

Academic Consortium Board

Evaluation of the CIEE Study Center Program at Vesalius College Brussels, Belgium

September 19-24, 2004

INTRODUCTION

The Academic Consortium Board (ACB) of CIEE is pleased to present the following report on the CIEE Study Center Program at Vesalius College, Brussels, Belgium. The report of the site visit team was received by members of the ACB. After review, the ACB accepted the report, and presents it to the Academic Consortium. The "Plan for Program Evaluation" is available at <http://www.ciee.org>.

We wish to make clear at the outset that we greatly value the cooperation of Vesalius College. This report is a review of CIEE's program and not a review or evaluation of Vesalius College as an institution. The review focuses on the program offered by the CIEE Study Center and on the courses offered by CIEE as part of the International Study Program at Vesalius College. In addition, the site visit team has examined CIEE's relations with the host institution and its analysis has been presented to CIEE staff.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The first CIEE program in European studies in Brussels began in January, 1994. Affiliated with the Université Libre de Bruxelles, it was designed to operate in tandem with a fall semester European studies program at the University of Amsterdam. Because few students studied at both sites, separate CIEE Study Centers began operations in fall 1999. In 2002, the program moved from the Université Libre de Bruxelles to Vesalius College, a private university with a largely social science curriculum taught in English.

Although the program was evaluated in 1998, this is the first formal evaluation since the change in host institutions. In general, the review team found the program to be well run, with a very capable on-site staff that is sensitive to the needs of the CIEE students while working to establish good long-term relations with Vesalius College.

The change of hosts allows CIEE to offer more courses taught in English that focus on the study of Belgium and its role in the European Union. Vesalius College students are from many countries (primarily Europe); in class CIEE students are exposed to many different points of view. Both French and Dutch language is available through Vesalius College's affiliation with Vrije Universiteit Brussel and Université Libre de Bruxelles. The change of host institutions makes possible the three current goals of the program:

- to provide opportunities to study European identity, culture and policy-making from a non-U.S. perspective with other international students;
- to offer insights into Belgium and Brussels' unique political, cultural, and linguistic situation in Europe; and
- to enable students to improve their French or Dutch language skills.

The program's goals are being met, though the team has some recommendations aimed at broadening the array of courses that focus on European identity, culture, and policy-making. Teaching methodologies used in the French language classes, as well as the expectations of some language teachers, may be more suitable to European students than those from America. For this reason, CIEE is encouraged to continue sponsoring language teaching symposia in Brussels.

Vesalius College runs an internship program. CIEE students are allowed to participate, though students must have excellent language skills to qualify. Thus, internships requiring English language skills are most likely to be awarded to CIEE students. CIEE may put too much emphasis on internships in its advertising. The number of placements is limited, Vesalius College does not have the resources to develop new ones, and the amount of academic supervision does not appear to meet CIEE's criteria for credit-worthiness.

Students have very adequate access to computer and library facilities. Vesalius College's campus consists of one building that has several classrooms, a computer lab, and administrative offices. It is across the street from the Vrije Universiteit Brussel campus, where an extensive library and two computer labs are located. Many Vesalius College classes are offered in a building located between the two labs, making it convenient for students to visit the labs and the library.

Two types of housing are available: host families and "independent" apartment accommodations. While the students are generally quite happy with their living situations, there was considerable confusion about what constitutes independent accommodation. CIEE needs to more carefully explain what this means in Brussels.

There are now two full-time employees on site – the resident director and the new resident coordinator, who was hired in summer 2004. The new resident coordinator, Daniel Riley, is adjusting very well to his duties and is already considered a great asset to the program by resident director Michelangelo van Meerten. CIEE students are very well served by the resident staff. The team feels that the program is currently well positioned to continue modest growth and to develop a more rigorous academic program that gives qualified students insight into the European Community.

METHODOLOGY

The evaluation site visit team was composed of:

Nancy Stubbs, Director, Study Abroad Programs, University of Colorado at Boulder
(Evaluation Team Chair)

Dr. Neovi Karakatsanis, Assoc. Professor of Political Science, Indiana University South Bend

Dr. Dennis Wiseman, Professor of French, Wofford College

The three members of the site visit team reviewed the history of the program. They studied the course catalog and reviewed course syllabi for program courses; read end-of-session reports; and reviewed statistical information on the participants (numbers, gender, and ethnicity statistics, sending institutions, etc.). They reviewed staff and instructor curriculum vitae. They reviewed the pre-departure orientation handbook and the on-site orientation schedule, student evaluation summaries and all evaluations covering the CIEE Study Center in Brussels. They contacted the top five sending

institutions and another three (a random sampling of sending institutions in the past five years) from the Academic Consortium to learn of their concerns. Finally, they reviewed the CIEE strategic analysis of the program.

In preparation for the site visit, the team chair wrote a memo which was distributed on site by the resident director to Vesalius College faculty who teach classes taken by program participants, inviting these instructors to present comments either in writing or orally during the visit. A similar memo went to all students.

During the three-day site visit, team members visited a sampling of Vesalius College economics, political science, communications, art, and French language classes. The required core course, *Contemporary Europe: The Belgian Experience*, was scheduled to take a field trip to the Belgian Federal Parliament; the evaluation team attended that but did not attend a course lecture. A meeting attended by 29 of the 31 program students was held after the visit to Parliament so the team could talk with students on a more formal basis.

Several meetings with Vesalius College faculty and administrators occurred. The team met with Dean Jean Louis Luyckx and Associate Dean for International Development Pat Costa. A meeting for faculty who teach courses used by the program was held because many of the courses have lectures only on Thursday and Friday. Vesalius College has a for-credit internship program open to qualified CIEE students. The evaluation team visited Dow Jones with Assoc. Dean Costa and the CIEE student chosen for this internship.

Tours of the Vesalius College, Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB), and Université Libre de Bruxelles (ULB) campuses gave the evaluation team a chance to see the classrooms, libraries, computer labs, and lounges/cafeterias available on each of the contiguous campuses used by the students. Several types of housing arrangements were also visited, allowing the team to see typical independent and host family settings. The team met in the CIEE program office, located several blocks from the Vesalius College building. The schedule of the visit is appended at the end of the report.

The site visit team jointly drafted and agreed on recommendations which are made part of this report.

ENROLLMENT STATISTICS

Current enrollment: 31 (fall 04)

Average enrollment: 25 per semester

Highest Recent Enrollment: 35 (spring 05)

Lowest Recent Enrollment: 10 (fall 01)

EVALUATION

In accordance with the Program Evaluation Plan for ACB Program Review, the evaluation report is divided into twelve sections below, corresponding with the terms of reference specified in the plan.

I. Quality of the Academic Activities

Teaching and Assessment

Content Based Courses

Many of the courses available in fall 2004 appear to meet the first goal of the program, namely the study of European identity, culture and policy-making from a non-US perspective. This was particularly encouraging given that previous student evaluations of the program (particularly during spring 2004) indicated that this goal was not fulfilled due to a large number of course cancellations. In those evaluations, students complained that even though the program was advertised as an International Relations/Political Science program, very few such classes were offered. Students this semester have indicated satisfaction with the number and variety of political science, international affairs, economics and history courses offered. The program core course, taught by the Resident Director and offered for the first time during autumn semester 2004, appears to meet the second goal of the program—offering insight into Belgium and Brussels' unique political, cultural and linguistic situation within Europe.

To evaluate the academic content and teaching of the program, the ACB team visited eleven courses offered by Vesalius College and accompanied students on a field trip to the Federal Parliament (a requirement of the CIEE core course). The team also reviewed syllabi for each course and spoke with many of the instructors after class. In all cases the syllabi appeared to be an accurate reflection of course content and the instructors expressed commitment to the program and to CIEE students. Attendance was generally good, with the exception of one course which was poorly attended and to which students arrived late. In most classes attendance sheets were passed out and students were asked to sign in as they arrived (again the only exception to this rule was the one poorly attended course).

CIEE and Vesalius College, in particular, advertise the curriculum and pedagogical techniques as American based and inspired. Faculty in lecture and language courses endeavor to vary the student skills that are called upon – reading, listening comprehension, etc. and this effort to vary pedagogical styles to relate more effectively to student learning styles is commendable. Generally classes begin with a review of material covered in the previous class. While some professors have incorporated an interactive approach into their teaching, others provide copies of lecture notes to students and lecture from these notes, allowing students to ask questions when necessary. Most instructors, however, have incorporated the use of blackboards, overhead slides as well as power point presentations into their teaching. In a number of cases, the use of European newspapers, guest lecturers, small group activities, and student presentations have also been incorporated to facilitate class discussion and to better illustrate concepts and theories. Efforts are clearly being made to engage students in discussion and in critical reflection of course content and this is commendable.

In general, the variety of pedagogical techniques used in the Vesalius classroom is similar to what one might witness in an American university setting. However, as is often the case in American classrooms, the techniques are not always fully developed and used to their full potential. In sum, while no major concerns exist regarding the variety of techniques used, the team nevertheless believes that the faculty (and CIEE and Vesalius) are in a 'neither fish nor fowl' predicament. While the faculty has some experience in teaching in an American environment, they are primarily European and they are teaching an international student body. The Vesalius teaching methodology is at best a hybrid of the European and American. The faculty is making concessions to the American way of doing things but the American students do not always recognize

the efforts that are being made to accommodate them.

As pedagogical techniques vary, so do students' level of engagement, interest and understanding of course content. In a number of classes students appeared to have done their readings, were taking notes and were engaged with the course content, asking and answering questions and reflecting upon the material. As one might expect, however, in other courses students lacked engagement and appeared completely aloof and inattentive. This varied depending on the topic and the teaching-style of the instructor (occasionally instructors made what might be taken by American students as humiliating comments and this, in turn, provoked visible discomfort from the Americans). An important pattern that stood out in several classes visited by the team and which may be particularly important for CIEE students given their gender composition was the following aspect of classroom dynamics: In several classes male students seemed far more engaged than the females; they asked *all* of the questions and answered most of them. In one course in particular the professor seemed to have developed particularly good rapport with the male students but not with the women taking his class.

However it is important to note that a number of instructors also commented that European and Belgian students find American students to be pushy and rude; they tend to interrupt the flow of lecture, ask too many questions, etc. Professors also requested that behavioral expectations in the European classroom (i.e., the perceived impoliteness of sleeping in class, sitting too casually, wearing hats and hoods, calling professors by their first name, etc.) be addressed in either pre-orientation and/or orientation materials.

Recommendations

1. In order for CIEE to sustain and strengthen the program's primary emphasis on politics and international relations, it should suggest to Vesalius that a greater variety of such courses be offered and that more use be made of the city's proximity to key international bodies and organizations through the incorporation of guest lectures and student visits to these sites.
2. CIEE should be sure to include a session on behavioral expectations for students in the classroom during each on-site orientation.

Internships

Two team members also visited an internship site (Dow Jones). The student intern, the RD and Vesalius College's Associate Dean for Institutional Development accompanied them. While one cannot judge the quality of all internships based on one site, it was clear to team members that student interns at this site were not simply engaged in administrative and/or secretarial tasks, but were truly involved in pre-professional training that enhanced their learning experience. The internship emphasized the acquisition and utilization of excellent writing skills, research methods and critical thinking by students. Team members were favorably impressed by the fact that interns at Dow Jones engage in investigative journalism and have been published occasionally (in the Wall Street Journal and in a number of online publications).

Both the Associate Dean for Institutional Development and the internship coordinator emphasized that Vesalius College would like CIEE students to know that they are *not* entitled to internships, which are very competitive in Brussels. Many of the internship opportunities require substantial language competency; CIEE students must understand

that their internship opportunities will be less numerous if they do not possess appropriate linguistic competency.

Students should also know that the internship's sponsor, rather than Vesalius College or its internship coordinator, selects the student interns. According to the internship coordinator, CIEE students often complain about the requirements for internship credit (6-7 page paper and 135 hours of work). This seems to be particularly the case when students' home institutions will not accept the internship for credit. The Vesalius internship coordinator indicated that it would be particularly helpful if CIEE-Portland were to develop an internship form to be used by program students. This form would be completed by the student and signed by his/her advisor, confirming the home institution's willingness to grant credit. If additional work is required by the home institution for such credit, the coordination and supervision of this must be done by someone at the home institution and not a Vesalius supervisor.

Finally, interns meet only once or twice with their Vesalius internship supervisors. Team members do not believe this conforms with CIEE's guidelines for credit-bearing internships. Only pass/fail credit is awarded by Vesalius College, and the Associate Dean for Institutional Development stated that there were no plans to change the amount of supervision provided during the internships. When coupled with the internship coordinator's complaint that CIEE students can be difficult because they feel entitled to internships, but then want to change the requirements, the team questions whether highlighting the internship program in the catalog is in the best interest of either institution. Until Vesalius College has the resources to expand the program, particularly to provide opportunities for students who lack advanced French or Dutch language skills, it might be better to deemphasize this aspect of the program. At the very least, CIEE should carefully consider what students are told about possible internships, making sure that the advertising does not exceed what is truly available.

Vesalius is aware that internships are extremely valued by students. Its administration is fully aware that a shortage of internship opportunities exists. The Associate Dean for Institutional Development indicated that the internship program can and will be expanded in the future but that Vesalius College needs additional time to do this well while continuing to ensure that most internships provide students with quality pre-professional experience.

Recommendations

3. CIEE-Portland staff should develop and provide students with an internship form to be completed and signed by academic advisors at the home institution prior to departure for Brussels. The form would verify the home institution's willingness to give students credit for completed internships.

4. CIEE should review the information provided about internships with Vesalius College to ensure that students are not arriving in Brussels with unrealistic expectations about the scope of placements available and the work that must be accomplished. If internships remain a significant part of the program marketing, an internship form must be developed to inform students and their home institutions of the requirements for completing the internship and the kind of assessment (pass/fail) that will be awarded.

5. CIEE should suggest to Vesalius College that a more sustained program of 'encadrement' for internships be developed and administered by either a student service staff member or the Vesalius internship coordinator.

Language Courses

The team was able to visit four of the Vesalius language courses: Elementary Conversation in French; Intermediate French I; Intermediate French II; Advanced French I. As noted above, pedagogical techniques in classrooms varied, as did students' level of engagement, interest and understanding of course content.

The team is comfortable in praising the instructor who teaches both the Intermediate II and Advanced language courses. She is scrupulous in using French in the classroom, interacts well with students, and brings a high level of personal energy and engagement to the classroom environment. She assiduously calls on all students to get everyone involved at least once in the daily session. She uses literature to illustrate grammar, gives good examples of idiomatic expressions, and generally entertains as many responses as possible from students. The level of the course was linguistically appropriate, demanding and sophisticated but well within the reach of Intermediate level American students. While one might quibble with her pedagogical methodology on some issues (she could speak less herself, draw students out more), she is a good, fundamentally sound language instructor.

In each of the two courses observed, the instructor commented to the students that the course's grammar text was unreliable and was sometimes wrong. Such comments undermine student confidence. It is the least of things to select a reliable language textbook.

The Elementary Conversational French teacher's efforts were heroic but lost for two reasons. Firstly, the students were remarkably indifferent to the course. Five of fourteen came to class without texts, most had not prepared homework, most spoke to her in English with no effort to use French. Secondly, she is targeting the course to students who have some control of French and this group does not have such control. Her methodology was audiovisual at its base but she is not adept at drawing out the potential of video.

The professor of the Intermediate I French course has deservedly received many harsh critical comments from students. She can be abrupt and condescending to students. She is not well organized in class; her grammar examples are needlessly complicated and occasionally inaccurate. The students in the course seemed attentive and capable of relatively advanced language, but they would not answer the professor. One could hear answers under the breath, and the student answers were on-target, but they would not offer them out loud because often the professor would not acknowledge the answer as being correct.

Student evaluations and comments over the past several semesters have suggested that there is some significant difficulty regarding the presentation of the language curriculum at Vesalius, especially in the French language curriculum. One day's visit to a course is by its nature very limited but the team does wish to express some concern about the language program – concern for faculty and methodology and concern for student engagement.

One of the very attractive qualities of the CIEE-Brussels program is that our American students are placed in a truly multinational student population in their Vesalius courses. In 'content' courses, this is surely a wonderful cross-cultural learning opportunity. In language courses however, this mixed population may be a hindrance to student learning. American students are often risk-averse. Frequently their oral skills in a language are less well-developed because they do not like to take chances. International students are, by definition, international. A Spanish student in Vesalius is already functioning in a foreign language – English and the French course that they take is just their 'next' experiment. The international student is accustomed to linguistic experimentation and mistakes are just part of what happens when one tries to speak in another language. The risk-averse American student, coming to an English language college environment, has not made that step.

Several students expressed unhappiness with their placement in the Intermediate language course, saying that they had already covered the 'content' of the course but that they were placed in Intermediate because of less successful results on the oral part of the placement exam. The team recommends that CIEE & Vesalius College study the option of offering either a conversation course (not a grammar course) or a sustained schedule of tutorial hours in French with local students.

The team also feels CIEE should continue to work with Vesalius College to sponsor teaching workshops like the Foreign Language Teacher Education sessions held in Brussels in January 2004. Such meetings, which would have to be underwritten by CIEE, could be used as a vehicle for collaboration between Vesalius College teachers and teachers of French at CIEE sending schools. Besides offering a chance for professional development on both sides, it would benefit students who participate in the program.

Student satisfaction with the language courses offered at Vesalius College is crucial to the success of the CIEE program in Brussels. The team believes most strongly that CIEE should not consider eliminating the requirement that all students take a language course while enrolled in CIEE-Brussels. The challenge of language acquisition is an integral part of learning to engage with, cope with, and master an alien environment. Language is the key to culture.

Recommendations

6. CIEE should ask Vesalius College if a new intermediate conversational language course can be created. If this is not feasible, CIEE should consider ways to create the course for its own students.
7. CIEE should approach Vesalius College to see if additional French language teaching colloquia could be offered. Like the workshop offered in January 2004, a colloquium would bring instructors from Academic Consortium schools to Brussels to compare methodologies with Vesalius College teachers.

Appropriateness of Academic Offerings

The team is concerned about the qualifications of some Vesalius faculty to teach their assigned courses. Specifically, while few to no students complained that political science course(s) were scarce this semester, team members noted that there were

relatively few political science instructors on the faculty. As a result, too many political science courses are being taught by historians (although one historian appears to be a master teacher and highly regarded by students), economists and others. In fact, this appeared to be a general trend—where a professor of French, for example, taught an art history course—and was of considerable concern to the team.

Many political science students are attracted to this program because of its location and its proximity to a number of important EU and other institutions. Team members would like to see a greater number of such courses offered and taught by political scientists. The team suggests CIEE analyze the list of course offerings as well as the academic credentials of the faculty offering those courses and encourage Vesalius to hire qualified faculty to teach them. By encouraging Vesalius to better develop its international affairs curriculum in this manner, CIEE would be in a better position to highlight this program as an important component that fills a specific student niche market, which, as noted above, the teams finds to be the most exciting aspect of the program.

The team finds, however, that Vesalius is probably not in a position to offer a greater number of courses taught by the appropriate faculty over the short- to medium-term. One political scientist, for example, informed the team that she hears many student complaints about class enrollment in a course she offers on the UN, which, with 39 students, exceeds Vesalius' maximum course enrollment. As chair of the International Affairs Curriculum Committee, she personally expressed a willingness to develop and offer additional political science courses, and she asked CIEE to consider administering a survey to its top sending institutions to help identify courses they would like offered. Despite this instructor's genuine enthusiasm and commendable intentions, team members do not find it realistic that Vesalius will be able to sufficiently increase the number and variety of courses offered over the short-term given its relatively small size and the even smaller number of full-time faculty (approximately ten) at the College. This was confirmed in a later discussion with the Dean of the College who indicated to the team that no immediate plans exist to increase the number of classes.

Recommendations

8. The team recommends that CIEE suggest to Vesalius that it begin to incrementally strengthen its political science content over the medium-term.
9. CIEE should consider revising its program goals to better reflect the academic capabilities of Vesalius College, placing a greater emphasis on economics and business in its student recruitment materials.

II. Quality and Appropriateness of Services

Pre-departure services

The Fall 2004 program catalog is generally well-written. It provides an adequate overview of the program, but several discrepancies were noted between the program description and the reality in Brussels. Most notably, the core course was not mentioned. The evaluation team is aware that the decision to require a core course was made after the 2004-05 catalog was published in October 2003. None of the students commented that they were taken by surprise by the requirement, so adequate notice appears to have been given after students were accepted.

A majority of the students feel that cost estimates in the CIEE materials are greatly underestimated. Since some students pay tuition to their U.S. private institutions and receive a stipend for food and personal expenses from that tuition, they were distressed to see that the cost of living seems much higher than the catalog's estimates. They cannot convince their schools to release more funds unless the costs are revised. This is also true of students dependent on financial aid.

A comparison of expense listed in the fall 2004 and the fall 2005 catalogs shows no increase in the estimated costs. This is the case in spite of the fact that the U.S. dollar has lost about 6% of its value against the Euro between August 2003 and August 2004 (when the 2004 and 2005 catalogs were published). Further, the CIEE web site, which could be easily updated, shows the same estimates as the catalogs. CIEE should review published cost estimates 3-4 months before the program begins and inform program participants if those estimates have increased or decreased.

Many students commented that the start date changed and that academic year students did not know when the program ends in May, causing difficulty in purchasing plane tickets. The evaluation team is aware that the host institution does not set dates for the academic year until much later than American universities. Students, however, are not aware of this and were apparently not adequately informed of the reasons for the delay in getting academic year dates. In fact, the CIEE web site still does not show the dates for the spring semester program.

While students felt the CIEE staff in Portland was friendly and willing to help, there were additional complaints about the information received and the timeliness of responses. The most serious issues mentioned were:

- Descriptions of Vesalius College. Students felt the institution was not accurately described, leading them to believe that it is more integrated with VUB than it is. In particular, students wish they had known how small the College is. This is not necessarily a negative trait; small class sizes, the international nature of faculty and students (for example, in a class of 21 students visited by the team, eleven different countries were represented), the diverse environment, etc. can actually be appealing to students. But they should clearly be aware that Vesalius College is an independent, private entity with a loose affiliation with VUB.
- Confusion about what courses are actually available each semester. Students should be warned that they need to have more courses evaluated by home school advisors if the schedule of courses sent late in the semester (in April 2004, for instance) is not completely accurate. While fewer classes were cancelled this semester than in the past, it was still a complaint shared by most of the students we interviewed.
- The timeliness of response to emails was a source of complaints, though it was not possible to determine in the student meeting if the complaints were reasonable or not.

Since student evaluations from the past 3 years have expressed the most dissatisfaction with services provided by CIEE in New York or Portland, the consistent pattern suggests that more needs to be done to accurately describe the program and to provide timely

information about program dates and course offerings.

Recommendations

10. Review published cost estimates 3-4 months before the program begins and inform program participants if those estimates have increased or decreased.

11. Either list program dates in a much more timely manner or make sure students are informed as quickly as possible before the program begins. Update the web site (both the catalog pages and the orientation materials) as soon as calendars are set.

12. Routinely inform students of the possibility that Vesalius College might add or delete courses even after the “final” list is produced.

13. See the recommendations for adjusting the program catalog in section X. and consider adopting the recommendations in the next update.

Orientation

There are two orientation sessions in Brussels, one organized by CIEE and one run by Vesalius College. In September 2004, students arrived on Sunday and spent Monday and Tuesday in a “CIEE only” orientation, joining the regular Vesalius orientation program for new students Wednesday through Friday. On Saturday, Vesalius College had a tour of Brussels (optional except for students taking a specific art course). The orientation ended with a CIEE field trip to Waterloo and Villers-la-Ville on Sunday. Three 1.5-hour “survival French” lessons were conducted on Monday, Tuesday, and Friday.

Students stayed at a centrally-located hostel from Sunday through Wednesday, moving to their assigned housing locations on Thursday. The three institutions are located on the eastern side of the city; students learn quickly how to use public transportation to go from central Brussels to campus.

In general, students were happy with the on-site orientations. There were some complaints about having material repeated, but there is no easy solution to this problem. The CIEE orientation cannot be scheduled after the general Vesalius orientation; it ends on Saturday and classes begin the following Monday. Since it is important to have an orientation specifically for the CIEE students, there is no choice but to do it first and to repeat some of the general information. The resident director is aware of the complaint and does his best to avoid introducing material that will be repeated, but CIEE has no control over what Vesalius will present each semester.

Resident Director Michelangelo van Meerten included an article in the orientation packet about aggressive behavior toward women by some males in Brussels. These behaviors - catcalls, brushing or touching in passing, suggestions about sexual activities, etc - while fairly common in some cultures, are not so common in this part of Europe. The city's international population is blamed for the problem. Dr. van Meerten reports that he has had difficulty finding a female to talk to the students about how to behave in these situations. He told us that women he has asked to speak to the group about how to best deal with unwanted comments and gestures have not been self-reflective about their own reactions to such situations and thus have found it difficult to advise American female students. The team commends Dr. van Meerten and Resident Coordinator Daniel Riley for attempting to address this issue before a serious incident occurs among

program students. We hope they will continue to search for a female who can speak effectively to the students.

The only other complaint heard was that students wished they could move to their permanent housing more quickly. This issue will be addressed in section II.D.

Recommendation

14. Continue to talk about the potential for male attentions toward females that will be judged inappropriate by American standards. In particular, continue to search for a female, either a resident of Brussels or perhaps an American, who can present strategies for dealing with the situations that may occur.

Academic Advising

There appear to be fewer problems with academic advising this semester than in the past two years. The evaluation team feels this is primarily because Vesalius College did not have to significantly change the course offerings. Problems that arose in 2003 and spring 2004 because of curriculum revision were not evident in fall 2004. For this reason, only a few students complained about having courses evaluated and approved at their home institutions only to find they were not registered for them when they arrived.

A few students complained that academic questions were not adequately answered by Vesalius College staff. Upon closer examination, the evaluation team found that the nature of the questions, about how courses would count at home, whether they would be considered upper or lower-division, etc., was such that Vesalius College could not respond. When the same questions were addressed to the resident director or resident coordinator, students were completely satisfied.

Concerns about the availability of courses advertised in the program materials have been addressed in sections I and II.B. of this report.

Housing

The program advertises two types of housing: homestays arranged for a limited number of students by Vesalius College staff and independent housing arranged by the CIEE resident staff. While some of the housing is quite near the Vesalius College and VUB campuses, many students live 30-45 minutes from classes and must take public transportation. All housing placements are in the Brussels city limits, and most are concentrated in the southeast portion of the city closest to the universities.

Students expressed several criticisms about housing arrangements. First, many did not understand that "independent housing" in a European city means something different than it would in the U.S. Although the catalog indicates that independent housing may involve sharing "common spaces with landlords," they seemed surprised that they were given a list of rules on the first day and that they lived with adults and often with a family. Many are not living with other students (either American or European), which seemed to surprise the group. In fact, the one apartment that houses five or six program students together was characterized by some as the "ideal" situation.

The landlords' rules appeared to be standard and appropriate; i.e., how and when to use the house phone, if computers are available for student use, whether guests are permitted, access to refrigerators and food, etc. The fact that the students seemed

surprised indicates there is inadequate explanation of European rental arrangements.

The first living situation visited by the evaluation team was described as an independent arrangement. Two CIEE students had separate bedrooms in a house where the landlord and her daughter also lived. The evaluation team was greeted at the door by the landlord, who stayed and talked after the students gave a tour of the house. The arrangement seemed closer to what one might expect with a host family, so the team can understand why the term “independent housing” might be misleading to students.

The team recommends that different terminology be used to describe the alternative to homestays. Perhaps the catalog should say, “Most students will have their own room with a family in an apartment or private home. In some cases, there may be other students in the home as well. Students in these living situations are not expected to interact with the landlord on a daily basis, but will be given access to cooking facilities so they can prepare their own meals. A limited number of homestays for students who wish to have more interaction with a family in Brussels can be arranged by the Vesalius College housing coordinator...”

Many students wished they could be moved to their permanent housing earlier in the orientation period. They felt unsettled during this initial period and could not understand why they could not have a chance to unpack and begin learning how to get back and forth from their residences. At the same time, many complained that they were not given their housing assignments until the day they moved. While they had an intellectual understanding of how the resident director and coordinator make assignments after spending a little time with each student, they were emotionally unsatisfied with the insecurity caused by the process. In spite of these complaints, the evaluation team agrees that the most effective way to successfully place students in housing is the procedure used by the resident staff.

The homestay process differs in two ways: assignments are made by the Vesalius College housing coordinator and students are given the address of their host family several weeks before arriving in Brussels. Students in this situation, therefore, did have the prior notice desired by those who chose independent housing. Several students, however, wished they could have spoken with their families before being assigned. This request was, predictably, made only by the students who were unhappy with the initial housing placement and who eventually asked to be moved.

The only comment that might merit further consideration was that students who decided they were unhappy were told by the Vesalius housing coordinator that they alone were responsible for working out a compromise or ending the arrangement. They felt inadequate to the task without help from someone, so they turned to the CIEE resident staff. The students would prefer that homestay arrangements be made by the CIEE resident staff. The team, however, feels that finding homestays takes so much time that it should be left to Vesalius College. As long as the staff is able to assist the few students that encounter difficulties, the arrangement is sufficient.

In the end all but one student reported complete satisfaction with the housing placement. Given the difficulty in finding adequate housing in a capital city where no student residences are maintained by the host institution, the desired result is being achieved.

Recommendations

15. Use a different term to describe the alternative to homestays and more carefully explain that apartment living in Brussels most often means sharing an apartment with the landlord and/or a family.

16. In the absence of assistance from Vesalius College, the resident director and resident coordinator should make a point of checking with students who are assigned homestays to help them work out any initial problems. This preventative effort may save a good deal of tension and stress later on.

Accommodation of Special Needs

Brussels is not a wheelchair-friendly city. Many streets and sidewalks are paved with cobblestones or other uneven materials. It would be difficult to use the Metro system. The classroom buildings all seem to have elevators, but some are small and would be difficult to use. The evaluation team did not see anyone on the ULB or VUB campuses in a wheelchair. The building that houses Vesalius College has narrow hallways that would make maneuvering difficult.

Associate Dean Costa said that some accommodation was possible for students with mild learning disabilities, though it appears that this is unusual. Services for sight- and hearing-impaired students would be problematic. The evaluation team suggests that students with special needs get in touch with CIEE early so that accommodations may be made.

Other

One member of the team required medical attention during the visit. The VUB student medical clinic was utilized and proved to be very adequate. The attending physician was efficient and completely accurate in his diagnosis of the problem. The level of health care available in Brussels is of the highest quality, and the coordination between the VUB student clinic and the Belgian health care system is excellent.

III. Quality and Appropriateness of the Students Who Participate

The program accepts students with a 2.75 grade point average. In fall 2004, 31 students from 17 different institutions are on the program. This enrollment pattern of students from many different colleges is typical. It appears that students who attend the program are qualified and have chosen Brussels for the right reasons.

The resident director reports that the fall semester students are generally more academically serious than those who come in the spring. This is not atypical for European programs; the spring semester often attracts students more interested in traveling and having "a European experience" because travels begun during the semester can be continued over the summer.

Faculty and administrators at Vesalius College expressed satisfaction with the quality of CIEE students. The overwhelming opinion is that the students enhance the classes they attend. They are willing to engage in classroom discussions and have sufficient background in the subject matter. The majority can write well in English and receive superior assessments for their work. There were no complaints about attendance, though the resident director reported that some students (more in the spring) come

determined to choose only those classes that do not meet on Friday to have more time for travel.

In general, Vesalius instructors commented very favorably upon CIEE students. Most faculty members with whom the team met stated that program students were generally no more or less advanced than Belgian or other European students. They found their level of preparation to be adequate and the quality of their writing very good. Many professors commented that American students are far more eager to engage in discussion and debate, to ask questions and to answer other questions when asked to do so. They believe that American students contribute to the diversity of the classroom environment and, in this way, greatly enrich it. However it is important to note that a number of instructors also commented that European and Belgian students find American students to be pushy and rude; they tend to interrupt the flow of lecture, ask far too many questions, etc. Professors also requested that behavioral expectations in the European classroom (i.e., the perceived impoliteness of sleeping in class, sitting too casually, wearing hats and hoods, calling professors by their first name, etc.) be addressed in either pre-orientation and/or orientation materials.

Recommendation

17. Guidelines that clearly define behavioral expectations in the European classroom should be incorporated into pre-orientation and orientation materials as soon as is feasibly possible.

IV. Quality of Facilities

Office and Class space

The CIEE office is adequate for the current size of the program. The space is in three sections: an office with door for the resident director, a small library/meeting space where English-language books, brochures, and notices are kept for the students to use, and an entry area where the resident coordinator has a desk and where a small table is kept. While it would be difficult to have a long meeting for all 31 students this semester, the space is adequate as a meeting space and a place where private counseling can occur. The area is bright, clean, and in building only a few blocks from Vesalius College.

Classroom space is adequate, both at Vesalius College and on the VUB campus. The buildings are clean and well-lit. Classrooms are set up for overhead projectors and PowerPoint presentations. Many Vesalius College classes are taught on the VUB campus across the street. Unlike many urban campuses, VUB has lots of green space between buildings, copy centers, libraries, and lounges in a central location. The ULB campus, about a half mile from VUB, has fewer lawns and gardens, but is compact and easy to access. The buildings are older but appear to be well maintained.

Library

CIEE students have access to the VUB library, with open stacks and a collection that has extensive English-language holdings, and the larger ULB library with closed stacks and a collection mostly in French. Both libraries have computer centers with internet access, and both allow the students to search interlibrary loan systems to find additional resources, which can be available in 2-3 days. Library hours, while not as extensive as in the U.S., are not terribly restrictive now that classes have begun. The team agreed

that the students have adequate library facilities that should be sufficient for most of their needs. However, several faculty members requested that students be better-informed about the size of the library, which by American standards is relatively small. They also suggested that students who have the ability to access electronic journals and other materials at their home institutions while at Vesalius be encouraged to do so.

Recommendation

18. Pre-departure materials should better inform students about the size of the VUB library and encourage students to access electronic materials at their home institutions while at Vesalius College.

Computer and e-mail facilities

In spite of complaints in prior semesters about poor computer access, the team found that there are sufficient resources available for no extra cost. Vesalius College has a small computer room with about 10 machines, all connected to the internet. There are computer labs in the ULB and VUB libraries and another lab in the building next to the "D" classroom building at VUB where many Vesalius College courses are held. Access to computers is rarely as easy outside the U.S. as it is in the U.S., but students enrolled in the Brussels program have modern, plentiful resources available to them.

Recommendation

19. Students who own laptop computers should continue to be encouraged to carry them to Europe rather than to have them shipped to Brussels after their arrival to avoid costly custom duties.

V. The Program's Plans for Improving its Teaching and Services

The program moved from ULB to Vesalius College in fall 2002. This allowed a fundamental shift in the program's mission because Vesalius College's English-language curriculum allows more American students to study a variety of academic subjects. The team feels that the objective of the move, to enlarge the curriculum to accommodate students who are not fluent French and to find a more stable administrative situation, have been accomplished in the four semester since the program moved.

The major academic change in 2004-05 is the inclusion of a required core course, taught by the resident director, that introduces students to Belgium and discusses how the country fits into modern Europe. It will provide a framework for understanding Belgium and its unique ethnic, religious, and political divisions. Since there is no similar course offered at Vesalius College, the evaluation team feels it serves an important purpose for American students.

One issue that bears watching is that the core course is required. In many other programs required courses have been gradually made optional because students complain that they do not like being told what courses to take. This can happen regardless of the quality of the course or the relevance of the subject matter to the overall cultural and academic experience. The team recommends that the evaluations of the course be watched closely over the next two to three years. If too many students begin to complain about the obligation to take this core course, it is hoped the resident director will recommend that the course be optional, thus serving those students who will

truly benefit from what is offered.

The greatest administrative change has been the addition of a resident coordinator. In 2001-02, a total of 33 students participated in the program; in 2003-04, that number grew to 57, a 25% increase. It is possible that there will be 65-75 participants in 2004-05, so the addition of a second full-time staff is quite timely. Increased responsibility for providing housing in non-homestay situations, the addition of the core course, and the growth in program numbers all make it necessary to have a larger staff in Brussels.

Future plans might include working with Vesalius College to accommodate business majors on the program. This would allow the continued growth of the program without as much concern that certain classes would be dominated by CIEE students. Since the mix of students from many nationalities is one of the strong points of the program, growth should be carefully managed to avoid creating academic "CIEE ghettos."

Recommendations

20. Monitor student evaluations of the core course over the next two to three years. If requiring the course becomes a source of contention, decide if it should be optional, thus serving those students who will truly benefit from its content.

21. In the next two years, begin discussions with Vesalius College to determine if the business curriculum could be attractive to American students, thus helping to disperse the growing numbers of CIEE students into different classes at the College.

VI. Relationship with the Host University

In general, the program enjoys good relations with Vesalius College. According to the Associate Dean, approximately 10% of the students attending classes at the College are American study abroad students. CIEE is the largest American program, making good relations important to Vesalius College as well.

In the course of developing this new relationship, there have been some minor misunderstandings that have been resolved. It appears that no serious problems have developed because of a determination on both sides to make the arrangement work. The evaluation team congratulates the Vesalius College administration and CIEE for establishing a good working relationship in a relatively short period of time. It is hoped that regular communication channels will continue to be developed to benefit both institutions and their students.

Recommendation

22. The resident director should identify relevant administrators at Vesalius College and ask to have regular meetings with them. This will help ensure that efforts are coordinated to accommodate CIEE student needs in the areas of housing, internships, and the academic program.

VII. Perceived Satisfaction of the Consortium Member Institutions

Comments from member institutions were, for the most part, favorable. The greatest complaint concerned the changes in course availability once students arrived in Brussels. It appears that member institutions agree with the fall 2004 students that there have been fewer changes this semester.

Several institutions reported that they do not get timely responses from the Portland staff when asking for course descriptions, final dates, and other data needed to help their students prepare. Recommendations concerning this issue have been made in section II.A. A further problem is the delay in receiving grade reports for the program, though the institutions that commented about this also noted that reports for other CIEE programs have also been coming more slowly in the past year, so this does not appear to be a problem that originates in Belgium.

Several institutions commented that the program seems to work best for students studying European history and politics, comparative governments, international relations, and/or the European Union. Two institutions said that the French language instruction was problematic because students from their institutions did not seem to be placed into the proper level to receive credit at the home school.

In spite of the specific concerns, all schools that responded agreed that the program was worthwhile for their students.

Recommendation

23. CIEE should investigate the delay in sending grades for the program and take measures to improve this process.

VII. Perceived Satisfaction of the Student Participants

In general, students have expressed the least amount of satisfaction with information and services received before departure. This pattern is consistent over the past four semesters and should be addressed. The evaluation team makes the following recommendations about the program catalog:

- Carefully review the catalog to ensure that the academic focus of the program is not misrepresented. There are numerous faculty at Vesalius College who have the credentials to teach economics and business. Faculty with degrees in history, political science, and communication teach at Vesalius College, but the number of courses available does not justify that claim that the program is strong in all areas of international relations.
- Do not emphasize that Vesalius College provides an “American-style” educational experience. The teaching style is a hybrid that incorporates both American and European teaching styles. The student services model also incorporates aspects of what students get in the U.S., so people familiar with the European educational system can see the difference. American undergraduates, however, cannot appreciate those differences, so they conclude that the label “American-style” has been misapplied.
- Vesalius College conducts itself as a small, independent, private university. To imply that it is a college or department of the Vrije Universiteit Brussel is misleading because students and home universities get the impression that there are far more faculty available and courses taught in English than there really are.
- Students whose primary goal is to improve their French language skills should not consider this program unless they minimally have third-level French language skills so they can take courses at ULB.

- Many of the limited number of internships available require excellent language skills. Since most CIEE students do not have advanced French or Dutch, this reduces the number available to program students. While it is true that a few internships each semester are usually awarded to CIEE students, the catalog should clearly state that only a few internships will be available each semester.
- Make it clear that homestay placements with French-speaking families are very limited.
- Clarify what “independent housing” means in Brussels.
- Minimize the statements about Brussels as a great base for traveling in Europe in order to avoid encouraging students who do not have serious academic goals.

Overall, students are very satisfied with the on-site orientation, in spite of some complaints that information is repeated during the Vesalius College orientation. As stated earlier, students are happy with their housing assignments once they settle in, but the confusion over what is available and who handles homestays vs. independent placements needs to be addressed.

About half of the students enrolled in fall 2004 expressed satisfaction with the quality of courses in which they are enrolled. Some commented that the courses they had approved prior to leaving for Belgium were not available when they arrived because of scheduling conflicts or other issues, but most felt they had found satisfactory substitutes. The variety and availability of field trips receives high praise from the students.

Overall, the current students are very satisfied with the program. They are wildly enthusiastic about the resident director, Michelangelo van Meerten, and the resident coordinator, Daniel Riley. These two have solved virtually every problem, are available 24-7, and are judged to be “totally awesome.” Clearly the satisfaction with the resident staff is a highlight of the program.

IX. Safety and Security Issues

Brussels is a very safe European city. There are few to no large areas that must be avoided at night. The streets with clubs and restaurants are busy until midnight most nights. In the metro stations and tourist areas, students are cautioned to be careful about pickpockets, but generally it is easy and safe to move around the city. The only incident reported by the fall 2004 group a month into the program is a student who was robbed while he was in Barcelona.

Females should be aware that men in Brussels are likely to comment in much the way some men do in southern Europe. This attention could be considered insulting or threatening by American standards. While this does not appear to be a big issue with females who live in Brussels, the orientation materials provided by CIEE include an article about aggressive male behavior, and it is a subject of discussion during the orientation meetings.

X. The Program's Compliance with CIEE's Policies

The program appears to be in compliance with CIEE's policies.

XI. The Quality of Administration and Management of the Program

Resident Director

Michelangelo van Meerten has been resident director since the program moved to Vesalius College in fall 2002. He had previously taught an economics course for the program. Dr. van Meerten has a PhD in economics from the University of Groningen and has taught at several European institutions, including Universidad Carlos III (Madrid), the Universitat Pompeu Fabra in Barcelona, and Vesalius College in Brussels. He is very well liked by the students and seems quite attuned to the needs of American students. He has worked to establish good rapport with the administration at Vesalius College, and he maintains good relations with the center for foreign students at ULB. The addition of a resident coordinator will allow Dr. van Meerten to continue his focus on the development of new academic opportunities of the program. The team feels this program has a very competent resident director who will help the program grow without losing track of its academic and cultural goals.

Others

Daniel Riley began his duties at the resident coordinator in August 2004. Prior to that he worked at CIEE in the USA as program advisor for Western Europe and Francophone African programs (March 2001-May 2003) and coordinator for membership, annual conference, and campus relations (May 2003-August 2004). Mr. Riley has a BA in French from the University of Florida and studied at the University of Montpellier III, France. Mr. Riley feels he is settling into his duties in Brussels. He will take over the housing assignments in spring 2005 and will continue to assist with student life issues. During our three days in Brussels, Mr. Riley not only facilitated the medical care for the member of our team who fell ill but also spent a great deal of time helping a student who is continuing to have difficulty adjusting to life in Belgium. The team feels the addition of this staff position, and the filling of the position by Mr. Riley, is the perfect solution to allowing the program to prosper and grow.

XII. Future Prospects and Plans

Since the program was, essentially, remade in fall 2002, it is only four semesters old. As such, it is appropriate that future plans center around the stabilization of the current operations. There are some issues, which have been articulated in the recommendations made in this report. These should be addressed in the next 12-18 months to make the program stronger. If growth is desired, the program should investigate ways to increase the number of student participants while diversifying the subjects they study. A limited number of advanced French speakers could be recruited to do a year-long advanced study program at the ULB. More business majors could be recruited to take courses at Vesalius College. This will help ensure that the program grows without creating a CIEE ghetto in the midst of Vesalius College.

Relationship with previous evaluation

Since the last evaluation in 1998, the program has gone from a fall semester only option paired with a spring semester at the University of Amsterdam to a semester or academic year option. It has a full-time resident director and a resident coordinator hired and supervised by CIEE rather than a part-time resident director appointed by the Université Libre de Bruxelles (ULB). In order to offer more courses taught in English, the program moved from ULB to Vesalius College, thus greatly expanding the curriculum and gaining access to a limited number of the internships arranged by that institution.

For these reasons, there is no relationship between the conclusions drawn in the 1998 evaluation report and the conclusions here other than to indicate that the original reasons for the move and the hiring of full-time staff appears to have been realized.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The members of the evaluation team benefited greatly from the care and concern for this process by the staff of CIEE and of the host institution. In particular, we wish to thank Dean Jean Louis Luyckx and Associate Dean for Institutional Development Pat Costa of Vesalius College for taking the time to meet with us and to take the team and the resident staff out to dinner. We also thank Ai Lee Long, Vesalius College Internship Coordinator, for taking time to clarify some issues with us. The many faculty who graciously allowed us to observe their classes and who came to an after-hours meeting are greatly appreciated.

The success of the visit must be credited to Michelangelo van Meerten and Daniel Riley in Brussels and to Catharine Scruggs in Portland. Catharine very patiently provided all the materials requested, helped to refine the schedule until it covered everything needed, and answered all pre-departure questions promptly and completely. Michelangelo and Daniel were completely available, cheerfully answered all questions, and helped us sample the best of Belgian hospitality and culture during the visit.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

1. In order for CIEE to sustain and strengthen the program's primary emphasis on politics and international relations, it should suggest to Vesalius that a greater variety of such courses be offered and that more use be made of the city's proximity to key international bodies and organizations through the incorporation of guest lectures and student visits to these sites.
2. CIEE should be sure to include a session on behavioral expectations for students in the classroom during each on-site orientation.
3. CIEE-Portland staff should develop and provide students with an internship form to be completed and signed by academic advisors at the home institution prior to departure for Brussels. The form would verify the home institution's willingness to give students credit for completed internships.
4. CIEE should review the information provided about internships with Vesalius College to ensure that students are not arriving in Brussels with unrealistic expectations about the scope of placements available and the work that must be accomplished. If internships remain a significant part of the program marketing, an internship form must be developed to inform students and their home institutions of the requirements for completing the internship and the kind of assessment (pass/fail) that will be awarded.
5. CIEE should suggest to Vesalius College that a more sustained program of 'encadrement' for internships be developed and administered by either a student service staff member or the Vesalius internship coordinator.
6. CIEE should ask Vesalius College if a new intermediate conversational language course can be created. If this is not feasible, CIEE should consider ways to create the

course for its own students.

7. CIEE should approach Vesalius College to see if additional French language teaching colloquia could be offered. Like the workshop offered in January 2004, a colloquium would bring instructors from Academic Consortium schools to Brussels to compare methodologies with Vesalius College teachers.

8. The team recommends that CIEE suggest to Vesalius that it begin to incrementally strengthen its political science content over the medium-term.

9. CIEE should consider revising its program goals to better reflect the academic capabilities of Vesalius College, placing a greater emphasis on economics and business in its student recruitment materials.

10. Review published cost estimates 3-4 months before the program begins and inform program participants if those estimates have increased or decreased.

11. Either list program dates in a much more timely manner or make sure students are informed as quickly as possible before the program begins. Update the web site (both the catalog pages and the orientation materials) as soon as calendars are set.

12. Routinely inform students of the possibility that Vesalius College might add or delete courses even after the "final" list is produced.

13. See the recommendations for adjusting the program catalog in section X. and consider adopting the recommendations in the next update.

14. Continue to talk about the potential for male attentions toward females that will be judged inappropriate by American standards. In particular, continue to search for a female, either a resident of Brussels or perhaps an American, who can present strategies for dealing with the situations that may occur.

15. Use a different term to describe the alternative to homestays and more carefully explain that apartment living in Brussels most often means sharing an apartment with the landlord and/or a family.

16. In the absence of assistance from Vesalius College, the resident director and resident coordinator should make a point of checking with students who are assigned homestays to help them work out any initial problems. This preventative effort may save a good deal of tension and stress later on.

17. Guidelines that clearly define behavioral expectations in the European classroom should be incorporated into pre-orientation and orientation materials as soon as is feasibly possible.

18. Pre-departure materials should better inform students about the size of the VUB library and encourage students to access electronic materials at their home institutions while at Vesalius College.

19. Students who own laptop computers should continue to be encouraged to carry them to Europe rather than to have them shipped to Brussels after their arrival to avoid costly custom's duties.

20. Monitor student evaluations of the core course over the next two to three years. If requiring the course becomes a source of contention, decide if it should be optional, thus serving those students who will truly benefit from its content.

21. In the next two years, begin discussions with Vesalius College to determine if the business curriculum could be attractive to American students, thus helping to disperse the growing numbers of CIEE students into different classes at the College.

22. The resident director should identify relevant administrators at Vesalius College and ask to have regular meetings with them. This will help ensure that efforts are coordinated to accommodate CIEE student needs in the areas of housing, internships, and the academic program.

23. CIEE should investigate the delay in sending grades for the program and take measures to improve this process.

**ACB Evaluation of the CIEE Study Center
At Vesalius College at the Vrije Universiteit Brussel
Brussels, Belgium
September 2004**

Novotel Brussels off Grand'Place
120, rue du Marché Aux Herbes
1000 Brussels BELGIUM
tel: (+32)2/5143333
fax: (+32)2/5117723

(the hotel is located around the corner from the Grand 'Place. A taxi from the airport will take approximate 30 minutes and cost around 25-30 euros. The closest metro stop is about a block away.)

Vesalius College, the VUB campus and CIEE's office are located in the east of the city, about a ten minute metro ride and a five minute walk, or a 20-25 minute taxi ride from your hotel. ULB is located in the east of the city. The Belgian Parliament is located at one metrostop from the hotel.

A cell phone will be provided for the Team's use in Brussels.

Michelangelo van Meerten's cell phone number is 0473 96 62 59.

Sunday September 19

Arrival ACB team

19h30 Dinner with Brussels CIEE Staff, Resident Director, Michelangelo van Meerten and Resident Coordinator, Daniel Riley

Monday September 20

9h30 MVM will meet ACB team at hotel to accompany to the CIEE office
10h00 Tour Vesalius and VUB campus
11h30 Class visit: POL251 Political Theory from Machiavelli to Marx 12h30
Lunch with Dean, Jean Louis Luyckx, Vesalius College and Associate Dean for
Institutional Development, Pat Costa.
14h30 Class visit: ECN302 Comparative Economic Systems
16h30 Class visit: POL211 Evolution of the International System: 1815 to 1945
18h00 Internship visit Dow Jones (with Associate Dean Pat Costa)
18h45 Independent Housing set up visit
19h30 Evening free - suggestions for dinner and local entertainment will be provided
Dinner reservations can also be made by RD.

Tuesday September 21

9h30 Visit ULB campus
11h30 Class visit: ECN271 The European Economy: Structure and Performance
13h00 lunch
14h30 Meet with Vesalius College Internship Coordinator Ai Lee Long
15h30 Homestay visit (with Vesalius housing coordinator Caroline Van Ongevalle)
17h00 Meeting with Vesalius College administration (Dean, Associate Deans), and
professors who teach courses that are often taken by CIEE students.

Wednesday September 22

9h30 Class visit: CMM261 Communication and Media in Europe
12h30 lunch
13h30 Class visit: ART 361 European Studies
15h00 CIEE Core course visit to Belgian Parliament and Senate
17h30 reception with ACB team and CIEE students
20h00 dinner with Michelangelo and Daniel

Thursday September 23

10h30 Class visits: LFR104 Intermediate French II, FR 107 Elementary Conversation in
French; LFR 103 Intermediate French I; LFR 201 Advanced French I, POL314 The
United Nations Organization: Policy and Power.

Write report

Friday September 24

Departure

Note: Several classes that many students take like HIS301 (History of 20th Century
Conflicts), LAW201 (European Legal Systems), POL333 (Policies of the European
Union) are taught on Thursdays and Fridays and thus cannot be visited by the team.