Freshmen and Study Abroad:
Student Experiences in Costa Rica
(and Related Administrative Experiences)

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Quickly About Purdue

10 Academic Schools
(over 5,600 courses and 240 degrees offered)

Agriculture  Management
Health & Human Sciences  Pharmacy
Education  Science
Engineering  Technology
Liberal Arts  Veterinary Medicine

About 40,000 total students on the West Lafayette Campus
Quickly About Purdue Study Abroad

Study Abroad Student Participation and Programs Utilized
1998-2011
CIC Study Abroad 2008-09

2,610 Michigan State (#2)
2,347 Minnesota (#6)
2,322 Texas, Austin (#7)
2,230 Wisconsin, Madison (#8)
2,181 Penn State (#9)
2,116 Michigan (#10)
2,028 Indiana (#11)
1,999 UIUC (#13)
1,758 Ohio State (#20)
1,388 Texas A&M (#33)
1,283 Iowa (#37)
1,208 Purdue University (#39)

NOTES:

Data per Institute of International Education (IIE) for students of US citizenship earning credit on study abroad (fall 2008, spring 2009, & summer 2009).

Other notable universities for study abroad include: New York University #1 (3,524); UCLA #3 (2,371); Washington #4 (2,349); University of Southern California #5 (2,348)
Top-20 Doctoral Institutions for Short-term Study Abroad
(fall 2007, spring 2008, summer 2008)

2,484 Michigan State (#1)
1,563 Texas, Austin (#4)
1,449 Ohio State (#6)
1,306 Minnesota (#8)
1,193 Michigan (#10)
1,159 UIUC (#12)
1,107 Purdue University (#15)
1,094 Indiana (#16)
1,089 Penn State (#17)
1,030 Texas A&M (#20)

Notes:
Let Short-term = less than a semester/quarter

About 3 to 3 ½ % of US study abroad students are freshmen.

Likewise at Purdue, historically less than 5% of US study abroad students are freshmen.

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New Program Innovation (summer 2011)

- Provost’s commitment
- Early experience (thinking and/or doing)
- Interdisciplinary (albeit no core course currently at Purdue)
- Symbolic commitment to new students
- Admissions partnership
Why Costa Rica?

- Expenses
- Safety
- Perceived safety
- Alumni contacts
- "Leadership" and "Green" as interdisciplinary topics
- Edu-eco-adventure-learning
- General allure
- Prediction of success
Goals

- Early experience (mindset plus future)
- Interdisciplinary
- Innovative program (relative to Purdue)
- Partnership with Office of Admissions (for recruitment)
- Minimized issues of cost, safety, perception management
Program had varied features

- Museums
- Rainforest
- Lectures on history and culture
- Lectures on communication
- Volcanoes
- Coffee plantations
- Alumni contact
- Company Visit
- Hikes and walking tours
- (optional) zip line experience
- Local speakers
- (optional) opera
- Cooking instruction
- Dance instruction

Note: A program provider was utilized
Global Leadership in Costa Rica for Freshmen

“Be part of something special. Participate in this unique program meant to enhance the Purdue experience from day one. Create lasting bonds with fellow students whom you'll be spending the next four years. A multi-disciplinary team of Purdue faculty/staff escort a small group of incoming freshmen on a two-week academic program in and around San Jose, Costa Rica.”

~ Excerpts from Promotional Materials ~

**Rolling admission as space remains**

Organized lectures on:
- Cultural Orientation
- Leadership & the International Experience
- The Peoples and History of Costa Rica
- History and Geography of Monteverde
- Costa Rican Afro-Caribbean Influence and Descent

Related extra-curricular activities:
- National Museum of Costa Rica
- Inbio Park
- Monteverde Cloud Forest
- Tour of Arenal Lake
- Hike at Arenal Volcano
- Visit to Irazú Volcano and Colonial Orosí
- Visit to Maleku Reservation
- Coffee Tour
- Workshop at the Popular Culture Museum
- Tropical Dance Class

Potential Purdue Engagement activities:
- Gathering with Purdue alumni in San Jose
- Company visits of alumni & friends

Onsite Support: Purdue partners with ISA (International Studies Abroad) to facilitate the program.
- Transportation from & to San Jose airport
- Welcome Reception & Farewell Dinner
- Arrival Orientation
- Excursions (entry fees & required guides)
- Resident Director (a local Costa Rican) on-call throughout
- Most meals are provided

For more information on San Jose & ISA.

**Accommodations:** Students will be housed in hotels throughout

Credit: 2 credits, OS 39000

Program Cost: $1,999 (to include housing, some meals, & estimated airfare)

Enrollment Deadline: May 10th ~ Rolling admission as space remains ~
Challenges and How We Responded:

Admissions related
- Including in cycle of Admissions communications and events
- Admittance effective date (i.e. fall, not summer)
- Recruiting prospective students (i.e. even after May 1\textsuperscript{st})
- Academic Advisors not in rhythm of including as Fall option
- Importance of visit days, direct emails, and \textit{relentless} recruiting
Challenges and How We Responded  {continued}

- July activity, but treated as fall semester endeavor (note the Provost-related exception)
- Campus wide curiosity but less able to boldly advocate
- Issue of non-US citizens (so restricted to US only this first time)
Other success
- Behavior great
- Students became “Purdue identified” immediately
- No alcohol abuse noted
- People on time (i.e. worries of grade cuts initially)
- Students wanted more integration and challenge
- Students began speaking of long-term plans
Outcomes

- Interdisciplinary (almost every College represented)
- Experienced student group self-selected
- Noted that is was high-achieving students
  - Seven (7) honors students (out of 23)
  - Most had prior travel experiences
  - Most had ambitious personalities
- Three (3) picked Purdue because of it
Outcomes {continued}

- Less emphasis on “Leadership” than anticipated
- Bonding (prevailing theme, even if secondary)
- Decision to repeat same for summer 2012
- Interest by Colleges/departments to do their own
Thank you for your interest!

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