First-Year Study Abroad
University of Cincinnati

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New Program Development

• Identify & build on strengths
• Establish a vision
• Utilize professional resources & collaborations
• Leverage institutional opportunities
• Use pilots
• Assess for continuous improvement
UC’s Model for Undergraduate Education

- 3 Integrated touch points
  FYE, mid-collegiate, capstone

- 3 Integrated learning environments: credit-bearing, experiential, co-curricular
I'M KIND OF A BIG DEAL...

I rocked my freshman year at UC Cincinnati!
Learning Communities

Comprehensive · Distinguished Integral

• An educational package
  – Small group based learning experience
  – Creates learning connections

• Bundles courses with
  – Related learning
  – Peer mentoring
  – Social experiences

• Reach beyond FYE
  – Prepares students for graduation
  – Provides opportunities to get involved in the Bearcat community
**Vision**

**Goals**
- Value the presence and status of study abroad as an integral and expected part of the UC undergraduate experience
- Expand UC study abroad capacity to the first year of college
- Increase UC and MSU participation rates of students from populations who normally forgo study abroad
  - demographic backgrounds
  - early stages of college
  - academic majors
- Expand UC and MSU study abroad destinations to include more locations traditionally underrepresented in study abroad
- Increase UC STEM and education faculty involvement in developing undergraduate global study pathways from first-year through graduation and in leading short-term, first-year study abroad gateway experiences

**Strategies**
- Establish a mentoring collaboration between the University of Cincinnati and Michigan State University
  - Consultation
  - Program observation and shadowing
  - Joint programming
- Establish a Study Abroad Capacity Building Steering Committee to guide UC expansion from conception through implementation and evaluation
- Establish a faculty engagement strategy and training programs
- Increase study abroad site development activity
- Pilot new first-year study abroad programs and approaches
- Build a comprehensive assessment and evaluation system to track outcomes
- Establish a plan for increasing revenue streams for sustainability

**Outputs**
- A 3-5 year strategic plan for increasing UC’s study abroad capacity
- Increased number of UC faculty trained to lead short-term, first-year study abroad experiences
- More non-traditional destination sites developed in preparation for UC and MSU first-year study abroad trips
- Multiple UC first-year study abroad pilots completed
- Expanded marketing strategies and communication templates for targeted student populations at UC and MSU
- Increased private donations to UC student study abroad scholarship funds as well as faculty development support
- Completed program evaluation and student learning assessment studies (at UC and MSU)

**Outcomes**
- Institutional Change
- Participant Learning
- Participant Behavior
- Participant Satisfaction
Institutional Change
- First-year students study abroad at incrementally increasing rates (UC and MSU)
- Established cross-unit collaborations provide increased administrative, curricular, and pedagogical support for UC first-year study abroad
- Student orientation, re-entry and alumni follow-up systems are embedded in the UC curriculum and link to subsequent global studies opportunities in mid-collegiate and senior years, e.g., international co-op, foreign language study, or international capstone undergraduate research experiences
- Cross-institutional study abroad collaborations between UC and MSU are established

Participant Learning
- Students acquire intellectual and self-management skills needed for success in the university, as well as in an inter-connected world
- Students’ attention is focused on what their professional and civic responsibilities to the world might be as educated persons
- Students’ capacity to make connections between knowledge gained from multiple sources and to apply their increasingly comprehensive understanding to new questions and situations is enhanced

Participant Behavior
- Study abroad student alumni persist at UC and graduate on time (6-year rate)
- Student participation rates reflect strong participation from student populations that traditionally forgo study abroad
- First-year study abroad students participate in additional study abroad or other experiences that continue to internationalize their learning

Participant Satisfaction
- UC faculty and students are satisfied with the quality of first-year study abroad experiences
- UC faculty and students are satisfied with the timing of first-year study abroad experiences
- UC faculty and students alumni recommend that future first-year students participate in study abroad
Assess & Regroup

- Unfunded grant proposal
- Aggressive semester conversion timeline
- Faltering economy
- Increased student enrollment coupled with budget cuts
Leverage Opportunities

- Clear, but unfunded vision
- Alignment with institutional ideals
- New institutional leadership
- Academic master planning/articulated priorities
- Semester conversion process

- Extended our planning time frame
- Formed a faculty exploration team
- President prioritized study abroad and allocated funds
- Inserted ourselves into the master planning process
- Immersed ourselves into the semester conversion process
Next Steps

– Continue with faculty exploration team
– Utilize internal funding sources
  • New Presidential monies
– Identify potential pilots
  • Spanish literature, communication, engineering
– Incorporate other forms of experiential learning, e.g., service-learning
New Program Development

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What have we learned?

• Vision
• Tenacity
• Advocacy
• Collaboration
• Passion