

# Instructional Program Review Report

## Sierra College, 2014-15

Department/Program Name: Study Abroad

Date Submitted: 2/27/15

Submitted By: Anne Fleischmann

Ideally, the writing of a Program Review Report should be a collaborative process of full-time and part time faculty as well as the appropriate educational administrator, instructional assistants, classified staff members and students who have an interest in the present and future vision of the program at all sites throughout the district. The Program Review Committee needs as much information as possible concerning the present and future of the program to assess and recommend the resources needed to keep the program viable and robust.

Please attach your Department Statistics Report (DSR) and your ePAR Report when sending in your Program Review.

**1) Relevancy: This section assesses the program's significance to its students, the college, and the community.**

1a) To provide context for the information that follows, describe the basic functions of your program.

Study Abroad provides an opportunity each spring semester for Sierra College students to study with Sierra College instructors in Florence, Paris, or Madrid. Students live in shared apartments and attend classes at sites arranged by the program provider with which the college contracts. The Study Abroad group (students and faculty) also participate together in excursions to other sites of interest within the host country. Students register for at least 6 units; they choose among course offerings that meet the requirements of AA, GE and transfer patterns. The International Education Committee collaborates in the planning of the programs. Comprised of faculty from the Liberal Arts, Business, and Sciences and Math divisions, the Study Abroad Program Coordinator, and the Associate Dean of Liberal Arts, the International Ed Committee interviews and choose the faculty leaders for the programs and consult with the Liberal Arts dean and program coordinator on schedules and course offerings.

1b) How does your program fit within the district mission, as quoted below. Please include an analysis of how your program supports ISLOs (Institutional Student Learning Outcomes).

*"Sierra College provides a challenging and supportive learning environment for students having diverse goals, abilities, and needs interested in transfer, career and technical training, and lifelong learning. The College's programs and services encourage students to identify and to expand their potential. Sierra College students will develop the knowledge, skills and abilities to become engaged and contributing members of the community."*

Study Abroad courses are specifically designed to access the historical, geographical, cultural and linguistic features of the host country. Through participating in Study Abroad, students are encouraged to learn the language of the host country and to engage in in-depth study of the history, culture, society, art and politics of the country in which they are studying. Study Abroad courses, are offered in a wide range of disciplines, three or four per program: Anthropology, Art History, English, Foreign Language, Communication Studies, History, Humanities, Philosophy, Photography, Political Science, Psychology, Studio Art, and Women and Gender Studies. As they do on our home campuses, Study Abroad students in these courses master the ISLOs associated with each individual course. Beyond their experience in the individual courses, however, Study Abroad students are uniquely positioned to practice and achieve the college's "Citizenship" ISLOs: Ethics, Diversity, Global Awareness, and Personal Responsibility as they negotiate, many for the first time, independent foreign travel, community living, and assimilation into a new and unfamiliar culture and country.

1c) Program offerings align with which of the following mission categories (check all that apply):

X Transfer  Career Technical Education

Basic Skills X Personal Development/Enrichment X Lifelong Learning

1d) Please analyze the role of your department's programs and offerings in supporting the categories marked in 1c above; please provide evidence in support of this analysis. If any of the following apply to your program, please address them in your analysis.

- The number of degrees, certificates, and/or licenses your department has generated
  - The alignment of these awards with the district's mission and/or strategic goals. (See the district "Awards Data File, available from Research and Planning, for your numbers).
- Job placement or labor market information for your program's awards and licenses.
- The contribution your program makes to student transfer.
- Participation in basic skills programs.

Study Abroad provides an opportunity for our young college-age students to expand their educational experience with familiar and supportive faculty teaching courses that will align with their degree and transfer goals. We do not have data reflecting the number of study abroad students who go on to take degrees and certificates from Sierra College or to transfer to 4 year institutions. The program also offers an opportunity for life-long learners, often seniors in our community, to enrich their travel experiences with coursework and language study.

Optional comments here:

**2) Currency: This category assesses the currency of program curricula as dictated by Title 5 and the currency of efforts in meeting accreditation standards as well as improving pedagogy and engaging in professional development.**

2a) Curriculum: Considering the information provided on your Department Statistics Report (DSR), comment on the currency of your program's curricula. Please describe your process for evaluating and revising curriculum, including the use of SLOs.

Study Abroad course curriculum is handled at the department level. All of the departments offering Study Abroad courses have current curriculum.

2b) Student Learning Outcomes Assessment: Analyze your program's assessment of course outcomes, analysis of results, and improvements/changes made to the program as a result of this assessment. Please provide specific data and analysis in the space provided.

Student Learning Outcomes for Study Abroad courses are met at the department level. Outcomes are assessed in each course taught abroad in the same way as they are assessed in courses taught on campus. The Study Abroad program has also surveyed students, before and after, regarding their study abroad experience. Unfortunately, due to the cancellation of the 2014 Madrid program, changes resulting from the student responses to the prior survey have yet to be assessed and implemented. The changes suggested have to do with the scheduling of more social time among travelers before departure and during the early weeks of the trip.

In the space below, please describe or attach the cycle you have developed for outcomes assessment.

2d) Professional development: Describe how your department's planned activities and professional development efforts serve to improve teaching, learning and scholarship. Please be sure to include flex activities, departmental meetings and activities, conferences, and the like.

The part-time faculty member who has served as the Study Abroad coordinator has been, when funds have permitted, a member of NAFSA, the Association of International Educators, and has attended the NAFSA conference when possible and regularly reads NAFSA publications. The application for faculty leaders for Study Abroad asks about applicants' experience with travel and with leading students in extra-curricular activities; the program works to ensure that faculty chosen for the Study Abroad program bring a wealth of experience in travel and foreign study to the program. Study Abroad faculty are encouraged to bring back to campus new strategies and materials that they have developed for their students abroad which can confer to campus classes some of the cultural enrichment experienced by program participants.

2d) Optional Additional Data: Enter additional data here that you believe to be an indicator of your program's effectiveness and explain why.

Enter comments regarding outcomes assessment here.

3) **Effectiveness:** This section assesses the effectiveness of the program in light of traditional measurements.

3a) Retention and Success: Identify and explain the trends in your program's data. Address separately the data for on ground and on-line course. Comment on the significance of the trends as well as the challenges experienced within the program, including any relevant data/analysis from your course and program outcomes assessments. If you see a need to improve the statistical trends, outline a plan that will achieve the changes you are seeking, including the results or your outcomes assessment, as appropriate. Please refer specifically to the data in your Department Statistics Report, as supplied by the Research and Planning Office, in supplying your answer.

We do not have data on the success and retention of Study Abroad students. That data is captured in the department statistics.

3b) Enrollment Trends: Identify and explain the enrollment trends in your program's data. Address separately the data for on ground, on-line, and enrollment at the various centers. Comment on the significance of the trends as well as the challenges experienced within the program. If you see a need to improve the statistical trends, outline a plan that will achieve the changes you are seeking. If applicable, comment on both the past performance and the future direction of the program as a whole as well as by location and mode of delivery. Please refer specifically to the data in your Department Statistics Report, as provided by the Research and Planning Office, in supplying your answer.

Enrollment trends are poor, so much so that the program will not be returning in its current format. The Spring 2014 trip to Madrid had to be cancelled due to low enrollment. Study Abroad is a self-supporting program and depends on students' program fees to pay the salary of the coordinator and the minimal program administration costs. We expect a large (45-60) Florence program every other year to offset the costs of smaller programs to Paris and Madrid. The current program in Florence has only 37 students, which is not large enough to pull the program out of the arrears financial situation caused by the cancellation of the Madrid program.

3c) Productivity: Comment on how the program contributes to overall district productivity. Comment on the significance of the trends as well as the challenges experienced within the program. If you believe the statistical trends need improvement, outline a plan that will achieve the changes you are seeking.

During the past several semesters of marginally low enrollment in the program, the productivity of the Study Abroad courses has been quite low. Because the number of sections offered in Study Abroad is very small, the effect on overall district productivity is low. Still, low enrollments, excessively small class sizes, and the resulting loss of FTE (offset slightly by online instruction provided by the participating faculty) are pressing concerns at this time.

3d) Analysis and Planning: Referring to your ePAR Report of Goals, Strategies, Actions, and outcomes assessment cycle and relevant assessments/evaluations, comment on how your program plans to maintain or increase its effectiveness and whether it has taken actions to do so.

Unfortunately and in spite of the tremendous contributions and hard work of the longtime Study Abroad coordinator and participating faculty, the program hasn't been doing well these last few years. In 2009 Study Abroad was asked to become fully self-supporting. The changes necessary to ensure that Study Abroad remained in the black included dropping down to one spring program per year and planning trips only to the most popular locations (Florence, Paris, Madrid). Though we have run several healthy-sized programs since 2009, the unexpected cancellation due to low enrollment of the 2014 Madrid program drained the funds we had budgeted for just such a rainy day. To cover program expenses, we rely on sending a large program (50+ students) at least every other year, which is why the program has alternated to Florence, the most popular location, every other spring. But over the past three years, we have not seen this enrollment pattern, even to Florence. Although the 2015 Florence program is well-enrolled with approximately 35 students, the expected revenues from a 35 student 2015 program will not address last year's shortfall, cover this year's expenses, nor bolster the coffers to support a smaller future program to Paris or Madrid. It is difficult to say what is causing this downturn in student interest – Other competing programs? The program fees? The college's overall enrollment slump? But the result is that we must look for other program models to assist our students who want to study abroad.

One option is a "local faculty" program, in which our college, in conjunction with a program provider, plans the program and offers credit for courses that are taught by native faculty in the host country. Another option is joining a consortium such as the Northern California Study Abroad Consortium, housed at Los Rios's Sacramento City College. NCSAC would welcome our participation, but such a decision would need to go through the college's shared governance process since it would not be cost neutral. Finally, referring students individually to programs that interest them would be a third option at this time. Any one of these would represent a big change for us, and so we must carefully consider all options. Given the short timeline and the importance of deliberative planning, we will not be offering a program in Spring 2016 but will be referring students to NCSAC. We will continue to have a website presence with a link to NCSAC. The International Education Committee will be proposing an alternative program format this spring (2015) with the expectation that a new program format will be in place in the 2016-2017 academic year.

3e) Optional Additional Data: Enter additional data here that you believe to be an indicator of your program's effectiveness and explain why.

You may add additional data here if desired:

**4) Resources: This category assesses the adequacy of current resources available to the program and describes and justifies the resources required to achieve planning goals by relating program needs to the assessments above. (Refer to the bottom row of your DSR in your response to this category. You may include budget information if you have it.)**

4a) Please describe the future direction and goals of your program for the next three years in terms of sustaining or improving program effectiveness, relevance, and currency. Please include any analysis of relevant outcomes assessment data noted above.

Plans for Study Abroad are uncertain (see above).

4b) **Equipment and Technology**: Comment on the adequacy of the program’s equipment and technology funding level for the District as well as specific sites. Include a projection of equipment and technology needs for the next three years as well as a justification for needs. Please include any analysis of relevant outcomes assessment data noted above.

None requested.

4c) **Staffing**: Comment on the adequacy of your program’s faculty, classified, and student help staffing levels for the overall District as well as specific sites. Include a projection of staffing needs for the next three years and justification for any increases. Please include any analysis of relevant outcomes assessment data noted above.

Depending on the direction taken, the program may need some part-time administrative assistance. No staffing requests at this time.

4d) **Facilities**: Comment on the program’s fill rate and the adequacy of the facilities for the District as well as specific sites. Include a projection of facility needs for the next three years as well as a justification for any increases. Please include any analysis of relevant outcomes assessment data noted above.

None.

4e) Please check the appropriate boxes in the chart below [not yet provided; it will resemble the chart in the year end report] indicating in general the reasons for your requests (e.g., “program maintenance” or “outcomes assessments”)

Program	Function/Role	Maintenance	Development	Growth	Safety	Outcomes	Student Success	No Requests
							Other measures	x

**5) Summary/Closing**

5a) Evaluate the program’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges.

Study Abroad has been a signature program at Sierra College. The economic downturn appears to have precipitated a decline in the popularity of the program. For undetermined reasons, students are not signing up in sufficient numbers for even our most popular program destinations. Our current program model, which has involved sending two full-time faculty each spring semester, is not sustainable given the low enrollments we’ve experienced recently. We have an opportunity to join on to the Northern California Study Abroad Consortium, but the associated costs may be prohibitive or contrary to the District’s interests at this time.

5b) Please provide any other information the Program Review Committee should consider that was not expressed in questions above.

5c) How has the author of this report integrated the views and perspectives of those who have interests in the future of this program, e.g. full time and part time faculty, educational administrators, instructional assistants, classified staff, and students at Rocklin, Roseville Gateway, NCC and/or Tahoe Truckee?

I have met or spoken individually with faculty who are members of the International Education Committee regarding the strengths and challenges of the program.