

**Study Abroad Program Annual Report for 2008-2009**

**Submitted by  
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**STUDY ABROAD PROGRAM  
DIVISION OF BEHAVIORAL AND SOCIAL SCIENCES  
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**OVERVIEW OF PROGRAM**

El Camino College's study abroad program has been in existence since 1992. In the past the program was also known as International Education but has mainly been identified as Study Abroad for well over a decade. In the first years of its establishment the program included a faculty coordinator on reassigned time as well as a faculty advisory committee. The coordinator had several responsibilities including oversight of the faculty advisory committee which assisted in the identification of locations for programs, selection of faculty to serve as on-site coordinators abroad as well as negotiating agreements with educational contractors.

The faculty advisory committee was comprised of faculty from academic divisions who were nominated by their respective division deans. This continues to be the case today although there is no longer a faculty coordinator for the program. The division dean for Behavioral and Social Sciences has assumed the responsibilities of administrative oversight for all aspects of the program.

From 1992 until 2003 the college offered semester-length programs along with one summer session each year. Semester programs were suspended due to budgetary cutbacks after the spring 2003 Spain semester program. Winter programs were added in 2007 and currently two winter and two summer offerings comprise the annual study abroad schedule.

The program has a modest operating budget that includes funding for faculty salaries, a part-time hourly program assistant, conference attendance, membership dues and supplies.

The College has had tremendous success with our international education offerings. We have offered forty-four successful study abroad programs in seventeen years while only four programs have been cancelled due to low enrollment. The majority of semester programs have been in European locales but winter and summer programs have taken ECC students to Africa, Asia, Latin America and the South Pacific as well as to Europe. Instructors from various academic divisions have been chosen to lead these programs over the years with an emphasis on teaching general education credit courses to students recruited for study abroad.

The recruitment of students is the responsibility of faculty chosen to lead a study abroad program. Generally, students must have at least a 2.0 GPA in

their academic work in order to be considered for inclusion in any program. The minimum number of students needed for a program to materialize is usually between 15 to 20 students. In order to finance their study abroad experience, the majority of students seek financial aid or loans. A limited amount of money is available for study abroad scholarships which are contributed to the Foundation through payroll deduction.

### **Study Abroad Mission and Purpose**

The Study Abroad Program was developed to foster international and multi-cultural understanding and enrichment for students in academic programs while studying abroad. The aim of the program centers on nurturing a global perspective that will enhance students' educational experiences in order to better comprehend the international cultural setting of California and the Pacific Rim.

### **2008-2009 Study Abroad Programs**

Two summer programs were offered in 2008 with destinations to (1) **Eastern Europe** and (2) **Italy/Austria/Germany**. The Eastern Europe program was led by Professor of Geography, Matt Ebner, and included 38 students. Courses offered for this program were Geography 1 (Physical Elements, Geography 2 (Cultural Geography), and Geography 20abcd (Geography Field Studies). Eastern Europe was a multi-country program with visits to the Czech Republic, Poland, Slovakia, Hungary, Croatia, Slovenia, and Austria (in that order). The total price per participant (including airfare, accommodations, daily breakfast, excursions and ground transportation) for the three week program was \$4345.00. The educational contractor for this program was Leonardo World.

Academic instruction took place at key multi-day locations and on-site at geographical locations. Students were required to take examinations during the trip as well as to complete a written assignment as part of their course grade. As a rule students were required to enroll in two courses but exceptions were made for those who already held a bachelor's degree. Attendance was mandatory and calculated as positive attendance.

Professor of Art, Connie Fitzsimons and Professor of Geology, Charles Herzig, led the second summer program to Italy/Austria/Germany and took 33 students. The price for the nineteen day program was \$4543.00 and included airfare, daily breakfasts, accommodations, excursions and ground transportation. Passports served as the educational contractor for this program. Four courses were offered for students to select from including Art 2 (History of Western Art - Prehistoric to Gothic), Art 3 (History of Western Art – Proto-Renaissance to 19<sup>th</sup> Century), Geology 1 (Physical Geology) and Geology 3 (Physical Geology Laboratory). The instructors prepared a custom textbook that blended both geology and art history themes.

This program included significant travel throughout the three countries and focused on both urban settings for art history and rural locations for the geological segment of the itinerary. The unusual blend of course offerings worked very well as evidenced by the thematic structure of the customized textbook.

The 2009 winter destinations were **Guadalajara, Mexico** and **Australia**. Professor Nitza Llado led the program to Mexico with sixteen students. Students attended classes at the University of Guadalajara's Center for Foreign Students (CEPE) and had the opportunity to take classes from three that were offered to them. Spanish 1 (Elementary 1), Spanish 24 (Introduction to Spanish and Latin American Language and Cultures) were taught by Professor Llado with Art 7 (Art History of Mexico and Central and South America) was offered by one of the university's instructors and was taught in English.

The three week program price totaled \$2050.00 including airfare, home stay accommodations, meals and several excursions. This students on this program comprised diverse backgrounds, bonded and adapted well to the setting in Guadalajara and returned with very positive cultural experiences. Professor Llado is to be commended for her success in developing a cohesive group of students.

The second winter program was led by Professor of History, Arthur Verge, who took 23 students to Australia for a 3 week program "down under." This program included a brief visit at the onset to Auckland, New Zealand before settling into a routine at the University of Sydney. Courses offered by Professor Verge included History 4 (History of Modern Civilization) and Political Science 2 (Comparative Politics). The cost of \$4750.00 covered airfare, lodgings, excursions, ground transportation, and daily breakfasts. Professor Verge reported that this was the best behaved group of students he has led in his 17 years as an on-site faculty coordinator.

Study abroad programs generally attract more female students. Guadalajara had only two men and Australia recruited eight. This is a consistent pattern on most of our programs over the years. Ages vary but most students fall into the 18 to 23 age group even though we have had students over 60 years of age participate on study abroad as well.

### **Advisory Committee Meetings**

The Study Abroad Advisory Committee meets on the average twice every semester. The committee's responsibilities include recommending locations for study abroad programs, review of faculty proposals and evaluation of completed

programs. Currently the committee is comprised of the following faculty members:

Arthur Verge	Behavioral and Social Science Division
Michael Botello	Business
Elaine Moore	Counseling
Rosemary Swade	Fine Arts
Jenny Simon	Humanities
Anne Cummings	Humanities alternate
Michael Stallings	Industry and Technology
Matt Ebiner	Natural Science

Vacancies exist in and have been requested for Health Sciences and Athletics and Mathematical Sciences Divisions. Assignments are made by the division deans.

This year, the advisory committee is reviewing a second winter 2011 and summer 2011 locations. Updates on recruitment efforts for current year programs are reviewed at each committee meeting. In addition, the committee discusses educational contractor proposals and services to determine the best agency for El Camino's programs abroad.

### **Operating Budget**

The Study Abroad program was allocated \$71,141.00 in 2008-2009. The majority of the funding covered faculty salaries with a small allocation for dues and memberships, conference attendance and other services such as unexpected contractor costs. In addition, funding for a part-time program assistant was included in the budget. This amount had been significantly reduced by more than 50% over the last few years.

However, the major shortcoming in the budget was a line item for a faculty coordinator. In the first years of the program a coordinator was given 60% release time to oversee the program. With budget cutbacks in the late 1990s, the allocation was reduced to 20% and within the last two years, has been completely eliminated. As a result of the elimination of the faculty coordinator the responsibility for the operations of the program has fallen on the division dean for Behavioral and Social Sciences. The division office staff has also assumed responsibility for maintaining the website, distributing program flyers, arranging advisory committee meetings, maintaining application files and collecting payments from students planning to participate in study abroad programs.

The total cost for study abroad programs that students are required to pay varies with location selected. Program price depends on destination, length of program, the number of excursions plus any additional travel within a country. These are costs that are paid by each student participant but are not part of the operating budget.

## **Program Objectives**

The study abroad program continues to evolve well into its seventeenth year of operation. Objectives for the future include the following:

- Development of global service learning/student volunteer service component for selected programs.
- Establishment of annual scholarship fund through the ECC Foundation.
- Expand connection with universities as locales for study abroad programs.
- Attract more African American students to participate in study abroad.
- Update and revise evaluations for study abroad faculty participants.
- Create program level SLO.
- Develop statistical data gathering format for student participants in study abroad by age, ethnic/racial background, and academic success.
- Restore semester study abroad programs.