

AC 2009-1804: A TAILOR-MADE STUDY ABROAD PROGRAM FOR UNDERGRADUATE ENGINEERING STUDENTS

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Dr. Gohr has been coordinating the tailor-made study abroad program with Lafayette College since 2004. She has been teaching German Politics and Culture for visiting students at Jacobs University Bremen since 2005.

A Tailor-made Study Abroad Program for Undergraduate

Engineering Students

Introduction

Most universities and colleges aim to educate “global citizens and leaders of tomorrow”. For engineering and science programs, however, familiarity with a foreign language and time spent studying abroad are not an inherent part of their curricula. Because educating true global citizens is difficult when students have not experienced time outside of their comfort zones and in different cultural settings, creating an undergraduate study abroad program tailored particularly to engineering and science students is an essential innovation. Students gain a new knowledge and the opportunity to share it in new and challenging situations. Institutions that offer study abroad programs tailored to different student needs are better positioned to market to interested students, and can better present the uniqueness of their study programs.

Lafayette College has engaged in an undergraduate engineering study abroad program which is now entering its fifth year. The program was established with a firm set of institutional requirements guiding its development, including:

- (i) A semester-long experience.
- (ii) Immersion in an international, non-anglophile culture.
- (iii) A partner institution providing English language instruction for coursework.
- (iv) Participation allowing completion of all engineering degree requirements in four years.
- (v) Congruent structures, such as the semester schedule (academic calendar).
- (vi) Congruent academic programs in terms of quality assurance.

This paper describes the developing partnership between Lafayette College, a small liberal arts college with an engineering program (in Easton, Pennsylvania)³, and Jacobs University Bremen (located in the Free Hanseatic City of Bremen, Germany)¹. Jacobs University is the only private, fully English-speaking, international university in Germany that offers courses in a wide range of the humanities and social sciences, as well as in the natural sciences and engineering. The process of locating an appropriate partner institution, the growth of the program, and the current assessment of the program’s success are discussed. Additionally, an explanation of the program requirements mentioned above is provided.

The study abroad program for Lafayette College engineering students includes a recruitment phase, pre-departure activities, an orientation period upon arrival in Germany, an explanation of course load requirements, preparation for integration into campus life and the local community while abroad, program-sponsored group excursions to points of interest in Europe, and activities and contributions to campus life upon return to Lafayette College. This paper also discusses the future directions of this program based on the past experiences, faculty reactions, and students’ input.

Although the program is designed to cater specifically to the needs of Lafayette College students, faculty and the institution as a whole cooperate in Jacobs University’s “tailor-made” approach to

the development of international programs; it is therefore possible to translate many elements into applicable concepts for international exchange or visiting programs in general.

History

Lafayette College has been offering opportunities for international study abroad for qualifying undergraduate engineering majors since 1989, allowing students to study abroad for one semester while staying on track in a four-year degree program. This study abroad program has been developed for over twenty years, and is now in its fifth year of cooperation with Jacobs University Bremen.

Since its establishment in 2004, the Lafayette-Bremen program for engineers has undergone significant developments, and has become a mature enterprise providing roughly twenty-five percent of the College's engineering majors with a significant foreign culture component. The Bremen program has become Lafayette's principal international site for engineers studying abroad, and the only site used by the College for its semester-long, faculty-led program abroad for engineers. The Lafayette College's Off-Campus Study *Mission Statement* guides the continuing development of the Bremen Study Abroad program. It states:

“[The] College recognizes that we live in an increasingly complex and interrelated global environment, and connecting the classroom to the world outside our walls is at the core of the College's mission. Off-campus study combines academic rigor with experiential learning through immersion in an international or domestically significant setting.”²

During spring of 2009, thirty-five sophomore and junior Lafayette students will be studying to complete one semester of their course requirements while abroad at Jacobs University. Completion of course requirements is, however, only part of their study abroad experience. The objectives of the study abroad program in Germany are embodied by an addendum to Lafayette's Mission Statement for Study Abroad:

“Engaging in an unfamiliar cultural milieu often is truly transformational. Off-campus study participants are encouraged to expand their comfort zones, encounter new perspectives, and examine their own cultural viewpoints. Students return to campus with a greater appreciation of global issues enriching their understanding of their own on-campus curricula while stimulating and deepening conversation within the College community.”²

This paper describes the functioning of a program that provides true immersion into a foreign culture for participating engineering students.

Institutional Guidelines at Lafayette College

At the core of a successful study abroad program is a set of guidelines that are compatible with the mission of the institution³ and the institution's programs. The Engineering Division at Lafayette College includes the following words in its mission statement:

“The engineering curricula will blend innovative engineering education with the opportunities available in the liberal learning environment at Lafayette College.”⁴

Innovation and liberal learning are the core considerations of this statement. The guidelines presented in the introduction to this paper have been crafted to fit the educational environment for engineers at Lafayette College, and also to allow for innovation in the four-year experience through study abroad. These guidelines are described below:

(i)

Many study abroad programs offer three- to four-week programs. The four-month experience, however, provided by a semester-long program offers a true immersion into a foreign culture. This would not be possible through a program that is simply a brief sojourn in a foreign country.

(ii)

The study abroad experience should be truly abroad in both culture and language in the sense that students study and live in a non-anglophile nation. The students' perception should be that they are distinctly outside of their comfort zone. This experience can be truly unique and revealing.

(iii)

The program, in order to be available to a broad cross-section of undergraduate engineers, must provide instruction in English. Such a requirement does not match well with objective (ii) stated above. Identifying English speaking universities in non-English speaking nations presents a considerable challenge, and quickly narrows the range of potential partner institutions. Because engineering students in particular are not exposed to integral language instruction within their degree program, the significance of instruction in English is considerable. Only through the provision of classes in English can it be guaranteed that students are not only eligible, but able to participate in this exchange program.

(iv)

Fulfilling these criteria is not sufficient in itself, however, to provide for an excellent study abroad experience. It is also crucial that a study abroad semester allows students to complete the allocated requirements for completion of their degree within four years. The next two guidelines that are described below guarantee this completion.

(v)

For practical and logistical purposes, the semester timetable for a partner institution must reasonably correspond to that of the home institution. Three-year European degree programs offer a further challenge in comparison to four-year American programs, as this often results in mismatches between courses and credits.

(vi)

Finally, a partner institution must have accredited academic programs and, for engineering education purposes, programs in several engineering disciplines. Faculty from both institutions must be qualified to provide teaching within the program. The institution sending students must recruit supervisors who are both capable and willing to teach and mentor students for a full semester in a foreign setting. This ensures that courses not offered at the partner institution but

required by the sending institution are available. Furthermore, the faculty supervisor is crucial to addressing parents' concerns through their immediate presence in the foreign country.

If the guidelines described thus far can be met, there is a reasonable expectation that a mutually acceptable contractual arrangement can be developed between foreign partners and a home institution.

Admission and finances

Although the above framework is useful, there are still issues of eligibility, admission, and finances that must be addressed. To qualify for the study abroad program at Lafayette College, potential students must have a cumulative GPA of at least 2.80, three letters of recommendation from faculty (one of these from the student's academic advisor), and a disciplinary record that the Dean of Students (as well as the study abroad faculty supervisor) considers worthy for foreign travel. Cost considerations for students are relatively straightforward. Study abroad participants pay Lafayette College tuition, room and board. In turn, Lafayette remits tuition, room and board fees to Jacobs University Bremen. The differential in tuition between Jacobs University and Lafayette College then covers expenses associated with program activities and faculty expenses. As most European universities charge no, or significantly lower tuition fees compared to US colleges and universities, tailor-made study abroad programs can be offered without additional charges. In the case of this particular partnership, the financial aspect of the program is a "win-win" situation for both institutions.

The Partner Institution: Jacobs University Bremen

As explained in the framework above necessary to create a successful study abroad match, a certain congruence between sending and host institutions is a decisive factor. With Jacobs University Bremen, Lafayette College has found a partner that has been willing and able to design a tailor-made program for engineering students. Jacobs University in Bremen, Germany, offers instruction in English in a German-speaking European country. The University offers programs in engineering, the natural sciences, the humanities and social sciences. The University's uniqueness, and its suitability as a partner institution for a study abroad program, is tied to its organization as a private university, and its student population that consists mostly of international enrollees. 75% of the students come from countries other than Germany and currently represent 94 countries from all continents. Visiting students therefore have the opportunity to live in an intercultural environment. As a relatively small university (1,204 students in 2008/2009), the community is very inclusive, and all undergraduate students (currently 681) live on campus in residential colleges. Visiting students are integrated into these structures, living in a multicultural environment with students from various countries.

Jacobs University began as International University Bremen (IUB) in 1999, receiving initial accreditation by the city of Bremen, Germany. The University occupies a former military base outside the city of Bremen, in what could be considered a recent manifestation of the "swords into plowshares" prophecy. Jacobs was founded through a collaboration of planners from the city-state of Bremen, the University of Bremen, and Rice University in Houston, Texas.⁵ (Rice University remains a study abroad partner with Jacobs University.) After accepting the largest

private donation ever given to a private university in Europe from the Jacobs Foundation, IUB became Jacobs University Bremen in 2007.

Lafayette officials first traveled to Bremen in 2003 to explore the possibility of a collaborative program. They found that the recently created university in a central European location had well-established academic programs. Of special interest to engineering students were particularly strong science and engineering offerings. In addition, the University had adopted an American-style semester system with instruction in English. With a residential campus and students representing countries from many parts of the world, Jacobs University appeared to meet the broad requirements of Lafayette College's study abroad program for engineers. Jacobs University aims at developing tailor-made programs for partner institutions that cater to their respective needs. Through its small size and excellent faculty-student ratio (1:11), this can be achieved in visiting and exchange programs.

The semester-long study abroad partnership between Lafayette College and Jacobs University was formalized through a contractual arrangement in 2004, and the first group of twelve students traveled to Bremen in the spring semester of 2005. The second year of the program enrolled only six students, but the following three years saw enrollment grow to 21, 34, and 35 students in the 2007 - 2009 groups, respectively.

The Program: Preparation at Lafayette

The study abroad cycle at Lafayette is shown in Figure 1 and begins with the recruitment effort targeting second-semester, first-year students thinking of studying abroad as part of their engineering studies. These (usually two) information sessions are scheduled early in the spring semester, nearly one year prior to participation. Students are given ample time to consult with parents, plan their curriculum, and talk with student colleagues in coming to an informed decision to study abroad. Students from the prior year's program are often enthusiastic to help recruit the next study abroad group. Students considering study abroad then have the summer months to consider their participation. They are asked to complete a preliminary statement indicating their intention to apply to the program. They are provided with a copy of the College's study abroad handbook, advised of relevant websites, and encouraged to interview faculty and prior participants.

Based on preliminary numbers, a budget plan is generated by faculty supervisor(s) for the trip. Over the summer months, students must submit a formal application that includes letters of recommendation from faculty. After review by the College, students' applications are the basis for deciding eligibility. Students are informed of their acceptance to the program prior to their return to campus in the fall. A deposit from accepted students has a mid-September deadline, allowing the College and Jacobs University to plan in greater detail. The size of the group dictates whether one or two faculty will supervise the program. It is generally acknowledged by faculty supervisors and study abroad administrators that twenty to twenty-five students is the maximum group size appropriate for one faculty supervisor.

Because study abroad in general, and the Bremen program in particular, has attracted greater numbers of students, Lafayette College has created an Office of the Director of Off-Campus Studies. This office supports the myriad of activities associated with students and faculty going

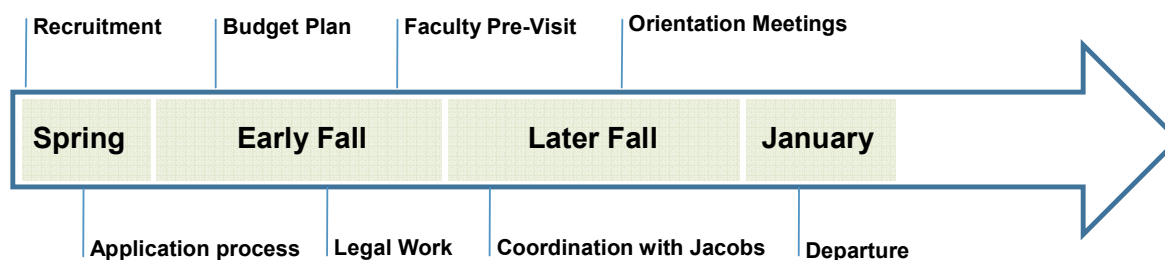
abroad (outlined below). The fall semester that precedes a spring semester study abroad are used as preparation time to ensure that the faculty supervisor and up to thirty-five students are ready to depart the following January for a four-month stay in a foreign country. The major responsibilities include:

- Generating a detailed budget statement.
- Assisting students in completing applications for admission to Jacobs University.
- Monitoring the collection of required legal documents.
- Coordinating with Jacobs University regarding preparation for the incoming students.
- Communicating with students and parents, and answering questions regarding the program.
- Preparing the faculty supervisors for their travel to Bremen for a 2-day pre-program visit during the fall semester preceding the study abroad spring semester.
- Finalizing students' cross-registration for courses to be taken at Jacobs University and for credits to then be transferred to Lafayette.
- Hosting orientation meetings for students and faculty.

The actual departure with students in late January is envisioned as the final step in a comprehensive preparation program.

Figure 1. Summary Organization Flow at Lafayette.

AT LAFAYETTE COLLEGE



The Program: Activities at Jacobs University

The program cycle at Jacobs University Bremen is shown in Figure 2 and begins with a curriculum set-up, and the preparation of accommodation for a large group of visiting students. An important component of the partnership is this willingness on the part of the host institution, Jacobs University, to prepare a week-long orientation given at the start of the program. (Appendix 1 shows the full program.) Upon arrival in the host country, students are faced with the responsibility of learning as much as possible in a very short time about a new learning environment, unfamiliar living arrangements, a different culture and, for most when they leave campus, a language with which they are far from fluent. The first two weeks of the four-month study abroad program are especially critical to the successful administration of the program. A support system is in place to respond to a burst of questions and needs as students adapt to what amounts to a completely new environment. It includes:

- Full support and program management through the Office for Academic Affairs and International Programs.
- Provision of all university services in English (e.g. Orientation Week, student handbook, registration and enrollment, residence permit and visa issues etc.).
- Residential College system.
- Student advising.
- Information and communication via an intranet page for visiting students.¹²
- Host family program.

The Office for Academic Affairs and International Programs at Jacobs University provides constant support not only regarding organizational and academic concerns, but also with advice regarding personal plans during their stay. The Office cooperates with the Undergraduate Student Government to match student advisors (usually 2nd or 3rd year undergraduate students) with small groups of Lafayette visiting students in order to help them with orientation in Bremen, and the daily routine at Jacobs University. Furthermore, visiting students may join the “Host Family Program” which matches all non-German students with a family in Bremen that is interested in connecting to students from a different part of the world. These families invite their host students to participate in their family life, introduce them to the region, give them insights into German culture, and act as a supporting structure constituting a home away from home.

Perhaps the most critical aspect of the host institution’s responsibilities is the organization and teaching of courses put in place specifically for the visiting students. Generally courses within the program are taught by:

- Accompanying visiting faculty.
- Faculty from the host institution as part of the regular course offerings.
- Faculty from the host institution or specially hired faculty for tailor-made courses offered to visiting students.

In order for Lafayette students to be prepared for their following fall semester, certain prerequisite courses must be taken while abroad. The following three tailor-made courses are offered:

- Applied Differential Equations and Modeling
This course is required for all engineering majors and must be completed before the third year of studies.
- Strength of Materials
This course is required by mechanical engineers and civil engineers and must be completed before the third year.
- Basic Electrical Circuit Analysis
This course is required for electrical and computer engineering majors.

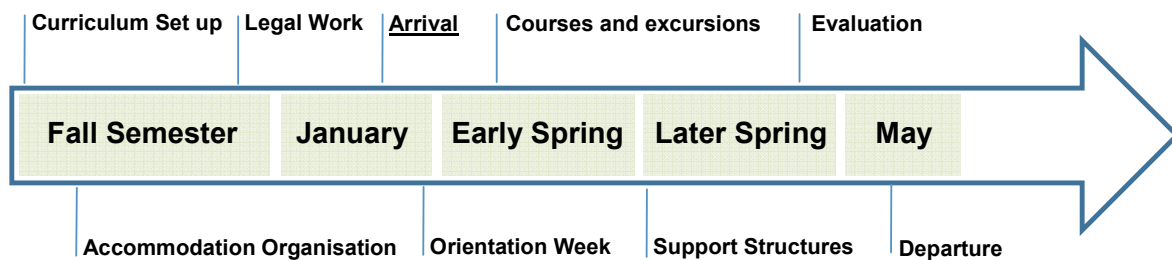
German Politics and Culture is another important course (for the syllabus see Appendix 4) required for all students participating in the Bremen study abroad program. Engineering majors use this course as a Social Sciences/Humanities elective and, unlike courses listed above that are taught by Lafayette College faculty, German Politics and Culture is always taught by Jacobs University faculty. Crucial to students’ study abroad experience are visits to local points of interest along with several excursions to more distant destinations; these are integrated into the

syllabus of the course. The spring 2009 group will visit Berlin and Cologne in Germany, important European Union institutions in Brussels, and St. Petersburg in Russia. A complete list of excursions for the 2009 program appears in Appendix 2.

By the time final exams arrive, students have adjusted to living and learning in a new and different setting. Some students leave Bremen speaking fairly good German, and all have learned to communicate even when language differences are a major barrier. A helpful addition to the program is a course in conversational German taught at Lafayette during the fall semester prior to program; this course includes a culture component to complement language skills. At Jacobs University, students can take accredited German language classes at all levels - from beginners to business German - in order to improve previously attained proficiency.

Figure 2. Summary Organization Flow at Jacobs University.

AT JACOBS UNIVERSITY



Assessment

The Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET) requires continuous monitoring of learning outcomes⁶. For students, instructors, and courses in the study abroad program at Jacobs University, this entails the use of evaluation instruments for individual courses as well as an evaluation instrument for important aspects of the program.

At Lafayette

Lafayette faculty teaching courses at Jacobs use standard Instructional Assessment Forms for student evaluation of their teaching and the course. These include four overall effectiveness questions, eighteen more specific questions, nine questions relating to course involvement, and open-ended comment areas regarding what course features students perceived as positive, and what aspects were perceived as needing improvement.

At Jacobs University

Program evaluation is accomplished through a set of surveys provided to the students, designed to address the study abroad experience in general, and the excursion program specifically (both surveys can be found in full in Appendix 3). Additionally, all courses the students have taken are evaluated through Jacobs University's course evaluation tool completed by students in a given

semester. An analysis of the student responses is completed by Jacobs University personnel, and a report is generated that includes:

- Semester Program Overview.
- Areas of Excellence and of Potential Improvements.
- Improvements over the previous year.
- Areas of Immediate Concern.
- Minor Changes and Problems.
- Interpretation of Survey Data and Actions Taken.

Conclusion and Future Direction

The Jacobs-Lafayette Study Abroad Program is viewed by both participating institutions as mature and successful. Participation by Lafayette students has grown from a low of six students in 2006 to thirty-five students in this year's contingent. Jacobs University personnel have indicated that Lafayette students are welcome and appreciated on their campus and in their classrooms. Lafayette professors have shown a desire to participate in the Bremen program and are often wait-listed for several years.

Anecdotal evidence points to the impact of the study abroad experience for Lafayette undergraduates. Students have often remarked that the study abroad experience was the single most significant part of their undergraduate career. With the program now five years into its existence, the Engineering Division at Lafayette, along with the Off-Campus Study Office, might well consider a comparative study of engineering graduates at the 5-year mark in their careers, and the effect that studying abroad has had on their personal and professional lives.

The tailor-made program described in this paper has been designed according to specific requirements and conditions of both Lafayette College and Jacobs University. As shown, such a program is shaped by complex structures. However, the successful elements presented here can serve as guidelines for other institutions that plan to establish similar partnerships. Table 1 below summarizes the key factors that have enabled the development of a successful and worthwhile partnership.

Table 1: Key factors of success of the program

At Lafayette	At Jacobs University
Residential College system	Campus University provides housing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - security - no resources needed by sending institution to provide housing
Pre-Departure Preparation	Orientation upon arrival
Off-Campus Studies Department	International Office
Workshop: host country integration	Intercultural Training
Willingness of sending institution to approve a semester-long study abroad program	Possibility to host a visiting group for an entire semester

Academic congruence	Flexibility to offer tailor-made programs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - degree requirements of sending institution are met - English language instruction
Tuition fee used for study abroad	Private institution: enhanced services and offers
Faculty-led program (assure required course offer)	Full integration of visiting faculty
Semester schedule congruence	Semester schedule congruence
Quality assessment	Quality management through evaluations
	Integration and exposure to a foreign culture: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - English speaking in a non-Anglophile country - International students body - Integration into host culture via host family program - German language program - Course: "German Politics and Culture"
Communication <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Nursing and strengthening of partnership - Regular visits 	Communication <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Nursing and strengthening of partnership - Regular visits

As a future expansion of the program, it has been suggested that Jacobs University students consider a semester at Lafayette College. There are major obstacles to overcome with such an arrangement, particularly regarding the significant difference in tuition fees between US and European private universities. A modest beginning or pilot program, however, would most likely serve as an appropriate first step.

Students have expressed a desire for a choice of at least two possible faculty-led study abroad programs. Indeed, two smaller groups would probably be a better experience for American students abroad. In this regard, Lafayette College is continuing to explore possibilities for alternate study abroad sites. As mentioned earlier in this paper, this is not a problem that is easily solved. In addition, the desire on the part of Lafayette would be to offer choices that would enroll a roughly equal numbers of students. An effort is underway to diversify the Bremen student group from exclusively engineering majors to a more balanced population representing the four academic divisions at Lafayette College⁷. To that end, the teaming arrangement of two faculty members (one from Electrical and Computer Engineering, and one from Government and Law) is being field tested during the spring 2009 semester at Jacobs University.

The broad educational objectives of our students studying abroad include a greater appreciation for the global nature of the engineering profession, a realization of the importance of multiculturalism in engineering practice, and an understanding of the interconnectedness of global communities. Lafayette College and Jacobs University Bremen are happy to present their

study abroad partnership as a model for other engineering programs seeking to link a foreign study experience to these broad objectives.

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Appendix 1: Full Student Program Orientation Week 2009

Monday, January 26, 2009

- 10:05 am Arrival at Bremen Airport
- 1 pm We have a **Welcome Desk** in the **IRC Conference Room (check map number 1)**
1. Lunch buffet, you meet the Office for Academic Affairs
 2. You sign your housing agreement
 3. You receive bedding for a fee of 15 Euro
 4. You receive your Cash Card for meals and copying
 5. You receive various passwords
- 6 pm Your Student Advisors will meet with you for **Dinner in your College serveries.**

Tuesday, January 27, 2009

- 8:45 am Meet in the IRC Conference Room for your first **Orientation Day (O-Day)**. I
- 2 pm Course Advising by Schools
- 3 pm Taking of photos for your new Cash Card
- 4 pm You meet with your Student Advisors in the Mercator Servery for a **Campus Tour**.
- 6 pm Your College Masters will meet with you for **Dinner in your College serveries.**

Wednesday, January 28, 2009

- 8:45 am The second part of the O-Days will start at 8:45 am in Krupp College.
- 2 pm Taking of photos for your new Cash Card
- 3 pm You meet the student advisors at the main gate for a **Vegesack Tour**.
- 6:30 pm **The Student Government/ Internal Affairs Committee** is hosting a **semi-formal dinner** for you in College III.

Thursday, January 29, 2009

- Use this morning to look at and/or register for courses on **Campus.NET**.
- 9:00 am Taking of **photos** for your Residence Permit Applications.
- 3 pm Meeting at the grass square in between east and west hall (see map number 1).
First part of your **Intercultural Training** workshop with the counselors
- 6 pm Dinner with Iris in College III
- 7 pm **Movie night in the Multimedia Room in College III:** We will watch a movie and have some snacks.

Friday, January 30, 2009

- 10 am Second part of your **Intercultural Training** workshop with the counselors
- 3:30 pm Meet Iris in the Multimedia Room in College III. You will be able to clarify any remaining questions you may have.

Saturday, January 31, 2009

- 9:30 am Meeting at the main gate
Treasure Hunt and visit of the Beck's Brewery in downtown Bremen.
- 6:30 pm Those of you who have a **host family** will meet their families for **dinner in College III**.
Please be on time as this will be your first meeting with your host family.

Sunday, February 1, 2009

- 2:30 pm If interested drop by the Grand Final of Jacobs Open at the Bürgerschaft in downtown Bremen.

Monday, February 4, 2009

- Your classes start – make sure you know WHERE and WHEN your classes are (**CampusNet**)

Appendix 2: Full Excursion/ Visit/ Events Plan Lafayette Students Spring 2009

Excursion	Type	Date
Bremen Treasure Hunt and Beck's Brewery	Visit	31.01.
Mercedes Benz factory	Visit	10.02.
Berlin Excursion	Course Excursion	12.02.-15.02.
Concentration Camp and Documentation Center Memorial Bergen-Belsen	Visit	27.02.
Emigration Center Bremerhaven	Visit	28.02
Bremen Parliament	Visit	13.03.
Cologne Excursion	Course Excursion	20.03-22.03.
German Movie Night "Good bye Lenin"	On campus event	26.03.
Brussels Excursion	Course Excursion	14.04.-17.04.
St. Petersburg Excursion	Course Excursion	29.04.-03.05.
Radio Bremen	Visit	07.05.
EADS European Aeronautic Defence and Space Company	Visit	15.05.
Werder Bremen football team	Visit	16.05.
Farewell BBQ with Host Families	On campus event	29.05.

Appendix 3: Evaluation Questionnaires (2008 program)

3.1. EVALUATION FORM STUDY ABROAD

In order for us to continually improve our programs/services, please take a few moments to answer the following questions. Circle the number that most closely matches your opinion. If you would like to make additional comments, please do so on the last page of this evaluation form. You may also make notes to specific points, by referring to the numbers of the respective questions/points.

(Before) Arriving at Jacobs University	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
1. The information I received from the Office for Academic Affairs prior to my arrival supplied me with all the information I needed to prepare my study abroad.	1	2	3	4	5	
2. The information I received from Lafayette College prior to my arrival supplied me with all the information I needed to prepare my study abroad.	1	2	3	4	5	
3. My questions were answered satisfactorily by the Office for Academic Affairs prior to departing for Bremen.	1	2	3	4	5	
4. The staff of the Office for Academic Affairs was always readily available to answer my questions, help me settle in, provide me with information, and help me solve unforeseen problems.	1	2	3	4	5	
5. It was helpful to have student advisors to show us around campus and the colleges, and to introduce us to the Jacobs community.	1	2	3	4	5	
6. The Orientation Days were helpful and gave me a good overview of what Jacobs University is about.	1	2	3	4	5	
7. The Orientation Days helped me complete all necessary paper work.	1	2	3	4	5	
8. Overall, the O-Days and the first meeting with the Office for Academic Affairs equipped me with necessary tools and information to successfully settle at Jacobs University.	1	2	3	4	5	

During the Semester	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
9. I enjoyed the Bremen City Tour in the beginning of February.	1	2	3	4	5	
10. I enjoyed the excursion to the German Emigration Center.	1	2	3	4	5	

3.2. EVALUATION OF EXCURSIONS SPRING 2008

Organizers: Office for Academic Affairs and



To continually improve our programs and services, please take a few moments to answer the following questions about the Lafayette College Visiting Program Excursions. Circle the number that most closely matches your opinion.

General	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Receiving all excursion dates at the beginning of the semester allowed me to plan my stay in Germany well.	1	2	3	4	5
Receiving an itinerary of the excursions a week before the departure was sufficient.	1	2	3	4	5
The excursions were well aligned with the content of the German Politics and Culture course.	1	2	3	4	5
The German Politics and Culture course prepared me for meetings/discussions with official representatives in Berlin and Brussels.	1	2	3	4	5
The excursions gave me a good impression of the politics, history and culture in Germany and its neighboring countries.	1	2	3	4	5
The number of excursions was appropriate.	1	2	3	4	5
The excursions should remain a mandatory component of the Lafayette Visiting Program at Jacobs University.	1	2	3	4	5
The excursions introduced me to cities of my interest (relevant?).	1	2	3	4	5
I enjoyed the traditional dinners on the first evening of each excursion.	1	2	3	4	5
The spare time I had during the excursions was sufficient.	1	2	3	4	5
The personal costs that occurred to me during the excursions were maintainable.	1	2	3	4	5

Berlin: Feb. 14 – 17, 2008	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
The itinerary handed out upon departure was useful.	1	2	3	4	5	
The duration of the excursion was appropriate.	1	2	3	4	5	
The number of program points during the excursion was appropriate.	1	2	3	4	5	
I had sufficient spare time.	1	2	3	4	5	
The quality of the accommodation at A&O Hostel was good (furnishing, service, cleanliness, breakfast, etc.).	1	2	3	4	5	
The number of people per room was appropriate.	1	2	3	4	5	
I enjoyed the following:						
Guided city tour by bus	1	2	3	4	5	
Typical dinner at "Neumann's" restaurant	1	2	3	4	5	
Visit to the Paul-Löbe-Haus with discussion with members of parliament	1	2	3	4	5	
Visit to the Jewish Museum	1	2	3	4	5	
German Opera: Die Zauberflöte	1	2	3	4	5	
Technical Museum	1	2	3	4	5	
Pergamonmuseum	1	2	3	4	5	
The Story of Berlin Museum	1	2	3	4	5	
Guided tour of the German Reichstag	1	2	3	4	5	
Guided city tour Potsdam with castle Cecilienhof and castle Sanssouci	1	2	3	4	5	

Should the Berlin excursion also be offered to next year's Lafayette group?

☐ Yes ☐ No (please use this space to justify your decision)

Do you have any comments or suggestions for improvement of this excursion?

Brussels: April 25 – 29, 2008	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
The itinerary given upon departure was useful.	1	2	3	4	5	
The duration of the excursion was appropriate.	1	2	3	4	5	
The number of program points during the excursion was appropriate.	1	2	3	4	5	
I had sufficient spare time.	1	2	3	4	5	
The quality of the accommodation was good (furnishing, service, cleanliness, breakfast, etc.).	1	2	3	4	5	
I enjoyed the following:						
Visit to the Permanent Mission of the Free Hanseatic City of Bremen in the EU	1	2	3	4	5	
Typical dinner at the Grande Place	1	2	3	4	5	
Visit to the European Commission (Committee Meeting Environment, Health and Labor)	1	2	3	4	5	
Meeting with Karin Joens, MEP	1	2	3	4	5	
Guided City Tour	1	2	3	4	5	
Visit to the Permanent Mission of the Federal Republic of Germany in the EU	1	2	3	4	5	
Museum for Musical Instruments	1	2	3	4	5	
Royal Museum of Fine Arts Belgium	1	2	3	4	5	
Autoworld	1	2	3	4	5	
Guided tour of Antwerp	1	2	3	4	5	

Do you feel this excursion should also be offered to next year's Lafayette group?

☐ Yes ☐ No (please use this space to justify your decision)

Do you have any comments or suggestions for improvement of this excursion?

Krakow: May 11 – 13, 2008	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
The itinerary given upon departure was useful.	1	2	3	4	5	
The duration of the excursion was appropriate.	1	2	3	4	5	
The number of program points during the excursion was appropriate.	1	2	3	4	5	
I had sufficient spare time.	1	2	3	4	5	
The quality of the accommodation was good (furnishing, service, cleanliness, breakfast, etc.).	1	2	3	4	5	
The number of people per room was appropriate.	1	2	3	4	5	
I enjoyed the following:						
Guided city tour	1	2	3	4	5	
Traditional welcome dinner	1	2	3	4	5	
Guided tour of the Wavel	1	2	3	4	5	
Visit to Collegium Maius, Jagiellonian University	1	2	3	4	5	
Talks at Collegium Novum, Jagiellonian University	1	2	3	4	5	

Do you feel this excursion should also be offered to next year's Lafayette group?

☐ Yes ☐ No (please use this space to justify your decision)

Do you have any comments or suggestions for improvement of this excursion?

Tour Guides (Ferienwerk) + Transport	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
The Ferienwerk tour guides were competent and helpful.	1	2	3	4	5
It was useful to have a Jacobs University Staff/Faculty member accompany the excursions.	1	2	3	4	5
I felt well taken care of and safe during the excursions?	1	2	3	4	5
The means of transportation (bus) was adequate.	1	2	3	4	5
The bus was comfortable and clean.	1	2	3	4	5

Which excursion did you enjoy the most?

☐ Berlin ☐ Brussels ☐ Krakow

Did you travel to any cities on your own?

☐ Yes ☐ No If yes, please list these cities.

Do you recommend visits to other cities as part of the Lafayette excursion program?

☐ Yes ☐ No If yes, please list these cities.

Please use this space for additional comments or suggestions for improvement?

If you were satisfied with the Excursion Program, please state here a short testimonial, which the Office for Academic Affairs could use to advertise the Program to other incoming students from Lafayette e.g. via our website.

Home University Major:	Class of 20__
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Thank you for your feedback!

Appendix 4: Course syllabus “German Politics and Culture”

Time: Thursday, 2:15-5:00 pm
West Hall 1

Dr. Antonia Gohr
Franziska Deutsch

Syllabus: German Politics and Culture

The aim of this course is to familiarize students with various aspects of German society, its politics, history, and culture. The course will focus upon in-class discussions of readings and events and student presentations.

In addition to the course, day or weekend excursions will be offered by Jacobs University.

5 February	Introduction
12 - 15 February	<i>Excursion to Berlin</i>

Historical Background

19 February	Historical legacy I: From the Weimar Republic to World War II
26 February	Historical legacy II: From the post-war period to German unification
27 February	<i>Excursion: Concentration Camp Bergen-Belsen</i>

Institutions and Structure of Government

5 March	Germany's political system: The institutions and structure of government; political parties and elections
12 March	Germany's federalism: Structures and interdependencies
13 March	<i>Excursion to Bremen Parliament (Bürgerschaft)</i>

Culture and Society

19 March	Germany's political culture: Attitudes, values and participation – different than in the United States?
26 March	Political culture(s) in East and West Germany: Two peoples in one nation? <i>7:00 p.m. Movie Night: Good bye Lenin</i>
20 – 22 March	<i>Excursion to Cologne</i>

Germany and the EU

2 April	Germany and the European Union
6 – 13 April	Spring Break
14 – 17 April	<i>Excursion to Brussels</i>

Policy Example: Welfare Systems

23 April	Welfare systems: Germany and the United States
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St. Petersburg - Russia

24 April	<i>St. Petersburg – Preparation Meeting</i>
29 April – 3 May	<i>Excursion to St. Petersburg</i>

Media System

7 May	Germany's media system <i>Visit to Radio Bremen</i>
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Concluding Remarks

14 May	Concluding remarks
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