Students in 2-year colleges are often more provincial, and thus have a greater need for overseas study and travel experiences than other college students. Such programs in community colleges, however, are hampered by limited administrative experience and the special need for low costs and relatively short programs. The administration of these programs is discussed in terms of expected outcomes, credit, travel or residence study, staff, costs, housing, and how to contract for services. The document includes a list of guidelines for institutions conducting foreign study prepared by the Federation of Regional Accrediting Commissions of Higher Education, as well as the major part of an Office of Education pamphlet, "Study Abroad," which offers suggestions for selecting study-travel tours. Aspects the administrator should consider are the sponsor, sponsor's finances, contingency provisions, housing and study facilities, sponsor objectives, orientation, staffing, the program of study, and student selection procedure. (RN)
STUDY AND TRAVEL PROGRAMS ABROAD: GUIDELINES FOR TWO-YEAR COLLEGE STUDENTS

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TOPICAL PAPERS

18. Directions for Research and Innovation in Junior College Reading Programs. Feb 1971. ED 046 396.
24. Training Faculty for Junior College Reading Programs. May 1971. ED 050 711.

Copies of back issues are available (by ED number) from ERIC Document Reproduction Service, P.O. Drawer O, Bethesda, Md. 20014. Hard copy (HC) is $3.29 per units of 100 pages or less; microfiche (MF) is $.85 per title, regardless of size. Payment must accompany orders of $10.00 or less and should include sales tax where applicable.
I. INTRODUCTION

Study and travel abroad has become commonplace in American higher education. Among students it is now the "in" thing. Increasingly, faculty and administrators are actively advocating such experiences for students. Statistics are scarce on the number of U.S. college students who study and travel abroad, but a recent report by the Institute of International Education gives the number enrolled in foreign universities at over 40,000 for 1969-70.1 (The report comments on the difficulty of obtaining this information, which means that their figures are conservative.) This does not include the large number who participate each year in institutionally operated and sponsored student programs abroad, nor the still larger number who travel on their own each summer.

No data are available on how many two-year students participate in these programs. While the number is doubtless small compared to senior colleges and universities, it is growing rapidly.

The Need in Two-Year Colleges

Private two-year colleges offer overseas study and travel opportunities to a greater degree, relative to their number, than do public community colleges. Yet, it is hardly an exaggeration to say that students in public community colleges, taken as a group, have a greater need for this type of experience than does any other segment of the higher education student population. Many have spent their lives in the community where they are attending college, lived at home, and traveled little. Compared to other college and university students, they are highly provincial—as are their teachers.

This provincialism is not limited to community college students in small cities and rural areas. A college president in one of our largest metropolitan areas recently observed that the world perspective of his students is extremely limited. He noted that most of his institution's students are from low-income, inner city families and their life experiences are limited to a small segment of that area. He observed that many have a distorted understanding of the United States, to say nothing of the rest of the world.

On first thought, it might be assumed that this deficiency will be taken care of when students transfer to senior colleges and universities. The fact is, though, that less than one-third of those who enter public two-year colleges ever matriculate to four-year institutions, and those who do are often ineligible to participate in the undergraduate programs abroad.

Experience With Programs Abroad is Limited

Since most two-year colleges, especially public ones, have not been involved in overseas student study and travel, they are inexperienced in planning, organizing, and administering such programs. The growing realization among their administrators and faculty that their students should have overseas experiences is frequently accompanied by uncertainty as how best to provide it. This uncertainty is apt to be compounded by a deluge of mail and "pitches" of hard sell representatives from travel agencies.

Another dilemma that administrators encounter is the faculty member who promotes an overseas tour. Such an instructor may be more interested in obtaining a complimentary ticket and/or direct financial gain from an airline or travel agency than in educational benefits for students. When a faculty member requests institutional endorsement or credit for an overseas tour that he proposes to conduct, the decision to grant it must be weighed carefully.

Special Considerations Confronting Two-Year Colleges

Two-year colleges face some considerations relative to student study and travel abroad that are quite different from those of other higher education institutions. They should probably not, for example, attempt to duplicate the undergraduate study centers that have been developed by many senior colleges and universities. Most of those centers are for upper-division students, usually focusing on the junior year abroad. The fact that community and junior college students are enrolled for two years at most pretty well rules out an extended period of study abroad. Another limitation is that many two-year college students who would benefit the most from an overseas experience have limited financial resources and hold part-time employment to help defray their educational expenses.

These conditions mean that the experience needs to be of relatively short duration, not exceeding a quarter or a semester and, in many cases, limited to the summer months. Furthermore, costs must be kept low, and, even then, financial assistance is needed if the program is to reach the many students who could benefit.

II. ADMINISTERING STUDENT STUDY AND TRAVEL ABROAD PROGRAMS

Whether an institution should operate its own program of student study and travel abroad or have it administered by someone else is not an easy decision for two-year college presidents. A number of options are available. A program can be administered by:

a. the institution itself
b. another educational institution, in the U.S. or abroad
c. a consortium of institutions sharing administrative costs
d. an educational association
e. a state educational agency, i.e., a division of community colleges
f. an educational consulting firm
g. a travel agency
h. a combination of two or more of the above.

If the program is administered by another institution, organization, or agency, the reputation of the sponsoring institution is at stake. Students and their parents reasonably assume that the sponsor has critically examined the program and judged it to be educationally sound and capable of yielding a reasonable educational return for the cost to the student and the institution.

A two-year college administrator, trying to decide whether to have his institution operate an overseas program or have someone else do it, should consider a number of questions:

1. **What outcomes are expected?** It goes without saying that an educational experience should be planned and evaluated in terms of its intended outcomes. As basic as this step is, it is frequently given little attention when planning student programs abroad. Who determines these purposes becomes important when the program is administered by someone else. While this task need not be done by the sponsoring institution, it still has the responsibility to see that the anticipated outcomes are clearly set forth and compatible with its commitment.

2. **Should credit be granted?** Whether to award credit and how much for overseas study and travel may be a difficult decision. Accrediting associations and educational organizations are becoming concerned about the laxity that has developed in this area. Advent of the "open university" and "school without walls" concepts emphasizes informal educational experiences to a much greater degree than in the past, but granting academic credit for overseas programs continues to be a problem. Accrediting associations, educational officials, and professional organizations are groping for direction in their efforts to bring order out of the chaos that is developing in awarding academic credit for nontraditional educational experiences.

3. **Should it be travel or residence study?** This question needs to be answered in terms of both time considerations and the educational purposes to be served. Travel programs have the advantage of time flexibility, giving them appeal as a summer activity. They also provide a new perspective for the student who has never been abroad. On the negative side, they are expensive and their educational purposes open to question. What does a group of students learn from a "run through Europe" where in two or three weeks they visit six or seven countries with one or two day stops at eight or ten major cities and a few side excursions? They may come away with more false impressions than new insights.
Residence study abroad is less expensive than a travel program, assuming an equal amount of time. It also reduces the chances of superficiality. But it is not without its own limitations. The period of time required—even when it is only a month or six weeks in length—may be more than many two-year college students can afford financially. Furthermore, arrangements must be made for staffing and administering the program as well as for food and housing. There are, however, an increasing number of summer study and travel programs operated by senior colleges and universities that are available to two-year colleges, freeing them from operational problems of their own.

4. *How will the program be staffed?* When a program is administered entirely or partly by an outside group, the sponsoring institution still has responsibility to determine if the staffing is adequate. Obviously, program control is easier when staffing is handled by the sponsoring institution, but it may not have the necessary expertise. Quite different considerations are involved in the case of a travel-study program as contrasted to a residence-study program. In the former case the regular instructional staff may be limited to the program director accompanying the group supplemented by resource persons along the way. In a resident program a core of regular faculty members is required. Whether they should be drawn entirely from the sponsoring institution and/or other U.S. colleges or from the host country needs to be decided. Authorities generally agree that at least some should be natives of the host country.

5. *How much does a good program cost?* There is little relationship between the cost of the student programs abroad and their educational merits; some low-cost programs are very good educationally while some high-cost programs are largely an educational farce. In an effort to minimize cost, an institution may decide to mount its own program, which may result in high costs and low quality due to lack of expertise and limited student participation. This accounts for the trend toward institutions operating such programs through consortiums.

An example of a low-cost program with considerable promise is the Canadian-U.S. community college exchange program. That program, organized jointly by the Association of Canadian Community Colleges and the American Association of Junior Colleges, provides for the exchange of students, faculty, and staff. Operational procedures are developed by participating institutions. In some cases the only cost to the student is travel.

6. *How can the cost be met?* Traditionally, the cost of undergraduate study and travel abroad has been defrayed almost entirely by the student, but that appears to be changing. The cost is being shared by the institution, especially in the case of residence programs. Where a student pays tuition and receives credit, some institutions apply the same amount to his program abroad that would be spent if he remained on campus.
Several measures are being taken to reduce the financial exclusivity typical of overseas programs. One is obtaining grants to assist qualified students who otherwise could not participate. Others consist of making loans and of deferring a portion of the tuition while a student is abroad. If experiences abroad are important for students in certain programs (the preparation of bilingual secretaries, for example), two-year colleges need to show more initiative and imagination than they have in the past to find ways of making student participation possible.

7. Where should students live? In the case of travel programs, participants may stay in expensive international hotels (such as those found in Los Angeles, Miami, or New York), modest but local hotels, or low-cost pensions and hostels. The choice in the case of residence programs is usually between living in private homes and in a converted house or small hotel that serves as a dormitory for American students.

Considering the travel program alternatives from both cost and educational standpoints, the choice, in most cases, should be the hostel or pension. Travel agencies may contend otherwise because they receive a percentage commission on charges of hotels on the tour, causing them to frequently book reservations only through the better, more expensive hotels.

The decision may not be as easy in the case of residence programs. The educational benefits are undoubtedly greater when students live with families. It is likely to be more expensive, however, than a dormitory arrangement, and unless students are competent in the language of the host country, there are additional problems. It may also be difficult to obtain enough homes considered satisfactory for this purpose. On the other hand, there are the normal problems facing dormitories abroad. More serious is their tendency to become small conclaves where our students are isolated from the life and culture of the host country. When that happens, a major purpose for sending students abroad is lost.

The following policy statement by the Federation of Regional Accrediting Commissions of Higher Education provides valuable guidelines for community and junior colleges that are considering participating in study programs abroad.
POLICY STATEMENT ON UNDERGRADUATE STUDY ABROAD PROGRAMS

Study abroad is increasingly accepted as an important phase of many undergraduate programs in American colleges and universities. Carefully planned and administered, opportunities for foreign study can add significant dimensions to a student's educational experience. At the same time, the great diversity of programs poses serious problems for their evaluation and control.

As guidelines for institutions which conduct programs of foreign study or whose students participate in such programs, the Federation of Regional Accrediting Commissions of Higher Education suggests that undergraduate study abroad programs should:

1. be clearly relevant to the purpose and objectives of the sponsoring or participating institutions;
2. be designed to provide educational experiences integrally related to the institution's undergraduate curriculum but otherwise unavailable;
3. be limited to carefully selected students;
4. have rigidly specified language proficiency requirement when appropriate to the program and place of study;
5. include extensive preliminary orientation for intended participants;
6. so far as conditions permit, be staffed and directed under the same policies as the home institution — continuity of administrative direction is especially important;
7. provide counselling and supervisory services at the foreign center equal to those on the home campus, with special attention to problems peculiar to the location and nature of the program;
8. include clearly defined criteria and policies for judging performance and assigning credit in accordance with prevailing standards and practices at the home institution;
9. stipulate that students will ordinarily not receive credit for foreign study undertaken without prior planning or approval;
10. include provisions for regular follow-up studies on the individual and institutional benefits derived from such programs.

2Adopted by the Federation of Regional Accrediting Commissions of Higher Education, 5454 South Shore Drive, Chicago, Illinois 60615.
Cooperative arrangements are encouraged among American institutions seeking to provide foreign study opportunities for their students. Travel programs “per se,” or commercially sponsored “study-travel programs,” will not normally be countenanced for degree credit by the regional accrediting commissions, nor will they accredit independent foreign study programs unrelated to specific college or university curricula.

The Institute of International Studies, Office of Education, has produced a pamphlet entitled Study Abroad. It was developed by the Interorganizational Commission on International Education as an aid to those who are faced with making decisions on overseas study and travel programs and in establishing policies for institutionally sponsored programs. While the pamphlet is focused on secondary students, it has direct applicability for community and junior colleges. That pamphlet is reproduced here in major part.

STUDY ABROAD

Introduction

Those who accept responsibility for administering, supervising, and teaching in connection with such tours (study-travel) also do so for a variety of reasons. Some want to travel; some want to help youth; some, to occupy their summer vacation in an income-producing way consistent with their personal knowledge and skills.

There is also a great range in the quality of services offered by agencies sponsoring study-travel tours. The best tours are well organized, educationally worthwhile experiences, with provisions for protecting the health and security of the participants. At the other extreme some tours have been haphazardly arranged with the result that participants felt cheated in a variety of ways.

The demand for study-travel experiences has exceeded the ability of well-established agencies to supply the necessary volume of services. Since no accrediting agency has as yet been set up, it was inevitable that established standards would be compromised. Some of the shortcomings will eventually be reduced through the efforts of private accreditation bodies. In the meantime, the most effective control will be that exercised by discriminating parent, students, and school personnel.

1. Know the Sponsor

Any reputable organization offering a study-travel tour wants to maintain and build its reputation. It therefore stands ready to answer legitimate inquiries from prospective clients. Sound, basic advice is: Be skeptical; ask questions; do not enroll or pay a deposit until you are satisfied.

Sometimes the name of the organization promoting a study tour differs from that of the organization bearing legal responsibility for the conduct of the program. The legally responsible organization may be a school, an individual, a small company incorporated for profit, a nonprofit agency, or a large corporate conglomerate. Commercial travel agencies often take responsibility only for transportation, leaving the study program to another agency, sometimes one outside the United States.

Confusion can develop because of a difference between the title used and the name of the real sponsor. Sponsoring organizations may be checked by:

- Careful reading of the advertisement to determine how long the organization has been offering study-tours, the amount of direct supervision it exercises abroad, and the composition of its board of advisers, if any. Seek clarification of vague statements and claims.

- Correspondence with educators or advisers named in the advertisements.

- Identification of the agency bearing legal responsibility, if there is any hint that it may be different from the promoting organization.

- Inquiries addressed to parents or students who have previously participated. If the sponsoring organization is reluctant to supply names and addresses, that in itself is significant.

- Inquiring among people who have served as leaders or chaperones in past years.

- Determining whether the organization has an official base in the United States that would be legally responsible in the event of complications that might require legal action. All business arrangements involve the risk of misunderstanding or even breach of contractual obligations. As an American citizen, you might find it difficult or impossible to protect your legal interests in a dispute with a foreign organization unless it maintains some form of official representation in the United States that would be responsible under U.S. laws.

- Finding out how the sponsoring organization handles references. If it requests that the applicant secure written references and attach them to the application form at the time of submission, one may infer that these references are of little importance. Parents and students should determine:

  Whether letters of recommendation are to be submitted directly to the sponsoring organization by the applicant or by the writer.

  Whether more than one reference is required.

  Whether the sponsoring organization guarantees strict confidentiality in handling such references.
Remember —

No organization sponsoring a study-travel tour can make a statement asserting or implying that credit will be granted by the student's home school. The conditions under which that credit might be obtained lie completely in the hands of the local school authorities.

2. Look Up the Sponsor's Finances

Financial aspects are important, even though parents are investing more than money in a tour when they entrust their children to an agency. Inquiries to the local Better Business Bureau, to the Institute of International Education or to the Council on International Educational Exchange may provide useful information about the organization under consideration. Check the promotional brochure or other sources to determine:

- The financial status of the organization, including the name of the company holding its bond and the bonding coverage.
- How the rates compare with those quoted by organizations offering similar study-travel opportunities.
- Whether basic fees cover all transportation expenses or whether there will be obligations for additional transportation, taxi fares, buses, meals, trips, etc.
- Whether costs of tours and weekends on "free time" are included in the basic fee. "Extras" may add to an expensive total.
- Whether medical, accident, and baggage insurance are provided in the basic fee.
- Whether provision is made for full or partial refund of fees in the event of any sort of cancellation. Some agencies will return all but a modest service charge; others make no refund at all. Read the fine print.

3. Consider Carefully Provisions for Contingencies

Parents will want to be sure that arrangements have been made for coping with illnesses, accidents, and other unusual circumstances. Do the promotional materials provide information on:

- Medical and accident insurance. (Often these are not included.)

— Medical services while overseas.

— Plans for promptly returning home any participant who is in serious difficulty.

— The extra charges that will be made if a participant has to return before conclusion of the tour.

Since most study tours are based on tour-bulk rates, extra charges could reach $300 to $400 if a participant has to return before the rest of the group. Parents should be fully acquainted with this contingency before agreeing to the project.

4. Investigate Housing and Study Facilities

Study-travel tours make use of hotels, hostels, pensions, private homes, and university or school classrooms and dormitories. Parents and students should know:

— The adequacy of hotels, hostels, and pensions to be used and the provisions the agency makes for advance inspection of such facilities.

— Whether chaperones or supervisors will be housed in the same facility with students.

— How private homes are selected. The better programs have lists of appropriate families (not merely boarding houses).

— What classrooms, library, and study facilities will be available.

— What provisions are made for transportation if students are housed beyond walking distance of classrooms or other assembly points.

5. Compare Participants’ and Sponsors’ Objectives

Each individual should consider his own reasons for wanting to participate in a study-travel program with the purpose stated in promotional materials from the sponsor. Such materials should clearly indicate which of the following four types of activity is to receive primary emphasis:

1. Travel and sightseeing.
2. Foreign language experience.
3. Cultural contact.
4. Study in a specific field or area, with reading, exercises, and discussions professionally administered and validated by tests and reports.

Do the activities planned seem relevant to the announced objectives? Well-planned conducted tours of foreign countries can be highly educational, and homestays with families in other countries should be an enriching experience; however, these activities do not constitute a "study program".
6. Check Adequacy of Orientation

Young people traveling abroad for the first time will be confronted with many needs for information concerning personal preparation: desirable clothing; immunizations; customs, visas, immigration procedures; and orientation to another culture. Parents and students should determine:

- The assistance to be given by the sponsor.
- The extent of orientation to be provided by the sponsor.
- The extent to which the sponsor provides access to selected reading materials and other information.

7. Critically Review the Program of Study

Some announcements imply that study at foreign schools or universities will be under master teachers or university professors. Experience has shown that in some instances students on summer trips may be enrolled in special courses for foreigners, or they may be taught by specially hired instructors in otherwise empty schools or universities. The experience may be devoid of any intercultural contact other than that provided by the presence of a foreign instructor. Parents and students should know:

- The exact calendar and time schedule of the study-travel tour.
- The language of instruction and the linguistic requirements for participation in courses.
- The courses that are offered.
- The relationship between tours and courses.
- The academic and attendance control over the program.
- The qualifications of the instructors.
- The qualifications and experience of the director in residence, whether an American or a citizen of the host country.

The style of learning at most schools abroad tends to follow a more rigid pattern than in the United States. American students should be prepared to adjust to a teacher-centered, lecture type of instruction which often does not provide opportunity to ask questions or participate in seminar-type activities. This condition may be partially offset if teachers accompany their classes during related field trips.
The study phase of some study-travel tours offers little more cultural contact than might be arranged in a stateside classroom. The program should be examined with care and additional information requested where needed.

8. Inquire About Staffing

Study-tour organizations must depend upon short-term employees to fill the roles of director, teacher, and chaperone. Parents should determine:

- Whether the tour director is carefully selected and likely to understand and work effectively with American students.

- Whether the tour director is familiar with the countries to be visited — culture, languages, and customs.

- Whether the teachers and chaperones who accompany the group are chosen on the basis of their suitability for this demanding assignment. Staff selection should in no way be connected with the recruitment of students by potential staff members.

- Whether foreign teachers have been selected on the basis of professional competence, experience, and ability to work with the age group to be served.

- The extent to which the tour schedule provides for continuous access to chaperones by participants. Parents of high school age students should require clarification of a statement that participants will have large segments of “free time” to explore the foreign culture “on their own.” The different customs, the culture shock, even homesickness, greatly increase the need for the constant presence of a wise and understanding counselor, not merely a “chaperone.”

9. Ask About the Student Selection Procedure

The adequacy of the student selection process — not merely the ability to pay the fee — is one important indicator of the merit of the tour as worthwhile educational/travel experience. The parent and student should examine promotional materials for:

- Appropriate language requirements.

- Age levels accepted.

- Letters of general recommendation required.

- School recommendations required.

A substantial nonrefundable registration fee required with the application may be evidence of an inadequate selection process. However, most programs legitimately collect a modest nonrefundable deposit to cover administrative costs and to limit the number of costly last-minute cancellations.
After The Tour Is Over

Students who have participated in a study-travel tour should tell friends and school authorities about their experience. Evaluate it honestly. You will be providing valuable information for the guidance of other prospective participants. You will be making your contribution toward setting appropriate standards for future study-travel tours and for improving intercultural understanding.

To Educational Personnel

Endorsement of any study-travel program not under the school’s immediate control may be a violation of ethics as spelled out in the ethical codes of your school system or education association. The mere fact that a particular study-travel offering meets all the general suggestions set forth here is no guarantee of consistent control over quality and effectiveness.

Some study-tour promoters recruit student participants by offering teachers opportunities to supervise, with free travel and/or cash compensation, depending on the number of participants recruited. Unless conducted outside the teacher’s own school, such recruiting activity may constitute a serious violation of national, State, or local codes of professional ethics.

What The Administrator Can Do

— Use these suggestions as the basis for recommending a policy to the board of education.

— Include a copy of the suggestions, excerpts, or adaptations in a handbook of procedures supplied to each teacher or counselor in the school system.

— Help interested individuals obtain the data necessary for a careful decision but refrain from endorsing any particular program.

— Require all organizations soliciting in or through the schools to register with the school superintendent’s office. They should be asked to submit copies of all their promotional materials and should provide evidence of adequate bonding, including an explanation of the terms of the bond.

Contracting for Services

Some boards of education have initiated the practice of contracting for student study-travel experiences in connection with senior trips and special summer programs. These suggestions will be useful in helping draw up careful performance contracts for such services. The assistance of the school attorney is recommended for drafting a contract that will conform to local legal requirements.
As a result of difficulties encountered by a large number of youth traveling abroad under auspices of one group charterer, concern has been expressed about the solvency of study group charterers. In response to these concerns the Civil Aeronautics Board issued regulations relating to these groups which became effective on September 1, 1971. These regulations require that if a study group charterer (excluding an educational institution), as defined by the Civil Aeronautics Board, charters a plane, it must:

1. Fulfill the security provisions which have been designed to protect the deposits of study group participants.

2. Provide a formal academic course of study abroad which includes a minimum of 15 hours of classroom instruction per week for at least four weeks duration at one or more foreign educational institutions.

3. Establish a price to each participant which includes a minimum of at least two meals a day, all sleeping accommodations, necessary air or surface transportation between all places on the itinerary, and tuition.

4. File certain information with the CAB prior to sale, solicitation, or operation of any flight to insure that the foregoing requirements are fulfilled. (If a study group does not charter an airline, these provisions are inapplicable.)

Further information concerning these regulations can be obtained from the Bureau of Operating Rights, Civil Aeronautics Board, Washington, D.C. 20428.

SOURCES

The following sources and references provide additional information on student study and travel abroad:

Council on Student Travel, Inc.
777 United Nations Plaza
New York, New York 10017

_A Guide to Institutional Self-Study and Evaluation of Educational Programs Abroad_ (Cost $1.00) An excellent guide for evaluating both credit and noncredit educational programs abroad. A two-year college that is involved with or is considering a program of study and/or travel abroad should have this publication.

Director of Public Information and Reports Staff
Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs
Department of State
Washington, D.C. 20520
A Word of Caution: Private Work, Study, or Travel Abroad Organization
(Available without charge) Gives helpful pointers on evaluating private travel organizations.

Council on International Educational Exchange
777 United Nations Plaza
New York, New York 10017
(Available without charge) Students Abroad: Summer Study, Travel and Work Programs; Students Abroad: High School Student Programs.

Institute of International Education
809 United Nations Plaza
New York, New York 10017
Summer Study Abroad describes summer courses open to U.S. students in Europe, North and South America, the Far and Near East. (Cost: $.50)

UNESCO Publications Center
P.O. Box 433
New York, New York 10016
Study Abroad. Includes vacation study. (Cost: $6.00)

Commission on Voluntary Service and Action
475 Riverside Drive
New York, New York 10027
Invest Your Self, annual, lists voluntary service opportunities in United States and abroad. (Cost: $1.00; 68 pages)