MEMORANDUM

TO: Michael Bruno  
Provost

FROM: Sarita Rai, Director  
Sarita Rai

John Casken, Chair, Council on Study Abroad  
John Casken

SUBJECT: Study Abroad Program Review Three Year Progress Report Since July 2019

A. Introduction: The Study Abroad Center


The goals for the 2015-25 Strategic Plan are:

Goal 1: Enhancing Student Success (p. 20-22)

SAC meets goal 1 by providing: a) curricula and programs that enable students to appreciate and interpret global circumstances; b) an education that situates the United States and Hawai‘i as a part of the present global community; and c) opportunities that develop students’ abilities to make personal and public policy decisions that may address inequities in human rights, economic, climate, and social injustice.

Goal 2: Global Leading Research University (p. 12)

SAC meets goal 2 by providing UHM faculty serving as resident directors the opportunity to develop research/scholarship and collaborate with foreign colleagues while teaching in Study Abroad Programs.
Goal 3: An Engaged University that Emphasizes local, national, and international partnerships that reflect our ambition to become a global leader in scholarship of application (p. 16)

SAC meets goal 3 through its international partnerships with 25 overseas Institutions of Higher Education in 23 locations in Australia, Asia (East), Europe (Western) and Latin America.

The Study Abroad Center collaborates with many UHM departments, provides opportunities for qualified students to study and for faculty members to teach, develop courses, and research while abroad. Accordingly, the Center’s Mission is to enable students in Study Abroad Programs to acquire knowledge through academic work in other countries and develop cross-cultural understanding through cultural immersion in those countries. Faculty in Study Abroad Programs have opportunities for research, professional development and teaching. (Council By-laws 7/23/03, latest amendment 1/19/2018)

Study Abroad programs are offered for a summer, semester, or an academic year. Students earn UHM credits for all course work completed abroad. The courses offered in all of the programs fulfill a student’s major, minor, certificate, language, foundation, diversification, focus, elective or graduation requirements.

Faculty members from various departments teach, mentor students, research and develop new courses in study abroad programs. They have represented the Schools of Architecture, Ocean Earth Science and Technology, Law, Medicine, Nursing and Dental Hygiene, Public Health and Social Work; the Colleges of Arts, Languages and Letters, Education, Engineering, Social Sciences and Tropical Agriculture, Cancer Center and the Institute for Astronomy.

A distinguishing feature of UHM’s Study Abroad Program is the participation of faculty resident directors from UHM. The Council on Study Abroad and I believe that this practice has multiple benefits: it enhances the quality of students’ study abroad experience by providing on-site supervision, mentoring and advising not available to students from most other programs; it offers students credits for academically equivalent courses taken abroad that are uniquely tailored specifically for a specific location; and it has added benefits in terms of faculty development, in terms of research opportunities, and pedagogy exploration and development.

According to the final report by External Reviewers of the Study Abroad Program, “SAC programs have a strong faculty oversight; offer faculty professional development; benefit from a strong faculty “buy-in”; provide good logistical support, training and orientation for both faculty and students; offer programs of various lengths, locations, and disciplines and have the capacity to accommodate growth in participant number.” (University of Hawai`i Study Abroad Center External Program Review Report. Review Team Dan Gold, University of Wisconsin, Madison and Kimberly Jones, University of
This reflects similar findings in the 2012 and 2005 Program Review Reports.

The Study Abroad Programs embrace the principles of Diversity, Equity and Inclusivity (DEI) within the space of a Hawaiian place of learning. The programmatic decision to offer UHM study abroad programs as mainstream (studying with the degree students of a foreign University), rather than “island” programs (studying with only UHM students) is one of the hidden gems of UHM. Many students who have studied abroad appreciate the value of non-US Institutions of Higher Education Abroad and declared it as the highlight of their tertiary education experience.

Our students earn UH Mānoa credits while studying abroad, further demonstrating that these overseas institutions offer equivalent credits. Today, all UHM Study Abroad Center programs continue as partnership programs with the following distinctions:

- Partnership mainstream programs based at a University of the host country that reflect UHM curriculum
- Offer dual track programs in all locations where the target language is other than English - a broad-based cross-disciplinary curriculum in English as well as the host country’s target language
- UHM faculty do not teach in summer programs, rather they provide experiential learning activities to engage students and reinforce in-country learning and pursue their academic research
- UHM faculty teach two classes during semester programs and offer the classes to the host institution’s students as well as UHM study abroad students
- UHM students enroll in classes with host institution’s student population and receive UHM credits for each class
- UHM faculty members are visiting faculty at the host institution with research opportunities while they mentor students and provide student support services

Following the above principles since 2019, the following new programs have been developed and offered to our students.

- Institute for Discovery and Data Science (Summer 2022)
- Irish Studies (Summer 2022)
- Irish Consultancy (Summer 2022)

2021: Florence, Italy. Lorenzo de Medici. Architecture (4 weeks; Summer 2021)
- Program length expanded to 6 weeks effective Summer 2022

2020: My Two Italies (Florence and Tuscania). Lorenzo de Medici (Fall 2021)

2020: Sendai, Japan. Tohoku University. (backup for Kobe Summer Program, which was canceled due to the pandemic in summer 2021)

2020: Year-in-Japan. Consortium Schools - University of Arizona, University of Hawai`i, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, and University of Pittsburgh. The other three consortium schools voted for UHM to lead the consortium replacing
the University of Illinois. The terms of agreement of the transfer was negotiated with the Host Institution Konan University, Kobe, Japan.


B. **Innovations and Initiatives - to Scale up Study Abroad Student Engagement**

Study Abroad Center has developed a strategic plan to scale up study abroad students and faculty participation in our programs. Student recruitment will be enhanced through peer-to-peer recruitment by hiring undergraduate students for each study abroad program. The efforts of the appointed Resident Faculty Directors are also included in the recruitment plan.

With the increase in student enrollment, SAC’s plan is to hire more Study Abroad Advisers and embed them within more colleges including the Colleges of Engineering, Education, and CTAHR. Previous embedment of Study Abroad advisers in the Colleges of Arts, Languages and Letters; Natural Sciences; and Social Sciences has been successful and we will continue to expand on this front. SAC began embedding Study Abroad advisers in Colleges in 2019. In the 2019-2020 academic year, 20 natural sciences majors studied abroad. In 2021-2022, academic year 41 did.

The Council on Study Abroad has developed a policy that embraces UHM as a Native Hawaiian Place of learning. The actionable items are to increase both the Native Hawaiian student enrollment in our programs and to encourage Native Hawaiian faculty members to apply as resident directors to teach and conduct research through our study abroad programs. Toward that end, of particular note, is that the Study Abroad Center was allocated a tenure track position prior to 2019, to specifically increase Native Hawaiian student engagement in Study Abroad programs, advising, and retention. A qualified Native Hawaiian faculty member was hired. The faculty was granted tenure in 2019.

Following are various activities that SAC has embarked on to engage students since 2019.

1. **Internships**

An 8-week internship program in Dublin, Ireland offered through the Quinn School of Business at University College Dublin is available to our students seeking an internship. Over the years, students have expressed a desire to have internships abroad. However, while multiple internships related to our program sites are available, not many students have participated. For example, in London, students may be able to intern with a design magazine, or in Spain with a refugee settlement, or a fashion show in Italy, or business start-up company or a multinational bank in Ireland, or renewable energy engineering internship in Lille, France. Again, the internship programs are in response to the needs of UHM departments and colleges.
2. UHM Faculty Sponsored Study Tours (FaSST)

To support one-time departmental and/or college initiatives, the Faculty Sponsored Study Tours (FaSST) was developed for niche programming overseas. A FaSST Coordinator/General Study Abroad Advisor was hired. From 2019, we are able to offer a full range of services to the sponsoring faculty including risk and liability management training for the faculty, budget development, pre-departure health and safety training for the students, insurance coverage, course registration, etc.

Since 2019, the following departments have offered programs facilitated by the Study Abroad Center: Sydney, Australia (Kinesiology and Rehabilitation Science), South Africa (Plant and Environmental Protection Science), Shanghai, China (Architecture), Sonipat, India (Law), Nagaoka, Japan (Architecture), Ballarat, Australia (Residential Life Exchange Program), Semarang, Indonesia (Urban Planning), Saga-Saga-Makimuku-Wakasa, Japan, (Archaeology), Western Europe (Interdisciplinary Studies and School of Hawaiian Knowledge), Alicante and Barcelona/Madrid, Spain (Spanish language), French Polynesia (Tahitian), Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam (Second Language Studies), Chengdu, China (Theater), Republic of Palau (Field School), Yancun, China (Social Work), Ehime, Japan (Internship in Japan). A total of 135 students have studied abroad thought FaSST.

This niche programming has been steadily growing in terms of departmental faculty and student participation. However, a decline was observed due to the pandemic in 2020 and 21. We are optimistic that the FaSST program will rebound shortly.

3. Technology and Study Abroad Prior to Covid-19 and Beyond

The Study Abroad Center website (www.studyabroad.hawaii.edu), has been completely revamped so that users may better access information with greater transparency. The redesign makes navigation more intuitive for students, faculty and the community at large.

A new feature, the Study Abroad Center blog, was added to offer helpful tips on coping with issues such as culture shock and jet lag as well as offering COVID-19 information. In addition, the SAC Facebook page (https://www.facebook.com/uhmstudyabroad) was integrated in the website as an additional platform for interacting with alumni, current, and prospective students.

a. On-Line Delivery

Since Spring of 2020, all operations of the Study Abroad Center have successfully migrated to on-line delivery utilizing Zoom. This positive outcome resulted from the pandemic as we could no longer hold face-to-face activities. We successfully transitioned from a high-touch program to provide all operations to both students and faculty via Zoom. All social media platforms (twitter, instagram, facebook, pinterest) were utilized for publicity, marketing and information dissemination. SAC advisers have moved to on-line modes of delivery concerning informational meetings, pre-departure cross-cultural training, class visits, advising, and pre- and post-program evaluations.
Except for summer 2020, faculty resident directors and students have been able to teach, research and study abroad. Successful negotiations with our partner universities overseas regarding the health and safety of our students and faculty, in light of the pandemic enabled us to continue our programs. Such negotiations included in-country entry requirements, Covid-19 protocols, accommodations, instructions, social distancing, in-country orientations, to name a few. Study Abroad students were able to complete their semesters (especially in Spring 2020), graduate on time, and without losing any UHM credits. In fact most students who went abroad during the pandemic indicated that it was the first time that they have had in-person/face-to-face instruction.

In summary, we have successfully made Study Abroad accessible to our students and faculty despite the pandemic through the use of on-line tools while in Hawaii.

b. Development and Implementation of On-line Study Abroad Application
Collaborating with the UH ITS department enabled the Study Abroad on-line application platform to finally launch softly in summer 2021 and fully in Fall 2021. Online program payments have also been enabled within this application.

c. Study Abroad Express On-Line Academic Advising
Spurred by COVID-19 pandemic and working with Banner personnel, the Study Abroad Center has its own on-line academic advising portal. Now students are able to receive express advising by entering Study Abroad Academic Advising

d. Annual Study Abroad Fair and Spring Festival via Zoom
The SAC hosted its first Virtual Annual Study Abroad Fair in September 2020. It enabled the SAC to include international partner institutions. There were approximately 500 participants. We succeeded in creating a framework that was “user friendly” for participants. Because the Fair was offered on-line, UHM students not only from Hawai`i but also from the Mainland found it very easy to attend.

On-line platforms are now effectively and expeditiously fully integrated into all aspects of Study Abroad operations. Because SAC’s presence is fully on-line, student access has increased. For example, pre-online, when advisers held program informational meetings, very few students attended in person (0-15). Now, student attendance is between 5-30. Additionally, on-line applications have increased from 35-40 per term (excluding summer programs) to 120 in Fall 2021.

e. Global Tech Program Partnership with the College of Social Sciences
The Study Abroad Center is in the process of partnering with the College of Social Sciences to offer Social Science majors a six credit course for ten weeks that focuses on global data (to inform decision making), global marketing, and global coding specifically designed for social science undergraduate students. It is an online course that provides an opportunity for students to build real-world work experience by providing “on-the-job” training and projects that help develop “in-demand” technology and intercultural skills. Students work on projects
with their international counterparts from different parts of the world. We hope to launch this in summer 2023.

Our other Study Abroad programs are not virtual. They will remain to be in-person international programs. The Global Tech program is designed for those students who would not ordinarily participate in an “in-person” Study Abroad program. The hope is that, after experiencing the Global Tech virtual program, the students would then leap to actual “in-person” programs abroad.

4. Study Abroad Advisors Embedded in Colleges

An innovative advising model of housing Study Abroad Advisers within a College rather than in the Study Abroad Center has been successful. External College Advisers did not know about Study Abroad programs to effectively advise students. The goals of embedding Study Abroad Advisers within Colleges were to: 1) expand the academic advising capacity of the Colleges and the Study Abroad Center, 2) make Study Abroad Center programs a more visible part of the College's curriculum that is compatible and achievable within students’ academic degree programs, and 3) scale up the number of students attending Study Abroad Programs.

We now have advisers embedded in the College of Social Sciences; Colleges of Arts and Humanities, and Languages, Linguistics and Literature - now the College of Arts, Languages and Letters; and College of Natural Sciences. SAC Advisers are fully integrated with the Academic Advising Unit of said colleges. They now have access to students' databases and are able to map the curriculum for their students; there is more awareness of Study Abroad programs among the college advisers, and above all there is an increase in Study Abroad enrollment.

5. Fundraising and Endowments

Working with the UH Foundation, the Tamah Nakamura Endowment Fund was established for students who wish to study abroad in Japan. This provides a yearly scholarship of $50,000. In 2019, a donor who did not wish to be named provided a scholarship in the amount of $10,000. We continue to solicit funds from potential donors so that UHM Study Abroad students may have scholarships to offset their study abroad costs.

Partner Universities provide substantial scholarships to UHM students. For example, Konan University Japan awards four of our students who attend the year-long program a scholarship in the amount of $8,000.00 to $10,000 each. Lorenzo de Medici also provides scholarships to UHM students to study in Florence and so does University of Roehampton, London. In 2021, University College Dublin designated €10,000 scholarship for nursing students for summer 2022.
C. Challenges and Concerns

1. Fiscal Changes in SAC accounts - Transfer from RCUH to UH Kuali Financial System (KFS)

Since 1991, the Study Abroad Center accounts have been handled through RCUH revolving accounts. The RCUH financial system is designed to support UH programs that require a flexible approach to paying universities abroad in foreign currencies, loan funds to Study Abroad to pay for salaries and invoices and student payment abroad. It allows for carry over funds from one fiscal year to another. All of the aforementioned services are not possible through UH as it must follow State of Hawaii fiscal laws.

The Provost’s office is in the process of transferring SAC accounts from RCUH to UH KFS in fall 2022 despite multiple feedback on the harm the transfer will cause if the exact services provided by RCUH is not available in KFS. The new account in KFS is designated as a Tuition, Special Funds and Fees (TSF) account similar to UHM tuition and fees account. The TSF account will not allow roll-over funds to the next year. Thus establishing a Revolving fund account rather than TSF account would facilitate Study Abroad Center operations.

Four of the seven SAC personnel, all faculty resident directors’ expenses each year, SAC operational and departmental replacement costs are funded through revenues generated from student participation. During the pandemic, student enrollment was low. However, due to our carry-over fund capability through RCUH, SAC was able to provide salaries for all of its personnel including departmental replacement costs for faculty. This is critical for SAC sustainability and not possible with KFS.

2. Hiring of Fiscal Personnel

The Provost has agreed to hire a 1.00 FTE fiscal personnel within the Office of Global Engagement and provide 50 percent of the funding while Study Abroad will provide another 50 percent of the salary while performing 75 percent of the job responsibilities for the Study Abroad Center. In the long term, it is unclear how this fiscal personnel will be able to support SAC operations while working 25% in the Office of Global Engagement when the student enrollment is expected to boom. SAC needs its own dedicated fiscal support so that the incumbent may be supervised and evaluated by the Director of the Study Abroad Center.

3. Replacement of SAC Adviser upon Retirement

SAC must fill the position of one Study Abroad Adviser who will retire in June 2022. With the UH hiring freeze still in effect at the time of writing, it is urgent that SAC receive an exemption to replace the Adviser before retirement. If SAC is unable to replace an Adviser, our plans for scaling up Study Abroad participation is in jeopardy.
4. Review and Finalization of Agreements
Of special concern is the time it takes for the Office of General Counsel (OGC) to review and give the go ahead on agreements to be signed and executed - be they renewals and/or new ones. This inhibits any future initiatives with new Partners Universities. Since the inception of the OGC Agreement template, the SAC agreements are considered as not following the OGC’s template agreement. Thus, SAC Agreements whether they be renewals or new ones must go through the full review process. This is fine, however, the time it takes to receive a “go ahead” stifles any new partnerships.

D. Conclusion
The Study Abroad Center will keep moving forward with its innovations and creative programming. These actions will benefit the students and faculty members to achieve educational excellence across the UH Mānoa campus.

Cc: Laura E. Lyons, Interim VP for Academic Excellence
    R. Anderson Sutton, Assistant Provost for Global Engagement
    April Goodwin, Director of Program Development and Program Review