

Reflective Essay 1b: Expanding Our Horizons: Educating Students for the Global Community

Introduction

Through the [Shared Vision](#) process, the University has identified five goals for assisting students to become successful citizens. This essay will describe three initiatives that have been undertaken to meet the fifth goal, educating students for a global community: a) study abroad and internationalism; b) the City Heights Collaborative; and c) Community-Based Service Learning. These examples illustrate our commitment to providing students with opportunities to work with diverse groups in both local and international communities.

Study Abroad and Internationalism [CFRs: 1.1, 1.2 & Q4, 1.5; 2.11; 3.5; 4.2]

To advance the campus goal of becoming a global university, the position of Assistant Vice President (AVP) for international programs was created in 1998 to direct the [Office of International Programs](#) (OIP). The AVP is responsible for coordinating and facilitating the development of international programs and activities at SDSU. He oversees a budget of approximately \$275,000 per year for faculty development related to internationalizing the campus and increasing study abroad opportunities for students. Each year faculty submit proposals for awards of up to \$3,000 for the purpose of generating educational connections and activities that will lead to greater involvement of students and faculty in international educational experiences. Proposals that expand and build on existing programs are given highest priority, particularly those that involve study abroad, international internships, and student exchange programs. In its first five years of operation, the OIP has awarded \$698,199 to 406 faculty members for these purposes. Since 2001-02, OIP has also provided \$138,000 in scholarship funding for over 200 students to study abroad.

The [International Student Center \(ISC\)](#), located adjacent to OIP, provides another way to enrich and internationalize our campus. It has benefited from an increase in physical space as well as additional financial resources to support the goal of increasing the number of international students who study at SDSU. For example, between 1998-2004 the budget for the International Student Center was doubled to \$500,000 and the staff increased from four to nine people. These resources, coupled with a coordinated recruitment and communication plan, were directed toward increasing the number of [international students](#) from 600 to 1300 by fall 2002, a goal we surpassed when enrollment reached 1429 in AY 2002-03.

Increasing internationalization has also been a goal of the Imperial Valley Campus. While the campus serves a bicultural and bilingual border community, it is geographically isolated from contact with people from other parts of the world. In addition to expanding the successful cooperative agreements with nearby Mexican universities, the university has, in recent years, aggressively sought opportunities for cultural exchange on a more global scale. A dozen new exchange agreements with universities throughout Europe and Latin America have brought students from several of these universities to year-long programs at the Imperial Valley Campus. These agreements have also facilitated numerous travel study programs for Imperial Valley Campus students in a growing list of countries ranging from Brazil to Finland.

Opportunities for students to [study abroad](#) abound. Currently SDSU maintains approximately 190 international exchange partnerships offering experiences in 44 countries. Collaborative efforts among departments, the International Student Center, and the [College of Extended Studies \(CES\)](#) have resulted in the design of programs that offer students a range of experiences including the ability to earn resident credit, to increase language proficiency, and to engage in and learn about the cultural aspects of the host country. Through these efforts the number of SDSU students studying abroad has increased from 167 in 1997-98 to 950 in 2002-03 ([President's Convocation address: August 28, 2003](#)). Some majors now require study abroad experiences. These include

[European Studies](#), [Economics](#), [Spanish](#), [International Security, Conflict, and Resolution](#). The International Business Program, the first major to require a study abroad experience, is described in detail in the following paragraphs.

Internationalization has also been accomplished through the development of academic programs such as the [International Business Program](#) (IB). This program has over 750 students, 30% of whom are international students, and is one of the largest undergraduate International Business Programs in the United States. If desired, IB majors can choose to participate in one of several [transnational multi-degree programs](#). Existing dual-degree programs involve agreements with partner universities in Canada (SanDiQué), Chile (San Paraiso), Brazil (San Brazil), and Mexico (MEXUS). The first and only triple-degree programs in the United States have been established with universities in Canada and Mexico (CaMexUS), and with Mexico and Chile (PanAmerica). Students in these programs study a minimum of one year (and in some programs two years) in each country to provide students with both training in business concepts and the language and cultural skills necessary for success in a global business environment. In fall 2003, a total of 84 students were enrolled in these programs.

These programs rely on a range of resource providers. Academic instruction is provided by the partner institutions along with SDSU's College of Arts and Letters and the College of Business Administration. When attending the foreign universities, SDSU students generally pay only SDSU fees and are still eligible for financial aid. We have received FIPSE grants from the US Department of Education to support the following programs: a) MEXUS ([\\$257,061 over 1993-1996](#); [\\$102,882 over 1995-1998](#)), b) San Brazil ([\\$206,107 over 2001-2005](#)), c) CaMexUS ([\\$205,697 over 2001-2004](#)), and d) Project Amigos ([\\$150,000 over 2003-2005](#)). SDSU provides matching funds during the life of these contracts and eventually assumes full financial responsibility for the program. The grants provide critical funding for program administration and oversight, including the hiring of a program coordinator, travel undertaken by the directors and program evaluators, and scholarships. Additional support for these programs is provided by SDSU's Centers for International Business Education and Research ([CIBER](#)), a collaborative activity of the College of Business Administration and the College of Arts and Letters. In 2000 the [International Business Program](#) won the Institution of International Education Andrew Heiskell Award for its Study Abroad program while in 2003, it was [ranked 11th by U.S. News & World Report](#). Also in 2003, [Provost Nancy Marlin received the International Leadership Award](#) for building internationalism into SDSU programs and curricula.

[City Heights Educational Collaborative](#) [CFRs: 1.1, 1.2, 1.5; 2.5 & Q4]

City Heights is a five square mile neighborhood consisting of about 80,000 residents who speak over 30 languages and scores of dialects. In this ethnically diverse neighborhood, only 40% of the residents have graduated from high school, 60% earn less than \$25,000 a year, and 30% are designated at below the poverty line. These demographic characteristics, coupled with the very low test scores of the neighborhood's children, led to the creation of the City Heights Educational Pilot in 1998. Funded by an \$18 million gift from Price Charities, San Diego State University operates an elementary, middle, and high school with a combined enrollment of over 5,500 students. The four objectives of the Collaborative are to: a) significantly increase student achievement; b) effectively prepare educators and other professionals for careers in diverse, inner city neighborhoods; c) provide solutions to community problems through an active research agenda; and d) coordinate public and private resources to provide a quality education. The initiative involves over 100 faculty from more than 40 departments who work on over 65 projects. These faculty contribute 13,000 hours a year in curricular design, implementation, teaching, and direct support to teachers and students in Rosa Parks Elementary, Monroe Clark Middle School, and Hoover High School. SDSU student involvement is unparalleled. Each year students spend

150,000 hours in course work, field work, and research. More than 100 SDSU students each semester serve as tutors in these schools, while scores of others work as student teachers.

We will focus attention on only one aspect of the program, the education initiative. The [School of Teacher Education](#) has developed a “teaching hospital,” where student teachers from SDSU are immersed in their credential training on-site. They teach for a full year and work with students in all three schools, gaining experience with diverse learners across all educational levels. They are exposed to the most innovative teaching methods and are able to practice immediately those skills in an urban setting. In addition, teachers at the local schools receive training and work collaboratively with faculty from SDSU to create curricula that are aligned from elementary through high school that will successfully prepare students to attend college.

Indicators of the success of the education initiative abound. In the first three years, 75 teachers earned a master’s degree in education and 175 student teachers completed the on-site teacher credential program. Graduates are highly sought after because of their unique education and experience working with diverse learners. Additionally, faculty published over 25 refereed journal articles, 10 book chapters, and gave over 17 presentations at professional meetings based on their research in City Heights. From the neighborhood perspective, success can be measured by increases in student test scores in reading and math and increased teacher retention at the schools. In fact, teacher retention has risen to 90% compared to 75% at similar schools. The most recent acknowledgement of success occurred in September 2003, when the School of Teacher Education won the prestigious [Christa McAuliffe Award](#), one of only five universities honored by the [American Association of State Colleges and Universities](#). The award was given in recognition of the numbers of new teachers completing the program, the innovation of its practices and partnerships, the integration of pre-service preparation of new teachers and in-service development of practicing teachers, feedback from students who completed the program indicating their feelings of being well-prepared to teach in a diverse urban community, the high approval of cooperating teachers of the program and candidate performance, and employer satisfaction. As a result of these successes, what started as a pilot program became the [City Heights Educational Collaborative](#) in 2002, an ongoing and renewable partnership dedicated to improving the learning and lives of all participants.

Center for Community Based Service Learning (CCBSL) [CFRs: 1.1, 1.2, 1.5]

The mission of the [CCBSL](#), created in 1998, is to enhance learning and civic responsibility through community engagement. The CCBSL coordinator works with an advisory board of about 20 members consisting of faculty, staff, and community members to promote and educate faculty and community partners on appropriate community-based service learning techniques and practices.

CCBSL assists faculty who want to include a service learning component in their classes. Workshops are held to help faculty learn about service learning pedagogy, including the design of mandatory reflective assignments for their courses. Materials on the [website](#) describe the process faculty must follow for a course to become designated as having a service-learning component. The number of service learning courses offered each semester has ranged from 16 to 28 and the number of participating students has ranged from 424 to 900. CCBSL also partially funds the “Alternative Spring Break Experience,” which allows students to perform a service learning project in a foreign country over spring break. In the past three years, students have traveled to Mexico, [Costa Rica](#), and [South Africa](#) to participate in community-based projects.

Expanding the number of service-learning courses we offer has been challenged by a number of factors. First, changes in leadership of CCBSL have made it difficult to maintain the stability necessary to see goals through to fruition. The most recent coordinator, hired in fall 2003, was successful in securing [CSU funding](#) for “advancing the academic culture to realize the civic mission of education.” Unfortunately, she has moved to another position, leaving CCBSL without a coordinator. In addition, CCBSL was recently moved (summer 2004) from Career Services to the Centers for Student Involvement. Thus, CCBSL is in transition again and faces the challenge of hiring a new coordinator and developing the vision and infrastructure necessary to expand and sustain opportunities for students to engage in service-learning courses that will enhance their learning about civic responsibility.

Summary

As this essay indicates, the goal of educating students for global communities has guided decision-making, resource allocation, and action. Yet challenges remain in advancing this goal. First, a limited number of scholarships are available for study abroad. Students in majors requiring a study abroad experience face an unfunded mandate since they are ultimately responsible for covering the expenses involved with completing the study abroad component for their degree. Second, educating students for global communities does not only mean providing opportunities for international travel; it also includes an understanding and appreciation of multicultural and diverse communities. We have not yet examined the extent to which international perspectives and issues of diversity have been integrated into our programs and courses. And finally, while we have several indirect measures of student learning, notably through our successes in achieving national recognition and awards for our programs, we have not systematically studied direct measures of student learning in these programs.