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OCSC Principles for Approved Off-Campus Programs

Reed College's Commitment to Off-Campus Study

Reed College believes that international and domestic off-campus study, especially study abroad, supports, extends and enhances the learning that happens inside the Reed classroom. Off-campus study allows students to enrich their academic experience through exposure to new academic cultures, languages, communities, methodologies, and subject matters. It fosters personal development, helps students develop new skills, and strengthens their sense of global citizenship and belonging to a larger community. Off-campus study also allows students to engage with persons, groups, and communities representing a multitude of backgrounds, identities, experiences and values, including those currently underrepresented at Reed.

Principle of rigorous academics: An off-campus program should be academically rigorous and should help reinforce the principles underlying Reed's curriculum even as it enhances students' education. We are open to a variety of academic structures, but in order to qualify for the transfer of credit, a host program must be an accredited, non-profit academic institution or a non-profit study abroad provider with an accredited School of Record that is committed to facilitating the highest quality academic offerings. All off-campus program courses, including the in-house courses of study abroad providers, must offer a degree of rigor and quantity of lecture/conference/lab hours commensurate with Reed's pedagogy.

Principle of intellectual and personal growth: An off-campus program should help the student grow intellectually and personally by providing access to a variety of approaches to academic disciplines, cultural, linguistic, and social environments, and intercultural connections within the larger community. Even though some off-campus programs offer courses in English, a study abroad experience can be greatly enhanced by study in another language. Such study, even at the introductory level, can open doors to richer personal growth, more nuanced intercultural understanding and more in-depth study across disciplines. Thus when available, Reed students participating in approved programs in countries where the local language is taught on campus must take a language class while studying abroad. Exceptions can be made only if there is a conflict to fulfill an academic requirement at Reed or when a specific academic accommodation can not be offered abroad. The quality of the off-campus study experience also depends to a great extent on the commitment to academic excellence and student well-being on the part of the host institution.

Principle of equal opportunity: Every Reed student should have equal access to off-campus study, regardless of financial need or area of study. Ensuring equal access includes early orientation and informed advising regarding the full range of off-campus study opportunities so that students can plan their four-year curriculum accordingly. The principle of equal opportunity may also entail access to shorter-term or targeted skill-based off-campus study opportunities in certain disciplines, such as faculty-led programs.

Principle of scope: Approved off-campus study programs should include opportunities for students to study many academic disciplines and topics, and across diverse geographic regions of the world. At the same time, the college seeks to limit the number of approved programs to the extent that it is necessary to do so in order to maintain inter-institutional relationships, as well as a high level of program quality and oversight.

Principle of Safety: Approved off-campus study programs should strive to create an environment that is conducive to learning, as well as inclusive and supportive of a wide variety of student identities and abilities. Approved off-campus programs must have health, safety, and security protocols to address any significant safety concerns abroad in a timely manner (including terrorist attacks, mass casualty events, mass transportation accidents, natural disasters, etc.).

Review of Approved Off-Campus Programs: As articulated above, off-campus programs should maintain serious academic rigor and support student development, safety, and well-being. To ensure this, the Off-Campus Study Committee (OCSC) and the Associate Dean of Global Education and Director of the International Programs (IPO) shall monitor the roster of approved off-campus programs, conducting a review of a subset of programs every five years. Reviews of programs, especially decisions to discontinue a program, shall be conducted in consultation with interested Reed departments and programs. The OCSC will bring to the CAPP and then the faculty for their consideration and vote on any proposal for discontinuation. See Program Review Guidelines.