

Innovation Fund for Global Education

Global Distribution Study Abroad & Global Education Program

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Abstract

The Industrial Distribution Program has been supporting two undergraduate global study abroad classes for the past four years. The classes have been supported by industry gifts (\$245,000 to date) and the College of Engineering. Two endowments have been formed to support the classes: the Judy and Paul Andrews Endowed Excellence fund (\$300,000) and the Thomas E. Ferguson '78 Endowed Excellence Fund (\$10 million in a non-revocable charitable remainder trust, minimum \$100,000 promised per year until the trust becomes activated, 1/3 committed to global study abroad).

All gift funds are being directed to support student travel. The courses started in Mexico and Central America and are moving to China this summer (2013). The class curriculum is focused on business and engineering investments in other markets. The students learn about culture, local business practices, government, and international trade issues. The sponsors provide the students with a case study project on a current business challenge. Research professionals from our Global Supply Chain Lab execute the project first (before the class begins) by working with the sponsor firms. The project is then thoroughly integrated into the class materials.

- ENGR 410 Global Engineering – This course focuses on engineering applications in international markets.
- IDIS 445 International Sales and Marketing – This course focuses on global market penetration.

The global student learning outcomes are aligned with University ones:

1. Sponsors will provide projects that require the students conduct analysis in each class discipline then integrate the outcomes into a final deliverable.
2. Students have to compose a final report and present results to sponsors. The presentation and report have to meet professional business standards.
3. Understand business practices and ethics in different countries. Students will deal with issues related to government regulations, negotiation and ethics in foreign markets, global corporate responsibility, and varying cultural beliefs.
4. The project and global environment will force students to explore global databases and investigate knowledge outside of the class materials. The students will develop knowledge acquisition and problem solving skills essential to life long learning.

5. The team-based projects will build collaboration skills especially when working with corporate sponsors in the discovery phase. The final presentation to the firm will focus and motivate the students towards a high quality deliverable.

This proposal requests six months salary support and travel expenses for a project manager. The PM will keep the students on schedule, advise and direct their interaction with sponsors, assist sponsors in supporting student information requests, guide and teach students in project management processes, and schedule interactions between classes and countries.

Sustainability of Program:

The project manager will work closely with sponsors to acquire sponsored follow up work on projects. The PM will seek to build a continuous relationship that builds on the sponsor's evolving needs. The PM will act as an advisor for future projects and implementation of student findings. The sponsors will be asked to take over PM financial support.

The continuous process will increase instructor and sponsor competency in global competitiveness knowledge. The combination will continually upgrade class content, knowledge delivery, and project execution. Instructors, researchers, and sponsors will become knowledge teams focused on understanding, teaching, and managing international business processes.