

Broad Matters Season 7 Episode 3 “Enhancing Global Engagement For Broad Spartans” with Guanglong Pang

Quinetta Roberson:

Welcome to Broad Matters.

Ken Szymusiak:

A podcast bringing you thought leadership, innovative perspectives, and real world impact from Michigan State University's Eli Broad College of Business. I'm Ken Szymusiak, Managing Director for the Burgess Institute for Entrepreneurship and Innovation.

Quinetta Roberson:

And I'm Quinetta Roberson, the John A. Hannah Distinguished Professor of Management in Psychology. To start the spring semester, we have Guanglong Pang, Assistant Director of Education Abroad and Global Engagement with us today. He started in this role with the college last May and is on a mission to empower Broad's Spartans to experience the world beyond their home countries.

Guanglong Pang:

Broad matters because it has the highest number of international students on campus. They can walk past someone from Morocco, Nigeria, India, Vietnam, China, Brazil, down the hallway. We have a truly global community right here at Broad, and that's a resource for us.

Ken Szymusiak:

Welcome, Guanglong.

Guanglong Pang:

Thank you for having me on the podcast. It's great to be here.

Ken Szymusiak:

Can you tell us a little bit about yourself and your role at the Broad College?

Guanglong Pang:

I see my role having two parts. The first part is education abroad. I work on program marketing, promotion, student engagement, running workshops and info sessions.

The second part of my job is global engagement. This is where I focus on global mindsets, developments, intercultural learning, and learning abroad at home. I collaborate with a lot of colleagues from within Broad.

Something about myself, before joining Broad, I was an international student for 10 years. I spent six years in Canada and four years in the United States. My graduate student research focused on international student experience and internationalization of curriculum. I just completed my dissertation this past May, “Transformative Learning in International Education”, specifically to find out what student transformation means and how do we quantify it for evidence.

Quinetta Roberson:

Dr. Guanglong Pang, congratulations on defending your dissertation.

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Guanglong Pang:

Appreciate that. Still trying to sink in, that excitement.

Ken Szymusiak:

This is such an interesting topic for us to cover. MSU is known for the depth and breadth of its education abroad programs with over 260 education programs across 60 countries. Just within the Broad College alone, I know we have 53 programs and growing. Can you tell us a little bit about what's exciting to come in the Broad College and the things that have been really exciting since you've taken this position?

Guanglong Pang:

Recently, we launched a program in Spring 2023 that gives students a closeup look at critical supply chain in Panama Canal. Another program that we are launching in 2024 centers on entrepreneurship. That will take student to Cambodia. Those two are examples of faculty-led programs, organized experiences where students travel abroad with a MSU class, led by MSU faculty.

We are also expanding our program portfolio for semester-long program. For example, we established a partnership with National University of Singapore. That is the nation's flagship university. We are also long-term partner with Monash University in Malaysia and Australia. We also have exchange agreements with University College Dublin in Ireland, University of Nicosia in Cyprus. Generally, those are semester-long programs that offers students more of a culturally immersive and a more independent experience.

I also want to highlight our international internship programs. We have locations that take students to Portugal, South Korea, Singapore, Spain, UK, Sweden, and China. Those are summer programs that last about eight weeks, and they are very much like real jobs where students go to work Monday to Friday. Some students tell me that this is their favorite type of education abroad program, where they can combine both education abroad and work experience.

Quinetta Roberson:

With 53 education abroad programs, and also, Guanglong, you mentioned global engagement being part of your job, it seems like quite a large role. So understandably, you work with student ambassadors to empower their peers to participate in these programs. Can you talk about the work that student ambassadors do and the work that you do with those ambassadors?

Guanglong Pang:

Certainly. But before I talk about the work, I want to highlight a quote that I collected from a past student ambassador. This student graduated in the Class of 2023 in supply chain management. She did an international internship in London, and when she came back, she applied to become an education abroad ambassador. This is what she said:

"I had a great time getting to speak about my experience from education abroad last summer, and I am grateful to have developed the skills I need to effectively speak about my roles and time from education abroad. I think the practice was critical in my interview for full-time role, and the experience abroad really shines on my resume."

The most important expectations that I have for student ambassadors is having fun by sharing their personal experiences and the passion about education abroad. Professional development and leadership growth opportunities come next.

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In the ambassador positions, they frequently present in class. They share their personal experiences during workshops. They represent Broad Education Abroad at college-level and university-level fairs. And they also connect with many important peoples, including administrators and the faculties within the college.

For me, I'm also learning a lot by working with the ambassadors. They have taught me how to effectively connect with students and how to think and walk in their shoes. They often provide me with feedback on how to run events that are fun for students. Most importantly, I think they feel my passion for education abroad.

Quinetta Roberson:

It sounds like they also have passion, that you don't have to really look for them. They come to you, saying, "I want to be an ambassador."

Guanglong Pang:

Yes. I try to make the position as flexible as possible. I trust them. I let them shine with their experience and the passion.

Ken Szymusiak:

And nothing beats that peer-to-peer referral system. That's really what gets students excited is when they hear from their peers, in terms of the impact that these study abroad experiences had. It's a really impactful program.

Where do you see our abilities to impact international learning opportunities? What are the things that you're working on now that will continue to grow the programming in Broad and across campus?

Guanglong Pang:

As I mentioned, my role touches upon two areas: education abroad and the global engagement. In my personal opinion, I think education abroad is the most direct and tangible way of developing a global mindset, simply because experiencing it is the start for developing global mindset.

In terms of global engagement, my colleagues in the Broad College are collaborating with me to provide intercultural learning opportunities, learning abroad opportunities at home. Education abroad can be expensive, and for some of our students, education abroad is not viable because of the financial requirements, but that doesn't mean that those students do not get to experience global learning. And that's where my colleagues and I are coming in. We are expanding the frontier of global learning by offering those workshops at home.

Quinetta Roberson:

It does sound like a very inclusive approach. You mentioned the importance of a global mindset, which we talk a lot about here at Broad. What does having a global mindset mean to you?

Guanglong Pang:

Well, first of all, let's talk about the meaning of global mindset. I have two versions of it, the academic versions and the non-academic version.

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Quinetta Roberson:

I knew you were going to do that. He's going to say, "The scholarly one and the real one."

Guanglong Pang:

Yes. So, let's start with the academic and the long version. I preferred this definition offered by Maznevski and Lane in 2003. They define global mindset as "the ability to develop and interpret criteria for personal and the business performance that are independent from the assumption of a single country culture or context and to implement those criteria appropriately in different countries, cultures and the context."

Like many academic definitions that's really trying to jam a lot of content into one definition, and there are a lot of important aspects in there. For example, "personal and business performances" and "independence from assumptions of a single country culture and the context and the ability to apply those criteria appropriately in different countries and culture."

But in more simple terms, I'd say global mindset means being mindful that we live in a world, not a country.

Quinetta Roberson:

Mm-hmm.

Ken Szymusiak:

Absolutely.

Quinetta Roberson:

How do you see students demonstrating that knowledge, of being a global citizen?

Guanglong Pang:

Sometimes students are demonstrating it without even being aware of it. I say that because I see a shift in global mindsets development among students. Our students are becoming more aware of the activities in the college that could help them develop global mindsets, for example, education abroad programs, international internships, international case competitions, global career consulting. I think the fact that they are more globally themed, the opportunities, is a good trend for students.

However, I think we, as higher education system in general, need to sometimes pause and think about what the meanings of those global opportunities are. I often say that the value of education abroad depends on how well students articulate to stakeholders, like job interviewers, to reflect on the value of their global experiences. I collaborate with colleagues in the college to help students unpack their experiences. For example, we help students communicate the value of their education abroad experience. In fact, we have an unpacking workshop this afternoon.

Ken Szymusiak:

That's an amazing support structure to have. What do you tell a student who maybe is on the fence about doing a study abroad program? Why take the trip?

Quinetta Roberson:

Or is it why take advantage of the opportunity?

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Ken Szymusiak:

Or take advantage of the opportunity. However you want to frame it.

Guanglong Pang:

I will tell students that I have spent the last 10 years studying abroad, and I feel the experience has transformed me. "I love it, and I want you to have it too."

Quinetta Roberson:

I took my first trip outside of the US during my PhD program, and it was life-changing. I'm now in my 54th country. But I got to see how, probably, narrow my mindset was.

Ken Szymusiak:

Unfortunately, I was signed up for my study abroad as an undergrad. They needed 12 to go on the trip, and two people canceled two months out, so it all got canceled. So I didn't get to go. I didn't get to leave until I was old and in the working world. Yeah, but like you said, changes your whole perspective when you see another part of the world.

What's your vision for education abroad at the Broad College? And what do you hope to achieve in the months and years ahead?

Guanglong Pang:

My long-term vision is to provide more Broad students with the opportunity to study abroad. The college is actively expanding the portfolio across all program types, from faculty-led programs, international internships, and semester-long programs. So we are trying to create more options for students.

We are also engaging with our alumni to increase our scholarship funds so that we can continue to offer scholarships to every Broad student whom MSU has determined has financial needs, as well as offering scholarships for programs of strategic importance to the college. For example, those program destinations that are not in Europe.

My short-term goals includes running workshops in collaborations with Broad colleagues. These workshops, covering topics like cultures through music and sports, aiming to provide global learning opportunities without the needs to travel. And also, the goal is to stimulate more interest in study abroad.

Another short-term goals that I have is to leverage the existing international communities within Broad College. Initiatives like the Buddy Program and the upcoming International Student Experience Project aim to bring together domestic and international students for friendships and learning with each other. By tapping into these resources at home, the goal is to develop global mindset for everyone within the college.

Quinetta Roberson:

So Guanglong, we know that you have over 10 years of personal experience with education abroad. What's something that excites you about education abroad?

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Guanglong Pang:

I think the fact that the college is putting so many resources into supporting education abroad shows the leadership recognizes the direct impact of education abroad to developing global mindset for students. Another thing that I'm really excited about is that we are making a lot of efforts to diversify our program portfolio. Europe is the most popular destination for students at Broad and other institutions. But we are creating programs in Asia, Africa, and Latin America, and that is not a trend that every business school in the US is going. So, I am proud to work at one that recognizes the value of global diversity.

Ken Szymusiak:

That's fantastic.

Quinetta Roberson:

That's great.

Ken Szymusiak:

Okay, one personal question: If you could go to one country right now to do a study abroad program, where would you like to go?

Guanglong Pang:

China, my home country. Not for me, but I'd love to lead a study abroad program to take American students to experience China. There is a lot of potential for people-to-people exchange, communications between the US and China.

Ken Szymusiak:

That's fantastic. Well, thank you so much for joining us on the podcast. It's been great talking to you today. How can we keep up with your work going forward?

Guanglong Pang:

The best way to learn about Broad Education Abroad is google “Broad Education Abroad”. We have a website, and there, we have a filter function that helps students to decide what types of program work for them the best. We also have an Instagram account that is @MSUBroadAbroad. We use our Instagram to advertise events, new programs, scholarship opportunities, and to feature student stories. Go green and go abroad.

Ken Szymusiak:

Well, if you want more Broad news and insights, you can follow us on social media platforms at MSU Broad College, or visit us on the web at broad.msu.edu/news.

Quinetta Roberson:

And remember, like, rate and subscribe to Broad Matters on Apple Podcasts and Spotify.

That does it for this episode. I'm Quinetta Roberson.

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Ken Szymusiak:

And I'm Ken Szymusiak. Join us next time to hear faculty and staff weighing in on relevant issues and discussing how their work makes an impact, illuminating how and why, Broad Matters.