

April 16, 2024

To the SU Faculty Senate:

Below please find the Faculty Senate's International Education Committee's review of international education at SU as per the Senate charge of the following:

The International Education Committee is charged with reviewing the current policies and procedures related to Study Abroad, international exchange, and international student recruitment as well as their implementation and provide a report of their review to the Faculty Senate. The Committee's report should include specific recommendations (if any) in areas they feel there is a need for improvement.

In order to review SU's international education programs, policies, and procedures and suggest recommendations, we compiled information from various sources:

1. We requested a review/overview of the current policies and procedures from the Assistant Provost in charge of the Center for International Education, Brian Stiegler and reviewed the ACE International American Council for Education Internationalization Laboratory 2015-2017 report and 2023 CIE white paper update as well as a report from the on-site non-teaching faculty coordinator SU In Scotland (Winter 2024).
2. We requested comments pertaining to the charge from all SU's schools and colleges' (Fulton, Henson, Perdue, Seidel, Clarke Honors, Graduate, Social Work and CHHS) International Education Committees (e.g. Fulton International Education Committee) and all schools' Deans. Received responses from 1 Dean and 4 schools.
3. We sent a survey to all SU Faculty (through each school/college) about global learning at SU and study abroad. 121 faculty responded (28.5% of faculty)

We make the following recommendations (more details below):

1. We recommend increased financial and personnel support to the CIE and need-based support for students to study abroad
2. We recommend improved communication from CIE to faculty describing options for faculty-led study abroad and current SU risk management and procurement limitations that affect these programs as well as disbursement of a new, streamlined CIE handbook.

3. We recommend approval of course content for SU-faculty led programs to remain solely in the hands of faculty (departments and school committees) with no university-wide prescription, in order to ensure all disciplines can facilitate their students to study abroad, with administrative approval continuing to be based on non-content concerns such as finances and risk management.

We are happy to present at some future date the results of this survey in more detail and hope to send followup surveys in future semesters. For now, we summarize the current state of SU study abroad, its policies, and how faculty view SU's international education programs, and make recommendations.

Eric Liebgold, Ph.D. and Deeya Mitra Ph.D.  
Co-chairs of Faculty Senate IEC  
Salisbury University

## **SUMMARY OF IEC FINDINGS:**

### **Review of CIE materials regarding International Education at SU:**

#### **Student Participation**

Lingering effects of Covid have suppressed student participation in international programs. SU student participation is 61.4% of pre-Covid average +/- SE (208 in 2023-2024 vs 339 +/- 23.6). Short-term study abroad is recovering more quickly than semester-long study abroad. Summer study abroad numbers highest since 2014/15 thanks to a Global Seminar by Andrew Martino, Clarke College, the SU In Spain initiative, and SU's partnership with AIFS Abroad.

#### **Specific sectors of International Education**

##### **Study Abroad by SU personnel**

Global Seminars – Increased enforcement of risk management/procurement regulations and increased safety oversight needed in recent years coupled with high numbers of course cancellations due to low enrollment have made individual-led trips more difficult/less safe to run and more labor-intensive for CIE. Faculty members can still propose courses not taught at SU In Global Campuses. It is expected that these courses are supported by a new in-country host institution or a pre-procured travel company or study abroad partner in order to mitigate risk management and procurement issues.

SU In – New program (starting 2023) mirroring other universities’ programs that is not a substitute for Global Seminars but meant to increase SU student participation due to losses in numbers for Global Seminars because they have consolidated risk management and bundled procurement in part because they are linked with partner institutions.

### **International Exchange**

National Student Exchange is a new non-global substitute/addition to our partner international exchange programs with some benefits.

### **International Student Recruitment**

Enrollment of new international students has begun to recover slowly and stand at about 50% of pre-Covid levels. New agreements with partner institutions are continuing. English Language Institute numbers are below break-even levels. Potential Civil Rights violations by HR and hiring managers/foreign employee start dates are of concern and cause difficulty for students and international faculty. Reduced housing availability (to none with loss of Global Village and International Faculty House) for international students, graduate students, and global scholars have decreased attractiveness of SU.

### **Budget and Personnel**

CIE staff was cut/reduced during the last few years and is severely understaffed with loss of a PIN line and two full-time staff and a part-time staff and reassignments. Decreased staff has affected financial and risk management of study abroad programs, more lengthy processing of faculty contracts and expense account reports and Gullnet management of classroom enrollments for study abroad and ELI, reduced marketing materials for study abroad, and less support for international students. Reduction in budgets and decision to make CIE self-funded have had similar negative effects plus reduced SU membership in international consortiums and reduced funds for faculty for travel.

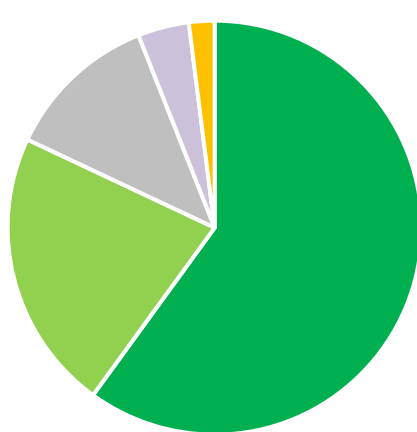
### **Communication**

CIE created a new website in October 2023 with mostly positive response from faculty and school IECs despite a few things to improve such as transparency of the application process to the applying faculty during submission.

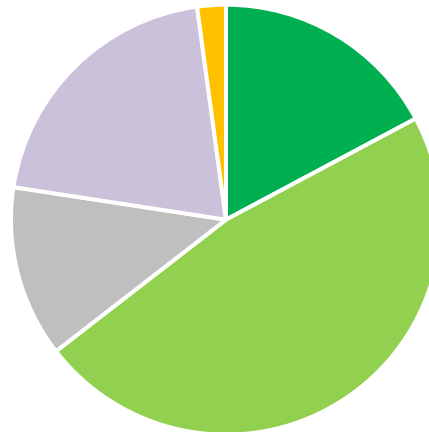
## Review of survey of faculty

A survey comprising questions about faculty perspectives on global learning, study abroad, and study away was distributed across schools and through SU publications. A total of 121 (28.5%) faculty completed the survey.

Despite the new (and old) General Education curriculums not specifically including Global Learning Outcomes and instead including parts of their outcomes within other learning outcomes (e.g., Experiential Learning or within some disciplines), a large majority of faculty who responded consider Global Learning to be “crucial” for a students’ college education (Figure 1: 82%) as do all deans and school IECs, and most faculty include global learning in their courses at SU (69%) as it is “among the most impactful experiential student learning opportunities we can offer to our students”. In comments from individual faculty, deans, and school IECs, many respondents included *general* reasons for this importance including understanding diversity, international and diverse perspectives and cultural awareness, and promoting open-mindedness. Many others cited *specific* benefits for disciplines, such as foreign business, health, and environmental practices. Faculty know much of this from experience as they further note that their study abroad experiences, if they had them (60% did), were transformative experiences that had Excellent (85%) or Good (15%) impacts on their personal and academic growth.



- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Neither nor
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree



- Very positive
- Somewhat positive
- Neither nor
- Somewhat negative
- Very negative

Figure 1. Global Learning is crucial

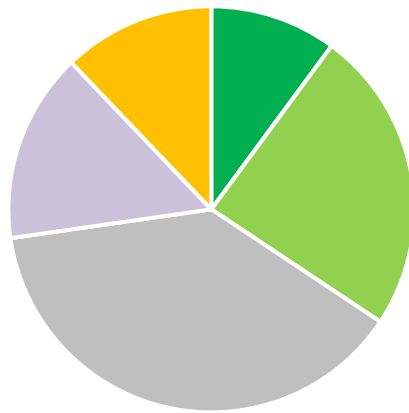
Figure 2. Faculty view of global learning at SU

for college education.

The benefits to experiencing global learning are clear. Faculty often used global learning in their courses and widely agreed that study abroad programs have measurable impact. These included students reporting hands-on learning experiences in science, increased cultural awareness, empathy towards other cultures, understanding of global issues addressed in the course, and shedding of ethnocentric tendencies. Additionally, faculty reported positive views of global learning at SU (Figure 2).

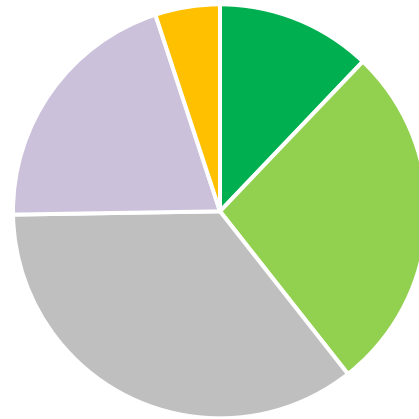
Global learning helped their students develop intercultural competence, resilience, and problem-solving skills, while also building supportive social networks and professional relationships. They also gained greater language competency, awareness of environmental challenges and solutions, and a broader perspective on global connectivity. Furthermore, students demonstrated cultural awareness, engaged in cultural immersion activities, and experienced firsthand the cross-cultural differences in other countries. Tangible outcomes included students' subsequent involvement in international volunteer work, internships, and travel as lasting impact of study abroad programs.

Concerns regarding international programs at SU encompassed several key areas. Firstly, faculty reported that there's a lack of prioritization of global learning in some departments due to fears of diluting SU's teaching methods or because certain disciplines do not naturally align with cultural content (Figure 3). This leads to difficulties in applying study abroad courses towards majors. Cost is another significant barrier, with prohibitive expenses for many students, despite the presence of some scholarships. That is, financial constraints, including the need to work or care for dependents, make studying abroad financially and logistically challenging for many. Safety concerns, including policies for extreme events and student support abroad, were also reported prominently. Also, faculty responses suggested some discontent over both integration of global learning in their department and effectiveness of study abroad at SU (Figure 4) including resource allocation, administrative support, and faculty resistance to new models. For example, some reported that faculty-led programs face bureaucratic hurdles and concerns about aligning courses with host cultures. There were also worries about the effectiveness and integration of global learning and accessibility issues for students. Addressing these concerns (Figures 4 and 5) requires comprehensive support, adequate funding, transparent communication, and flexibility in program design.



- Very integrated
- Somewhat integrated
- Moderately integrated
- Slightly integrated

Fig. 3. Integration of global learning by department.



- Very effective
- Somewhat effective
- Moderately effective
- Slightly effective
- Not effective

Figure 4. Overall effectiveness of study abroad programs at SU.

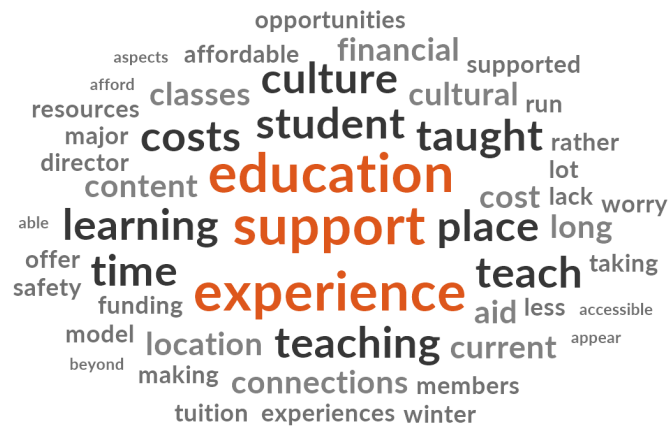


Figure 5. Word map of concerns expressed by SU faculty generated using NVivo 14

While faculty overwhelmingly touted the benefits of global learning, there is no official, specific, Global Learning Outcomes in SU’s Gen Ed plan. It is beyond our purview to determine

what or who should develop these outcomes, but we recommend they be developed. Likewise, all global experiences do not have the same impact. For example, studying abroad for an entire semester is usually much more impactful than a 2-3 week short term winter or summer Global Seminar. The more time a student spends abroad typically leads to more benefits. However, it is obvious that any global learning is beneficial and not all students can partake in longer experiences for academic, financial, and personal reasons.

Global course content in faculty-led programs is a major concern by faculty but there is clearly disagreement among schools and schools faculty as to whether global content should be required for global courses. We note from CIE policies that it is true that it is currently possible to teach courses without global content but to date, no courses have done so. All courses have included global content. If the opportunity for a course to be taught that did not include global content, such as a Mathematics or Physics course, the Faculty Senate IEC, note that many of the general benefits of global learning such as understanding diversity, international and diverse perspectives and cultural awareness, and promoting open-mindedness, do not require course material to occur. Interactions with non-American students and locals inside AND outside of the classroom, the types of interactions that are inevitable in a foreign locale, are where these experiences occur. Additionally, the CIE has piloted including global learning outcome video discussions prior to/during SU In programs. Does integration of global content into course materials improve this outcome? Undoubtedly. Unfortunately, not all disciplines have a) the potential to include international content in the same way (such as some STEM disciplines' not being able to teach "global" versions of their specialties) or b) the support by departments to allow students to take large periods of time for non-major courses abroad.

Finally, when asked about faculty **recommendations** to enhance educational value, cultural exchange opportunities, and faculty engagement in study abroad and global learning initiatives at Salisbury University, responses were multifaceted. They included advocating for better funding and communication within the Center for International Education (CIE) to support programs effectively (Figures 6 and 7). For example, responses suggested that faculty-led short-term programs should be encouraged, with funding allocated for training and site visits. Scholarship opportunities and financial support for students, particularly for short-term programs, are crucial for accessibility. Additionally, promoting study abroad earlier in students' academic careers, integrating study abroad courses into majors, and providing clearer communication on program options and requirements were recommended. There were calls for increased faculty involvement and ownership in program development, along with more support for faculty-led initiatives. Suggestions for improving administrative processes, promoting transparency, and streamlining program setup were also prevalent. Emphasis in faculty reports was placed on incorporating cultural components into courses abroad, fostering partnerships with international universities, and ensuring diverse location options for study abroad. Overall, the

recommendations aimed to address funding, communication, faculty involvement, and program effectiveness to enhance the study abroad experience for SU students.



- Very positive
- Somewhat positive
- Neither nor
- Somewhat negative
- Very negative

Figure 6. View of communication by CIE to faculty.



Figure 7. Word map of recommendations expressed by faculty generated using NVivo 14

**Review of solicitation of comments from school IECs and deans:**



## **Budget and expenses**

School IECs and faculty, as well as the CIE itself, have noticed recent funding issues and widely and consistently recommended increased funding to the CIE and global learning through increased budgets, pin lines, and student scholarships, especially in light of decreased post-Covid funding. We, the Faculty Senate IEC, have noticed and strongly echo this need for increased finances to the CIE (through budget and personnel) and to students (via scholarships) to enable student global learning if the administration, like the vast majority of faculty, considers it worthwhile.

## **Learning Outcomes**

There is clearly disagreement among schools and schools faculty as to whether global content should be required for global courses and this is an area of contention that was raised. Two schools and some individual faculty had concerns that SU was trying to increase participation without integration of global material into courses and have stated that they would only like global courses to be taught including global material. However, two other schools and some individual faculty expressed support for including courses without global content to be taught abroad. We note that approval of course content lies solely in the discretion of departmental, school, and university curriculum committees, where it should be, not at the discretion of administrators like Deans and the CIE, who approve SU-approved courses to be taught abroad based on other factors, such as risk management and finances and these entities should not and cannot infringe on faculty freedom by trying to dictate course content one way or another. Instead, the CIE appears to approach the increasing benefits to global learning outcomes of study abroad courses by enabling, and promoting to faculty, cultural student experiences during their time abroad in foreign countries both within and outside the courses. For example, SU In programs all enable cultural excursions either through host universities while students are abroad and require students to take at least basic language courses provided by the foreign university partners in countries where English is not the national language.

## **Communication**

We found confusion among faculty as to reasons that Global Seminar structuring has changed post-Covid including more facilitation/enforcement of risk management and procurement guidelines, both of which make individual-organized Global Seminars more difficult without local university or third-party provider assistance. Roll out of the new SU In program communication was flawed to some degree as it was not a substitute Global Seminars but a replacement for pre-Covid type Global Seminars that were no longer viable due to risk management and procurement issues.

Communication from the CIE about course approvals (course content versus

administrative-type approval regarding safety and financial viability) needs to be clearly stated to faculty initiating study abroad programs.

Communication to departments on the importance of and learning objectives for study abroad, whether or not a discipline has direct links to global learning, needs to be communicated on some level, potentially through the Faculty Senate IEC.

## **IEC RECOMMENDATIONS:**

### **Budget and Personnel**

**We recommend** increased SU financial and personnel support to the CIE at least to pre-Covid levels and further due to increased costs for risk management. SU lacks the financial support that should be provided to help students to partake in global experiences. SU is suffering from missed opportunities at promoting diversity and culture to students by not providing financial support to the CIE and giving them personnel including PIN lines and full-time positions sufficient to provide risk management and procurement services needed for faculty to teach abroad as well as bring in international scholars and international students to SU.

### **Student Recruitment (to SU and from SU on study abroad programs)**

**We recommend that** SU provide some need-based financial support for students who wish to study abroad via scholarships or grants. There is widespread support among faculty for this with some concerns about equity to help student partake in global experiences.

**We recommend** dedicated housing on campus return for international students and scholars.

**We recommend** revision of HR procedures to reduce potential for Civil Rights violations by HR and hiring managers regarding foreign employee hiring start dates. According to The Immigration and Nationality Act's (INA) anti-discrimination provision, found at [8 U.S.C. § 1324b](#), they cannot require more than the listed I-9 document options to process new international hires. A social security number is not a requirement to be hired and paid. A social security number (and filled out W-2) can be submitted later in the year and is not required during hiring or for paying employees.

### **Communication**

**We recommend** improved communication from CIE to faculty describing options for faculty-led study abroad and current SU risk management and procurement limitations that affect these programs as well as disbursement of a new, streamlined CIE handbook.

**We also recommend** improved CIE communication of financial options to students such

as the new use of Pell Grants for 6+ credits in summer, scholarship opportunities and coupling multiple SU In courses and scholarship opportunities. Potentially, a social media/website savvy student intern could facilitate this.

**We recommend** improved communication to departments on the importance of and learning objectives for study abroad, whether or not a discipline has direct links to global learning, potentially through the Faculty Senate IEC.

### **Learning Outcomes and Global Course Content**

**We recommend** that the Senate and faculty and departments keep an open mind about the course content and details of student experiences abroad so that more students, such as STEM students where global links are not as appropriate are able to have global experiences. While it is obvious that more cultural integration during study abroad is beneficial to global learning, there are *many* mechanisms for cultural integration including, but not only, course content, such as living in another culture, interacting with locals, learning local languages, and going on shared non-class cultural excursions. We do **not** recommend that SU somehow enforce global content within study abroad courses and keep course content approval in the hands of departments and school IECs as a large swath of SU students, such as STEM students, could be left behind from studying abroad and miss out on “understanding diversity, international and diverse perspectives and cultural awareness, and promoting open-mindedness” because they are unable to or feel unable to participate in study abroad programs because of constraints in their discipline. **However, we also recommend** that the CIE continue and expand its promotion of cultural and language experiences during Global Seminars and SU In programs to allow all students to reach global learning objectives and we also recommend CIE exploration of promoting paired SU In courses, when possible, to allow students to receive both global content *and* discipline-specific content as well as more SU credits for their expenses.