbright Program comes from annual appropriations made by the U.S. Congress to the Department of State. Participating governmental agencies and host institutions in both foreign countries and the United States also contribute financially through cost-sharing and indirect support, such as salary supplements, tuition waivers and university housing. The Congressional appropriation for the Fulbright Program in fiscal year 2006 was \$184.6 million, a 55% increase over the \$119 million allocated in 2001. Foreign governments, through their binational commissions or foundations, contributed an additional \$37 million directly to the Fulbright Program during 2005<sup>4</sup>.

After a review of the literature, we report the results of our survey of U.S. business discipline Fulbright grantees to describe their perceptions of the Fulbright experience. Finally, we present an exploratory ordinary least squares regression model that seeks to identify those factors that have led to a positive experience on the part of our respondents.

## Review of the Literature

<sup>2</sup> The 2003 Fulbright Scholar Annual Report is the most recent report available summarizing the Fulbright Scholar Program and is available for download from the program website at [www.cies.org](http://www.cies.org).

<sup>3</sup> Much of the background information about the Fulbright Program is taken from the Council for International Exchange of Scholars website at <http://www.cies.org>

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

Specific studies focusing specifically on business disciplines within the Fulbright Program do not exist. Therefore, this review focuses more generally on the limited research available regarding of the Fulbright Program and on the relationship between international experiences and individual growth and development for faculty in business disciplines. The fact that little empirical research exists on this important topic is surprising and points to the need for further study about international programs, international study, and international exchanges.

In an early study of the impact of the Fulbright Program on award recipients Mendelsohn and Orenstein [1955-56] sought the answer to two major questions: first, to what extent does the Fulbright grant experience affect the grantee's status, activities, and interests; and, second, to what extent do Fulbright grantees share their experiences with the communities to which they return? The authors surmised that while increased general understanding on the part of participants was the most significant result of these intercultural contacts, the Fulbright experience also positively impacted the professional status of the participant and enriched his or her environment. In addition, they found that the impact of the cross-cultural program takes place at many levels and continues long after the experience. Specifically, Mendelsohn and Orenstein found that the professional contacts of over half the participants are broadened. In addition, the Fulbright Program provided grantees with materials that they subsequently used in either their classrooms or in scholarly publications. Finally, they found that the Fulbright experience acted as a stimulant to further research and provided grantees with ideas that are incorporated in such research.

In 1990, the Council for International Exchange of Scholars (CIES) commissioned Professors Craufurd D. Goodwin and Michael Nacht to conduct a landmark survey of the international experience of American college and university faculty. The resulting book, *Missing the Boat: The Failure to Internationalize American Higher Education*, was a sobering assessment of trends affecting U.S. faculty participation in international programs. Based on an ambitious series of site visits to an array of institutions around the United States, Goodwin and Nacht chronicled the barriers to getting faculty abroad. The authors reported that during the period of their research, declining funding for the Fulbright Program and other international fellowships made overseas opportunities increasingly unaffordable for faculty members. Shrinking U.S. foreign assistance and area studies programs further depleted funding sources for international activities by faculty. Campus promotion and tenure policies, which frequently do not recognize and reward international work, made engaging in international activities detrimental to individual career advancement. The authors also assert that the changing demographic patterns of American families, especially the prevalence of two-career households, also inhibited faculty participation in travel abroad programs. Perhaps most disturbing, Goodwin and Nacht discovered a surprisingly pervasive American academic arrogance that questions the value of overseas experience. Cumulatively, these factors amount to a daunting challenge to developing and nurturing requisite international skills among faculty on U.S. campuses. Despite these negative factors, however, Goodwin and Nacht identified one positive trend in the expansion of study abroad programs and the involvement of faculty in them. Specifically, they found an expansion of interest in study abroad among students and faculty leaders for these activities. Furthermore, study abroad programs engaged faculty members across a wide swath of university and college curricula.

In an update of Goodwin and Nacht, Peterson [2000] found that overall participation in study abroad programs had grown dramatically since 1991. According to Peterson, the Institute of International Education's (IIE) Open Doors Survey of U.S. higher education institutions indicated that the overall number of students participating in study abroad increased from 71,154 during the 1991-1992 academic year, to 113,959 during the 1997-1998 academic year.<sup>5</sup> Peterson argued that this sixty percent-plus growth in study abroad between 1991 and 1998 was bound to translate into a major expansion in the number of U.S. faculty members leading American students in such programs. Peterson claims that this was likely the increase in faculty involvement in study abroad programs is proportionally higher than the student study abroad increase, since the percentage of students participating in these kinds of programs are most likely to be led by U.S. faculty members. Peterson found faculty members were more likely to accompany students on short-term programs (e.g. those taking place during the summer or between terms), rather than semester-long or longer programs. These short-term programs have increased substantially within the overall expansion of study abroad. The challenge, according to Peterson, is to find ways to enhance the value of the international experience faculty receive at relatively low costs in terms of explicit expenditures.

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<sup>5</sup> Open Doors 98/99: Report on International Educational Exchange, (Institute of International Education, New York), 1999, p. 58. According to Open Doors Report 2006, the number of U.S. students participating in Study Abroad Programs was 205,983 during the 2004-2005 academic year. The complete report can be found at <http://www.opendoors.iienetwork.org/>.

In 1999, the Office of Policy and Evaluation of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the U.S. Department of State contracted with SRI international, an independent, nonprofit research organization, to assess and document the outcomes and impact of the U.S. Fulbright Scholar Program.<sup>6</sup> Specifically, SRI was commissioned to: (1) ascertain whether the U.S. Fulbright Scholar program was achieving its legislative goals, (2) assess the broader impacts of the program on individuals and institutions both in the U.S. and in host countries, and (3) assess and document the contribution of the Fulbright scholar experience to the professional and personal lives of program alumni. The assessment found strong quantitative and qualitative evidence that the program was achieving its legislative mandate of promoting mutual understanding and cooperation between the United States and other nations. The study also documented diverse and powerful impacts not only on the Scholars themselves, but also on their colleagues, students, friends, and families. More specifically, the study determined that the U.S. Fulbright Scholar Program:

- effectively served the national interest and promoted mutual understanding,
- resulted in scholar grant activities that were extremely diverse both personally and professionally,
- helped scholars build knowledge and long-term relationships with host institutions and foreign colleagues,
- helped scholars make U.S. campuses and communities more international,
- helped enrich and inspire scholars, and
- resulted in a high level of satisfaction by scholars on behalf of the Fulbright.

Biraimah [2001] studied the short-term and longitudinal effects of international programs on educators. The study was somewhat limited in that data were obtained from only 12 educators participating in the Fulbright-Hays Group Study Abroad Program to Singapore and Malaysia. Nevertheless, Biraimah's findings reflected a consistent increase in the proportion of educators exhibiting internationalization of effective multicultural and global education behaviors. International travel experience was found to have a sustained, positive effect on teachers' perceptions and pedagogy, and participants generally maintained high expectations regarding global and multicultural education. In addition, more participants reported that they modeled behaviors that reinforced global and multicultural perspectives after their Fulbright experience.

Lindsey [2005] conducted a qualitative study of value development in U.S. and Scottish social work students who participated in a study abroad program: several themes emerged. Study abroad programs opened students' minds to new ways of thinking, provided awareness and insight about their own values and beliefs, created social awareness and provided challenges to societal values and beliefs, heightened cultural sensitivity, enhanced awareness of social justice, and aided in the development of students' professional identities.

In summary, previous research suggests that international education provides significant benefits to both faculty and student participants. In addition, the Fulbright Scholar Program provides a unique and enriching experience for faculty members across a wide range of metrics and settings. This research specifically targets the experiences of Fulbright Scholars in the business disciplines. The results of this research should help faculty in business disciplines to better understand the application process and to identify the potential benefits of participation for themselves, their students, and their families.

## **Overview and Analysis of Data**

A list of the Fulbright Scholar grantees and their home university affiliations was obtained from the Council for the International Exchange of Scholars (CIES), which administers the Fulbright Scholar Program.<sup>7</sup> An email list of all business discipline scholars who received grants between 1998 and 2005

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<sup>6</sup> Ailes, Catherine P., and Susan H. Russell. (2002). Outcome Assessment of U.S. Fulbright Scholar Program: Executive Report. Science and Technology Policy Program: SRI International. Office of Policy and Evaluation, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, U.S. Department of State. Menlo Park, CA

<sup>7</sup> A listing of all Fulbright Scholar Program grantees is available by both year and by discipline through the Council for the International Exchange of Scholars website at [www.cies.org](http://www.cies.org)

was created and compiled from the names provided in the CIES Fulbright Scholar Directory on the CIES website. The email letter informed grantees of the purpose of the research, requesting their participation and directed them to the URL of a survey instrument that they could then complete electronically. A copy of the survey is included in the appendix. Survey Monkey® was used both to create the survey instrument and compile responses.

We identified a total of 224 business discipline Fulbright Scholar grantees (those that applied for and obtained specific business discipline grants) that were awarded grants between 1998 and 2005. Of the 224 grantees, we received 54 responses resulting in a 24% response rate. Sixty-eight percent of the respondents had a one-semester experience, 24% had a two-semester experience and the remainder had less than one semester. A majority of the respondents have had only one grant in the program but three respondents had two or three grants. No respondents had more than three Fulbright grants in their careers. Many (65%) had a professional or research interest in the region prior to applying. A vast majority of the Fulbright Scholars taught during their experience. Nearly 55% of respondents reported teaching as the primary activity, while about 35% reported an equal mix of teaching and research as their primary activity. Only 7% reported research as their primary activity.

Nearly all grantees were at the rank of Associate Professor or Full Professor and 75% of respondents were male. Ninety-four percent reported being 40 years or older. Three quarters of responding grantees were Caucasian. Twenty-eight percent of grantees reported management as their primary academic discipline. Finance and accounting were next with 21% and 15% of respondents, respectively. Most grantees (81%) were married, though in most cases (55%) the grantee's spouse spent three months or less in the host country. Where children were a part of the marriage, only 25% did not travel to the host country during the grant period.

The degree of support from home institutions was both strong and important to faculty members. More than 70% of the respondents received sabbatical support for the period of the grant and 63% of the respondents rated sabbatical support as extremely important in their decision to accept the Fulbright Grant; another 20% rated such support as very important. Home university administration support for participation in the Fulbright Program was slightly less critical with only 32% indicating extremely strong support and another 34% indicating strong support.

Respondents were asked to rate the reasons for undertaking the Fulbright experience using a seven point scale with 7 being highly influential and 1 indicating no influence. Professional development, career enhancement, and prestige were the most highly influential reasons. The factors rated as having little influence included financial reasons (54% rated this as no influence), family reasons (46%), to assist in your application for sabbatical support (42%) and vacation opportunities in country/region (29%). Among the most highly-rated reasons for choosing a particular host country were research interests (25%) and personal reasons (22%). Relevancy to academic interest and career were also highly ranked as reasons for choosing a particular host country. Interestingly, over 41% of applicants indicated language was of no influence in their choice of host country.

We also investigated participant perceptions of the application process itself. A vast majority of successful applicants found the application process to be clearly defined and well delineated, though relatively time consuming. Many rated the time and effort necessary to complete the application as time consuming, but only about 8% found the application process to be extremely time consuming. Most participants agreed that the time of notification of the grant provided ample time for travel planning but there was less comfort with the preparation period for coordinating and planning research and teaching tasks. Interestingly, 67% did not attend a pre-departure planning seminar called the Fulbright Orientation Session to assist them in preparing for the experience. The respondents who did attend these sessions rated them as helpful to extremely helpful. Once in the host country, 53% attended an "in-country" Fulbright Orientation Session. Of those, a significant majority (63%) found the experience to be helpful to extremely helpful.

Respondents were also asked to report on their satisfaction with the accommodations offered by their host institution. Sixty-five percent of respondents ranked living conditions as hospitable to extremely

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hospitable. Respondents were somewhat less satisfied with administrative and office support but significantly less satisfied with research facilities and support.

A question on “culture shock” elicited a bimodal response. Thirty-nine percent rated culture shock upon arrival as either high or extremely high while 41% rated culture shock as low to extremely low. Respondents reported that the level of culture shock for accompanying families was significantly higher with 61% reporting moderate to high levels of culture shock. Levels of culture shock for both respondents and their families were reported by respondents to diminish after an initial period of adjustment. Respondents who attended a Fulbright Orientation Session prior to departure reported a significantly lower level of “culture shock” after an initial period of adjustment. The respondents who attended an “in-country” Fulbright Orientation Session reported significantly lower levels of impact of language barriers on their ability to teach. Nearly half (48.7%) of respondents had no fluency in the native language of their host country. Surprisingly respondents indicated that language barriers did not contribute to culture shock. In fact, few respondents believed this hampered their teaching; only 4% reported problems in teaching while 46% rated language barriers as having no effect on their effectiveness in teaching whatsoever.

Part of the cultural immersion that accompanies a Fulbright grant includes community activities while in country. More than two-thirds of respondents engaged in teaching or research seminars and workshops. About half also participated in other public speaking forums, social activities with students and social activities with host institution faculty. This subset of professors was extremely entrepreneurial within their host countries. Perhaps most striking was the fact that 36% of grantees formed businesses during their grant and another 25% planned to start a business in the host country. More than three-quarters of those who did engage in professional business activities reported consulting with host country for-profit businesses while more than half reported consulting with host country non-profit businesses.

Course preparation duties were relatively light. Of those grantees with teaching responsibilities, fully 80% reported having two courses or less during their grant. Student class size was generally moderate to large. Fifty-four percent of respondents reported having 30 or fewer students; 37% reported having between 31 and 50 students. Overall, student English language skills were rated as relatively high in listening and reading and only slightly lower in speaking and writing. Academic preparation, effort and commitment on the part of host institution students were also rated as strong by grantees while academic honesty was rated slightly less favorably.

The Fulbright experience has also contributed to the development of participant research agenda’s according to our findings. Forty percent of respondents reported publishing or pursuing publication in peer-reviewed journals with host institution colleagues. Another 24% reported publishing or pursuing the publication of books or monographs with host institution colleagues. Twenty-five percent of respondents reported collaborating in similar research activities with host institution students. Finally, nearly 35% reported developing textbooks and other curriculum materials with host institution colleagues.

Grantees in the business disciplines are also active ambassadors for Fulbright Scholar Program upon their return to the United States, sharing their international experience with both local and academic communities. About 28% of all respondents reported presentations to the community and 42% reported presentations to students. More than 40% of respondents reported that they had local media exposure (TV, radio or newspaper) upon returning home.

For many grantees, connection with their host country did not end upon the completion of the grant assignment. Nearly 35% reported that they have worked to develop faculty and student exchanges after their return home. In addition, more than 80% of the respondents reported encouraging students to learn more about international issues and 70% reported directly encouraging students to actively engage in international program or other international travel.

## **Empirical Model**

We employed a stepwise regression model to determine the importance of various factors in determining the overall level of satisfaction of respondents’ grant experience. Eleven survey instrument questions were designed to measure grantee perceptions regarding personal satisfaction with the overall Fulbright Scholar grant experience. Each question asked respondents to rate their level of satisfaction using somewhat different descriptors. In general, however, grantees were asked to assess whether their experience was positive or negative. For the purpose of clarity, these questions are listed in Table 1 below. Once again, responses were coded from 1 through 7, where 7 reflected a highly positive experience and 1 indicted a highly negative experience. Responses to these questions were averaged to create a new variable,



We selected a variety of independent variables we thought might influence respondents' perceived satisfaction with their grant experience. The variables selected, along with their descriptive statistics, are shown in Table 2.

**Table 2**  
**Model Variable Descriptive Statistics**

Variable	Metric	Mean	SD	Range	Kurtosis
<b>Dependent Variable</b>					
Perception of Fulbright Experience	1 = extremely negative to 7 = extremely positive	6.34	0.70	4.09 – 7.00	+1.488
<b>Independent Variables</b>					
Adequacy of Financial Resources	1 = extremely insufficient to 7 = extremely sufficient	4.82	1.21	2.25 – 7.00	-0.725
Culture Shock	1 = extremely high to 7 = non-existent	5.01	1.53	2.00 – 7.00	-1.096
Adequacy of Resources Provided by Host Institution	1 = extremely inhospitable to 7 = extremely hospitable	5.01	1.43	1.75 – 7.00	-0.743
Helpfulness of Fulbright Orientation	A higher value suggests greater helpfulness	9.74	7.62	0.00 – 24.00	-0.666
Time of Notification Provided Adequate Time for Planning	1 = Strongly Disagree to 7 = Strongly Agree	5.01	1.64	1.00 – 7.00	+0.480
Application was Easy, Clear, and Not Time Consuming	1 = Strongly Disagree to 7 = Strongly Agree	4.58	0.87	2.50 – 6.50	-0.327
Extent to Which Language Barriers Hampered Teaching and Research	1 = strongly hampered my effectiveness to 7 = no influence on my effectiveness	5.64	1.24	3.00 – 7.00	-0.851
Teaching Load	1 = extremely light to 7 = extremely heavy	2.83	0.90	1.40 – 5.60	+1.024
English Strength of Students	1 = extremely weak to 7 = extremely strong	5.42	0.95	3.25 – 7.00	-0.305
Academic Strength of Students	1 = extremely weak to 7 = extremely strong	5.32	1.09	2.00 – 7.00	+0.842

The values for each of the independent variables were obtained by averaging the response to the questions from the survey corresponding to the particular metric. For example, the value for the variable *Adequacy of Financial Resources* was obtained by averaging the responses to a question which asked respondents to rate the sufficiency of the dollar value of the grant to cover various expenses such as housing, travel, personal expenses, and the cost of instructional materials. Responses were coded such that 7 indicated the dollar value of the grant amount was extremely sufficient and 1 indicated that the dollar value of the grant was extremely insufficient. Values for the other independent variables in the model were obtained using the same procedure. The only exception to this procedure was the calculation of the values for the variable *Helpfulness of Fulbright Orientation*. To obtain the values for this variable, a value of 5 was assigned if a respondent attended an orientation session (10 points if the respondent attended both pre-departure and in country sessions). For those that did attend a session, we then added value of the response



to the grantees perception of the usefulness of the orientation session (on a scale of 1 = not useful at all to 7 = extremely useful). Thus, if a respondent attended both sessions and found both sessions to be extremely beneficial, the maximum value for this variable would be 24 (5+5+7+7).

Table 2 indicates that responses for all variables were positively skewed. For example, culture shock was rated at 5.01 on a scale of 1 to 7 with 7 indicating no culture shock. As another example, academic strength of students averaged 5.32 on a scale of 1 to 7 with 7 indicating extreme strength.

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics					
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change	Durbin-Watson
1	.445(a)	.198	.181	.71468	.198	11.843	1	52	.001	
2	.545(b)	.297	.267	.67638	.099	6.590	1	51	.013	
3	.596(c)	.355	.313	.65466	.058	4.171	1	50	.047	
4	.640(d)	.410	.358	.63299	.055	4.204	1	49	.046	1.775
a Predictors: (Constant), Adequacy of resources provided by host institution										
b Predictors: (Constant), Adequacy of resources provided by host institution, Helpfulness of Fulbright Orientation (bigger = better)										
c Predictors: (Constant), Adequacy of resources provided by host institution, Helpfulness of Fulbright Orientation (bigger = better), Academic strength of students										
d Predictors: (Constant), Adequacy of resources provided by host institution, Helpfulness of Fulbright Orientation (bigger = better), Academic strength of students, Adequacy of financial resources										
e Dependent Variable: Perception of Fulbright Experience										

The results of the stepwise regression (Model 4) shown in Table 3 indicate that four variables of our 10 independent variables were significantly related to grantee PFE: adequacy of resources provided by host institution, helpfulness of Fulbright Orientation (bigger = better), academic strength of students, and adequacy of financial resources. The final overall model had an R<sup>2</sup> of 0.41 and resulted in an F-statistic of 4.24 and a significance level of 0.046. As shown in Table 4, the coefficients of the independent variables in Model 4 were all positive and significant. This suggests that the adequacy of resources provided by the host institution, the existence of a Fulbright orientation session, the academic strength of students, and the adequacy of financial resources provided to the grantee all exhibit a statistically significant and positive influence on overall satisfaction with the grant experience.

### Discussion

The results of our exploratory model suggest that the overall Fulbright grant experience as reported by respondents was positive. In addition, the results suggest that if participants felt that the adequacy of resources provided by host institution, Fulbright Orientation sessions, the academic strength of students, and the adequacy of financial resources were all significant factors in determining grantees' overall level of satisfaction with their grant experience. The findings also indicate four positive steps that administrators of the Fulbright Scholar Program might focus on to enhance the experience of applicants and future grantees. It is important to differentiate between aspects which are inherent to the application process (affecting all applicants) and those that are inherent to the fulfillment of the grant itself (affecting grantees only). Where changes can be made in the application process itself, it provides an opportunity for self-selection among

applicants *a priori*. In other words, with better information being provided in the application process applicants can self-select into or out of a particular situation based upon their extant preferences.

For example, in the case of student body expectations, grant applicants might consider spending time performing due diligence on his or her target academic institution. Fulbright Program administrators should consider sharing information concerning the actual quality of the student body. If applicants and/or grantees form these expectations in an informational vacuum, it will inevitably create gaps between expectations and actual experience. When valid and reliable information is provided to applicants *a priori*, it will reduce this expectations gap. It seems logical that setting realistic expectations concerning the students who will be encountered will enhance the experience of not only applicants and grantees, but also students. Closing the expectations gap is important regardless of the actual quality of the student body. There is little grant officers can do to change the actual student body – but there is ample opportunity to affect the expectations of applicants and grantees.

**Table 4**  
**Model Coefficients for Dependent Variable: Perception of Fulbright Experience**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Correlations		
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Zero-order	Partial	Part
4	(Constant)	3.881	.615		6.306	.000			
	Adequacy of resources provided by host institution	.192	.065	.349	2.953	.005	.445	.403	.338
	Helpfulness of Fulbright Orientation (bigger = better)	.031	.012	.298	2.477	.017	.338	.346	.284
	Academic strength of students	.185	.088	.254	2.092	.042	.409	.298	.240
	Adequacy of Financial Resources	.156	.076	.239	2.050	.046	.209	.292	.235

The same argument holds for the support provided to grantees by the host institution. Grant applicants should perform due diligence on the target institution prior to application. At the same time, Fulbright Program administrators should continue to work with host institutions to ensure that the support provided by host institutions to grantees is adequate and of the highest quality. Program administrators have the ability to affect grantee expectations even if the ability to affect the actual levels of host institution support is not. Contractual norms differ across cultures, as do expectations. Helping applicants and grantees to form a realistic picture of the opportunities and challenges they will face can only serve to improve grantee satisfaction with their experience.

Fortunately, opportunities to close the expectations gap occur throughout the entire application and grant process. Not only can the issue be addressed by providing better information in the application process itself; it can also be addressed when grantees attend orientation sessions. Our findings can be interpreted to provide evidence that Fulbright Orientations are highly valued by grantees: we posit that this is because they serve to narrow the expectations gap. Administrators should continue to offer Fulbright orientation sessions for grantees in country programs where they exist and create them for country programs where they do not. Administrators could also consider mandating attendance and investing in improving or lengthening the sessions considering their impact on grantees' satisfaction with the Program. According to the respondents, the orientation sessions provide a significant opportunity for sharing information and set the stage for their entire grant experience. If this is true, then orientation sessions

should be structured to provide ample opportunities for exchange between program officers, host institution representatives and grantees. Stress should be placed upon identifying and addressing gaps in expectations held by grantees. This opportunity is multi-dimensional: expectations concerning the student body, host institution facilities and host institution support should all become major themes in the orientation session.

Finally, grant applicants should investigate the terms and resources provided by their grants prior to application. For Program administrators, sufficient financial support must continue to be secured and provided to grantees to ensure that the Fulbright Scholar Program remains the flagship international education program provided by the U.S. federal government. Each year, the money allocated to the Fulbright Scholar Program is subject to Congressional appropriation. Given current federal budget constraints, continued funding for the program is always under threat. Recognizing this, Program administrators frequently solicit Fulbright Program Alumni to participate in Congressional letter writing campaigns to help ensure continuation of funding. However, Program administrators might also consider other lobbying, marketing or public relations activities designed to highlight the importance and value of the Program. The objective of such programs would be not only to secure continue funding, but also to increase funding and increase public awareness of the program and its benefits.

### Summary and Conclusions

This paper reports on the experiences of U.S. business-discipline Fulbright Scholars who received grants between 1998 and 2005. As the pace of the globalization expands, major business college accreditation agencies such as the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business International (AACSB) have committed themselves to increasingly internationalized business programs. Because funding for international activities and engagement is scarce, the Fulbright Scholar Program provides one of the few ongoing and consistent sources for funding international activity. Surprisingly, however, relatively little research has been conducted to assess outcomes and perceived benefits of the Fulbright Program in general and no research has focused on the experiences of business discipline grantees.

This paper provides an overview of the perceptions and experiences of business discipline Fulbright Scholars to help others considering application to make informed decisions about applying. We also offer a model that identifies factors that grantees perceive as being significantly important to having a positive grant experience. The results of this survey should be useful to any faculty member considering applying for a grant through the Fulbright Scholar Program. Additionally, the results should aid those that administer the program in their efforts to enhance the experience of future participants.

In general, respondents reported that the Fulbright Scholar Program was very well administered and most reported having positive experiences. Most grantees taught during their experience but many also reported having strong research interests in the location of their assignment. Most respondents received sabbatical support for the period of the grant and most reported that the home university administration was supportive of their grant and sabbatical.

Most successful applicants found the grant application process to be clear but relatively time consuming. Virtually all grantees that attended either pre-departure or in-country orientation sessions found them to be very beneficial to their grant experience. Most grantees ranked living conditions as hospitable but were somewhat less satisfied with Host University administrative and office support and far less satisfied with research facilities and support.

A significant proportion of grantees reported problems with culture shock and this problem was more acute for those who brought families with them on their assignment. However, levels of culture shock for both respondents and their families were reported to diminish after an initial period of adjustment. Nearly half of respondents had no fluency in the native language of their host country. Although this likely contributed to feelings of culture shock, most grantees rated language barriers as having minimal effect on their effectiveness in teaching. Most grantees engaged in a host of activities outside their official assignments during their assignments. Some of these activities included teaching or research seminars and workshops, public speaking forums, and social activities with students and host institution faculty. In addition, a significant number of grantees engaged in consulting and formed businesses during their grants.

Even though most grantees reported teaching as their primary activity, most engaged in scholarly activity which included the publication of articles in scholarly journals, publication of books or monographs and curriculum materials. Many reported collaborating scholarly activity with both host institution faculty and students.

Grantees in the business disciplines are also active ambassadors for Fulbright Scholar Program upon their return to the United States, sharing their international experience with their local communities and students. In addition, for many grantees, connection with their host country did not end upon the completion of the grant assignment. Many reported developing faculty and student exchanges and most reported encouraging students to learn more about international issues and to engage in international programs or other international travel.

Finally, our findings suggest that potential grant applicants and administrators of the Fulbright Scholar Program could take four specific steps to enhance the experience of applicants and grantees: ensure the adequacy of resources provided by the host institution, ensure the existence of and encourage participation in Fulbright orientation sessions, work with host country administrators to ensure that accurate and realistic expectations are conveyed to participants regarding host country students, and ensure that adequate financial resources are provided to the grantee. In general, we believe that it is critical to focus on closing the gap between grantee expectations and their actual experience. Fortunately, opportunities to close the expectations gap occur throughout the entire application and grant process. Taking these steps will not only enhance the subjective experiences of participants, they will also serve to strengthen and sustain satisfaction and participation over the long term within the Fulbright program itself.

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Fulbright Scholar Awards comprise the bulk of awards offered and include opportunities for professionals, artists, and scholars at all career-levels. Location and eligibility vary across all awards, and some awards may be restricted to certain career levels or types of scholars. This information is outlined in the award description. Please see here for three unique opportunities within the U.S. Scholar program: Global Scholar Award. Public Policy Fellowship. Arctic Initiative. Fulbright Distinguished Scholar Awards. Fulbright grants are awarded in almost all academic disciplines, except clinical medical research involving patient contact. Fulbright grantees' fields of study span the fine arts, humanities, social sciences, mathematics, natural and physical sciences, and professional and applied sciences.[14]. Student grants[edit].<sup>Å</sup> The Fulbright Bicentennial Chair in American Studies at the University of Helsinki brings scholars of various disciplines to Finland. The Bicentennial Chair is open to senior faculty with outstanding publication and teaching credentials and is also considered to be among the most prestigious Fulbright appointments. The experience of US Fulbright Scholars from business disciplines: 1998<sup>Å</sup>2005. DJ Borgia, BK Hobbs, HS Weeks. *Journal of Economics and Finance Education* 6 (2), 15-26, 2007.<sup>Å</sup> Corporate ownership is not always the best policy. JW Kensinger, SL Poe. *Research in finance*, 2005. 5. 2005. IQ and the Economic Growth of US States. G Jones, RW Hafer, BK Hobbs. GMU Working Paper in Economics, 2011.