

COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION
Results of Departmental Survey on Student Participation in
Education Abroad Programs

To the Academic Senate, Santa Cruz Division:

The EAP experience is one of the most memorable and valuable educational experiences that students currently have as an option. These are the experiences that students remember for all of their lives.

—Economics

We would like to say in the strongest terms possible that we support maintaining the UCEAP program for students... an international education experience creates a global citizen, one that is able to better listen to and understand the global problems faced by all.

—Politics and Legal Studies

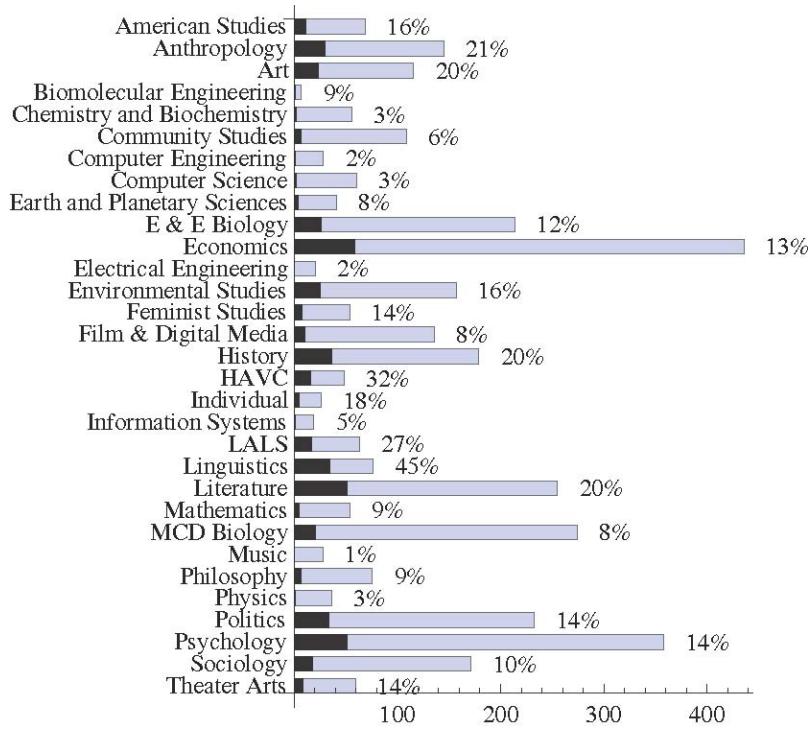
One out of seven UCSC undergraduates studies overseas in UC's Education Abroad Program (UCEAP). To help UCEAP minimize the effects of drastic budget cuts on EAP participants, estimate the possible impact of further cuts, and identify departmental practices that support and enhance students' international educational experiences, the Committee on International Education (CIE) conducted a departmental survey on student participation in Education Abroad Programs in winter 2010. Approximately two thirds of the departments with undergraduate majors responded to the survey. The responses yielded valuable information about the importance of EAP to UCSC, levels of EAP participation, pre-travel advising, and post-travel evaluation of coursework taken abroad for credit towards the major. Here we summarize the survey responses (excerpts from survey responses are given in italics) and provide data on EAP participation by major. The survey itself is in Appendix A.

International education is central to many undergraduate majors. The Global Economics major requires a minimum of one quarter of study abroad. The Literature major now requires one year of second language study, and the department anticipates that many students will use EAP to satisfy this requirement. Several other departments, including American Studies, History, Latin American and Latino Studies (LALS), Linguistics, and Sociology, strongly encourage their students to study abroad. Specialized EAP programs, such as the Monteverde Tropical Biology and Conservation program in Costa Rica, provide students with extraordinary opportunities to study unique ecological and social systems.

Students from all undergraduate majors participate in study abroad programs. While the greatest number of EAP participants come from the Humanities and Social Sciences, there are significant numbers of participants from all divisions. The following chart

summarizes average EAP participation by UCSC undergraduates over the past five years, grouped by department.*

EAP participation by department



Number of undergraduates participating in EAP (black) superimposed on the number of students graduating with BA or BS (gray) each year, averaged over the past five years. The ratio is expressed as a percentage.

EAP provides students with advanced language study opportunities. After one to two years of solid pre-travel language preparation, UC students are eligible for immersion programs at major universities abroad. The high caliber of UCSC's language instruction enables many of our students to fully participate in the host universities' regular courses, studying alongside the local students. Students majoring in Language Studies, East Asian Studies, German and Italian Studies, etc., may complete several courses in the target language. The symbiosis between international curricula and campus offerings extends the capacity of limited program offerings.

A cut in international programs [might] well have dire consequences for our students, particularly if language instruction is cut as well, since the LALS department can only offer a few upper division courses in Spanish, approximately three a year. We have no faculty who offer Portuguese courses.

—LALS

* In the interest of completeness and consistency, we used data provided by the UCSC Data Warehouse. Some departments reported lower levels of EAP participation than appeared in the database, and few departments knew how many of their students study abroad on non-EAP programs. This suggests that if education abroad programs are reduced, there may be even greater impact on some majors than anticipated.

It is critical to provide affordable international study opportunities. High priority should be given to keeping EAP programs financially accessible to all students. Increased student awareness that UC financial aid for international study is available, and is adjusted to take into account the cost of living abroad, could increase the diversity of EAP participants.

UCSC's Office of International Education (OIE) mentors students and supports EAP recruitment. OIE staff and peer advisors guide students through program selection and the EAP application process. Further reductions in OIE staffing would generate additional workload at the departmental level. Classroom visits by OIE staff and peer advisors inform and recruit students who are unaware of EAP or believe that study abroad is an unrealistic option because of financial or academic constraints.

If the EAP program is cut, it is hard to imagine that the same number of students will find a study abroad program on their own. The specialized expertise of the experienced EAP staff creates the groundwork for a positive experience. Academic department or college advisers will not be able to effectively fill this gap.

—Politics and Legal Studies

Major-specific advising by faculty and staff in students' home departments fosters successful international study. Many departments strongly encourage students to discuss their intended EAP coursework with their faculty adviser, particularly if they plan to petition for credit towards the major. Requiring students considering study abroad to submit a pre-travel study plan helps students integrate their international education experience with their progress within the major, and helps departments stay informed about their students' international academic activities. Some departments provide course selection advice via email while students are abroad.

Most returning students successfully petition to satisfy major requirements using EAP coursework. EAP enables students to take courses while abroad that are equivalent in caliber and material to UC courses. Advisers typically outline appropriate course content and structure, rather than recommending specific courses, but some departments use course information from the UOEAP MyEAP web site when assisting students with program or course selection. Almost all decisions regarding credit towards the major are based on material such as syllabi, papers, and exams submitted by the student after returning to UCSC.

EAP benefits not only the students who participate, but those who remain in Santa Cruz. EAP participation levels are very high in some of the largest major programs at UCSC (see the chart above). Thus EAP eases competition for courses in some of the most impacted majors. Since UCSC sends over 500 students abroad each year and receives approximately 50 reciprocity students, EAP reduces classroom crowding while enhancing the diversity and academic excellence of our campus.

Making study at UCSC more affordable for foreign graduate students would facilitate international exchange. The fee structure at UCSC makes implementation of graduate exchange programs challenging. Some graduate students visit UC campuses through EAP reciprocity programs, paying their usual fees at their home institution. However, graduate exchanges tend to be research-specific and many international student collaborators come from universities that do not have reciprocity partnerships with UC.

EAP is an essential resource that fully merits ongoing UC support. An overwhelming majority of the comments in the survey responses testified to the importance of EAP and emphatically recommended provision of adequate financial support to maintain the quality of the program. UCSC's commitment to providing our students with the best possible opportunities to develop their talents, indulge their curiosity, strengthen their sense of community on all scales, and experience the joy of discovery is clearly demonstrated by the dedication of faculty and staff across our campus to supporting international education.

Respectfully submitted,

COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION

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APPENDIX A

Departmental Survey on Student Participation in Education Abroad Programs (EAP)

UC's long-standing, well-respected Education Abroad Program (EAP) has taken enormous budget cuts in the past few years. In recent years, EAP's system-wide state support (from the General Fund) has been reduced from \$18 million in 2008–09 to \$4 million in 2009–10, and finally, to \$1 million in 2010–11. To survive without sacrificing the exceptional academic quality of the program, which allows UC students to participate in high caliber international programs while earning credit towards graduation, *EAP must continue to improve its efficiency and optimize its remaining resources.* In order to provide constructive feedback on international education at UCSC, the Committee on International Education (CIE) is reviewing UCSC's undergraduate participation in study abroad programs. Please complete the following survey—indicate “unknown” or provide rough estimates if exact information is not available—and return via email to the CIE analyst (Stephanie Casher, scasher@ucsc.edu) by **Monday, February 22nd.**

PARTICIPATION

For questions 1, 3–5, please provide (approximate) percentages and/or absolute numbers; for 1, 3–5, provide annual data for the past three years, if available:

1. How many undergraduates complete your program/major each year?
2. Is some kind of study abroad required for your program/major?
3. How many undergraduates annually participate in *your own* study abroad program(s)?
4. How many undergraduates participate in EAP? In non-EAP UC-run programs? In non-UC third-party provider programs?
5. How many of your students, on an annual basis, participate in summer (short-term) study abroad programs, quarter or semester-long programs, and full-year immersion programs?

ARTICULATION

1. Does your department regularly give credit toward the major for some study abroad courses? If so, do you distinguish between EAP, non-EAP UC programs, and non-UC programs?
2. How do you evaluate study abroad courses for credit toward the major? Do you primarily use the course information provided by EAP, or do you mainly rely on the syllabi, coursework, etc. provided by the student?
3. Do you advise students on course selection, particularly courses for which credit towards the major will likely be granted, *in advance of travel?*

CONCLUSION

1. Do you have any other specific questions or concerns about international programs that you would like to bring to our attention?

Thank you for your valuable time in answering these questions, which will be extremely helpful to the CIE committee in our work to maintain high caliber study abroad programs for UCSC students.