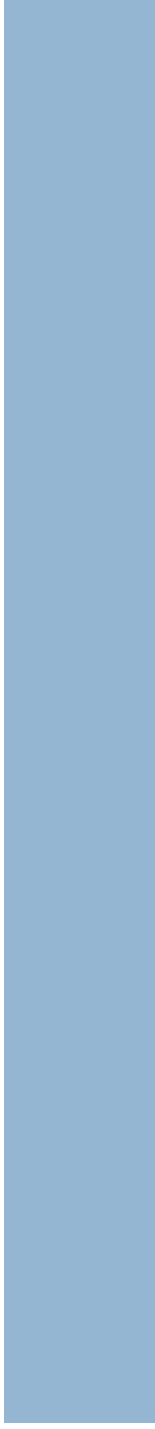


FROM RUSSIA WITH LOVE: TIPS FOR SUCCESSFULLY EVALUATING STUDY ABROAD TRANSCRIPTS

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Study Abroad on the Increase



2005 statistics according to annual Open Doors

Report:

- 223,534 students studied abroad
- 8.5 percent increase over previous year

Why Students Study Abroad



- Preparation for a globalized world
- Professional credentials
- Foreign language acquisition
- Heritage seekers
- Special internship, service learning or civic engagement opportunities
- Requirement of home institution
- Mistaken notion of study abroad as travel only
- Parental encouragement
- Personal reasons

Why Colleges Encourage Study Abroad

- Responsibility for preparation of global citizens
- Campus internationalization efforts and appreciation of diversity
- Support of foreign language departments
- Financial considerations
- Senator Paul Simon Study Abroad Foundation Act

(see www.nafsa.org for details)

University Mission Statements



Sample excerpt, from Murray State University
(KY):

“...Murray State University prepares graduates to function in a culturally diverse, technologically oriented society and increasingly interdependent world. The university is committed to international education as an integral dimension of the university experience...”

(from

Types of Study Abroad Experiences

- University-run programs
- Faculty-led programs
- Island programs
- Direct enrollment programs
- Direct enrollment via program provider
- Customized programs
- English language programs in foreign language settings
- Experiential education programs
- Term/semester, calendar or academic year, short-

Academic Record Evaluators on Campus

- Study abroad office
- Academic advisor
- Designated transcript or credentials evaluator on campus
- Report from outside evaluation service required
- International committee
- Registrar's office
- Others?

Types of Academic Records



- Host Institution Transcripts
- Host Institution Transcripts + Advisory Sheets from Program
- Program Records
- U.S. University Transcripts
- U.S. University Transcripts from “Schools of Record”
- Others?

Enrollment Status



- Leaves of Absence
- Study Abroad Place-holder Courses (e.g. “SA 101”)
- Fictitious Courses
- Registration in University-run Courses
- Others?

Credit Conversions



- Differences in educational systems
- Differences in course registration processes
- Difference in credit determinations between the U.S. and most other countries
 - ~ “total burden of study”
- “A full load for a full load”
- Formula for determining credit conversions

Credit Conversion Examples



A few examples...

- ECTS (European Credit Transfer System)
- SCOTCATS
- Oxford tutorials
- Contact hours in Latin America
- Other terms specific to countries and/or host institutions: points, units, etc.

Credit Transfer



- Treat as transfer credit
- Treat as home institution credit
- Pre-approval for courses and course fulfillment
- Petition for credit and course fulfillment
- Foreign language credit
- See “Grade Transfer” section...

Grade Conversions



- Differences in grading practices
- Progression towards graduation (lack of D's)
- Host institution grades that do not exist in U.S. systems (e.g. “N” in Australia, “RJ” in Costa Rica)
- Creation of a grade conversion scale

Grade Transfer



Examples:

- ❑ Grades transfer directly; factor into GPA
- ❑ Only grades for majors transfer directly; factor into GPA
- ❑ Letter grades appear on transcript, but credit factors into GPA as pass/fail credit
- ❑ Letter grades appear on transcript, but do not factor into GPA
- ❑ Fails dropped completely

Tips / Cautions



- ❑ Credit indicated may be full year, when student attended only one semester
- ❑ Terms vs. semesters
- ❑ Additional credit for degree exams
- ❑ Both grades for coursework and grades for exams may be listed on transcripts
- ❑ Failed courses not listed (treated as “drops” by host institution)
- ❑ Others?

What are your policies?



Be aware of your school's policies regarding:

- ❑ Enrollment status of study abroad students
- ❑ Transfer of study abroad credits and grades
- ❑ Authentication of academic records for study abroad
- ❑ Responsibility for evaluation of academic records and credit/course fulfillment for study abroad
- ❑ Completion of academic obligations by student
- ❑ Dropping/Withdrawing from courses while abroad
- ❑ Study abroad credit/grade appeals

Ramifications for Students



- Impact on major and/or cumulative GPA
- Required course fulfillment problems
- Degree requirement problems
- Jeopardizing on-time graduation
- Loss of financial aid for reduced course loads
or under-loads

Academic Ethics Across Cultures

- Increasing instances of academic dishonesty
- Plagiarism as a cultural concept
- Preparation of students for norms, values and expectations of host countries
- Differences in requirements for citing sources
- Differences in grade appeal processes
- Dealing with the student who is caught in the middle

Appeals



- Grade Appeals
- Credit Allocation Appeals
- Course Fulfillment Disputes
- Major and Minor Requirement Disputes
- Requirements/Allowances of Host Institutions
- Working with Program Providers

Working with Study Abroad Offices

- Course registration process
- Contact with students while abroad
- Course registration for first semester back on campus
- Preparing students who study abroad as seniors for graduation
- Agreements made with host institutions and study abroad program providers
- Study abroad program handbooks
- Recognition of students at commencement

AACRAO and Study Abroad

- Publications :
 - Foreign educational credentials guides
 - Country studies and guides to education systems
 - *AACRAO International Guide: Resource for International Educational Professionals*
- Electronic Database for Global Education (EDGE)
- Training at state, regional and national levels
- AACRAO Study Abroad Interest Group

Resources

AACRAO - Study Abroad Committee, EDGE, Credentials Evaluation Services (www.aacrao.org)

NAFSA: Association of International Educators – Knowledge Community for Education Abroad, Foreign Credentials Evaluation Workshop (www.nafsa.org)

Forum on Education Abroad – standards, outcomes assessment, curricula, and outcomes assessment (www.forumea.org)

NACADA – Study Abroad Advising Interest Group (<http://www.nacada.ksu.edu/InterestGroups/C38/index.htm>)

World Education Services (www.wes.org)

IIE Passport search engine (www.iiepassport.org)

Institute for Study Abroad, Butler University (www.ifsa-butler.org)

Questions?



Thank You



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