

MICHIGAN STATE
UNIVERSITY

Study Abroad Task Force
2007-08



FINAL REPORT

STUDY ABROAD TASK FORCE, 2007-08

Final Report

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Executive Summary
2007-08 Study Abroad Task Force
Final Report

Following a 10-year period of rapid growth in study abroad at MSU, the 2007-08 Task Force recommends that future growth be paired closely with issues of quality assurance and cost control. The program should re-emphasize quality (providing richer and deeper experiences that stretch our students) without losing sight of the long-standing goals of participation and affordability. Examples of richness and deepness include emphasizing integration of the local culture, increasing the number of sites with more dissimilar cultures, and providing more language-intensive programs. However, a broad portfolio of programs should be maintained, recognizing that some "less intense" opportunities can be the stepping-stone to more intense programs for some students.

We emphasize eight overarching themes (indicated in parenthesis below) described in the full text of the report. In addition to the report itself, five appendices (attached) and three separate supplements contain follow-up tables and detailed survey data.

Theme 1: MSU executive leadership must regularly and visibly endorse the value of study abroad as an integral part of the MSU student experience, reinforcing our institutional commitment to study abroad. (see recommendations 1, 2, 3)

Theme 2: MSU should improve access to quality study abroad programs at a *reasonable cost* (see recommendations 4, 5, 20, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37). To do this MSU must:

- Implement measures to reduce program costs and increase student aid/scholarships for study abroad.
- Provide students with clear information about all costs in program materials (airfare, tuition, spending money, etc.).
- Examine funding model for ISP/study abroad, particularly as it relates to the division of tuition revenue generated by faculty-led programs and funding in support of direct enrollment programs.
- Review per diem policies for faculty on study abroad.
- Correct administrative delays in finalizing program budgets so students have full access to financial aid.

Theme 3: MSU must enhance the study abroad experience (see recommendations 6, 7, 8, 9, 17, 19, 22) **by:**

- Diversifying locations and lengths of programs
- Increasing opportunities for immersion in local culture
- Promoting the integration of experiential and intercultural education at all program stages
- Working with faculty leaders to develop and provide support for the implementation of "best practices" related to teaching and learning abroad, which would include aspects of cultural education, immersion, language and experiential pedagogy.

Theme 4: MSU must strengthen the ties between the curriculum offered on-campus and that offered on study abroad programs. Every effort should be made to fully integrate the

academic offerings on study abroad into a student's degree program (see recommendations 14, 15, 16) by:

- Addressing difficulties in transfer credit and course approval systems (particularly related to integrative studies and co-sponsored program credit)
- Systemic review of study abroad curricular offerings by sponsoring departments and colleges.

Theme 5: MSU must increase opportunities to combine foreign language education with study abroad (see recommendations 27, 28, 29, 30, 31).

- Provide adequate resources and compensation for faculty to teach foreign language courses on-campus and abroad.
- Explore options for technology-enhanced non-credit and credit foreign language instruction

Theme 6: Encourage and facilitate faculty involvement (see recommendations 10, 11, 12, 13, 20, 26).

- Review and implement promotion and tenure, and merit criteria in support of study abroad across the campus
- Facilitate the linkage and/or integration of faculty research efforts with international teaching responsibilities
- Explore incentives to encourage involvement in programs (additional compensation, course releases, research expense allowances, etc.)

Theme 7: Actively engage in quality and outcomes assessment for programs (see recommendations 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26).

- ISP should work with appropriate offices to develop a statement of intended learning outcomes for study abroad.
- ISP should request that colleges review the academic goals, contact time and outcomes as a major factor in new program proposals and implement a process of program review every 3-5 years.
- OSA should work with appropriate offices to assess participant learning and study abroad outcomes through longitudinal program assessment.
- ISP should create and support incentives for faculty, staff and graduate students to research issues surrounding international education and study abroad as a means of publicizing and improving institutional practice.

Theme 8: MSU must market study abroad more fully and disseminate messages about the value of study abroad, as well as opportunities, financial aid, etc., to appropriate target audiences using diverse methods (see recommendations 18, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44).

STUDY ABROAD TASK FORCE, 2007

Final Report

Introduction

In 1995 MSU convened a university-wide Task Force on Study Abroad to gauge its current status and future directions. That Task Force report was submitted to President McPherson, and a study abroad initiative was launched. Changes in administrative and financial policies were implemented as a result of the Task Force's recommendations, and student participation in study abroad significantly increased (875 MSU students participated in study abroad in 1995-96. By 2006-07, that number had increased to 2,801).

There has been no similar university-wide examination of study abroad since 1995. Although in the interim significant progress was evident in some areas (most notably, student participation), new issues emerged, including the balance between short- and long-term programs, the role of language instruction in study abroad, quality control, faculty incentives, and program costs. In fall 2006, the Study Abroad Deans' Designees¹ recommended to then-Acting Dean of ISP Jeff Riedinger that a university-wide Task Force on Study Abroad be established, to explore these issues and make recommendations for university policies and priorities. The task force convened in February 2007 and began work in March 2007.²

The task force adopted a four-part approach to comprehensive information-gathering:

1. Review the literature on internationalization and study abroad program design and impact.
2. Web-based survey to a random sample of MSU students, including those who have studied abroad and those who haven't.
3. Web-based survey of all faculty at MSU.
4. Face-to-face meetings with key constituent groups on campus, including all college deans and various support units.³

During Fall 2007, meetings with student groups and a meeting with study abroad colleagues in the CIC took place.

Based on the information collected and analyzed to date, a set of issues emerged within which to frame MSU's study abroad activities and from which to derive preliminary recommendations for change. We present here the key themes that have emerged and for each theme we list the recommendations of the task force.

¹ The Study Abroad Deans' Designees is an advisory committee comprised of one representative or "designee" from each college which offers study abroad programs. The Deans of the colleges appoint their designees, and the designees meet regularly throughout the year with the Director of Study Abroad to discuss and recommend policies and practices that enhance study abroad at MSU. The Deans' Designees also have other responsibilities, such as providing college-level approval for program budgets and new program proposals.

² For a list of the Task Force members, see Appendix A.

³ For a list of all face-to-face meetings held, see Appendix B.

Nine critical themes emerged from our analysis of the extensive quantitative, qualitative, and focus group data collected from faculty/specialists, students, staff, and other key constituencies across campus:

1. MSU's Institutional Commitment to Study Abroad
2. The Student Experience
3. The Faculty Experience
4. Curricular Issues
5. The Academic Administration Experience
6. Program Quality and Structure Issues
7. Foreign Language Incorporation
8. Financial/Budget/Cost/ Issues
9. Marketing Issues

While there is some overlap between these themes, each broad category gives rise to unique concerns, and each category leads to a set of concrete recommendations.

MSU's Institutional Commitment to Study Abroad

MSU has long been committed to and involved with international programs in general and study abroad in particular. Since the launch of the study abroad initiative in 1995, MSU has experienced significant growth in both the number of programs offered and in the volume of student participation.⁴ Strong, visible, top-level institutional and administrative support, widespread faculty engagement, and college accountability for increased enrollments among their majors, were among the factors accounting for the dramatic growth in programs and participation.

The importance of maintaining this level of support, engagement, and accountability was stressed to the task force by administrators, deans, faculty, staff, and students at every stage of our deliberations, data collection, and discussions. Consistent, regular, and repeated endorsement of the value and priority of study abroad from the executive and academic administration (President, Provost, Vice-Presidents, and Council of Deans) ensures an institution-wide shared commitment.

Concerns that study abroad has lost some of its previous status as a priority echoed throughout our deliberations and discussions. Previously, accountability through inclusion in the annual APP&R process of strategic planning kept study abroad in the forefront of college priorities. Without any requirement to report on study abroad activity, study abroad moves down the list of college priorities. Deans, Associate Deans, department heads and individual faculty are critical advocates for study abroad and unequivocal statements of institutional commitment from the top are required to ensure, enhance, and exhort their advocacy.

⁴ See Appendix C: Study Abroad Participation, 1994-2007

Recommendations

1. Study abroad must remain a high priority for MSU and be recognized as an area of excellence. Study abroad as an integral part of an MSU education needs to be regularly and consistently emphasized in public statements by the top level of the administration.
2. A statement by MSU's executive leadership to the University community, acknowledging the progress we've made in study abroad over the past 15 years and highlighting the course we plan to chart for the future is imperative.
3. The Provost should exhort college deans to incorporate discussions of MSU's and their college's study abroad goals, achievements, and barriers into their units' strategic planning process. College deans should receive regular (at least yearly) updates on study abroad at MSU.
4. MSU must provide the financial commitment necessary for study abroad to remain an area of excellence.

The Student Experience

The data collection phase of the task force included a Web-based survey administered to 3,200 MSU undergraduate students (which yielded 2,047 responses, a 64% response rate).

Quantitative (close-ended) questions and qualitative (open-ended) questions were included to capture students' knowledge, attitudes, and practices of a broad range of study abroad activities. Three student sub-groups were surveyed: 1) students who have participated on study abroad; 2) students who have enrolled to participate in the near future but have not yet gone on study abroad; and 3) students who have never studied abroad, including those who enrolled to participate but withdrew prior to participation. A detailed analysis and assessment of these data is in Supplement 1. Tables 1 and 2 provide some summary information on the sample and responses on the key perceived obstacles to participation. We summarize findings and make recommendations here.

The racial and ethnic composition of participants approximates the racial and ethnic composition of the student body at large; while the percentage of African-American students who study abroad at MSU is higher than the national average for African-American students in 2006-07 (5.1% versus 3.5%), the percentage of Hispanic students studying abroad from MSU falls below the national average (3.5% versus 5.6%).⁵ Fully 84% of students who had studied abroad indicated program location was a dominant influence in their decision to study abroad, while program timing (i.e. when offered), duration, and courses available were important to approximately two-thirds of respondents. For students who had already studied abroad, 30% of respondents said that program cost strongly influenced their decision to study abroad. For 75% of those respondents who did not study abroad, financial concerns were listed as the greatest obstacle to participation. When asked what factors positively influenced their decision to study abroad, the "seemed like fun" and "a good investment in my future" factors dominated.

⁵ See Appendix D: Race/Ethnicity of Study Abroad Students

Table 1. Characteristics of All Student Respondents to the Study Abroad Web Survey Relative to Study Abroad Participation and MSU Enrollment

	Survey Respondants*		Study Abroad Participation**		MSU Enrollment***	
	%	N	%	N	%	N
Class						
Lower	32.73	670	13.7	231	44.39	15092
Upper	67.27	1377	86.2	2080	55.61	18906
Gender						
Female	55.35	1133	64.5	1556	53.73	18266
Male	44.46	910	35.5	855	46.27	15732
Ethnicity						
Caucasian (Non-Hispanic)	84.42	1728	80.5	1940	78.14	26566
African American (Non-Hispanic)	4.35	89	4.8	115	8.24	2801
Chicano	0.64	13	2.2	53	0.91	309
Hispanic – Other	2.44	50	3.6	88	1.95	662
American Indian	1.61	33	0.7	18	0.72	244
Asian/Pacific Islander	6.60	135	4.1	100	5.41	1839
Refused	3.47	71	4	97	1.05	356
% Participated in Study Abroad	34.78	712		2411		
% Applied for SA, but withdrawn	2.30	47	31****	1034		
% Not participated in Study Abroad	65.22	1335				
Total	100.00	2047		2411		33,998

*Students responded to the survey during SS '07. Of those, not all students answered all questions, and multiple responses were allowed on the Ethnicity question

** Study abroad figures for '06/'07, undergraduate students only

***OPB figures for SS'07

****There were a total of 3344 applications to study abroad, and of those 1034 were withdrawn before participating, representing 31% of total applications

Table 2. Factors Ranked "High" for Student Participation, Withdrawal, Nonparticipation

Factors which "influenced a lot" decision to participate	%	Major obstacles faced by participants	%	Factors which "influenced a lot" decision to withdraw after applying	%	Factors which "influenced a lot" decision to <u>not</u> participate at all	%
Seem Like Fun	88.2	Finding Money	45.5	Unable to Pay	53.2	Unable to find Money	22.8
Location	84.6	Lost Wages	28.7	Lost Wages	23.4	Unable to Find Time	21.0
Semester Offered	68.5	Relevant Coursework	18.3	Financial Difficulties	19.1	Lost Wages	16.8
Invest in Future	68.3	Separation from Loved Ones	17.0	Delayed Graduation	14.9	Delay Graduation	12.2
Duration	59.4	Finding Time	15.7	Extra-Curricular Obligations	14.9	Coursework Available	11.2
Courses Offered	59.0	Concerns for Housing/Lease	10.3	Lost interest	12.8	Missing Loved Ones	9.1
Interact w/Culture	49.7	Delayed Graduation	9.8	Dates No Longer Fit	12.8	No Interest	7.9
Foreign Language	33.7	Safety Concerns	9.1	Relevant Coursework	12.8	Housing Arrangements/Lease	6.1
Parents Encouraged	33.1	Concern for Poor Performance	6.5	Separation from Family/Friends	10.6	Extra-Curricular Obligations	5.8
Heard Peers Discuss	32.4	Health Concerns	6.3	Safety	8.5	Family Obligations	4.7
Cost	29.9	Extra-Curricular Obligations	6.0	Lack of Family Support	8.5	Lack of Family Support	4.3
Know Faculty Member	19.2	Lack of Family Support	5.9	Family Obligations	6.4	Concern for Poor Performance	3.6
Friends Going	14.9	Family Obligations	5.5	Unable to get Passport/VISA	4.3	Safety	3.2
		Academic Requirements	3.5	Housing Arrangements/Lease	4.3	Academic Requirements	3.2
		Athletic Obligations	2.5	Health Concerns	4.3	Health	2.2
				Concern over Poor Performance	4.3	Athletics	1.9
				Academic Requirements	2.1		
				Athletic Obligations	2.1		

n=712

n=712

n=47

n =
1335

Students who do participate in study abroad appear to consider participating first and to worry about the cost implications later, perhaps because many are not aware of the actual costs (tuition, housing, meals etc.) that are often borne by parents or a combination of parents' resources, financial aid, and other sources. (However, for students who do *not* participate in study abroad, cost of programs is the most-cited obstacle.) Students appreciate a choice of program models, location, and duration. This menu of choice promotes access and provides a developmental trajectory to study abroad that allows younger, less experienced students access to shorter programs (e.g. freshmen seminars abroad) and older students' access to more intense, immersive programs.

Undergraduate Recommendations

5. Consistent, explicit, and timely communication to all students on all costs likely to be incurred by participants is imperative.
6. New models of orientation, pre-departure preparation, and post-return evaluation and assessment need to be developed and implemented.
7. MSU must continue to offer a wide choice of program models, locations, and duration.

Graduate Students

While not explicitly included in the Web-survey, the graduate student experience of study abroad was scrutinized and discussed by the task force. Issues facing graduate students on study abroad must be disaggregated into 1) graduate students pursuing research abroad, 2) graduate students participating in full-fledged study abroad programs, and 3) graduate students as program staff. Several colleges, especially the professional schools and the College of Education, expressed strong desire for more study abroad opportunities for graduate students. There is limited awareness among departments/units of the existence, or the possibility of creating, such programs; many departments see graduate student international experience as part of their research commitment, primarily through data collection necessary for the completion of their degree. The role of graduate students as a primary instructor or program assistant is complicated through ambiguities arising from differing remuneration rates, teaching responsibilities, and associated graduate employees union complexities.

Graduate Student Recommendations

8. A working group should review all issues related to graduate student study abroad in terms of program design, pedagogy, and learning outcomes.
9. The Office of Study Abroad should work with the Graduate School and the Graduate Employees Union to clarify the role, graduate student involvement in, implementation, and oversight of international programs for graduate students.

The Faculty Experience

The data collection phase of the task force included a Web-based survey administered to MSU administrators, faculty, specialists, and staff (1,080 responses representing 32.3% of all MSU faculty and academic specialists). A detailed analysis and assessment of these data is in Supplement 2. We summarize findings and make recommendations here.

Summary findings:

- 86% of MSU faculty are committed to the belief that study abroad is one of the most powerful means to increase international knowledge among students and the globalization of the curriculum (a high of 96% in JMC and a low of 80% in CNS)
- 95% of faculty are committed to the belief that all study abroad programs should stimulate students' interest in cross-cultural, international comparative learning (uniformly high across all colleges) and 85% of faculty are committed to pursuing diversity in study abroad programs
- 73% of faculty are committed to the belief that study abroad should be a strongly recommended component of every undergraduate major (a high of 91% in JMC and a low of 62% in CNS)
- 88% of faculty are committed to the belief that every MSU student should have a study abroad opportunity, encouraged by curricular, financial, and administrative provisions (uniformly high across all colleges). Much lower percentages of faculty in all colleges are convinced that MSU has met this belief.

As Table 3 indicates, there was considerable agreement among faculty and specialists and are consistently upheld across academic rank, status, and gender:

- Studying abroad should not delay degree progress
- MSU should maintain 3-6 week program options
- MSU should focus on development of programs that are longer than 6 weeks
- Colleges should focus on developing language intensive-program options
- OSA and the colleges should focus on curriculum integration
- MSU should de-emphasize options based in major European cities

The narrative commentary provided by faculty indicates strong support for both long- and short-duration programs, with some faculty convinced that no real impact is possible in a less-than-6-week program or, indeed, less than a semester. Other faculty trumpet the flexibility, cost-effectiveness, and cost-attractiveness of short-term faculty-led programs. Some faculty say explicitly that MSU should consider eliminating one- to two-week programs. Others speak about the importance of variety and responding to student needs/wants. There is substantial commentary in support of more programming in Asia, the Middle East, Latin America, and, to a lesser extent, Africa. But there is also some clear recognition of the preferences of many students and their parents for Europe, with a sophisticated balancing in many cases of the pluses and minuses relating to cost, quality, faculty incentives, security, connection to majors/disciplines, infrastructure, cultural difference/challenge, language opportunities, and requirements. Faculty expressed strong concerns regarding faculty rewards and incentives for participating in study abroad.

Table 3. Faculty Attitudes on Study Abroad Program Location, Duration, and Content - % Distribution by Faculty Rank

	Prof	Asc Prof	Ast Prof	Ac Spec	Ac Adv	Inst/VP	N/A
Study Abroad Should not Delay Time to Degree							
% Agree/Strongly Agree	65.5	65.7	68.5	57.6	75	67.2	52
% Somewhat Agree	24.6	22.6	23.6	30.3	17	25.2	16
% Disagree/Strongly Disagree	8.1	10	7.4	9.1	6.8	6.9	8
No Response	1.7	1.7	0.5	3	1.1	0.8	24
MSU Study Abroad Programming Should Maintain 3-6 wk Programs							
% Agree/Strongly Agree	59.4	53	63	63.6	68.2	60.3	44
% Somewhat Agree	29.1	33	27.3	30.3	29.5	31.3	28
% Disagree/Strongly Disagree	9.8	10	8.8	6.1	2.3	6.9	4
No Response	1.7	3.9	0.9	0	0	1.5	24
MSU Study Abroad Programming Should Focus on 6+ wk Programs							
% Agree/Strongly Agree	57.4	56.1	61.1	60.6	50	55.7	28
% Somewhat Agree	30.8	31.3	30.1	27.3	38.6	35.9	32
% Disagree/Strongly Disagree	9.8	9.6	7.9	12.1	10.2	6.9	16
No Response	2	3	0.9	0	1.1	1.5	24
MSU Study Abroad Programming Should Focus on Language Programs							
% Agree/Strongly Agree	63.6	45.5	54.8	56.5	47.3	40	50.7
% Somewhat Agree	24.2	48.9	35.7	33.3	36.6	20	36.4
% Disagree/Strongly Disagree	12.1	5.7	8.3	9.3	12.2	12	10.1
No Response	0	0	1.3	0.9	3.8	28	2.8
MSU Study Abroad Programming Should Focus on Integrative Programs							
% Agree/Strongly Agree	78.8	76.1	72.6	78.7	74.8	56	69.5
% Somewhat Agree	12.1	22.7	20.9	17.6	20.6	4	24.4
% Disagree/Strongly Disagree	9.1	1.1	3	1.9	2.3	8	3.1
No Response	0	0	3.5	1.9	2.3	32	3.1
MSU Study Abroad Programming Should De-emphasize European City Programs							
% Agree/Strongly Agree	66.9	69.6	75	69.7	71.6	74.8	52
% Somewhat Agree	24.1	22.2	19.4	21.2	26.1	21.4	20
% Disagree/Strongly Disagree	6.4	6.1	3.7	9.1	1.1	1.5	4
No Response	2.5	2.2	1.9	0	1.1	2.3	24
Total	33.1	21.3	20	3.1	8.1	12.1	2.3
N	357	230	216	33	88	131	25

Many faculty also expressed concerns about the challenge of establishing new programs. This in some cases was simply a plea for more clarity and transparency about the process involved in designing and gaining approval, including more explicit guidance about OSA resources, proposal forms, and personnel who may be consulted most effectively. But some faculty participating in the face-to-face meetings with the task force stressed concerns about the risk assessment portion of the approval process, arguing that the criteria for denial for risk reasons may need review. Questions about the composition of the University Risk Committee and the appeal process were also raised.

Recommendations:

10. More effective incentives for substantial involvement in faculty-led study abroad programs are needed. Every effort should be made to ensure that compensation for teaching abroad is comparable to what one would earn with a similar load of teaching on campus, especially in the summer sessions. Faculty on 11-month contracts should be provided additional compensation when the teaching load abroad is not simply a replacement for their duties on campus (with no additional hardship or sacrifice). Where additional financial compensation is not feasible or appropriate, other forms of compensation (such as research funds, research travel, or release time) should be explored as alternative incentives.
11. Direct enrollment and exchange programs must have active faculty engagement. Therefore, faculty must be encouraged to be involved in developing and supporting direct-enrollment and exchange programs, especially those in non-traditional locations and/or in foreign language environments. Central funding should be provided to support such faculty involvement.
12. There must be more explicit and concrete recognition of faculty engagement in study abroad in university, college, and departmental P&T rules and merit raise criteria.
13. There must be more active encouragement of strategies to leverage study abroad to support faculty leaders' research. For example, ISP and departments/colleges could cover expenses for additional days before or after a program for research, meetings with research and grant collaborators, conference attendance, etc.

Curricular Issues

The student survey revealed a significant amount of frustration on the part of students regarding making study abroad “fit” into their academic programs at MSU.

The key points raised regarding curricular issues were:

- The co-sponsored program was initiated as an alternative to the transfer credit option to increase the number and quality of students participating in study abroad. There is continuing confusion surrounding the concept, the complexity of the procedure for staff and students, and its incompatibility with current electronic degree systems.
- Faculty members, students, and advisors expressed concern over the interface of study abroad with integrative studies. Four key issues arose: (1) how to deal with the ongoing issue of transferring three credit international courses to cover four-credit MSU requirements; (2) how to account for the integrative nature of study abroad in relationship to course requirements; (3) who can offer integrative studies abroad; and (4) how programs can be approved or designated to offer integrative studies.

In addition, faculty expressed concern over the academic quality of curricular offerings in study abroad, reinforcing the need for academic units to actively review the curriculum they offer on study abroad.

Recommendations:

14. The primary faculty role in curriculum development and quality assurance needs reinforcement. This is largely a college- and department-based responsibility, but concerns expressed by a variety of faculty about unevenness in the quality and the academic rigor of some offerings suggest that a systematic review of existing programs and course offerings should be conducted periodically by faculty committees.
15. OSA, in conjunction with the colleges, the Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education, and Registrar's Office, should review the co-sponsored process to determine if the initial goal is being addressed and whether the effort involved is justified by the outcome.
16. OSA, in conjunction with the colleges and the Office of Undergraduate Education, should bring together a group to discuss integrative studies in study abroad.

Study Abroad Administrative Issues

Faculty and student responses concerning administrative processes were generally positive, with 66% of faculty rating the Office of Study Abroad as excellent and 67% of students rating the office as very helpful. These figures reflect the high quality of current operations in OSA. Key issues within the academic administrative experience relate to course and transfer credits, technology/information flows, budget processing, and administrative roles/responsibilities. Key points are:

- Faculty members want to implement new, creative structures into their programming, but they are unclear how to do so.
- Coupled with the complexity of the transfer credit and approval process for some programs is the desire to have more streamlined communication and tracking processes for course approvals.
- Advisors and faculty both expressed confusion and difficulty with finding needed information from the OSA web site. Issues related to co-sponsored programs, program development, staffing information, and the review and approval of students via the Web would streamline administration.

Recommendations:

17. Working with the Registrar's Office, OSA should develop standard procedures for the academic timeline on study abroad, including drop/adds and grade due dates.
18. OSA should improve its Web presence to provide: (1) more features that make communication and course/application approval processes easier for faculty, staff, and students; (2) improved and expanded country, culture, or region-based information for students, especially those attending direct enrollment and exchange programs; (3) expanded and simplified materials available to faculty about new program development; and (4) resources to assist faculty with "second tier" programming such as orientations, re-entry, internships, service learning, home stays, language instructions, etc.

19. ISP and OSA should clarify the role and mission of OSA and its staff to increase the quality and consistency of service among OSA coordinators and budget personnel and clarify the duties of faculty versus staff members when planning a program; furthermore, ISP should consider more budget personnel to handle the budget/finance workload in OSA, recognizing the cyclical nature of the staffing burden.
20. The program budget reconciliation process should be reviewed to achieve a level of service equal to the Controller's current travel reimbursement system. Lack of prompt repayment of money advanced by faculty creates a personal cost and disincentive to participation.

Program Quality and Structure Issues

Quality in study abroad can be considered from a number of perspectives. The survey asked faculty opinions about programs mostly in terms of structure and location. Students were asked somewhat indirectly about program quality – for example to what extent interacting with the culture influenced their decision to study abroad. Both surveys asked about the levels of satisfaction with the services provided by OSA staff. Despite these questions, concrete agreement on conceptualization and operationalization of quality in programming remains elusive.

Strong concern was raised about the quality and outcomes of programs. Numerous advisors, faculty, and other academic professionals questioned the value of sending students overseas based on the learning outcomes of these programs. Faculty concerns center on issues related to program length, location, and level of immersion. Some faculty clearly see short-term programs (i.e., four weeks or less), programs offered in Europe, and programs that do not require immersion or language learning as being of lower quality and are concerned with the perceived lack of rigor and limited contact time in these programs. There is concern that students receive too many credits for insufficient work of less rigor than expected on campus. These concerns merit further exploration.

About two-thirds of faculty felt that current program locations need to be redistributed, with almost 93% agreeing that MSU should deemphasize new programming in some European cities. Almost 88% of faculty also felt that MSU should provide more programs with language instruction, and about 94% felt that MSU should emphasize “integrative” programs.

The issues raised by the faculty reflected the concerns of the students. Student respondents who studied abroad indicated that the factors that most influenced (“influenced a lot”) their decisions to study abroad were: program location (84%); semester offered (68.5%); program duration (59.4%); coursework offered (59%); opportunity to learn/use language (33.7) The greatest obstacle was financial concerns (74.2%), followed by separation from family and loved ones (22.5%); meeting academic requirements (21.8%); finding time to go (15.7%); health and safety concerns (15.4%); concern over housing/lease (10.3%); delaying graduation (9.8%); extracurricular activities (8.5%); concern for poor performance (6.5%); and lack of family support (5.9%).

Student narrative responses stress the need to lower the cost of participating. Many students felt it was important to be more “up-front” about the out-of-pocket costs of studying abroad, particularly in Europe, and also that the total costs of participating (air fare, tuition, program fees, spending money, etc.) should be made clear from the beginning so they can budget/plan

accordingly. Concerns were expressed regarding delays in notification of scholarship awards and financial aid information that affect students' ability to afford and therefore participate in study abroad.

Frustration with transferring courses and credits from programs overseas back to MSU is a recurring theme. Students noted the important role OSA should play to actively communicate to ease families' concerns about safety and security, particularly in developing countries.

"Unpacking" the study abroad experience upon return to the U.S. is viewed as an important, typically neglected, component of most programs. Most returning students describe it as a "life-changing experience," yet they are unable to specifically articulate the knowledge and skills gained during the experience. It is vitally important that we help students articulate to parents, faculty, other students, and future employers exactly how they benefited from study abroad: increased flexibility; an ability to cope with/negotiate change; a new language learned; ability to understand and interact with people from another culture; resourcefulness; independence; self-confidence; adaptability; and a broader world-view.

Recommendations:

21. The discussion of quality should focus on a number of issues beyond simply length and location. MSU has high-quality short-term programs and lower-quality semester-length programs: it's not necessarily about how long the students are abroad, but rather what they do abroad. Issues of quality must be addressed in the proposal process, including how the proposed program will stretch students beyond their comfort zones.
22. While MSU should continue to support existing programs in Western Europe, funding for new program development and approval of new programs should be limited to those proposals that address one of the following criteria:
 - a. Programs in non-traditional locations (outside Western Europe, Canada and Oceania)
 - b. Programs that will attract underrepresented groups of students and/or faculty (such as majors not typically represented in programs, or programs aimed at specific student populations, such as minority students, disabled students, athletes, or student parents).
 - c. Programs developed to replace defunct programs.
 - d. Programs that align with university and/or college strategic priorities.
23. ISP must work with appropriate offices to develop a statement of intended learning outcomes.
24. OSA must work with faculty leaders to develop and provide support for implementation of "best practices" related to teaching and learning abroad, which would include aspects of cultural education, immersion, language, and experiential pedagogy.
25. Colleges must review the academic goals, contact time, and outcomes as a major factor in new program proposals and implement a process of program review every 3 – 5 years.
26. OSA should work with appropriate offices to assess participant learning through routine, longitudinal methods.
27. ISP should create and support incentives for faculty, staff, and graduate students to research issues surrounding international education and study abroad as a means of publicizing and improving institutional practice.

Foreign Language Incorporation

An increased opportunity to combine study abroad programs with foreign language education was a strong recurring theme that permeated the deliberations of the task force. Fully 52% of the faculty strongly agree or agree that MSU should focus more on development of language-intensive programs for study abroad options consistent across professional rank and tenure status and, remarkably so, across colleges. There is uniform acknowledgement of the close links between language acquisition and development of cultural awareness and cross-cultural competencies.

For specific language instruction, it was noted that the Spanish major has a study abroad, international experiential requirement of a minimum of 8 weeks in a Spanish-speaking environment, and 90% of majors do study abroad. The German major also has a study abroad requirement, although the percentage of majors who study abroad is somewhat lower than 90%. Other foreign language programs include semester or summer language and culture programs in China, Egypt, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Korea, Russia, Senegal, South Africa, Spain, and Tanzania. In addition, there are foreign language study components or options in programs in Lille, France; Mytilini, Greece; Budapest, Hungary; Istanbul, Turkey; and Mali. Semester or year-long language study abroad programs are preferred, but shorter-term language programs do have value and are often the only option for a significant number of students. Seven-to-eight-week programs that involve home stays for maximum conversational practice have worked well in Volgograd, Russia; Mayen, Germany; Tours, France; Florence, Italy; and Santander, Spain.

There is concern that language-intensive study abroad may delay progress toward a degree, but the advantages accrued for those majoring in a foreign language or in an internationally relevant course of study in the humanities, business, or social sciences would seem to outweigh this concern. MSU is on the ground floor in developing study abroad programs for less-commonly-taught languages (LCTLs), but there is a capacity issue here too. The search for partnerships with overseas institutions to offer advanced instruction and intense conversation practice is underway but is challenging for LCTLs.

Recommendations:

28. Increase the number of language-intensive study abroad offerings for academic year, semester, and 7-8 week summer instruction in Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, Turkish, and Swahili, at a minimum.
29. Provide more resources for staffing introductory and intermediate sections of key foreign languages on campus so that no first- or second-year students are denied access to preferred language instruction (in time so that they can reasonably participate in a language-intensive study abroad program).
30. Explore options for technology-enhanced non-credit and credit foreign language instruction, especially for students and faculty preparing for a study abroad program.
31. In light of the strong interest in expanding options for foreign language study in study abroad programs, imaginative options beyond salary need to be developed to encourage foreign language faculty participation.
32. Allow the creation of academic minors without a corresponding major to increase student interest and participation in foreign language instruction.

Financial/Budget/Cost Issues

Approximately 30% of the student respondents who had already participated in a program indicated that costs did influence their decision to study abroad. Similarly, 40% indicated that costs had somewhat of an influence, and 30% indicated that program cost did not have an influence. There is great variability across colleges. The primary sources of financial support are personal money (45% of student respondents) and family financial support (50%). Based on these responses, cost is a key question to be addressed in conjunction with the budget structure.

OSA is financed 100% from tuition generated on faculty-led programs. Students pay regular tuition for the MSU courses they take abroad, at whatever rate they would have paid if they were on campus. In other words, in-state and out-of-state differentials apply. However, OSA receives tuition money from the Provost's Office at a set rate that is generally equivalent to the Lifelong Education (LLE) rate.

The LLE rate is higher than the in-state rate but less than the out-of-state rate. Consequently, OSA receives a little more tuition money than is actually generated for each in-state student who studies abroad, and a little less than is actually generated for each out-of-state student. However, since the vast majority of study abroad students are in-state (90%), receiving tuition money based on the LLE rate in essence means a subsidy to OSA.

For every tuition dollar generated by study abroad, 62% is made available to cover instructional costs on the program (faculty salaries, honoraria for guest speakers, classroom rental abroad, etc.), and 38% is held back by ISP. Of that 38%, ISP distributes approximately 27-28% to fund overall OSA operations, including staff, marketing, program development site visits, and special projects such as Curriculum Integration, Outcomes Assessment, etc. The remainder of the 38% not allocated to OSA is used by the ISP Dean's Office to fund other ISP-wide initiatives and programs which are not included in ISP's general budget. Expenditures include activities across campus in support of the internationalization efforts of many units, including International Education Week, the International Film Festival sponsored by the College of Communication Arts and Sciences, Global Festival, and international travel grants for graduate students presenting papers at conferences abroad.

On the individual program level, tuition revenue and program fee revenue are kept separate in each program's budget. If a surplus occurs in the tuition revenue budget (instructional expenses on-site are less than the amount available from tuition), that surplus is returned to the college which sponsored the program. If more than one college sponsored a program, tuition surplus is returned to each based on the proportion of student credit hours (SCHs) each college generated on the program. Each college's surpluses are netted against any losses incurred on the tuition portion of any budget. The yearly distribution of tuition revenue surpluses to the colleges represents an incentive for the colleges to participate actively in study abroad programming. Colleges are free to use their surpluses however they see fit; many use the funds for study abroad scholarships, new program development, staff time for study abroad responsibilities within the college, and other activities in general support of study abroad.

Recommendations:

33. A review of the 62/38 split in tuition for faculty-led programs is necessary.
 - Dollars generated from faculty-led programs should primarily be used to support faculty-led programs administered by OSA.
 - Eliminating or reducing the ISP share of tuition revenue (currently 10-11%) would make more money available for instruction, and therefore some expenses currently charged as program fee (such as academic field trips) could be covered by the expanded tuition money pot. A new split of the tuition money (e.g., 70/30) should be implemented.
34. The only programs for which OSA receives tuition revenue are traditional faculty-led programs. Direct enrollment programs are budgeted differently, on essentially a money-in, money-out basis. The student pays no MSU tuition, and all expenses (including host university tuition) are charged as a program fee. In addition, administrative expenses related to such programs (staff time in advising, brochures, orientation materials for participants, phone and postage expenses, etc.) are covered by the general OSA operating budget, which is completely funded by tuition generated by faculty-led programs. This amounts to a subsidy of direct enrollment programs by faculty-led programs.⁶

Direct enrollment programs should not be subsidized by faculty-led programs. Participants in direct enrollment programs should pay a fee (included in their program fee) to defray the expense of offering these programs. That fee should be roughly equivalent to the matriculation fee that all participants in faculty-led programs pay. The revenue from this fee would offset some of the expenses incurred by OSA in operating these programs. Reducing the financial burden of direct enrollment programs will allow OSA to run its operation with a lower percentage of the tuition revenue generated from faculty-led programs, thereby further reducing overall costs to students.

35. Per diem amounts to MSU faculty should be limited to 90% of the maximum State Department, beginning in Summer 2009. After 2009-10, the policy of reimbursing at a rate of 90% of State Department per diem rates should be re-examined to determine if adjustments in the rate of reimbursement are needed. Currently, most faculty who accompany programs receive the full State Department per diem. The State Department rate, which might exceed reasonable costs, is intended for short-term stays by U.S. diplomats, and is not necessarily the benchmark we should use for faculty leaders who stay 3-8 weeks in an apartment overseas, with access to kitchen facilities.
36. More effort needs to be made to make sure that students are able to take full advantage of financial aid. Many program fees are not finalized in time to allow students to receive the maximum summer financial aid. OSA, with the support of the Deans' Designees, should establish early deadlines for faculty to submit budgets, and then strictly enforce those deadlines. In addition, established programs with a stable financial history should provide estimated program fees to OSA early in the fall (for summer programs); those estimates will be passed on to the Financial Aid Office so students can be processed for aid sooner. As long as the actual program fee advertised and charged does not vary by more than 10% in either direction from the estimate sent to the financial aid office, students would not have to be re-packaged for aid.

⁶ See Appendix E: OSA Resources Devoted to Direct Enrollment Programs

37. More money for scholarships needs to be sought to make study abroad accessible to every interested student. ISP should have a full time development person whose portfolio includes raising scholarship money for study abroad. This effort should be undertaken in collaboration with college and central development offices.
38. MSU is obligated to disclose the full cost of all study abroad programs, beginning at the early marketing stages.

Marketing

While the three primary data-gathering methods (student survey, faculty survey, and interviews with key constituencies) did not focus directly on marketing, the issue of marketing and communication arose frequently during our discussions with administrators, faculty, and staff. Marketing is a key component of any initiative with identifiable goals. Given the public prominence of MSU's 1995 goal to have 40 percent of each graduating class have a study abroad experience, the initial marketing of MSU's study abroad commitment and programs could be thought of as rising to the level of a "campaign."

Marketing study abroad has several components, including CDs, the Internet, brochures, fairs, e-mail, flyers, talks, etc. The audience includes, but is not limited to, prospective students and their parents, current students and their parents, faculty, and external audiences. Generally, the marketing message is that MSU is a leader in study abroad programming, and many students include a study abroad component in their undergraduate experience. While more directed messages exist, the data seem to support a need for communications that are less generic and more targeted toward the intended audience.

A recurring theme among student survey responses is the need to provide better information beforehand, both earlier and more completely. These concerns have a marketing element. While individual program brochures provide complete "basic" information (location, dates, courses, etc.), there are no similar companion materials about what to expect, what to bring and what not to bring, etc., in the initial, primary marketing phase. One related theme is that the amount of "spending money" perceived to be needed by program directors seems to be consistently less than perceived by students.

In addition to knowing how to make it possible financially to participate, students want more information and opportunities to make it happen academically. More information should be provided to show students the range of content and curricular options available, not just focusing on the locations (i.e., Curriculum Integration).

Safety and security is a marketing issue. While MSU is a leader nationally in emphasizing and accomplishing safety and security, more can be done to communicate to students and their parents how seriously we take these matters, alleviating continuing concerns. Different messages are needed for different audiences (e.g. socio-economic, ethnic or gender groups). The initial admissions contact (i.e. *Inside MSU* – the campus visitation program for high school seniors) may not be the best time and place to push study abroad; there is already uncertainty and some apprehension about coming to college.

"Marketing" came up in the faculty discussion forums. Several faculty who were new to MSU or would be new to study abroad expressed uncertainty about how to go about starting a program, what is done by whom, what are the "rules and policies," etc. Advisors expressed similar

concerns regarding access to simple, accurate information that they could pass along to their students. Even some experienced advisors admitted that they do not know how to look programs up on the study abroad Web site or know how to refer students appropriately when they have questions about a program.

Program cost concerns pervaded all the information gathering venues; both deans and faculty saw the need for a significant endowment as the only realistic way to approach these problems. Should such an initiative become a high priority, the marketing approach and message would likely be a major factor in its success. Discussions with the Development Office indicate that 1) corporate and foundation donors have not been a reliable source of donations for study abroad, compared to individual donors, and 2) while individual donors see MSU as “good” for having a global focus, the case for supporting individual students to study abroad still does not rise nearly so high in their minds as (for example) regular scholarships.

Recommendations:

39. Messages regarding the *value* of studying abroad need to be communicated more strategically to families as well as prospective students. Venues might include admissions presentations to prospective students and families, admissions media, and family-targeted Web pages.
40. Clarification is needed around acceptable methods of communicating with families before students enroll, after they enroll, and while they are abroad.
41. Messages need more focus on the *how* to make it possible—both financially and academically. Existing brochures and Web site marketing campaigns could be supplemented with seminars or online tutorials.
42. Additional effort should be made to communicate to distinct populations—for example male, athlete, minority, science, low-income, first-generation students—strategic messages that capture their interest, address their concerns, and help them overcome obstacles to participation.
43. In communicating the attributes of a study abroad experience to students, the supplementary use of unofficial and informal modes of information dissemination (e.g. Facebook, MySpace, podcasts) should be explored.
44. Messages to advisors need to be further developed to indicate what options are available, information on costs and funding, academics, and where to direct students who have questions. Keeping in mind the diversity of our advisors and their workload, communication venues might include additional Web information, publications, and a yearly update via the UUD office.
45. Messages to faculty need more emphasis on the *how they can plan programs and the diversity of options and supportive resources available to them*. Venues might include a best practices guide, study abroad exemplars, a new Web site, and new faculty orientation or development seminars.

Next Steps

Since the task force began its work in Spring 2007, a number of steps have already been taken to address some of these issues. To identify those recommendations on which there has already been progress made, as well as to highlight what the next steps should be for every recommendation, a follow-up table is in Appendix F.

APPENDIX A: Membership of the 2007-08 Study Abroad Task Force

Leadership Team:

Norm Graham, Associate Dean, James Madison College
Jim Lucas, Office of the Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education
Brendan Mullan, Associate Dean, College of Social Science
Tom Wolff, Associate Dean, College of Engineering

Members

Rhonda Crackel, College of Agriculture and Natural Resources
Connie Currier, College of Nursing
Kathleen Fairfax, Director, Office of Study Abroad
Eric Freedman, College of Communication Arts and Sciences
Beth Judge, College of Arts and Letters
Frances Kaneene, College of Agriculture and Natural Resources
Oumatie Marajh, College of Social Science
Mike Mazzeo, Eli Broad College of Business
Dugald McMillan, Office of the Registrar
Thomas Summerhill, College of Social Science (replacing Brendan Mullan as of 1/2008)
Gerald Uruquhart, College of Natural Science/Lyman Briggs College

APPENDIX B: Face-to-face meetings to gather information Study Abroad Task Force, 2007

Colleges

College of Agriculture and Natural Resources (6/12/07)
College of Arts and Letters (7/9/07)
College of Business (6/13/07)
College of Communication Arts and Sciences (6/15/07)
College of Education (8/17/07)
College of Engineering (7/19/07)
College of Music (7/17/07)
College of Natural Science (6/18/07)
College of Nursing (8/9/07)
College of Social Science (6/6/07)
Lyman Briggs College (8/29/07)
James Madison College (7/13/07)
Residential College in the Arts and Humanities (7/24/07)

Administrative/Support Units and Key Individuals

Admissions (8/10/07)
Alumni Office (7/16/07)
Career Services (6/22/07)
Development (8/31/07)
Financial Aid (6/5/07)
John Hudzik (7/16/07)
Language Department chairs (8/16/07)
Registrar's Office (6/12/07)
Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities (8/20/07)
UUD (7/9/07)

Open Faculty Fora

June 13, 2007
July 11, 2007
August 15, 2007
September 5, 2007
September 18, 2007

Student Focus Groups

October 2, 2007
October 22, 2007
October 29, 2007

Meeting with study abroad directors of the CIC

October 18, 2007

**APPENDIX C: Participation in Study Abroad
Michigan State University Study Abroad**

Table 1: Student participation in study abroad, 1994-2007

Academic Year	Total Students Participating⁷	MSU students Participating⁸	MSU Undergrads Participating⁹
1994-95	1,004	776	
1995-96	1,148	875	800
1996-97	1,316	1,079	997
1997-98	1,690	1,454	1,253
1998-99	1,746	1,565	1,402
1999-00	1,908	1,698	1,510
2000-01	2,058	1,835	1,609
2001-02	2,012	1,819	1,621
2002-03	2,054	1,864	1,686
2003-04	2,460	2,269	2,045
2004-05	2,641	2,385	2,137
2005-06	2,787	2,558	2,247
2006-07	2,975	2,801	2,411

Table 2: Undergraduate Participation Rates, 1995-2007

Year	Participation Rate¹⁰
1995-96	13.5%
1996-97	16.4%
1997-98	19.9%
1998-99	21.0%
1999-00	21.9%
2000-01	23.1%
2001-02	22.9%
2002-03	22.8%
2003-04	25.8%
2004-05	27.6%
2005-06	28.5%
2006-07	29.3%

⁷ Includes non-MSU students who participate in an MSU-sponsored program (and register at MSU as Lifelong Education students), MSU graduate students, and MSU undergraduate students.

⁸ Includes graduate and undergraduate students enrolled for a degree at MSU.

⁹ Includes only students enrolled for an undergraduate degree at MSU

¹⁰ Participation rate is calculated by taking the number of undergraduate participants in study abroad in a given year and dividing it by the total number of undergraduate degrees awarded in that same year. This is the nationally accepted and preferred way of reporting participation rates.

APPENDIX C: Participation in Study Abroad

Table 3: Number of Programs Offered, 2001-2007

Program Type ¹¹	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
Faculty-led	94	102	108	124	139	156
MSU-Administered	5	5	6	8	11	11
Exchange	30	30	28	32	39	41
Direct Enrollment	10	9	19	15	30	26
Other	1	3	5	5	5	5
TOTAL	140	149	166	184	224	239

¹¹ Program types include the following: faculty-led (traditional faculty-led + Freshman Seminars Abroad), MSU Administered (programs which MSU runs and grants its own credit for, but which do not have a faculty member present; most group internship programs fall into this category), exchange programs (2-way student exchanges), direct enrollment (whether officially “co-sponsored” or not), and Other (consortium programs, third-party provider programs)

APPENDIX D: RACE/ETHNICITY OF STUDY ABROAD PARTICIPANTS

	MSU Study Abroad participants 2006-07		Total MSU student population Spring 2007		National statistics: study abroad participation (2004-05)	Total national enrollment in 4-yr institutions - 2005
	Number	% of total	Number	% of total	% of total	% of total
Caucasian	2,221	79.3%	32,423	75%	83%	68.2%
Black	143	5.1%	3,316	7.6%	3.5%	11.9%
Chicano	57	2.0%	389	0.9%	**	**
Hispanic	97	3.5%	864	2%	5.6%	8.2%
American Indian	22	0.8%	303	0.7%	0.4%	0.9%
Asian/Pacific Islander	132	4.7%	2,270	5.2%	6.3%	6.4%
Not reported	129	4.6%	537	1.2%	*	*
International	*	*	3,298	7.6%	*	4.5%
Multiracial	*	*	*	*	1.2%	*
TOTAL NUMBER	2801		43,400		205,983	10,999,400

* Statistics not kept for this variable in this grouping

**National statistics group Chicano and Hispanic students into one reporting category. MSU breaks these out.

APPENDIX E:

OSA RESOURCES DEVOTED TO DIRECT ENROLLMENT PROGRAMS

(Spring 2007)

Coordinator/AP staff time	%FTE
Coordinator 1 (EE, China, India)	0.42
Coordinator 2 (Latin America)	0.30
Coordinator 3 (Africa)	0.10
Administrator (credit transfer, etc.)	0.15
Coordinator 4 (Australia & all exchanges)	0.92
Coordinator 5 (Western Europe)	0.20
Coordinator 6 (UK)	0.05
Marketing/Editorial Staff FTE	0.40
Coordinator/AP staff time:	2.54

CT Staff time	
CT 1 (exchanges)	0.30
CT Staff time (combined)	0.85
Total CT Staff FTE	1.15

TOTAL STAFF FTE 3.69

Monetary value of AP staff time:
2.54 FTE x \$45K avg. salary = \$ 114,300

Monetary value of CT staff time:
1.15 FTE x \$33K avg salary \$ 37,950

Other Resources for Direct Enrollment programs (on annual basis):

Express Shipping of exchange and visa documents:	\$ 2,741
Incoming Exchange Student pick-up, orientation:	\$ 510
Marketing materials and related costs:	\$ 25,000
Staff travel to direct enrollment program sites:	\$ 18,000
Total S&E dollars:	\$ 46,251

TOTAL VALUE OF OSA RESOURCES DEVOTED TO DIRECT ENROLLMENT PROGRAMS

Staff FTE:	\$ 152,250
S&E dollars:	\$ 46,251
TOTAL	\$ 198,501

Calculation of administrative fee necessary to cover costs:

Total number of participants in direct enrollment programs (06-07): 359
Per person fee necessary: \$ 552.93

APPENDIX F: STUDY ABROAD TASK FORCE REPORT PROGRESS AND NEXT STEPS

MSU's Institutional Commitment to Study Abroad			
Recommendations	Implementation Venue	Progress	Next Steps
1. Study abroad must remain a high priority for MSU and be recognized as an area of excellence. Study abroad as an integral part of an MSU education needs to be regularly and consistently emphasized in public statements by the top level of the administration.	President's Office, Provost's Office, ISP Dean's Office, University Relations	MSU retains its #1 public university ranking nationally.	Members of the Task Force, together with the ISP Dean, should meet with the President and the Provost, (and any relevant staff) as well as with UR to discuss how to keep study abroad a high-profile priority.
2. A statement by MSU's executive leadership to the University community, acknowledging the progress we've made in study abroad over the past 15 years and highlighting the course we plan to chart for the future, is imperative.	President's Office, University Relations	MSUFCU luncheon speech by President Simon on 1/11/08.	Possible inclusion in Founder's Day speech? Other executive speeches?
3. The Provost should exhort college deans to incorporate discussions of MSU's and their college's study abroad goals, achievements, and barriers into their units' strategic planning process. College deans should receive regular (at least yearly) updates on study abroad at MSU.	Provost's Office, ISP Dean, OSA	OSA currently provides annual statistical reports to each college. A more complete report format will be developed by OSA and discussed by the ISP Dean in the Deans' Council.	Provost's Office should develop a mechanism for reviewing college deans' attention to progress in study abroad. OSA will develop a suggested prototype of an annual report to deans.
4. MSU must provide the financial commitment necessary for study abroad to remain an area of excellence.	Provost's Office Council of Deans, ISP Dean		

Undergraduate Recommendations			
Recommendations	Implementation Venue	Progress	Next Steps
5. Consistent, explicit, and timely communication to all students on <u>all</u> costs likely to be incurred by study abroad student participants is imperative.	OSA	OSA is working on an online tool students can use to figure out the total cost of a study abroad program.	OSA will include information about costs and financing study abroad in various publications and in various places on the web.
6. New models of orientation, pre-departure preparation, and post-return evaluation and assessment need to be developed and implemented in consultation with faculty and colleges.	OSA and the colleges (via the Deans' Designees)	OSA is working on building online versions of both the general pre-departure orientation and the post-program evaluation.	OSA Tech team to continue developing these two modules. Deans' Designees need to discuss the assessment piece.
7. MSU must continue to offer students a wide choice of study abroad program models, locations, and duration.	Colleges	New program proposals will only be funded if they meet established priority criteria (see recommendation #25)	Implementation of Recommendation #25 by OSA and the Deans' Designees.
Graduate Student Recommendations			
8. A working group should be constituted to review all issues related to graduate student study abroad in terms of program design, pedagogy, and learning outcomes.	OSA and Graduate School		OSA to contact Grad school to establish a working group and agenda of issues to be addressed.
9. The Office of Study Abroad should work with the Graduate School and the Graduate Employees Union to clarify the role, graduate student involvement in, implementation, and oversight of international programs for graduate students.	OSA, Graduate School, Deans' Designees		OSA should discuss the issues with the Deans' Designees, and then bring to the Graduate School for clarification.

Faculty Recommendations			
Recommendations	Implementation Venue	Progress	Next Steps
<p>10. More effective incentives for substantial involvement in faculty-led study abroad programs are needed. Every effort should be made to ensure that compensation for teaching abroad is comparable to what one would earn with a similar load of teaching on campus, especially in the summer sessions (as allowed by programs' instructional budgets). Faculty on 11- or 12-month contracts should be provided additional compensation when the teaching load abroad is not simply a replacement for their duties on campus (with no additional hardship or sacrifice). Where additional financial compensation is not feasible or appropriate, other forms of compensation should be explored as alternative incentives.</p>	<p>Departments and Colleges</p>	<p>New faculty salary policies in CAL & CSS put into effect within last year.</p>	<p>OSA and the Deans' Designees should talk to colleges and research units to find out what types of funding might already exist that faculty could tap into; make those sources of funding known to study abroad faculty.</p>
<p>11. Direct enrollment and exchange programs must have active faculty engagement. Therefore, faculty must be encouraged to be involved in developing and supporting direct-enrollment and exchange programs, especially those in non-traditional locations and/or in foreign language environments. Central funding should be provided to support such faculty involvement.</p>	<p>Provost, Departments and Colleges</p>		

Recommendations	Implementation Venue	Progress	Next Steps
12. There must be more explicit and concrete recognition of faculty engagement in study abroad in university, college and departmental P&T rules and merit raise criteria.	Departments and Colleges Provost's Office		
13. There must be more active encouragement of strategies to leverage study abroad to support faculty leaders' research. For example, ISP and departments/colleges could cover expenses for additional days before or after a program for research, meetings with research and grant collaborators, conference attendance, etc.	ISP Dean, Departments and Colleges, OSA		

Study Abroad Curricular Issues: Recommendations			
Recommendations	Implementation Venue	Progress	Next Steps
14. The primary faculty role in curriculum development and quality assurance needs reinforcement. This is largely a college- and department-based responsibility, but concerns expressed by a variety of faculty about unevenness in the quality and the academic rigor of some study abroad offerings suggest that a systematic review of existing programs and course offerings should be conducted periodically by faculty committees. Colleges also need to carefully review their programs' administrative arrangements to ensure that all program transactions are clear and transparent, with no conflicts of interest present. <i>ISP should not approve new programs from a college that does not have a regular program review process. In addition, all programs must be re-approved every five years.</i>	Departments and Colleges ISP Dean		OSA should convene a meeting with the Registrar's Office to address these issues.
15. OSA, in conjunction with the colleges, the Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education, and Registrar's Office, should review the co-sponsored process to determine if the initial goal is being addressed and whether the effort is justified by the outcome.	OSA, Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education, and Registrar's Office		OSA and APUE should establish a working group on this issue.
16. OSA, in conjunction with the colleges and the Office of Undergraduate Education, should bring together a group to discuss integrative studies in study abroad.	OSA, Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education, Deans' Designees		OSA and APUE should establish a working group on this issue.

Recommendations	Implementation Venue	Progress	Next Steps
17. Working with the registrar's Office, OSA should develop standard procedures for the academic timeline on study abroad, including drop/adds and grade due dates.	OSA and Registrar's Office		OSA and Registrar's Office to meet.
18. OSA should improve its web presence to provide: (1) more features that make communication and course/application approval processes easier for faculty, staff, and students; (2) improved and expanded country, culture, or region-based information for students, especially those attending direct enrollment and exchange programs; (3) expanded and simplified materials available to faculty about new program development; and (4) resources to assist faculty with "second tier" programming such as orientations, re-entry, internships, service learning, home stays, language instructions, etc.	OSA	<p>1) Complete overhaul of online services related to study abroad currently underway. OSA hopes to have a faculty portal to its database established by March 2008, to allow faculty to review and approve applicants online, submit flyer and budget revisions online, etc.</p> <p>2) Student portal will give participants this kind of information. Student portal not likely to be implemented until summer/fall 2008.</p> <p>3) and 4) Discussed but no action yet.</p>	1) and 2): OSA to continue development of faculty and student portals to database. 3) and 4) OSA to have discussions with faculty and Deans' Designees on the types of information needed, and who can assist in developing the information.

Recommendations	Implementation Venue	Progress	Next Steps
19. ISP and OSA should clarify the role and mission of OSA and its staff to increase the quality and consistency of service among OSA coordinators and budget personnel and clarify the duties of faculty versus staff members when planning a program; furthermore, ISP should consider more budget personnel for OSA	ISP and OSA	OSA currently conducting a thorough staffing review in order to create standard duties and expectations for various positions (coordinators, budget personnel, etc.)	Once OSA finished staffing review, recommendations and requests will be made to ISP.
20. The program budget reconciliation process should be reviewed to achieve a level of service equal to the Controller's current travel reimbursement system. Lack of prompt repayment of money advanced by faculty creates a personal cost and disincentive to participation.	OSA	Budget/finance personnel are part of the overall OSA staffing review.	Corrective action to be taken, and requests for additional resources, will be made after staffing review.

Program Quality and Structure Issues: Recommendations			
Recommendations	Implementation Venue	Progress	Next Steps
21. The discussion of quality should focus on a number of issues beyond simply length and location. MSU has high quality short-term programs and lower quality semester-length programs: it's not necessarily about how long the students are abroad, but rather what they do while abroad. A study abroad experience should stretch students beyond their comfort zones. Issues of quality must be addressed in the program proposal process, including how the proposed program will "stretch" students beyond their comfort zones.	Departments and Colleges, Deans' Designees, OSA		New program proposal form to be re-written to incorporate this element of quality.
22. While MSU should continue to support existing programs in Western Europe, funding for new program development should prioritize criteria spelled out in the full report text of recommendation #22.	ISP, Colleges		OSA to re-write Program Development Grant application to reflect new criteria.
23. ISP must work with appropriate offices to develop a statement of intended learning outcomes for study abroad.	ISP, OSA, Deans' Designees		
24. OSA must work with faculty leaders to develop and provide support for the implementation of "best practices" related to teaching and learning abroad, which would include aspects of cultural education, immersion, language, and experiential pedagogy.	OSA, faculty leaders, APUE		OSA should meet with APUE to discuss how to best solicit this type of information and convey it to faculty leaders.

Recommendations	Implementation Venue	Progress	Next Steps
25. Colleges must review the academic goals, contact time, and outcomes as a major factor in new program proposals and implement a process of program review every 3 – 5 years.	Colleges		
26. OSA should work with appropriate offices to assess participant learning through routine, longitudinal methods.	ISP, Colleges, OSA		
27. ISP should create and support incentives for faculty, staff, and graduate students to research issues surrounding international education and study abroad as a means of publicizing and improving institutional practice.	ISP, Deans' Designees		

Foreign Language Incorporation Recommendations			
Recommendations	Implementation Venue	Progress	Next Steps
28. Increase the number of language-intensive study abroad offerings for academic year, semester and 7-8 week summer instruction in Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, Turkish, and Swahili, at a minimum.	Colleges, Area Studies Centers, foreign language departments	An intensive semester- and year-long CHS program began FS07 at Zhejiang University, China. The Dept. of Linguistics and Germanic, Slavic, Asian, and African Languages (LGSAAL) is currently setting up a Swahili summer program in Tanzania with the help of a federal grant. A new summer intensive Portuguese program in Brazil has been developed.	A new intensive summer program to run in odd years at Harbin Institute of Technology to complement our Tianjin program, which runs in even years, is in the planning stages. Site visits this spring to set up a Thai program at Chianmiang University and an Arabic program in Alexandria, Egypt or possibly Amman, Jordan are being planned. Site visits for new Spanish programs in Mexico are being planned. The Mexico programs would include an intensive upper level summer as well as semester-length options.
29. Provide more resources for staffing introductory and intermediate sections of key foreign languages on campus so that no first- or second-year students are denied access to preferred language instruction (in time so that they can reasonably participate in a language-intensive study abroad program).	Central administration (Provost), College of Arts and Letters	An attempt has been made to relieve some enrollment pressure on high-demand languages by offering greater choice among the LCTLs.	All departments are facing increased enrollment pressure on languages as more programs at MSU require some level of language proficiency.

Recommendations	Implementation Venue	Progress	Next Steps
30. Explore options for technology-enhanced non-credit and credit foreign language instruction, especially for students and faculty preparing for a study abroad program.	College of Arts and Letters, foreign language departments	During SS08 the department of Spanish & Portuguese began implementation of a hybrid junior-level grammar course (SPN 310).	LGSAAL has a proposal now under consideration to develop hybrid courses in German and Hindi. LGSAAL is also working to develop an on-line course for Turkic languages. LGSAAL is also working with technicians in the WKAR studios to develop podcasting modules for LCTL languages. Technology options for French are part of on-going discussions.
31. In light of the strong interest in expanding options for foreign language study in study abroad programs, imaginative options beyond salary need to be developed to encourage foreign language faculty participation.	College of Arts and Letters, foreign language departments Area Studies Centers	The department of French, Classics and Italian (FCI) is considering banking courses: i.e. summer teaching might allow course release during academic year LGSAAL has discussed the possibility of release time for research for faculty members who participate in study abroad programs.	Final consideration by UCC should move quickly on this portion of the proposals. There is a great deal of interest in promoting minors in areas where we do not have majors. LGSAAL has alerted the College that they would like to do this in Turkish, Arabic (although a major is being developed), Korean, Hebrew, and Hindi. TESOL is another possibility that has the support of the College of Education.

Recommendations	Implementation Venue	Progress	Next Steps
<p>32. Allow the creation of academic minors without a corresponding major to increase student and participation in foreign language instruction.</p>	<p>Central administration (Provost) UCC</p>	<p>FCI has just received approval for an academic minor in French. SPP has an approved minor in Spanish. The request for a minor in Italian was turned back due to the policy requiring a pre-existing major.</p>	

Financial/Budget/Cost Issues Recommendations			
Recommendations	Implementation Venue	Progress	Next Steps
<p>33. A review of the 62/38 split in tuition for faculty-led programs is necessary. Eliminating the ISP share of study abroad tuition revenue (currently 10-11%) would make more money available for instruction, and therefore some expenses currently charged as program fee (such as class-related activities and excursions), could be covered by the expanded tuition money budget, thereby reducing the students' program fee.</p>	<p>Deans' Designees ISP Dean</p>		
<p>34. In order to adequately support direct enrollment programs, participants in direct enrollment programs should pay a fee (included in their program fee). The fee charged to students on direct enrollment programs could be roughly equal to the matriculation fee that all participants in faculty-led programs must pay.</p>	<p>Deans' Designees ISP Dean</p>		

Recommendations	Implementation Venue	Progress	Next Steps
<p>35. The Task Force recommends that per diem amounts paid to MSU faculty on study abroad programs be limited to 90% of the maximum State Department, beginning in Summer 2009. After 2009-10, the policy of reimbursing at a rate of 90% of State Department per diem rates should be re-examined to determine if adjustments in the rate of reimbursement are needed. Currently, most faculty who accompany programs for any length of time receive the full State Department per diem. The State Department rate, which might exceed reasonable costs, is intended for short term stays by U.S. diplomats, and is not necessarily the benchmark we should use for faculty leaders of study abroad programs</p>	<p>Colleges Deans' Designees ISP Dean</p>		
<p>36. More effort needs to be made to make sure that students are able to take full advantage of financial aid. Ideas that should be pursued include early deadlines for budgets, strictly enforced, and the possibility of estimated program fees, provided to the Office of Financial Aid well before the program takes place. Providing estimated program fees would be an option that programs with stable budgets might pursue. Such programs would submit their estimated budgets in early fall, allowing Financial Aid to package students in advance. When the actual budget is finalized,</p>	<p>OSA, OFA, Deans' Designees, faculty program leaders</p>	<p>1. OSA has been working to get program budgets submitted earlier. Some success has been achieved in 2007-08. 2. The creation of a faculty portal to the OSA database (currently in development) will include a section on budget development,</p>	<p>1. OSA and Deans' Designees to continue discussion about how to get program budgets submitted earlier. The possibility of an estimated program fee submitted in early fall will be explored with the Financial Aid Office. 2. and 3.: Technological enhancements in progress; continue development and testing.</p>

Recommendations	Implementation Venue	Progress	Next Steps
<p>the estimated program fee is compared to the actual program fee. If there is no more than 10% in the estimated and actual fees, the earlier figures provided to Financial Aid stand. If there is greater than a 10% difference between the two budgets, a new budget will need to be submitted to Financial Aid and students re-packaged.</p>		<p>hopefully making it easier for faculty to revise and submit program budgets. 3. A new interface with the Financial Aid Office has been created that will greatly reduce the time needed to package students for financial aid once budgets are submitted. New interface is being tested Jan-Mar 08, and should be fully operational by late spring 2008.</p>	
<p>37. More money for scholarships needs to be sought to make study abroad accessible to every student. ISP should have a full time development person whose portfolio includes raising scholarship money for study abroad. This effort should be undertaken in collaboration with college and central development offices.</p>	<p>Development Office, ISP, OSA</p>	<p>ISP is in the process of hiring a full-time Development Director (as of March 2008)</p>	<p>Once a Development Director is hired, ISP and OSA should establish clear goals regarding development efforts for study abroad scholarships.</p>
<p>38. MSU is obligated to disclose the full cost of all study abroad programs, beginning at the early marketing stages.</p>	<p>OSA</p>	<p>Same as rec. 5</p>	

Marketing Recommendations			
Recommendations	Implementation Venue	Progress	Next Steps
39. Messages regarding the <i>value</i> of studying abroad need to be communicated more strategically to families as well as prospective students. Venues might include admissions presentations to prospective students and families, admissions media, and family-targeted web pages.	OSA	Discussion with OSA Marketing and Communications team	Develop appropriate resources and web messages, as indicated.
40. Clarification is needed around acceptable methods of communicating with families before students enroll, after they enroll, and while they are abroad.	University administration, Legal Counsel ,OSA		
41. Messages need more focus on the <i>how</i> to make it possible—both financially and academically. Existing brochures and web site marketing campaigns could be supplemented with seminars or online tutorials.	OSA		
42. Additional effort should be made to communicate to distinct populations—for example male, athlete, minority, science, low-income, first-generation students—strategic messages that capture their interest, address their concerns, and help them overcome obstacles to participation.	OSA		
43. In communicating to students the attributes of a study abroad experience to students, the supplementary use of informal modes of information dissemination (e.g. Facebook, MySpace, pod casts) should be explored.	OSA		

Recommendations	Implementation Venue	Progress	Next Steps
44. Messages to advisors need to be further developed to indicate what study abroad options are available, information on costs and funding, academics, and where to direct students who have questions. Keeping in mind the diversity of our advisors and their work load, communication venues might include additional web information, publications, and yearly update via the UUD office.	OSA		
45. Messages to faculty need more emphasis on the <i>how they can plan programs and the diversity of options and supportive resources available to them</i> . Venues might include a best practices guide, study abroad exemplars, a new web site, and new faculty orientation or development seminars.	OSA, Colleges		