

Swedish Scholars Going West

An economic-historical perspective on scholars traveling to the U.S. and Canada on Sweden-America Foundation Fellowships, 1919-2006

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The Sweden-America Foundation

Founded in 1919, the Sweden-America Foundation has since its very start been an important and prestigious actor on the Swedish market for transnational education. With no governmental financial support, the foundation has always been entirely dependant on grants from individuals, other research-oriented foundations and – primarily – the economic sphere. Proceeding slowly at first, with an annual rate of 10-12 own fellowships, the foundation's activity increased after WWII to an annual awarding of 20-30 fellows in the period between 1946 and 1980, reaching its highest level of fellowships at 40-60 a year in the early 1980's through 2002. The last couple of years (2003-2007) the number have decreased to approximately 30 a year.

Besides the importance of the Foundation's own fellowships, the Sweden-America Foundation has, from a historical perspective, also been a link between Sweden and studies in the U.S./Canada for other reasons: serving travelers from other financiers of study travels, i.e. "honorary fellows"; for studies at undergraduate levels, i.e. the "college programs" (terminated in 2006); and as a channel for the exchange of trainees between Swedish and American companies.

Between 1919 and 2006, roughly 10 000 individuals have passed through the system of the Sweden-America Foundation, as fellows, honorary fellows, college students and trainees. For this first study of the foundation and its alumni, the focus is solely on the foundation's own fellows. This group of alumni consists of 2 183 persons.

Sources

The empirical source for the study is first and foremost the Sweden-America Foundation's archive. For every year since its inception, the foundation has published an annual report, describing its actions and financial results. These reports give a short presentation of every fellow, with name, scholarship subject, which institution the fellow plans to visit, sum of grant and grant donor. Many times, they also include a description of the fellowship funds: a few words about their donor and to what end they serve.

In addition to the annual reports, data has been added from two other sources: for the fellows of 1992 to today, the foundation has computerized data, which is fairly easily extracted, but

for the fellows of the years 1919 through 1991 the information is gathered on individual cardboard-cards for each and every fellow, student and trainee. Most of the cards, but not all, hold more detailed information of the history of the fellowship-applicant, his or her title/titles, previous and current work-place, geographical whereabouts, and additional data. This poses a time-consuming challenge: constructing a functioning and meaningful database out of what ideally should be one card per person. Therefore, for this first phase of inquiry, this has been done only for the Foundation Fellows.

The frailty of a card-archive could naturally cause problems; it certainly would if it was the only source available. During the nearly 90 years of the Sweden-America Foundation's existence, there are numerous ways and reasons for a card to vanish, be misplaced or simply be rendered unreadable. However, the information of the cards is compensated – when missing – by that of the annual reports and in all other cases complemented by it. The problems with and quality of the sources is consequently some gaps in the individual information, rather than missing individuals. In some cases, the information of the cards could be incorrect, or added at a later time than that of application, but the beauty of the card-archive is that the data can often be time-tagged by either the different print of typewriters or differences in handwriting between writers and/or pens.

Analytical questions

The initial focus is directed toward Sweden, and the relationship between the foundation's actions and the general development and change of Swedish society. This frame should later be broadened to include the impact of the American/Canadian experiences as well.

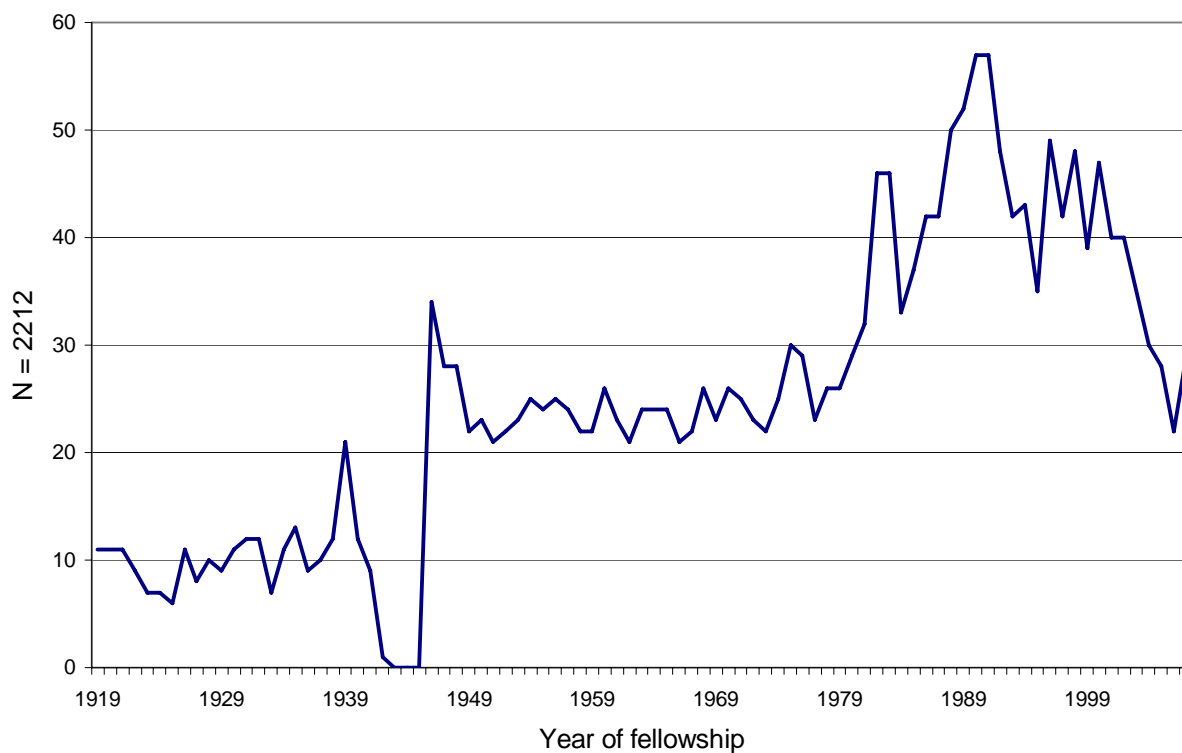
The relationship between the economical structure and the distribution of the fellows' choice of subjects is a fruitful point of departure. One perspective in Swedish economic-historical theory argues that economic development takes place in cycles. The distribution of subjects over time could hence be compared and/or contrasted with these cycles. In general, this vantage point seeks to pose and examine questions like the following:

What different kinds of interests does this production of fellows serve? An abstract national advantage derived from the fellows' inter-cultural experience? A closer relation between the economy and the production of knowledge and science: can the industry in general and/or specific branches of the business life steer the production of knowledge for instance by constructing dedicated fellowship funds?

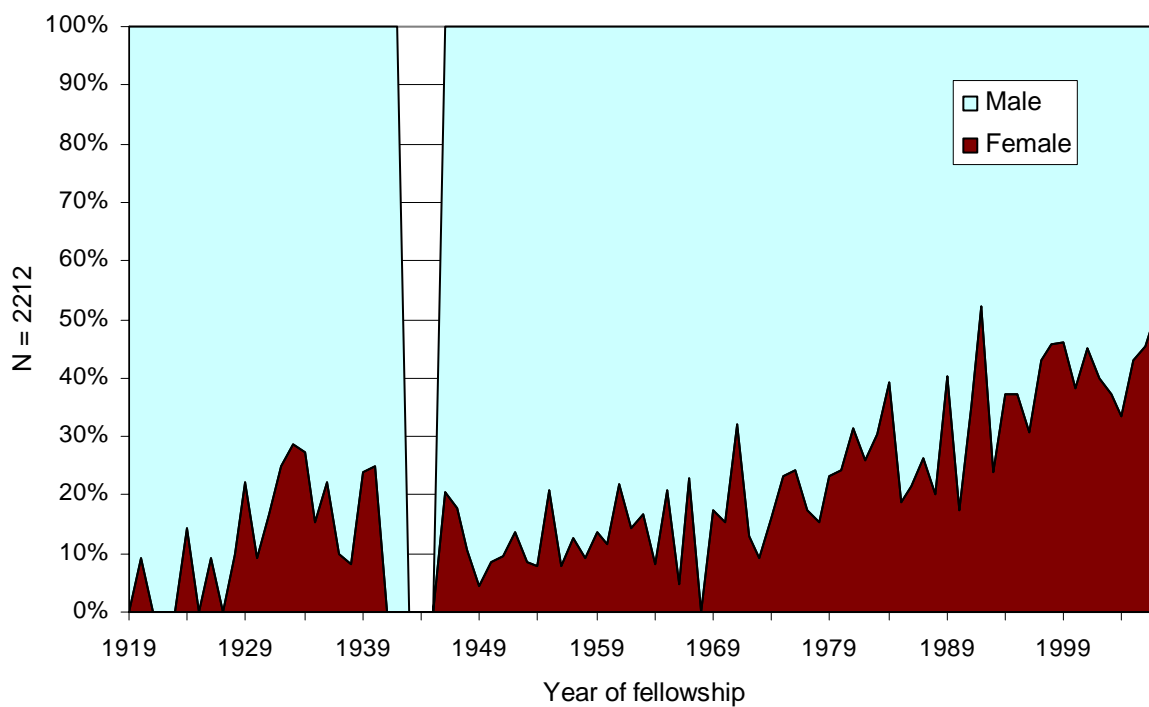
In a wider sociological frame: Who are chosen to become Sweden-America Foundation Fellows? What are they representing in terms of social background, post-fellowship national – and/or international – trajectories and geographic location? What impact does the fellowship have on the individual fellow: do they benefit from the American experience and connections in more ways than academically, for example by reproducing – or advancing – their socio-cultural status on the national market?

Preliminary results

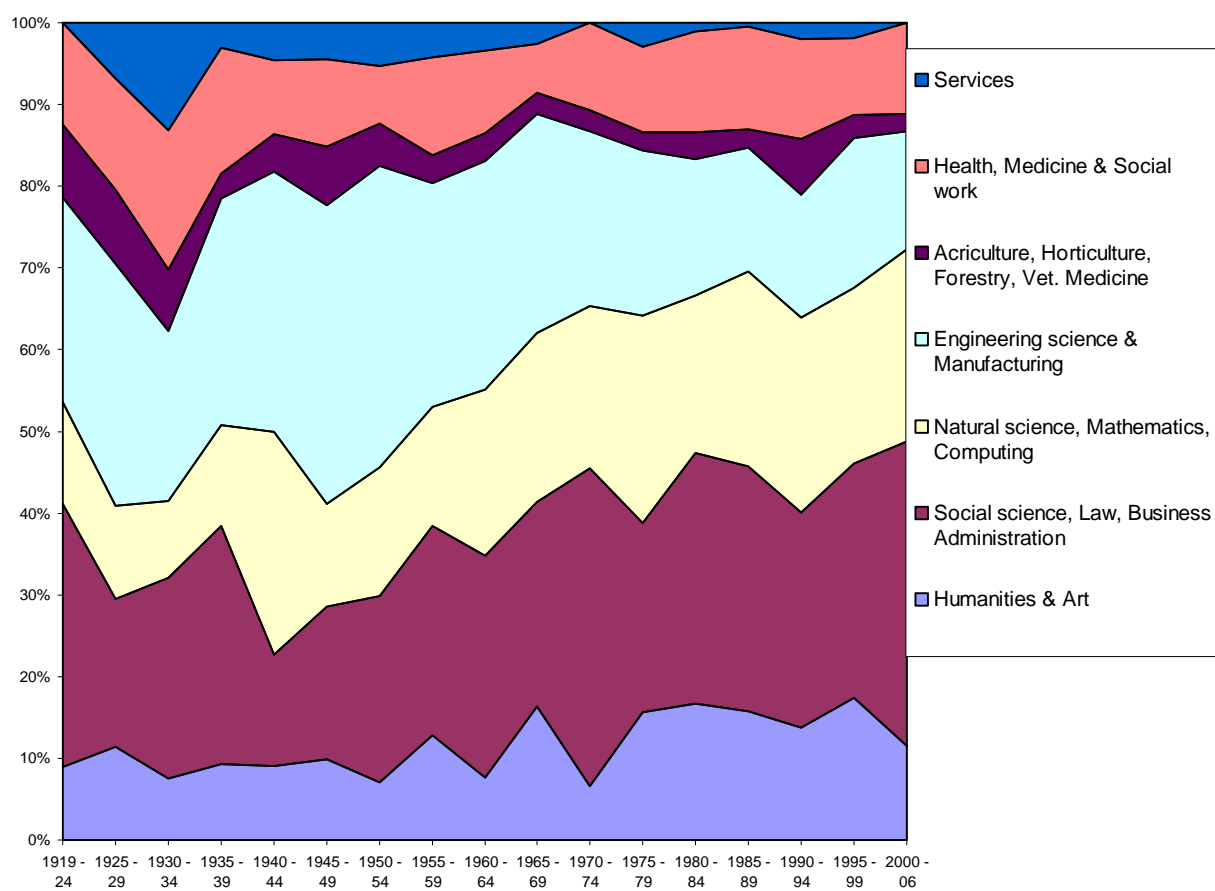
Graph 1: Volume of Sweden-America Foundation Fellowships, 1919 – 2007



Graph 2: Gender division, 1919 – 2007

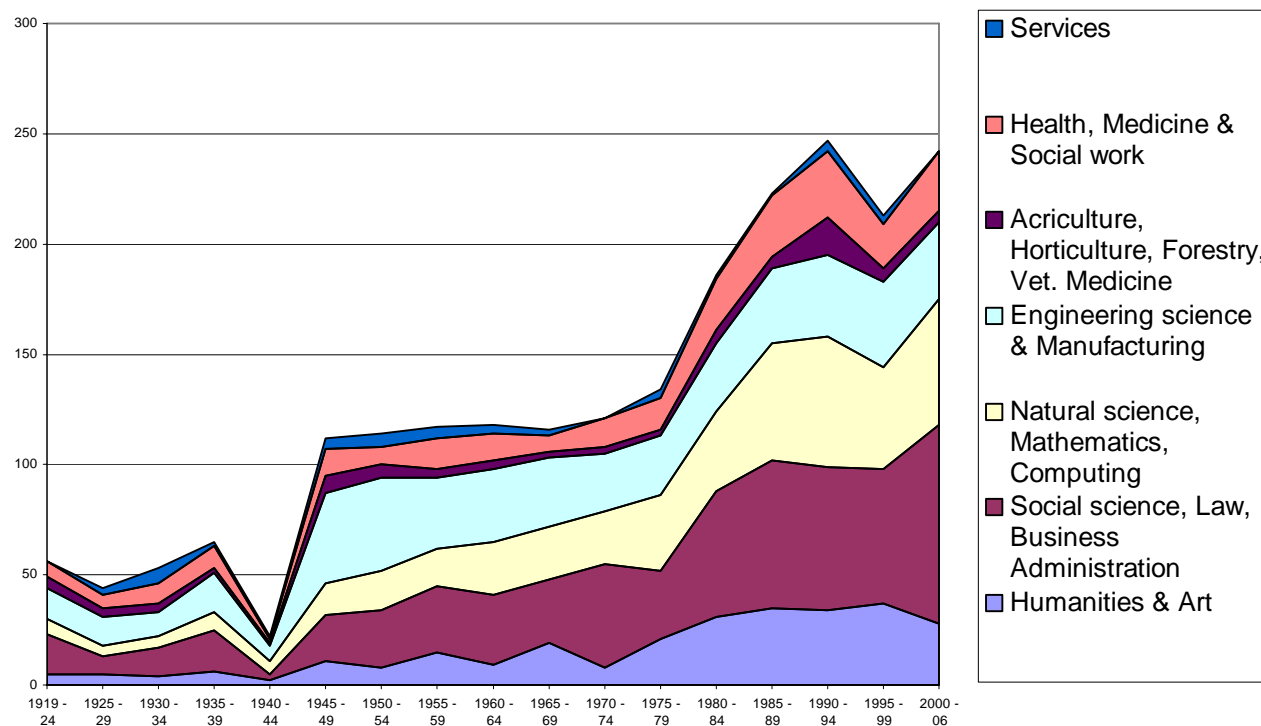


Graph 3: Distribution of Subjects, 7 categories, 1919 – 2006



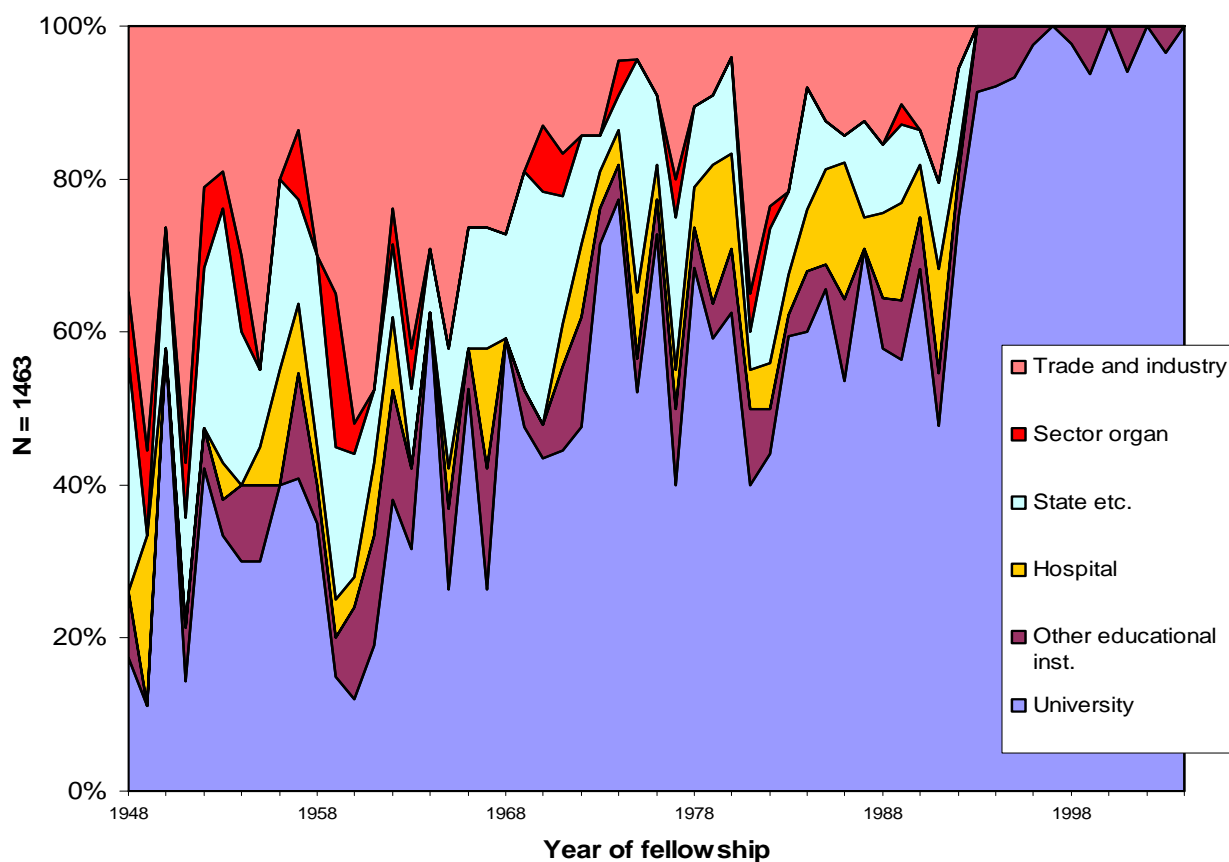
Categories based on a modified version of SUN 2000's 1 digit code

Graph 4: Volume of subjects, 7 categories, 1919 – 2006



Categories based on a modified version of SUN 2000's 1 digit code

Graph 5: The fellow's association to sectors of the Swedish labor market, 1948 – 2004



Graph based on information at the time of application

Table 1: Differentiations over time, within subjects

	1919- N/eN	1925- N/eN	1930- N/eN	1935- N/eN	1940- N/eN	1945- N/eN	1950- N/eN	1955- N/eN	1960- N/eN	1965- N/eN	1970- N/eN	1975- N/eN	1980- N/eN	1985- N/eN	1990- N/eN	1995- N/eN	2000- N/eN	SUM
Education	211%	268%	111%	91%	268%	316%	207%	50%	150%	51%	195%	88%	32%	79%	72%	0%	49%	37
Art & Media	76%	32%	27%	65%	64%	51%	99%	109%	72%	147%	47%	106%	152%	127%	109%	146%	64%	154
Humanities	63%	160%	100%	81%	80%	110%	0%	90%	45%	106%	58%	145%	104%	118%	107%	124%	124%	124
Social science	137%	65%	36%	74%	87%	68%	59%	74%	65%	74%	158%	79%	113%	129%	109%	103%	131%	228
Journalism & Information	0%	261%	325%	177%	0%	51%	151%	98%	146%	99%	142%	86%	154%	52%	47%	81%	71%	38
Business Administration & Organization	123%	20%	97%	132%	0%	31%	53%	125%	117%	119%	121%	77%	97%	96%	97%	125%	124%	254
Law & Legal science	0%	0%	69%	56%	0%	65%	160%	31%	62%	31%	90%	109%	156%	114%	59%	68%	256%	60
Biology & Environmental science	24%	30%	0%	21%	61%	36%	35%	57%	91%	92%	77%	120%	108%	144%	108%	107%	205%	163
Physics, Chemistry, Geo. science	93%	95%	99%	96%	190%	75%	110%	80%	106%	99%	129%	125%	79%	94%	135%	113%	56%	209
Mathematics & Other nat. science	80%	0%	0%	69%	203%	119%	117%	114%	151%	154%	37%	100%	120%	140%	54%	84%	110%	49
Computer science	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	118%	113%	305%	147%	122%	221%	128%	56%	16
Engineering science & Technology	121%	120%	86%	139%	69%	162%	172%	103%	115%	117%	62%	101%	77%	78%	76%	106%	81%	289
Material and Manufacturing science	42%	213%	133%	108%	533%	189%	226%	281%	179%	142%	116%	18%	50%	53%	57%	0%	48%	93
Architecture, Construction science	175%	111%	93%	113%	0%	175%	108%	42%	125%	127%	203%	146%	105%	66%	60%	104%	41%	89
Agriculture, Horticulture, Forestry	291%	296%	184%	100%	148%	204%	143%	56%	55%	84%	54%	49%	105%	58%	158%	76%	27%	67
Vet. Medicine	0%	0%	217%	0%	0%	103%	101%	196%	195%	0%	95%	86%	0%	52%	233%	54%	142%	19
Health & Medicine	126%	91%	152%	124%	91%	63%	71%	103%	60%	52%	108%	98%	124%	122%	110%	85%	112%	217
Social work	0%	397%	165%	269%	0%	390%	0%	149%	370%	75%	0%	65%	0%	39%	106%	82%	0%	25
Home economics & Physical education	0%	425%	588%	0%	284%	167%	328%	160%	211%	108%	0%	186%	34%	0%	51%	29%	0%	35
Transport services	0%	0%	0%	1119%	0%	650%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	342%	0%	3
Environmental care and protection	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	207%	0%	209%	0%	0%	130%	109%	295%	228%	0%	9
Security services	0%	0%	1648%	672%	0%	390%	0%	373%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	5
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	2183

Table 2: Distribution of subjects over visited institutions

Observed N	Top 10	11 - 25	25 - 50	51 - 124	Other inst.	Canadian uni.	Art/music/ theater/ design inst.	Hospital / Medical inst.	N			SUM
	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N		MISSING		
Art & Media	8	4	21	7	8	2	46	0	96	58	38%	154
Humanities	28	15	9	10	6	10	1	0	79	45	36%	124
Social science & Education	57	35	33	35	5	9	1	2	177	88	33%	265
Journalism & Information	3	2	6	3	1	1	0	0	16	22	58%	38
Business administration	74	30	18	19	19	7	0	0	167	87	34%	254
Law & Legal science	16	5	13	4	1	1	0	0	40	20	33%	60
Biology & Environmental science	12	19	26	24	28	15	0	5	129	43	25%	172
Physics, chemistry, geo. science	27	14	28	42	21	10	0	0	142	67	32%	209
Mathematics and other nat. science	15	8	4	2	0	2	0	0	31	18	37%	49
Computer and engineering science	71	12	35	38	26	8	0	0	190	115	38%	305
Material & Manufacturing science	11	4	10	8	2	3	0	0	38	55	59%	93
Architecture & Construction science	14	19	9	5	2	0	2	0	51	38	43%	89
Agriculture, horticulture, forestry, vet. Medicine	2	8	6	18	8	4	0	2	48	38	44%	86
Health & Medicine	24	19	29	21	10	7	0	31	141	76	35%	217
Social work	3	1	1	1	2	0	0	0	8	17	68%	25
Home economics & Physical education	1	3	5	6	0	0	0	1	16	19	54%	35
Services	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	6	75%	8
	367	198	253	243	140	79	50	41	1371	812	37%	2183

Table 3: Differentiations in subjects over visited institutions

Observed / Expected N	Top 10	11 - 25	25 - 50	51 - 124	Other inst.	Canadian uni.	Art/music/ theater/ design inst.	Hospital / Medical inst.	N	MISSING		SUM
	N/eN	N/eN	N/eN	N/eN	N/eN	N/eN	N/eN	N/eN				
Art & Media	31%	29%	119%	41%	82%	36%	1314%	0%	96	58	38%	154
Humanities	132%	131%	62%	71%	72%	220%	35%	0%	79	45	36%	124
Social science & Education	120%	137%	101%	112%	28%	88%	15%	38%	177	88	33%	265
Journalism & Information	70%	87%	203%	106%	61%	108%	0%	0%	16	22	58%	38
Business administration	166%	124%	58%	64%	111%	73%	0%	0%	167	87	34%	254
Law & Legal science	149%	87%	176%	56%	24%	43%	0%	0%	40	20	33%	60
Biology & Environmental science	35%	102%	109%	105%	213%	202%	0%	130%	129	43	25%	172
Physics, chemistry, geo. science	71%	68%	107%	167%	145%	122%	0%	0%	142	67	32%	209
Mathematics and other nat. science	181%	179%	70%	36%	0%	112%	0%	0%	31	18	37%	49
Computer and engineering science	140%	44%	100%	113%	134%	73%	0%	0%	190	115	38%	305
Material & Manufacturing science	108%	73%	143%	119%	52%	137%	0%	0%	38	55	59%	93
Architecture & Construction science	103%	258%	96%	55%	38%	0%	108%	0%	51	38	43%	89
Agriculture, horticulture, forestry, vet. Medicine	16%	115%	68%	212%	163%	145%	0%	139%	48	38	44%	86
Health & Medicine	64%	93%	111%	84%	69%	86%	0%	735%	141	76	35%	217
Social work	140%	87%	68%	71%	245%	0%	0%	0%	8	17	68%	25
Home economics & Physical education	23%	130%	169%	212%	0%	0%	0%	209%	16	19	54%	35
Services	187%	0%	0%	0%	490%	0%	0%	0%	2	6	75%	8
	367	198	253	243	140	79	50	41	1371	812	37%	2183