Foreign Study Programs, Guidelines for

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Development and Review of Plans for Proposed Foreign Study Programs

1. Review and Approval of Plans by Board's office. Plans for proposed institutionally sponsored foreign study programs, both credit and noncredit, including those offered during the summer term, should be submitted to the Board's office for appropriate review and approval before institutions make commitments as to the proposed program.

2. By Way of Suggestion. Plans for foreign study programs are more likely to be sound in principle and manageable in practice if they have had the benefit of thorough review on the home campus before submission to the Board's office. Experience of institutions that have had extensive experience with such programs suggests that the programs benefit from:

   a. Wise Use of Consultant Help in the Planning Stages. Such consultant help is available on the campus in the person of individuals who have had experience with foreign study programs. This is particularly true where institutions have appointed a committee or a single individual on campus to have general oversight and responsibility for review of all such program proposals. Such a committee or individual, by reason of this assignment, becomes thoroughly familiar with the characteristics of sound foreign study programs and with the pitfalls that most commonly entrap the planner.

   Also, within the Oregon University System there is consultant help available through the inter-institutional committee on international education, on which committee each institution has a representative. Institutions are encouraged to make use of the consultative resources of this committee in the early stages of the planning of foreign study programs, particularly those programs that it is anticipated will be offered as joint programs with registration encouraged from more than one institution.

   b. Review at the Institutional Level Before Forwarding of Plan to the Board's office. Institutions that have assigned to a designated individual or institutional committee reviewing responsibility for foreign study program plans have found that the reviewing officer or committee becomes a useful resource in at least two ways: (1) as a consultant service during the planning stages of the proposed programs, and (2) as a reviewing agent to insure that the proposed study plans conform to the System and institutional guidelines for such programs. The inter-institutional committee on international education commends the establishment of a specific reviewing agent on each of the campuses,
Program Considerations

1. **Objectives of the Program.** The objectives of the program should be carefully examined to determine whether they are both worthy and feasible. They should be related clearly to the educational mission of the home institution and, regardless of length, should exact academic standards comparable to campus programs of the sponsoring institution.

2. **Objectives, Curricula, Methods of Instruction to Be Correlated.** Programs ranging in length from a summer session of eight weeks to one of a full academic year may be equally valid, but the objectives, curricula, methods of instruction, and student needs may be quite different and should be specified in the program plan. The timing of the foreign study should be carefully considered and the selection of the curriculum and students closely correlated with the length of stay in the host country.

3. **Acquaintance with Conditions in Host Country.** Institutions contemplating the establishment of a study program abroad should be aware of the many possible difficulties posed by such factors as different educational systems, different teaching methods, limited libraries, and potential misunderstandings between the students and the local population.

   A study should be made of all available information concerning the educational facilities, the cultural resources, and the socio-economic-political situation in the host country. An on-the-spot investigation of these factors is desirable and, in some instances, essential.

4. **The Clientele for Whom the Program is Intended Should be Clearly Indicated.** This should be clear both from an overt statement as to the clientele to be served as well as being evident implicitly from the type of program proposed.

5. **Students Not To Be Penalized.** The program should be so designed that students will not, on balance, be penalized in terms of time expended and credits earned. Scholarships and other forms of financial assistance should be made available to them on the same basis as on the home campus.

6. **No Credit Contemplated for Purely Travel Programs.** It is not contemplated that academic credit will be granted for programs that are solely or almost entirely travel or tour programs.

7. **Costs of the Program.** Costs of the program should be itemized clearly so that the Board's office can evaluate the financial base for the program. As a general principle, the System would not expect to invest more in the overseas program than it would invest in providing an equal number of credit hours on the campus.

8. **Cooperative Features.** In planning foreign education programs, the possibilities of cooperative arrangements within the System should not be overlooked. An institution that does not have the faculty or student resources to offer a high-quality overseas foreign study program for its own students, exclusively, may nonetheless make significant contributions to a cooperative program, thereby both contributing to the strength of the program and obtaining the benefits of foreign study experience for its own campus.
9. **Periodic Formal Evaluation of the Program.** It is important that there be periodic formal evaluation of a program that continues over an extended period of time in order to verify adherence to the objectives of the program and the principles here set forth, as well as to ascertain whether management and administration meet acceptable criteria.

**Staff Considerations**

1. **Staff Should Be Selected for Competence in Program to Be Offered.** Careful selection of foreign study faculty and staff is essential. Designation of campus personnel for overseas assignment should be strictly on the basis of academic competence and/or managerial ability. It should not be influenced by the desire either to reward or temporarily to dispose of staff members.

2. **Staff Members on Foreign Study Assignments Ought Not To Suffer Discrimination.** Staff members serving in foreign study assignments offered by the institution should suffer no discrimination. They should be paid salaries comparable to those on the campus and should share in any pay increases occurring during their foreign assignment. Overseas time should be counted in the normal manner for such items as tenure and sabbatical leave.

**Student Considerations**

1. **Optimum Time for Foreign Study Experience.** The optimum period in the student's academic career for foreign study experience will vary with the program and the individual student. Involvement of freshmen in foreign study programs presents special problems calling for especial care in the selection of participants.

2. **Screening of Students.** Before admission, applicants should be carefully considered to insure that the program will be in their best interests. Students should be screened not alone on the basis of academic standing but also with respect to seriousness of purpose, emotional stability, and the capacity to cope with greater individual freedom in a strange environment.

3. **Orientation of Students.** Thorough orientation of accepted students should be provided for. This should include intensive instruction in the history, culture, mores and, in case of some types of programs, the language of the country concerned for those students with inadequate language facility. Orientation should commence before or immediately upon arrival at the foreign study center. The students should be given a clear understanding of the relevance of the program's objectives to the overall curriculum of the home institution.

4. **Housing.** Group housing is preferred for many types of programs. When the character of the program or other relevant factors suggest or dictate that students be housed individually or in small groups in community dormitories, private apartments, or private homes, the arrangements should be carefully and closely regulated.

5. **Health and Safety.** The health and safety of students in foreign study programs sponsored by System institutions must necessarily be a continuing concern of the institutions. Health and accident insurance should be included as a part of the total package plan for the programs, or
students should be advised to take insurance of their choosing. The program plan should specify the nature of the provisions for such coverage.

Financial Considerations

It is essential that proposed foreign study programs sponsored by System institutions individually or jointly be fiscally sound. As a basis for assessing fiscal soundness of proposed programs, the budget officer for the System has prepared two forms with appropriate notes relating thereto, which are to be used to report the fiscal facts relating to each foreign study program each year the program is to be offered. These forms should be filled out each year for each foreign study program it is proposed be offered in that year and forwarded to the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, together with a full description of the proposed program, not later than April 14, of the year preceding the year for which the program is being proposed. Foreign study programs that have been approved by the Board's office (Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs) once need not be described again in detail for the Board's office if they are continued in subsequent years. Only proposed changes in the program need be reported. But a budgetary statement must be submitted for approval each year by April 14, preceding the year for which program authorization is being sought.