First-year Students Abroad: Perspectives & Models from 3 Institutions

Forum on Education Abroad
22 March 2012

Brett Berquist - MSU
Kurt Olausen - U Cincinnati
Brian Harley - Purdue
Inge Steglitz - MSU
Early programming abroad

- Enrollment management trend
- Work with first-year transition & success programs
- Informed by student development theory
- Encouraged by trend to link state funding to performance metrics, e.g. retention, time to degree, etc.
- Early high impact programming.
- Symposium at MSU Sept 2011

http://studyabroad.isp.msu.edu/frseminar/symposium.htm
What do we want students to be and become in terms of their developing holistic and global perspective?

What can students experience in college that are most promising in fostering these desired ends?

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<tr>
<th>ENDS</th>
<th>MEANS</th>
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<td>Currriculum</td>
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<td>Cognitive</td>
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<td>Intrapersonal</td>
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<td>Interpersonal</td>
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</table>
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

over 2,600 students abroad on nearly 300 programs to all 7 continents

1/4 of MSU undergraduate students

Study Abroad top rated attraction for admitted students

Freshman Seminars Abroad

#1 Public University
Global Competence Goals

- an understanding of themselves culturally and the ability to use this knowledge to live and work effectively in diverse settings and with diverse individuals
- the knowledge and skills associated with international, global, and intercultural content areas such as language, geography, history;
- a desire and ability to seek out and use diverse sources of information to inform their decision making; and
- a desire and ability to engage in communities of practice as citizens and scholars.
First-year Students Abroad: Perspectives and Models from Three Institutions

University of Cincinnati

Kurt Olausen
Director, International Programs

Forum on Education Abroad
Tracing the Experience: From Inquiry to Integration
March 22, 2012
Who We Are

• Public, urban, research
• 43,000 students (4,300 first-year students in 8 of our 14 colleges)
• Focus on Experiential Learning
• Integrated Core Learning focus within undergraduate curriculum
FYE & International Programs

- Both part of Provost’s office (“pan-college”)
- Interdisciplinary education
- Small-group learning experiences (Learning Communities)
- Combining in-class with out-of-classroom experiences (holistic approach)
- Compatibility of Directors
- Capacity-Building Grant
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
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Outcomes

- Institutional Change
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- 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
Institutional Change

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Participant Satisfaction

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- UC faculty and students are satisfied with the timing of first-year study abroad experiences
- UC faculty and student alumni (returnees) 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
Where are we now?

- Leadership of FYE office is in transition
- Leadership of UC International in transition
- New academic calendar beginning Fall 2012
- Funding?
- One-time Program Development Grants
  - One Intro-level course to be developed
What have we learned?

- Vision
- Tenacity
- Advocacy
- Collaboration
- Passion
First-year Students Abroad: Perspectives and Experience from Purdue University

Forum on Education Abroad Annual Conference
Denver, Colorado
March 22, 2012

Brian Harley
Associate Dean, International Programs & Director, Office of Programs for Study Abroad
About 3 ½ % of US study abroad students are freshmen.

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

### Top Several Doctoral Institutions for Short-term Study Abroad (2009-10)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Doctorate-granting Universities</th>
<th>City</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>Study Abroad Students</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Michigan State University</td>
<td>East Lansing</td>
<td>MI</td>
<td>2,171</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>New York University</td>
<td>New York</td>
<td>NY</td>
<td>1,889</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Ohio State University - Main Campus</td>
<td>Columbus</td>
<td>OH</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>University of Georgia</td>
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<td>University of Delaware</td>
<td>Newark</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>University of Michigan - Ann Arbor</td>
<td>Ann Arbor</td>
<td>MI</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>University of Washington</td>
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<td>Miami University</td>
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<td>Brigham Young University</td>
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<td>19</td>
<td>University of Virginia - Main Campus</td>
<td>Charlottesville</td>
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<td>1,158</td>
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<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>University of Illinois - Urbana-Champaign</td>
<td>Champaign</td>
<td>IL</td>
<td>1,103</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Purdue University

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

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also online
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 freshman on a two-week academic program in and around San Jose, Costa Rica.”
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 *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 it was high-achieving students
  - Seven (7) honors students (out of 23)
- Most had prior travel experiences
- Most had ambitious personalities
Conclusions

- Less emphasis on “Leadership” than anticipated
- Bonding (prevailing theme, even if secondary)
- Early influence to ongoing learning outcomes (generally, not euphemism about seeking repeat study abroad later)
- Important symbolism (that international education is available to all)
Future

- Adding book from university core reading program (i.e. The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind) to the experience
- Adding service learning component
- Conversations about ties with residential “Learning Communities”
- Summer 2012 program is at enrollment cap
- Interest by one Academic College to pursue their own for summer 2013
Thank you for your interest!

Brian Harley
bharley@purdue.edu
First-year Students Abroad: Perspectives & Models from Three Institutions
The MSU Model

March 22, 2012

• Inge Steglitz, Ph.D.
  • Assistant Director, Academic Relations
  • steglitz@msu.edu

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Context and History

• Long-standing commitment to IE and EA

• Tradition of on-campus freshman seminars

  Designed to:

  ❖ facilitate transition to college
  ❖ introduce to the scholarly life
  ❖ interact with faculty and peers in small groups

• Early ‘03: idea to add global dimension

• July ‘03: first Freshman Seminar Seminar Abroad (FSA)
FSA Goals

• Combine academic, cultural, experiential learning
• Support institutional learning goals
  ❖ Liberal Learning & Global Competencies
• Introduce students to academic life
• Expose students to EA
• Help students develop sense of community
• Help students gain confidence and skills
• Support personal and academic success
High-Impact Experiences

FSAs include several high-impact practices (AAC&U)

- First-year Seminars
- Common Intellectual Experiences
- Learning Communities
- Diversity/Global Learning
- Writing-intensive Courses
The MSU Model

- Prior to first college semester
- Between mid-July and mid-August
- 10 – 18 days
- 2 teaching staff, 1 support staff
- 2 “tracks” per program, 10-15 students each
- 50% time in class, 50% experiential
- 2 graded credits (numeric scale)
- Required pre-departure and return programs
The MSU Model, cont’d

• Criteria for location selection
  ❖ safety
  ❖ existing EA infrastructure/on-site support
  ❖ cost containment
  ❖ available faculty/staff with regional and linguistic expertise
  ❖ institutional strategic focus
  ❖ student interest (Canada 😞)
The Role of the Office of Study Abroad

- The hub where it all comes together
- Contributing expertise to translate pedagogy and design into high-quality programs
  - regional, linguistic, (cross-)cultural expertise
  - EA models and good practice
- Tapping into int’l partner networks
- Serving on (new) FSAs as needed
Our Campus Partners

- Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education
- MSU colleges & academic department
- Office of Admissions
- Registrar
- Residential & Hospitality Services
- Career Services Network
- Judicial Affairs
- Financial Aid
- Writing Center
- Health Education Services
- Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities
- Department of Policy and Public Safety
- Others as needed
Participation so far

• 2003-2011
  ◆ 1,000 students
  ◆ 9 locations (Canada, Dubai, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Mexico, New Zealand, South Africa, UK – Scotland)

• 2012
  ◆ adding China
What the Students Say

• Overall highly satisfied
• Value networking & relationship building
• Better prepared for college
  - time and self-management
  - what to expect in the college classroom
• About 70% participate in additional EA programs
Challenges

• Communication
  ❖ students not yet on campus
  ❖ strict MSU policy about communicating directly with parents
  ❖ complex organizational structure

• Coordination with on-campus Academic Orientation Program

• Integration of FSA policies & procedures into regular study abroad procedures

• Ensuring consistency across programs
Lessons Learned

• Matrix staffing model
• Training for program team members
  - working with very fresh freshman
  - student development
  - experiential learning/reflection
• Longer pre-departure orientation program
• Campus partners are all-important
Q&A

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