

23 - 25 October 2026

Geneva , Switzerland

Who Gets to Go Abroad? Equity, Access, and Participation in Faculty-Led International Education

Dr. Elena Taborda

Babson College, The United States

Abstract

Faculty-led international programs provide students with opportunities to develop intercultural competencies, expand global perspectives, and connect classroom learning with real-world experiences. Yet access to these opportunities is not experienced equally across student populations. This study examines the question: Who participates in faculty-led international programs—and who does not? Using a descriptive, data-informed case study approach, the study analyzes student participation and demographic data from short-term faculty-led international programs at a small, special-focus university in New England. The analysis considers patterns of participation across student populations and explores factors that may influence access, including program cost, academic scheduling, awareness, advising, perceived relevance, and other institutional and structural barriers. Findings demonstrate measurable growth in participation among several student populations, suggesting that targeted outreach, increased program visibility, and efforts to improve accessibility can expand participation. At the same time, differences in participation across student groups highlight persistent questions about representation and equitable access to international learning opportunities. The study argues that participation should be evaluated not only by overall enrollment, but also by examining which students participate, who remains underrepresented, and why. The findings offer practical implications for program design, outreach, advising, and assessment and suggest strategies for creating more inclusive and accessible faculty-led international education opportunities.

Keywords: Access; Equity; International Education; Short-Term Study Abroad; Student Participation