

“Connecting the Spring Term Abroad Experience to the Fall Term, and Beyond”



**A WINTER ACADEMY SESSION FOR FACULTY
AND STAFF
DECEMBER 13, 2011**

Why are we talking about this?



- The extremely high quality of our Spring Term Abroad courses—a need, perhaps, to make as much of these great learning experiences as we can.
- The question: what happens to our students **AFTER** the STA experience?
- What **SHOULD** happen . . . if anything?

There is already a lot going on, as these presentations will show.

The Contexts of these Issues



- Should there be more connection of Spring Term (Abroad) to Fall Term? What are the opportunities here? What are the possibilities?
- Behind this, a larger question: what is the relationship between the Spring Term experience and the longer terms?
- (See our Fall Academy session on “Winter Term preparation for the STA experience” – this is an extension of that same question.)

Erich Uffelmann on his Art in the Netherlands course



- A 3-credit winter course, followed by 4-credit spring course – several students after course have done summer internship at Institute in Netherlands; summer research with Professor Uffelmann and with Pat Hobbs and Ron Fuchs in Reeves Center and other museums; students go to grad school in art history, museum studies, collaboration with colleague at Art Institute of Chicago; brought speakers to campus, students attend.
- A question: Can we ask students to do more without pay, credit, research, etc.? ~ The concern: our students are so stretched and occupied that they tend to lose focus.

Bill Connelly on his Washington Term Program



- 25th year of Washington Term!
- Fall selection, begin internship search; winter orientation program; 6-week spring term, summer internships – virtually a year-long program already.
- Many stay for summer, search for additional internships. Prior students are valuable resource for the next year's group, or for upper-level courses the next year on Congress, Presidency, Media, etc.
- Alums of program/W&L have been featured speakers at W&L public events, spoken to students, have worked in White House, Congress, think tanks, party organizations, media outlets, and other offices
- Also W&L's Mock Convention: student chairs are sometimes alums of Wash Term
- Senior theses sometimes follow; Model U.N., a program with Rockbridge County High School; speakers from DC who do well with Washington Term are then brought to campus for lectures or stints as executives-in-residence
- Useful for ongoing faculty research

Kathleen Olson-Janjic on her Art in Italy course



- “Drawing Italy” has been a program since 1999
- Students must create an art-work series that will be completed and then exhibited during Parents’ Weekend in the ensuing fall term, which includes a reception: students show off work, audience (including parents) sees what was produced
- Exhibition also recruits others for the program—keeps program running strong
- A few students begin a project in winter term, elaborate it in spring term, ongoing work in summer and fall into honor’s thesis
- Carry-over into studio art classes for students in the succeeding year (s)
- Reunion dinners at professor’s house and other get-togethers, especially for sophomores who have 2 full years left at W&L; a bonding unique at W&L—affects social structures at campus in positive ways

Suzanne Keen on the new International Education categories



- The new certificate of international immersion, a transcript notation for graduating seniors who have an intensive int'l experience: internships, full-term abroad or year abroad in fall or winter of jr/sr year
- Especially apt for students who start early with an abroad experience, such as an STA experience
- Seniors will present int'l experience portfolios
- STA directors can play a role in helping students develop immersion plans

Marc Conner on his Spring Term in Ireland Program



Spring Term in Ireland in 2000, 2002, 2005, 2007, 2010, and coming up in 2012 ~ What I've done with students after:

- Year-long honor's theses in 2001, 2003 with students from ST Ireland, part of what led to our current capstone courses
- Individual honor's theses with students (2011)
- Capstone seminars (2008)
- RE Lee research group in summer of 2010
- Semester-long independent study projects with students, most recently in 2010-11
- Took 2010 group to view a new play by Irish playwright Marina Carr at UVA in fall of 2010
- Film viewings in years following trip

Where to go from here?



- What other ideas, models, possibilities are there for wrapping the STA experience into the fall and winter terms to follow?
- What are the benefits of this? What might be the drawbacks?
- Do formal programs work best? Or informal gatherings?
- Other thoughts?