

International and Domestic Off-Campus Studies Committee Minutes

October 1, 2003

Members Present: Wendy Allen (chair), Maggie Broner, Rick Fairbanks, Roseanne Galegher, Sally Gonzalez, Kim Kandl, Kent McWilliams, Nathan Soland, and Tom Williamson.
Guests: Kathy Tuma (representing Office of International & Off-Campus Studies)

Old Business:

1. The Minutes of September 10, 2003 were approved.

New Business:

1. In the absence of Pat Quade, Wendy read notes he had prepared on his recent trip to the Middle East with President Thomforde. The trip went well and the visits to universities in Turkey, Morocco and Egypt were well received. The three universities visited-Bogazici University in Istanbul, Universite Cadi Ayyad in Marrakech, and the American University in Cairo, are all pleased by the idea of having St. Olaf students return to study there; some of these institutions are eager to expand opportunities for exchange of both students and faculty.
2. The subcommittee charged with examining pre-departure preparation of students and follow-up for Interim courses (Broner, Kandl, Fairbanks, McWilliams) presented their findings and recommendations to the full committee. Detailed notes from the subcommittee meetings are attached to the present minutes. The key points analyzed were as follows:

Preparation for Off-Campus Study:

- What are we currently doing to prepare students for off-campus study (required pre-requisites, IOS-led orientation, instructor-led orientation, other)?
- What might we do to prepare students better? What options exist?
- What are the plusses and the minuses of the various options?
- Are there more general issues that are related by discussions of improving student preparation for off-campus study? If so, how serious are the issues and for whom?

Follow-up to Off-Campus Study -

- What are we currently doing in terms of follow-up to off-campus study (meeting with instructor, program advisor, IOS staff, other)?

- What might we do to follow up more effectively? What options exist?
- What are the plusses and minuses of the various options?
- Does discussion of improving follow-up raise more general issues? If so, how serious are these and for whom?
- Follow-up with presentations - community wide, department, chapel, interim conversations, and photo exhibits.

Since the mission of the College includes providing students an education which incorporates a global perspective, we must integrate cross cultural learning into the fabric of student and faculty experiences, both on and off-campus. The following are some of the ideas presented by the subcommittee as to how to implement this kind of learning -

- We might add a question to the application that would cause the student to think about cross-cultural learning.
- Going into the field: We could/should arrange more "home stays." Students could receive more cross-cultural benefit from experiencing things first hand.
- During the formal orientation, we might have a guest anthropologist speak about cross-cultural learning. The idea is to provide students with "tools" needed to observe and understand cultures, both one's own and others. Perhaps this person could create a simulation that would powerfully demonstrate where and how to look for events of cultural significance.

Several different models were discussed with several options for students to integrate the cross-cultural learning component into their studies at St. Olaf.

- How to maximize the cross-cultural learning component?
- How to minimize the overload to the individual instructor?
- Can the component be integrated into course work?
- Can we provide students with a choice to explore this component on their own?
- Can it be mandated that faculty be trained in the cross-cultural component?
- Is there grant money available to train faculty?
- Is this something that can be implemented into the first year writing seminar?

Committee members developed a plan of action in order to follow-up on the recommendations made by the subcommittee:

* Rick Fairbanks will speak with Diane Leblanc, head of the first-year writing program, about the idea of integrating a cross-cultural component into this course.

* Maggie Broner will speak with Mary Cisar, who heads up a committee charged with examining the notion of a common first-year experience, to see whether a cross-cultural focus might be incorporated into such an experience.

* Wendy Allen and Pat Quade will contact Paddy Dale of Government-Foundation Relations to see whether grant funds might be available for faculty development in the area of cross-cultural teaching and learning (cf., the ORC or EIN model).

Meeting was adjourned at 4:55 pm.

Respectively submitted,
Roseanne Galegher