Meeting: UWG PAAA Monthly Meeting – Study Abroad Information Session

Attendees: There were 20 attendees: Wanda Eidson, Billy Etheredge, Julili Fowler, Joy Ginther, Danny Gourley, Emily Hall, Michael Harris, Kate Hiers, Ashley Hodges, Professor Pamela Hovath, Doris Kieh, Professor Rob Kilpatrick, Ashley Lewis, Jennifer Maxwell, Kimberly Mitchell, Curry Prothro, Professor Gail Reid, Michael Richardson, Kate Theobald, Professor William Schaniel

Meeting Date: February 6, 2013, 3:30PM

Location: UCC 206

Agenda:
Information session from International Services & Programs to promote the Study Abroad program.
- Study abroad opportunities available to UWG students
- Finance and scholarship opportunities
- How study abroad credits are counted
- How to reassure students that study abroad is right for them

There were approximately 20 faculty and staff attending the meeting.

Dr. Schaniel presented “Study Abroad Fundamentals” which included information for Study Abroad and Exchange programs, as well as Language Immersion programs. The International Programs office is located in Row Hall, Room 229 (West), and contacts are Dr. William Schaniel and Dr. Maria Doyle.

Study Abroad is short term, typically for students who have never been abroad, and the study is the island concept: Pick up the campus and set it down in another country. The tuition cost is not covered in the study abroad cost, but the study abroad cost includes room, 2 meals per day, air fare, local transport, site visits, and direct expenses. This is typically a summer program, 5 weeks in length, and 6 hours of credit. There are also programs held during Spring break, Maymester, and December break (next year). With study abroad, it is the same course as on campus.

The Exchange program is semester-long and typically a UWG student will trade places with a student at another institution abroad. The student will register for courses at UWG, but take courses at the other institution. Tuition and fees are paid to UWG. With exchange, this is a different course, and typically courses not offered at UWG. Note – Here in the US, there is a liberal arts curriculum (Core A-E), but in the European model all coursework is in one field without a liberal arts curriculum (students typically enter college around the junior year).
Dr. Schaniel recommends for students to go abroad two times: Once as a freshman/sophomore to complete a Core A-E course and to have the experience, and then return a second time as a junior/senior as part of the major or subdivision of the major.

The study abroad program gives the opportunity for the student to have a unique course experience and to have a unique resume.

The International Program will do program advisement for the student, such as class, GPA, and the overseas experience. Academic advisement will assist the student for the hours perspective (Fresh/Soph as Core and Jr/Sr as Major studies). The Financial Aid coordinator for Study Abroad is Pat Munn. For timing, it is important to get in before Spring advisement to see what is offered. It is not too early to plan for 2014 opportunities.

For financial aid and payment considerations, the student pays in the spring for summers, and pays in a lump sum. The student is legally on-campus, so the student receives financial aid. There are also study abroad scholarships available (about $130K in funding), and some departments will match the funds. There is an opportunity for a bridge loan to line up with financial aid into the next year. Study Abroad has no ‘on campus’ fees but students do have to pay the state mandated institutional fee.

There is a Nursing study abroad opportunity headed to Budapest this spring in a unique Maymester opportunity for 3 hours of credit (Professor Horvath).

For Freshman and Sophomore level, there are many opportunities for Core A-E courses. There are Language Immersion opportunities in Spanish, French and German. Professor Kilpatrick provided literature for the French Maymester 2013 program, and the host institution will be Institut de Touraine, Tours, France.

For the Junior and Senior level, there is ISEP: International Student Exchange Program. This is a competitive application to get in place. There are 147 universities in 40 countries, and these are bilateral exchanges. There is a teaching practicum available in Costa Rica.

Questions:

- Transcript? Yes, this shows on the transcript as UWG plus foreign courses.
- What if the student is a minor? The student may not have the same freedoms. There are Honors and Advanced Academy students in the program.
- ACCEL? Not part of the program.
- TAP and Age 62 waiver students? This seems to be OK, but these programs cover tuition only.
- Scholarships? Yes, the program directors will distribute the funds, and
departments may have funds as well.

- Popular programs? English has a waitlist, and programs that are major specific are popular. All classes are in English except the Language Immersion program. Students do get survival language preparation before going abroad.

- Graduate Programs? College of Education and MBA have programs, and this is developing.

- Air travel/Timing? Fares are more inexpensive before Memorial Day travel, to save on air fare.

- French Study Abroad Program? Dr. Kilpatrick provided student characteristics and traits: Independence, hybrid, social interaction, willingness for the uncomfortable, desire to go abroad, flexibility, and curiosity. Faculty are there with students to troubleshoot if there are any issues.

- First Time Abroad? Most students local to UWG have not been abroad. In the South, most parents have not been abroad and need a comfort level.

- GPA? GPA is not a good predictor. This is a different learning model with some success.

- Percent minority in Study Abroad? This is still low and the system office does not currently track, but the Chancellor has committed to regain this. Ashley Lewis did a Study Abroad with USG in the past. This is an important metric for the university now. A prior program was Black Men with Initiatives, to Canada and Panama.

- Travel with faculty? Typically there are two faculty members traveling in case of a backup issue. Faculty stays with the group, and the attendees travel as a group. Sometimes students are sent home for non-illness reasons.

Talking to the program director to get information does not commit a student. The object is to get students abroad. It is in a situation where they will succeed. It is a finding a right program where the student will thrive. Students must be able to succeed.

PAAA Attendees are encouraged to review the PowerPoint slides from the presentation.

The next meeting will be March 5th in the Ingram Library, for the LIBR 1101.

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