

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
Study Abroad Curriculum Integration

International Education for Undergraduates

Faculty and Advisers Workshops, 2002-2003

Throughout the year, evaluations were conducted for various activities for faculty and advisers, including the Major Advising Group 2 Retreat (September 2002), the Freshmen/Sophomore Advising Retreat (October 2002), Major Advising Group 2 workshop (March 2003) and Freshmen/Sophomore Advising workshop (April 2003). Also included as the End-of-Process evaluations for the Freshmen/Sophomore Advising group that summarized their cumulative experiences (Spring 2003).

Briefly, some of the more important results from these evaluations are as follows.

The **Major Advising Group 2 Retreat** (September 2002) was reported as being useful, helpful, relevant, and meaningful to participants. The Overview on Curriculum Integration presentation was the best received.

The **Freshmen/Sophomore Advising Retreat** (October 2002) was well received in all respects, in terms of content, location, and networking with Curriculum Integration specialists and other colleagues. The session on Maximizing Study Abroad: Student Strategies for Language and Culture Learning was particularly well received.

The **Major Advising Group 2 Workshop** (March 28, 2003) provided a rich source of qualitative data. The responses to the following questions illustrate some of the most effective tools being used in this process.

What were the learning experiences that most helped your understanding of study abroad curriculum integration efforts?

- site visits
- great information obtained from Study Abroad staff
- realization of integration as a holistic rather than just purely academic process
- process for matching courses with corresponding international universities

What was your reaction to the three-part process of curriculum integration?

- good structuring advice
- very effective
- very helpful for me to package my thinking

What are some specific ways to implement curriculum integration into your respective departments?

- develop advising sheets and have more study abroad information available in the adviser's office
- initiate a study abroad peer mentor program, display with literature and map showing where students have gone, and work with faculty to create research opportunities

- determine course equivalents in advance for all identified programs
- gather information about unique opportunities utilizing faculty's international connections
- identify part in calendar where majors could best study abroad
- faculty could invite returning students to share global perspectives to course content

What content would you like to see in future meetings?

- specific information on how to plug students into scholarships, ideas that worked in other places
- how to convince colleagues of these ideas
- how to incorporate the study abroad process into ongoing and new-hire training of faculty, staff, and directors (i.e., how can we ensure the curriculum integration efforts are institutionalized, part of the university's infrastructure, and continues with new groups of staff/faculty/students and not just one intervention?)

Freshmen/Sophomore Advising Workshop (April 4, 2003)

The comments from the evaluation forms distributed at this event also provided a rich source for qualitative feedback. The following section reflects the comments of participants regarding some of the issues that were of most interest to the grant process.

What are your own or your department's next step for study abroad curriculum integration?

- advertising more
- matching course needs and strengths to institutions
- find new ways to present information to students
- develop more wide ranging programs that incorporate opportunities within and outside major discipline requirements
- nurture a strong core of dedicated individuals to these goals
- meet more regularly to make plans for implementing these goals
- select creative ideas picked up at Bush-sponsored events regarding announcing opportunities, supporting students, incorporating into classes, etc.
- speaking with individual students
- possibly getting our alumni involved
- internships/experiential opportunity development in new entrepreneurship degree program

How should the Study Abroad office ideally continue working with your unit?

- audit our process at least annually for compliance and improvement
- logistic support
- sponsor activities aimed at perpetuating the collaboration
- have Study Abroad staff visit our staff meetings to keep us informed on programs
- doing presentation together to facilitate campus involvement
- development of internet/website to provide updates
- help us keep motivated and on track
- brown bag lunches

- Visit us!

What type of ongoing training do you want?

- adviser training
- orientation session to inform people about resources and support
- training new staff
- meet once or twice a year with reps from other units to learn what they are doing to encourage study abroad
- keeping us updated through email
- yearly in-service to talk about new programs, procedures and progress
- more cluster group face to face

End-of-Process Evaluation of Freshmen/Sophomore Advising Group

These evaluations were distributed to participants before the event in order for them to have time to reflectively answer the questions. Their responses summarized their cumulative experiences (Spring 2003) and were quite insightful. Five general questions were asked of the participants:

1. Timing of retreats/events for Curriculum Integration (intervals in between, pros/cons of longer/shorter events)
2. Advantages/disadvantages of meeting/working with other campuses/departments
3. How overall content of retreats contributed to role with curriculum integration (content level, pacing, amount, appropriateness, etc.)
4. How activities have been relevant to your given role within Curriculum Integration.
5. What could Study Abroad staff have done differently between retreats/workshops for assistance support with curriculum integration.

Timing of retreats/events for Curriculum Integration (intervals in between, pros/cons of longer/shorter events)

For the most part, participants felt the interval between events was appropriate and allowed them to complete necessary activities as well as allowed them time to process the information and integrate it into their work.

Shorter length events were easier to fit into their campus schedules, but longer events seem to give those who attended a more meaningful experience, partly attributed to those events that were off campus and away from the usual distractions.

Off campus retreats also provided a more relaxed atmosphere and gave participants more quality time to network. Positive aspects often included longer and more in-depth conversations with study abroad staff and peers, and negative aspects included travel time to longer off-site retreats.

What are the advantages/disadvantages of meeting/working with other campuses/departments?

Advantages almost always included the richness of ideas from peers and staff from other campuses, the potential for networking with like-minded individuals, ability to coordinate better

for accomplishing tasks, and peer pressure and the knowledge that their peers are moving forward with this process. Faculty and advisers reported very few disadvantages. One adviser reported the differences between the campuses and that the smaller campuses had different issues than the larger Twin Cities campus, as disadvantages.

How did the overall content of retreats contribute to your role with curriculum integration (content level, pacing, amount, appropriateness, etc.)?

The new information obtained from the retreats helped many advisors and faculty in their roles of informing and disseminating information to students. The content also answered many of their questions about study abroad. Others reported the content and ideas from the retreat made them more motivated.

How have activities been relevant to your given role within Curriculum Integration?

Many had reported the knowledge obtained from study abroad sessions/retreats have had a direct bearing on their work. They now give much greater emphasis to discussing study abroad opportunities where in the past they gave little attention. They also reported being more enthused and comfortable when discussing these issues with students. Several stated they now wanted a study abroad site visit themselves and that their own interest in this area has increased. Overall, advisers have become convinced that a study abroad experience is a valuable component of an undergraduate education. It appears they not only disseminate this information, but for many, they have internalized the value of the curriculum integration efforts.

What could Study Abroad staff have done differently between retreats/workshops for assistance support with curriculum integration?

Some comments included; more updates about success stories, increased contact via emails or short meetings (once a month), developing practical ways we can actually put the strategies we learned into action, and brief check-ins via email to ensure loose ends/questions have been addressed. Overall, the comments were very positive regarding the performance of the Study Abroad staff.