
Campus Collaboration Campaign

*A joint 1998-1999 project of
NAFSA: Association of International Educators,
Mobility International USA (MIUSA),
The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the United States Department of State,
and the Association on Higher Education And Disability (AHEAD).*

*Report compiled by the National Clearinghouse on Disability and Exchange,
a project managed by Mobility International USA and sponsored by
the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the United States Department of State
that seeks to increase the participation of people with disabilities in the full range
of international educational opportunities. NAFSA and AHEAD are members of
the National Clearinghouse on Disability and Exchange's Roundtable Consortium.*

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The **Campus Collaboration Campaign**, an initiative of NAFSA: Association of International Educators, Mobility International USA (MIUSA), the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the United States Department of State, and the Association on Higher Education And Disability (*AHEAD*), asked representatives from education abroad and disabled student services offices at colleges and universities across the United States to meet and collaborate in order to increase cooperative and innovative efforts of study abroad and disabled services offices on campuses. This booklet is the result of the campaign.

Over 40 schools of higher education participated and broke new ground in bringing together these two campus offices; their exciting and creative ideas range from very simple communication goals to more complex interaction and program design. These suggestions offer many ways to both increase the numbers of students with disabilities in international exchange and to better serve those students already participating.

Recruiting Students with Disabilities for Education Abroad

- *In Junior & Senior High Schools:*

Publicize and develop interest in education abroad opportunities for students with disabilities in junior and senior high schools via community outreach and visits;

Encourage preparation for an education abroad experience through educational workshops for high school teachers and students that promote second language skills and cultural learning.

- *In Disabled Student Services Orientation:*

Discuss education abroad opportunities as part of the routine intake consultation;

Build Awareness of education abroad possibilities at the beginning of college students' academic careers by having the Education Abroad office do a brief presentation at the Disabled Student Services fall orientation each year;

Include an education abroad interest form in the intake materials for students who enroll with the disabled student service office;

Provide the students with the opportunity to immediately complete the interest form and then forward it to the Education Abroad Office (the fact that the student has a disability should not be disclosed unless the student desires this);

Follow up to offer the student encouragement to reach their initial goals.

- *In General Student Orientation:*

Announce education abroad programs during freshman orientation and include education abroad information in the general student handbook;

Provide information on international service opportunities for all students if service learning is a requirement at the institution;

Recruiting Students with Disabilities for Education Abroad in General Student Orientation (cont'd)

Ensure that all students know that accessibility information for overseas programs is available in the education abroad office so they can find the information they need to make an informed decision;

Include information about education abroad programs offered by other universities or organizations.

- ***At Education Abroad and International Events:***

Promote education abroad events at disabled student services through flyers, posters and announcements;

Involve any interested students with disabilities in international clubs to facilitate international interests;

Highlight information and provide displays during international week about programs to support disabled students worldwide.

To Develop Interest in Education Abroad:

Encourage students with disabilities to develop interests in education abroad by allowing them to audit language or cultural classes related to their country of interest;

Promote the value of education abroad for career development by working with the Career Center; include this information when advising students with disabilities;

Offer international opportunities when students with or without disabilities are on any type of workforce recruitment program;

Emphasize the edge that education abroad gives in graduate, medical and law school applications and in future careers;

Provide short-term study abroad options to accommodate and attract students who might not have the financial resources or confidence to attempt a longer study abroad experience. Students having positive experiences in short-term exchanges often choose to go on to longer programs later.

To Work Towards Increased Collaboration Between Disabled Student Services and Education Abroad Offices

- *In Simple Ways:*

Attend each other's staff meetings each quarter to discuss issues, set strategies, review results and propose new ideas;

Improve communication between both offices via e-mail;

Provide education abroad promotional materials for the disabled student services office;

Include education abroad information and articles in disabled services mailings and newsletters and in the Disabled Student Services handbook;

Offer a joint department bulletin board that includes information on both disabled student services and education abroad opportunities;

Share professional network information between both offices to educate about current field trends.

- *By Cross-Training Staff:*

Inform disabled student services staff about education abroad options so they can be better informed when encouraging their students;

Educate the education abroad office staff about various disabilities and the nature of the on-campus accommodations that are typically made for students with disabilities;

Build Awareness of useful resources available like the University of New Orleans' European, Canadian and U.S. universities' accessibility guidebooks;

Train the education abroad staff to use a TTY to ensure equal access by people with hearing impairments;

Educate the education abroad advisors on how to talk with students about disability issues.

To Work Towards Increased Collaboration Between Disabled Student Services and Education Abroad Offices (cont'd)

- *By Working Together To:*

Sponsor a session or program on education abroad experiences during Disability Awareness Week;

Discuss multicultural /international issues as they pertain to people with disabilities;

Create a panel of students with and without disabilities who have participated in education abroad programs to share the situation of people with disabilities in various countries;

Encourage students with disabilities to consider studying in another country by having other students with disabilities who have been abroad discuss the preparations they did to ensure a successful experience;

Publicize programs through the college administration and faculty for support and recruitment;

Coordinate and lead education abroad and disabled student services tours jointly by utilizing staff from both offices;

Design a department that is responsible for both disabled student services and education abroad within the division of student services;

Identify the education abroad program that the student is interested in first, then contact the program director to discuss the student's needs;

Gather international students with and without disabilities to provide insight about the culture, society, attitudes, environment and facilities in various countries;

Facilitate clear expectations by setting up meetings with students with disabilities, the education abroad advisor and disabled student services advisor;

Compile statistics every year to record the number of students with disabilities who participate in education abroad programs. Use this information to evaluate if the intervention strategies implemented to increase the number of students with disabilities in education abroad programs are effective;

Network with other colleges or universities in the same state or region to share information and strategies to increase the number of students with disabilities who are participating in education abroad programs;

Coordinate accommodations with the student.

Present a “united team” to ensure students with disabilities are provided with the same opportunities as non-disabled students.

- ***By Sharing Resources:***

Develop sections on both offices’ websites on the topic of disabilities and education abroad; make specific reference to publications that address education abroad opportunities, accessibility overseas and travel needs for students with disabilities;

Provide more books and references for students with disabilities regarding program options;

Design a resource guide for students with disabilities who participate in education abroad programs. This could be an on-going project to provide updated contact names, resources, general hints and suggestions for making the education abroad experience successful;

Link education abroad websites to disability resources and information, disability services websites to education abroad sites and link both to Mobility International USA/National Clearinghouse on Disability and Exchange’s website;

Include information and resources for students with disabilities during the Education Abroad Fair;

Provide additional publicity materials to the Disabled Students Services office in the form of posters or brochures offering greater visibility of education abroad programs;

To Connect Students with Disabilities with other Students Involved in Education Abroad:

Pair students with disabilities interested in studying in a particular country with international students with disabilities who can share information about their country and culture;

Develop a mentoring program that pairs students with disabilities with students who have already participated in an education abroad program;

Invite students with disabilities interested in education abroad to an education abroad information session. Have students with disabilities who have participated in education abroad programs share about their experience abroad;

Provide an opportunity for the students to get to know each other;

Create small groups and role play specific scenarios where the student considering going abroad presents his or her needs for accommodation and these are interpreted through the experience of the student who has studied in that host country.

To Share and Publicize Experiences of Education Abroad Returnees:

Encourage all students, including those with disabilities, to participate in education abroad returnee activities;

Provide information about returning education abroad students with disabilities' experiences on the disabled student services website, listserv, newsletter and in the peer mentor program ;

Expect all students, including students with disabilities, to write an article and make a presentation about their education abroad experience once they return to publicize successful experiences;

Publicize any returning disabled education abroad student's experience in local newspapers and the school paper;

Create space on websites for students to share experiences, journals, thoughts and ideas.

To Ensure Inclusion, Accessibility and Accommodation:

Share access information and other ideas by developing a listserv discussion group;

Ensure that public programs on education abroad are held in accessible locations;

Provide inclusive information and language in all education abroad brochures and materials;

Publicize TTY numbers and international access symbols on education abroad promotional materials;

Highlight the successful experiences of people with disabilities;

Provide accommodations at all recruiting and informational meetings: sign language interpreter, alternative formatted materials (in Braille, large print, on disc, etc.). All presentations should be provided in a variety of modalities to meet the needs of students with disabilities;

Target students with disabilities by using inclusive language and photos of people with disabilities;

Utilize a step-by-step flow-chart that can be individualized for each student with a disability. Clearly outline the steps that the student may need to achieve to qualify and prepare for an education abroad program: foreign language requirements, required coursework or GPA, financial needs, personal assistant needs, care plans, auxiliary aids, transportation and accessibility issues;

Develop a brochure outlining procedures to obtain disability-related accommodations and an evaluation form on the accommodations provided;

Create a support plan for while the student is studying abroad; plan for all equipment needs, repairs and medications overseas;

Identify simple to elaborate adaptations with the assistance of disabled student services and the student;

Invite some students with disabilities to be involved in planning new education abroad programs and to help with recruiting;

Collaborate with other colleges or universities in the same state or region to share information and strategies to include students with disabilities in education abroad programs.

To Identify Funding Sources:

Investigate scholarships specifically for students with disabilities to study abroad;

Establish monetary grants to cover some of the expenses related to accommodation needs such as personal assistants or sign language interpreters;

Approach the Student Affairs Office or the college foundation to set up a yearly monetary grant for a student with a disability to participate in an education abroad program;

Target corporate sponsors, the Mayor's Committee for the Employment of People with Disabilities, Rotary, Kiwanis and other local groups to fund scholarship money for students with disabilities to participate in education abroad programs;

Train fellow students to be personal care assistants in exchange for reducing their cost for the program, to supplement other personal assistant services.

To Build International Partnerships:

Be proactive and approach existing and new overseas partners about the placement of students with disabilities; educate them on disability and accommodation requirements;

Locate support contacts in the host country in advance and coordinate a joint support team, including people from the host country, by using the international *AHEAD* directory;

Include in the team any personal assistants, sign language interpreters or others who are needed to assist the student in being successful in their education abroad program;

Develop a mutual informal contract to foster future relations and support mechanisms;

Work with overseas partners to overcome stereotypes and fears regarding students with disabilities and to identify resources in-country;

Ensure that all new partnerships established are open to all students; establish a checklist to determine how well an international program is accommodating students with disabilities. New partners should complete the checklist; the information can become part of the accessibility information available to students;

Be flexible but persistent and determined about accommodating students with disabilities when working with overseas partners;

Establish internship placements with international host institutions that might attract students with disabilities such as training in a disabled student services office;

Identify and educate a specific contact person at every international host institution affiliated with the education abroad office to be the main contact person for a student with a disability attending that institution;

Collaborate with the disabled student services office at overseas partner institutions;

Offer parallel trips for special education teachers with their counterparts in foreign countries;

Develop a peer mentor contact at the receiving institution;

Provide overseas institutions with pamphlets on providing accommodation for a student with a disability.

To Offer Information about Accommodation Issues in other Countries and Cultures:

Obtain access information at the time all new program agreements are signed;

Be proactive in getting access information regarding existing overseas partners; survey overseas sites;

Compile a database of services and accessibility information regarding international institutions;

Provide any information available on access laws in different countries and program access;

Gather enough information so that students with disabilities can make a fairly realistic assessment of their own needs and the ability of the overseas institution and culture to provide a valuable experience for them;

Share information on adaptive technology and how it might be used in an overseas setting;

To Offer Information about Accommodation Issues in other Countries and Cultures (cont'd)

Prepare the student with as many coping options as possible:

Assist them in developing strong self-advocacy skills;

Supply them with local contacts in the host country;

Practice and role play “what if...” scenarios;

Identify programs which have successfully accommodated students with various disabilities and continually expand information on international sites that have made accommodations for students with disabilities. This, however, should not limit a student’s interest in other programs nor cause students to only be funneled into certain programs;

Research information on the cultural perspectives about people with disabilities in the host country;

Be Aware that words associated with accommodation and accessibility issues can vary in meaning in different countries and cultures;

Develop a top ten list of the most important things that should be known about the host country from the perspective of the student’s specific disability;

Eliminate barriers such as fear on the part of students with disabilities of being visible and vulnerable in a foreign country by providing information, strategies and assistance as needed.

To Foster Good Communication:

Ensure that students have a choice of education abroad programs; do not steer students towards certain programs that have accommodated students with disabilities in the past;

Communicate well about accommodation needs; consultation with the disabled student services advisor can help with coordinating accommodations. The student should be considered the expert of his or her own needs; the disabled student services office should only be contacted if the student desires this;

Create an environment that encourages students with disabilities to be proactive in discussing their accommodation needs early enough to successfully plan for them in the education abroad program;

Provide a sense of sincere willingness and openness on the part of the education abroad advisor to work with students with disabilities to accommodate their needs and clearly communicate with the overseas site director.

Contact Mobility International USA/The National Clearinghouse on Disability and Exchange for More Ideas and Assistance on:

Connecting alumni from MIUSA/NCDE with your own students with disabilities who are interested in a particular country or program. Members of MIUSA's Peer-to-Peer Alumni Network can provide first-hand accounts of their own experiences overseas;

Obtaining accessibility information regarding overseas sites;

Leading a Campus Collaboration Campaign on *your* campus;

Permitting students with disabilities who attend schools and other overseas programs to earn academic credit by conducting surveys regarding their site's accessibility;

Acquiring any of our publications or videos concerning international exchange for people with disabilities including our book *A World of Options: A Guide to International Exchange, Community Service and Travel for Persons with Disabilities* or our award-winning, free journal, *A World Awaits You*;

Providing scholarship and financial aid possibilities through our website and financial aid information sheet;

Utilizing the NCDE's free information and referral service via phone, e-mail, mail or website. The information specialists at NCDE will custom-tailor a list of exchange programs based on the interests of the person inquiring.

Or visit the MIUSA/NCDE website at www.miusa.org and contact MIUSA about linking your programs' website to the NCDE site.

Participating Schools

The National Clearinghouse on Disability and Exchange would like to thank the staff of the disabled student services and the education abroad offices of these institutions for submitting the Campus Collaboration Campaign questionnaires that made this booklet possible:

American Dream, Inc., Hiroshima, Japan
Augusta State University, Augusta Georgia
Brown University, Providence, Rhode Island
Central Michigan University, Mt. Pleasant, Michigan
Dakota State University, Madison, South Dakota
Dickinson College, Carlisle, Pennsylvania
Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Virginia
Enforex Spanish Language School, Madrid, Spain
Florida Gulf Coast University, Fort Myers, Florida
Georgetown University, Washington DC
George Washington University, Washington DC
Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana
John Hopkins University, Baltimore, Maryland
Kalamazoo College, Kalamazoo, Michigan
Lake Land College, Matton, Illinois
Lawrence University, Appleton, Wisconsin
LeMoyne College, Syracuse, New York
Loyola College, Baltimore, Maryland
Montana State University-Bozeman, Bozeman, Montana
Muhlenberg College, Allentown, Pennsylvania
Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio
Oregon State University, Corvallis, Oregon
Scott Community College, Bettendorf, Iowa
South Suburban College, South Holland, Illinois
St. Andrews Presbyterian College, Laurinburg, North Carolina
University of California at San Diego, La Jolla, California
University of Central Lancashire, Preston, Lancashire, England
University of Illinois at Chicago, Chicago, Illinois
University of Maine, Orono, Maine
University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada
University of Miami, Coral Gables, Florida
University of North Carolina at Greensboro, Greensboro, North Carolina
University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon
University of St. Thomas, St. Paul, Minnesota
University of Texas at Austin, Austin, Texas
Utah State University, Logan, Utah
Villanova University, Villanova, Pennsylvania
Wabash College, Crawfordsville, Indiana

Twenty-four of the 38 institutions listed here stated that they have had or currently have students with disabilities participating in education abroad programs.