"FOR THE RECORD" REPORT FOR THE UNIVERSITY SENATE

University Senate Committee: Academic Policies Committee

Brief History of Issue—why the issue is being considered (from the CIE proposal):

We have been sending students to the University of Ghana at Legon via ISEP-Direct since Fall 2007. However, the ISEP-Direct program fee has risen from $7,300 for tuition, room, and board in Fall 2007 to $10,300 in spring 2014 for the same services. With an increase of approximately 30% in the program fee over the course of seven years, we have seen the participation in the program decline. As such, we began looking at a less expensive option at the same location/university with similar services. By staying with the same university—University of Ghana, all course equivalencies that have been established will stay the same.

Program names and descriptions (from organizational websites)

ISEP-Direct: International Student Exchange Program
ISEP Direct provides an independent, cultural immersion experience for students wishing to enroll directly in a host institution abroad on a fee paying basis. ISEP offers a support network that includes on-site orientation, academic counseling, international health insurance, and crisis management. Summer, semester, and full year placements are available, and the programs are open to students from all ISEP member institutions throughout the U.S. and worldwide.

USAC: University Studies Abroad Consortium.
For 30 years, USAC has provided university students with affordable, valuable study abroad programs and contributed to the internationalization of universities in the US and abroad; we currently have program locations in 26 countries with many locations unique for study abroad. Students from any university are welcome to participate; students from more than 800 universities around the world have studied on USAC programs over its thirty-year history.
USAC’s mission is to provide students with the opportunity to develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to succeed in the global society of the twenty-first century. We strive to provide an authentic, quality context in which students may grow into engaged citizens of the world, not only in the classroom but also through fieldtrips, integrated living and academic experiences, sports, internships, and volunteer and service learning opportunities.

Points Discussed by Committee:

1. UWEC normally doesn’t use service providers for study-abroad program. We do use service providers when there are language and structural challenges that can present barriers for our students.
2. The Center for International Education uses USAC for its study-abroad program in France, so they are familiar with the quality of the services provided. USAC is a consortium of universities. The University of Reno is on the Board of Directors and provides the home base for the consortium. Although UWEC is not a member of the USAC consortium, our students can still participate in approved USAC programs.
3. Whereas ISEP-Direct’s costs have risen by about 30% over the past 7 years; USAC’s costs have risen by only 8%. Students buy their own food, but there is a pick-up service at the airport.
4. Four courses will be taught by USAC faculty. Although the USAC faculty members generally comprise a mixture of Ghanaian and U.S. expatriates, a web search of the faculty teaching the four courses at the University of Ghana revealed that the faculty members are Ghanaian.
5. Students can choose which courses they want to take while at the University of Ghana, with the exception of one USAC required course: “Society, Government and Politics in Ghana and Africa.” That is, 3 credits are designated; students can choose which other courses to take to fill the remaining 9 credits. Whereas students in the other USAC courses will be primarily other exchange students, students in the other U of Ghana courses would comprise a blend of local/exchange students.
6. As with any courses taken as part of a study-abroad program, UWEC department chairs would determine any appropriate course equivalencies from either the U of Ghana or the USAC transcript. The “recommended” USAC course—“Introduction to Asante Twi Language” could possibly transfer in as either FL 101 or 102 and satisfy GE IA.

7. The Registrar’s Office has already made a prior decision to accept the USAC grade report.

8. USAC provides a resident director on site to provide students with designated, structured support (both academic as well as emergency travel and other student issues).

9. USAC has a lower GPA requirement than ISEP —2.5 compared to 3.0—which may make the program more accessible.

10. Students will participate in volunteer/service opportunities. USAC builds in the pedagogical versus ministry approach to volunteerism.

11. One potential issue was whether African American students would find a desired experience about learning about the slave trade. Follow-up by Colleen Marchwick with her USAC contact indicated that a large part of the Cape Coast excursions is devoted to the history of the slave trade through visits to a castle, forts, and ports relevant to the slave trade. The USAC contact indicated that typically the USAC faculty debrief the slave-trade excursions, as they are emotionally challenging for the student participants. The Beach and Shoreline excursions also include a visit to a castle/fort used in the slave trade.

Pros of Recommendation:

1. Much more affordable for our students ($10,139 versus $14,976)
2. The UWEC Center for International Education has familiarity and experience with the proposed service provider
3. Coursework is conducted in English
4. The UWEC Registrar’s Office has already adopted a “best practice” for accepting both the host university and the USAC transcripts.

Cons of Recommendation:

1. Course coverage of slave trade may be limited to 2 weeks.
2. Students in the USAC courses will be primarily other study-abroad students.

Technology/Human Resource Impact: None

Committee Recommendation:

Change the service provider for the Ghana study-abroad program from ISEP-Direct to the University Studies Abroad Consortium (USAC).
MOTION FOR THE UNIVERSITY SENATE

The Academic Policies Committee,

by a vote of ___9___ for to ___0___ against on December 10, 2013,

recommends that the service provider for the Ghana study-abroad program be changed from ISEP-Direct to the University Studies Abroad Consortium (USAC).

Implementation Date: Immediate

Signed: ______ Jean A. Pratt ______
Chair of the Committee

Send to: University Senate Office