

HOW TO INCREASE THE VOLUME OF STUDENTS GOING ABROAD



AARHUS
UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF MECHANICAL AND PRODUCTION
ENGINEERING

CIRCLS U
5 OCTOBER 2022

JESPER SEJERSEN
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR



ABOUT JESPER SEJERSEN

- Associate Professor (MSc EE from DTU). Teaching in Calculus and Electronics
- International Coordinator and Student Counsellor for Mechanical Engineering since 2014
- Developing and promoting international programs (taught in English) for Mechanical Engineering since 2003

DISCLAIMER

- The following slides may – due to the subject – be a little self promoting. I apologize for the inconvenience 😊
- This is not an evidence based study – it is more based on my feelings/impressions

THE 3 UNITS

- International Office (Aarhus University)
- International Office (Faculties of Technical and Natural Sciences)
- International Adviser (Department of Mechanical and Production Engineering) (Me – what do I do?)

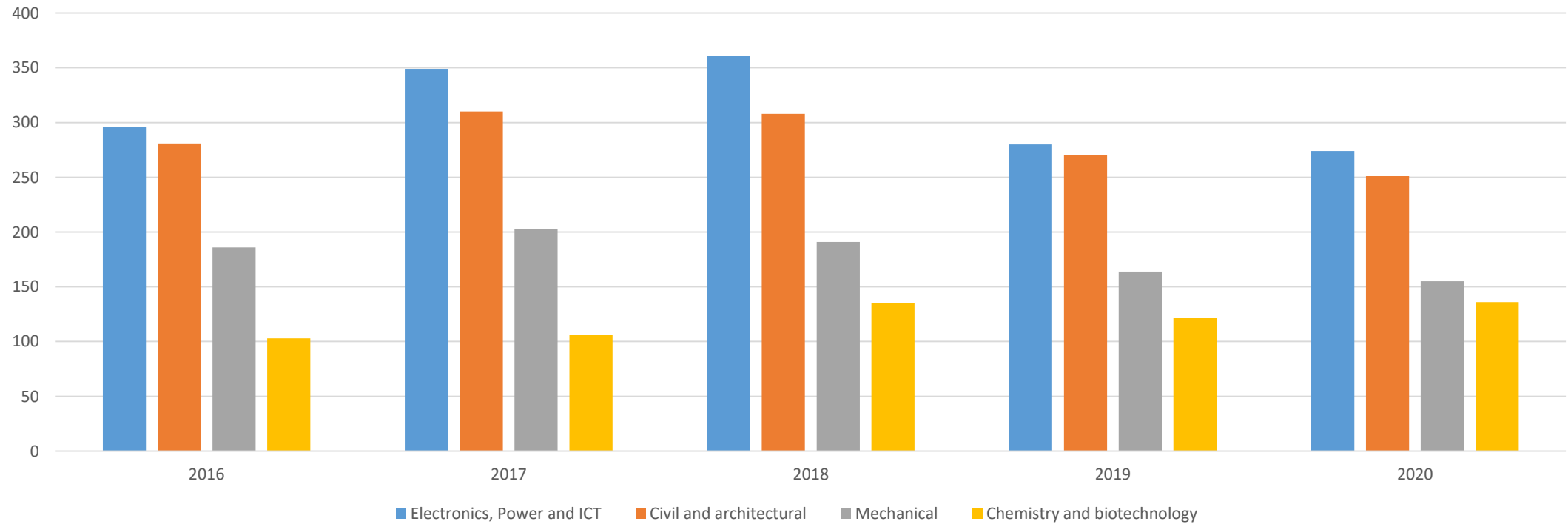
MY GOAL SINCE 2014

- Increasing the number of outgoing students to a new level
 - Encouraging students to go abroad
 - Using older students as ambassadors
 - Creating a “going abroad culture”
- Building up and maintaining relations with relevant partners – European and Overseas
- Building up a portfolio of “preferred partner universities”
- Visiting selected partner universities and - if possible – visiting our students abroad
- Finding and visiting new relevant partner universities

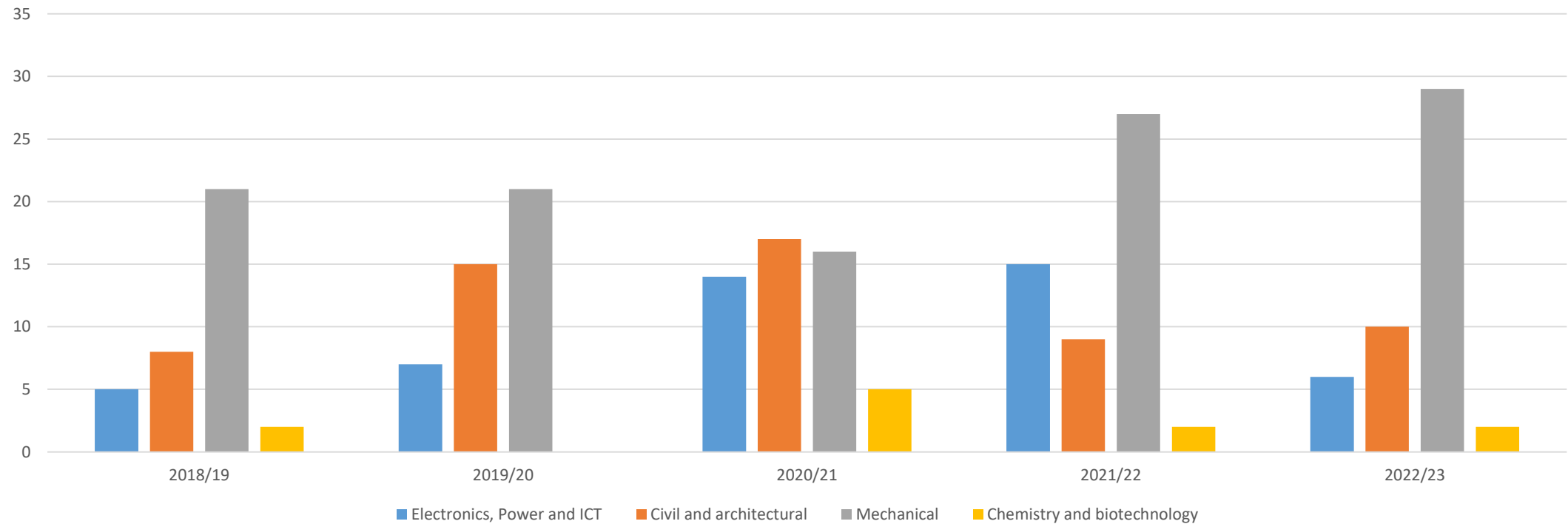


STATISTICS

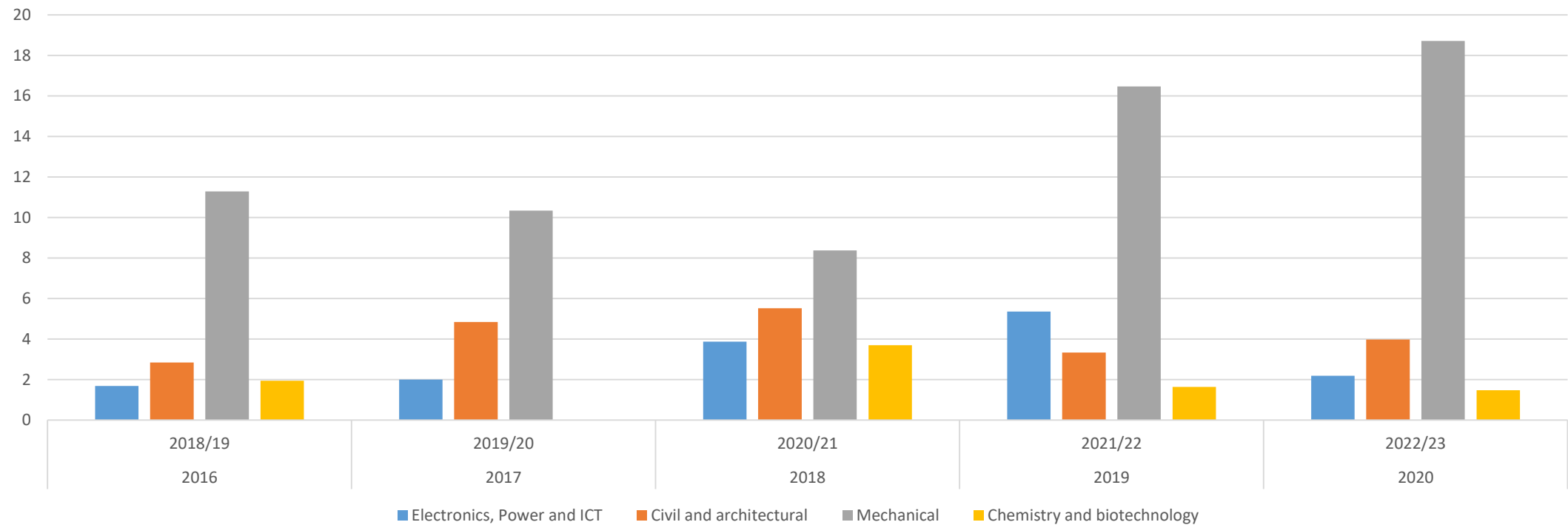
Number of admitted students



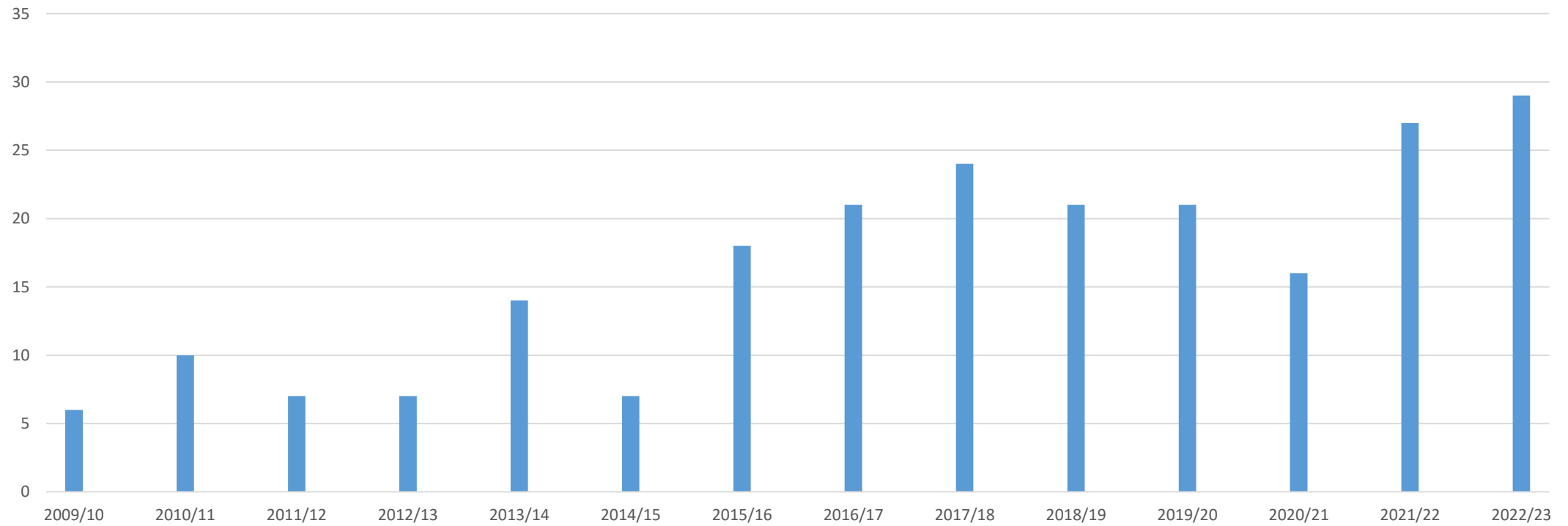
Number of students going abroad



Going abroad/admitted (%)



Mechanical Engineering Students studying abroad



— TO BE HONEST: I NEVER STUDIED ABROAD

- It was not very used and supported in the 70's and early 80's
- Instead of spending 5 months abroad I spend 5 years in Copenhagen 😊

CREATING GOOD CONDITIONS FOR EXCHANGE

- 6th semester as mobility window – no hard constraints
- Fast and flexible preapproval (delegated to the international coordinator = me)



RELEVANT TRICK

- I have taught in the same Calculus course in 2nd semester since 2014 – ie I have met all Mechanical Engineering students at Aarhus University during the last 8 years
 - I know a lot of the students
 - They all know me (hopefully) – and know that I am the international coordinator
- I make an introduction on how to study abroad already at 2. semester
- I tell nearly the same for the 3rd and 4th semester
- The more you repeat the more they understand, the students.
- I tell small stories from my visits at the partner universities, shows photos etc. – which I suppose gives me a kind of ” authenticity” – I have been there myself – not only read a book or seen a Youtube video (The use the same trick at travel agents in order to building up an authenticity)
- On the sophomore/junior study tour abroad: Visit partner universities!
- My fuel: Travelling!



FOCUS UNIVERSITIES

- Scandinavian universities
 - our common "Scandinavian language" increases the number of relevant courses
- European universities with (a certain number of) English taught courses
- UK and Ireland (the language)
- Universities in countries abroad with English as main language (USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Hong Kong, Singapore ea)
- Special partners

VISITING UNIVERSITIES

- My master plan:
 - A 2 week tour abroad in the spring
 - A single week tour in Europe in the fall
 - If possible – select universities, when our own students are there.
- Study tour with students:
 - Tours every fall – 3rd and 4th semester.
 - Use transport time in busses to make pep talks
 - Visit one or more university/-ties – if possible universities with AU students

A FEW PHOTOS

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TECNUN, SAN SEBASTIAN, SPANIEN



ULM, GERMANY



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ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR



AGDER, NORWAY



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ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR



NTNU, TRONDHEIM, NORWAY



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LULEÅ TEKNISKA UNIVERSITET, SWEDEN



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ZHAW, WINTERTHUR, SWITZERLAND



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MCI, INNSBRUCK, AUSTRIA



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TOMSK POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY, RUSSIA



UARK, ARKANSAS, USA



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NMSU, NEW MEXICO, USA



CITY UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG



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NANYANG TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY, SINGAPORE



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ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR



NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF SINGAPORE, SINGAPORE



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DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY, HALIFAX, NOVA SCOTIA, CANADA



UNIVERSITY OF NEW BRUNSWICK, FREDERICTON, NEW BRUNSWICK, CANADA



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UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN, MADISON, USA



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CONCLUSION

If you

- tell the students about going abroad
- repeat-repeat-repeat
- use older students as ambassadors
- tell stories
- show photos
- travel-travel-travel
- bring sophomores/juniors to exchange universities during their study tour - as an appetizer

then you will make a *Going Abroad* hype!

Thank you!



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