

COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION
Report on the Education Abroad Program

To the Academic Senate, Santa Cruz Division:

UCEAP is an academic program of the University of California. Its mission is to provide students with international learning opportunities to enhance their academic experience and to prepare them to be effective and responsible citizens of an increasingly interdependent global society. UOEAP coordinates summer, semester and year-long study abroad programs which combine high-quality academic experiences with immersion in the local culture; provides pre- and post-departure activities designed to help students gain the most from their international experiences; sponsors exchanges with international students; and helps to coordinate the efforts of individual campus EAP activities.

proposed UCEAP mission statement

The University of California Education Abroad Program (EAP) has been a vital, influential UC academic program since its creation in 1962, but deviation from EAP's core strengths has led to a host of problems that, combined with drastic budget cuts, seriously threaten the long-term viability of EAP. EAP expanded dramatically during the past decade, largely through the creation of short-term, non-immersion programs; this rapid shift away from EAP's unique, highly successful semester and year-long immersion programs led to fiscal disaster and put EAP in direct competition with for-profit third party providers. The current perception among some key administrators that EAP could be replaced by third party study abroad programs, or further remodeled in the image of such programs, must be corrected if EAP is to survive as a high quality academic program.

The Committee on International Education (CIE) is particularly concerned with two issues: the shift to an EAP-fee based budget model, and reciprocity agreements with partner institutions. From EAP's inception in 1962 until this year, EAP students enjoyed virtually the same funding status as students on campus. Affordable EAP programs are a crucial component of UC's diversity efforts; international experience is critical for employment and graduate study in many fields, and should be accessible to all students. EAP's system-wide state support has been reduced from approximately \$18 million in FY 2008-09 to roughly \$4 million in FY 2009-10 and \$1 million in 2010-11. EAP is expected to be supported entirely by student fees within a few years. CIE is extremely concerned that EAP is rapidly becoming a luxury service program that is out of reach for many students: special program fees ranging from \$750 to \$4000 have recently been added to many EAP options, and all EAP participants now pay a substantial administrative fee. Commitment of return to financial aid from EAP fees is essential if the diversity of participants in the program is to be maintained.

The Committee is also very concerned about the potential loss of international students attending UCSC through EAP reciprocity agreements. While EAP sends approximately 4500 students abroad each year, approximately 1200 students from partner institutions attend classes at UC campuses. These students enhance international awareness on our campuses, enriching the classroom experience with different cultural perspectives, and increasing awareness of UC in their home countries. The 3:1 exchange ratio enables EAP to serve as an "eleventh UC campus", relieving overcrowding resulting from rapid enrollment increases and the current budget restrictions. Under the new budget model, reciprocity students, who pay their usual fees to their

home university, may become a financial burden on the campuses unless reciprocity support for campuses from UCOP's General Fund or Opportunity Fund is continued. Termination or significant curtailment of reciprocity agreements would undermine EAP's highly successful extended-stay immersion programs, and diminish the diversity of UC.

In April 2009, Interim Provost Pitts convened a joint Senate-Administration Task Force to review EAP. The Task Force recommended the establishment of a UOEAP Governing Committee (GC), appointed by the Provost, with representation from the Academic Senate, including ex-officio representation from members of UCIE, UCPB, and UCEP. However, the current composition of the Governing Committee and apparent chain of responsibility gives excessive influence to UCOP. Senate oversight of UOEAP has been undermined by repeated invocation of fiscal necessity as justification for one-sided decisions. The EAP-fee based budget model was adopted in spite of the strong disapproval of Senate committees. Several Study Centers have been closed without UCIE's approval, abruptly ending multi-decade partnerships with major universities. Communication between the UCSC Office of International Education, UOEAP, and CIE has been hobbled by the lack of a UCSC EAP Faculty Director.

It is essential that EAP continue as a system-wide academic program, serving all campuses equitably. The Governing Committee currently has four members from UCLA, and none from UCSB, in spite of UCSB's exceptionally high level of involvement in EAP. This disproportionate representation of a large campus with relatively low per capita EAP participation may lead to policies that the smaller campuses can't afford. UCSC sends almost as many students abroad through EAP's long-term immersion programs as UCLA does, and will face much greater challenges if key support services are shifted from UOEAP to the campuses at the same time that local EAP offices are suffering severe staffing cuts. UOEAP provided \$933,000 for campus financial support in the 2008-09 budget; the February 2009 strategic plan eliminated this support entirely. UCOP's plan to transform EAP into a self-supporting service provider will catastrophically backfire if dramatic increases in student fees and abrupt reductions in administrative support drive students to third party providers, or deter them from studying abroad.

Our ever more closely linked global society desperately needs informed, insightful citizens. The UCSC Committee on International Education is extremely concerned that decisions being made by UCOP threaten the viability of the UC system's well respected Education Abroad Program, and the invaluable educational opportunity this program offers to UC students. The active support of the Senate and the Academic Council are essential if EAP is to survive and evolve to meet the current challenges in and outside the UC system, while maintaining its traditionally high standard of academic excellence.

Respectfully submitted,

COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION

Giacomo Bernardi

Karen Holl

Armin Mester

Debra Lewis, Chair

Judith Harris-Frisk, NSTF

Melissa Abel, SUA

Milicia Petranovic, SUA

January 29, 2010