

**Annual Program Review
CIEE Study Center at the Escola Superior de Comerç Internacional (ESCI)
Barcelona, Spain
Summer Program
2006**

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Each summer, program directors write a Study Center Review for each CIEE Study Center program commenting on the previous academic year. The program director writes the review based on input from the CIEE Academic Consortium Board members, resident directors, sending institutions, and student evaluations. Each report is made public on the CIEE website at www.ciee.org.

Program Goals

The goal of the program is to allow students to complete a course in a business-related field or in the humanities in either Spanish or English, while at the same time beginning or improving their Spanish skills. The program site is ESCI, a well-respected business school for the business-related courses and the CIEE Barcelona Study Center for humanities.

The goals were achieved this summer. This summer CIEE added three additional cultural courses, expanding the possibilities for students.

Academic Program

Students take one Spanish language course and one CIEE culture or ESCI business course. Students who are exempt from the language requirement based on the results of the placement test may take an additional ESCI or culture course in Spanish in place of the Spanish language course.

The CIEE Barcelona summer program ran for the second time in summer 2006 with a new resident director, John Lucas.

Three levels of language were offered: Beginning, Intermediate, and Advanced. One student was exempt from the language requirement. All language class professors had experience teaching the CIEE semester language classes. Students seemed generally satisfied with their placements, and they evaluated professors well. Complaints about the level and pace of the course were markedly improved as evidenced by onsite evaluations.

Last year, the former Resident Director and Language Coordinator observed that part of the problem was that students had already covered certain grammar concepts but were not using them in the correct context. In other words, they felt they were repeating material already learned.

The current RD corroborates this observation and the same problem has come up at other sites. The way to resolve it is to watch the pace of the classes early, ensure that when an instructor reviews or repeats concepts that the practical exercises are

challenging enough. It is also important to educate expectations during orientation, and this is done regularly at the CIEE Barcelona Study Center.

The new RD generally gives an orientation to language classes which focuses on the metaphor of language learning as comparable to sports or music more than learning math and history. That is, one has to repeat, practice, and hone the very same movements over and over again to achieve perfection.

Registering students at ESCI continues to be a smooth process. However, ESCI has not been successful at attracting students beyond CIEE. The current population was made up largely of CIEE students, a few other Americans, and a group of students from Mexico. Some CIEE students complained that their expectation was to be enrolled in courses alongside Spaniards.

European Regional Economics (7 students)

Only CIEE students were enrolled in this class. The results for this class were mixed. Some students suggested that the course took more of an historical than an economic approach to the topic than suggested by the title and course description.

International Marketing (8 students)

CIEE students were in class with some other international students, mostly from Mexico. The professor also teaches the CIEE semester course on International Marketing. All students said that they would recommend the class to future CIEE students. Students evaluated the professor and the class highly. The generally positive evaluations were consistent with last year's evaluations and the professor's track record in general.

In general, students recommend that the business classes last six weeks instead of four, because meeting time for classes (2.5 hours) is too long for a business class. While the classes are organized by ESCI, CIEE will discuss the idea of extending them in planning future summer courses.

This year, ESCI planned and delivered one mandatory company visit to a local Catalan firm. There were no complaints about this trip, as compared to last year.

Non-academic Features

Orientation

The summer orientation went quite smoothly. The students were extremely cooperative and punctual. One student had a problem with lost luggage, but she was quite patient throughout the time it took the airline to deliver her suitcases to the CIEE office.

CIEE has begun to hold two-day orientations to address the comments that sessions are too long and attention wanes. Orientation is held at a hotel which was a very short walk from the Study Center. There are no complaints about the facilities, and the conference rooms are well-equipped.

Each CIEE staff member presents on her or his area of expertise. Orientation sessions include:

Introduction to Barcelona and Staff (John Lucas and staff)
Welcome to Catalonia - Cultural Overview (John Lucas)
Housing (Nicola Heath)

Academics (John Lucas and Alberto del Río)
Health & Safety, and Practical Matters (Anna Sanchez)
Cultural Activities (Núria Rodríguez)

The Resident Director continues to offer a presentation on Catalonia as a region, focused especially on the interests of this group. He speaks about the growth of the region, its economic and political relevance to Spain and in the wider European context of nationalism vs. regionalism.

Other orientation sessions held throughout the week included “Health, Transportation and Money,” “Academics,” “Housing,” “Cultural Activities,” a Welcome Meeting at ESCI with Jordi Puig, the Course Coordinator for International Students, and a Cross-Cultural Workshop. Similar to the semester orientations, several cultural activities were incorporated into orientation.

The following visits were organized during orientation: Barrio Gótico, Park Güell, Sagrada Familia and La Pedrera.

Cultural Activities, Excursions and Company Visit

Excursions and travels are prepared in a “summer mode” combining cultural activities (such as the visit to Greek & Roman ruins in Empúries) with free time (spending the afternoon in the beach). This time there was one daytrip and a weekend trip to Mallorca. Students also attend local events with their Spanish student guides, known in the program as Guardian Angels. These include local culture such as flamenco, tapas, and the magic fountain activities as well as visits to local museums and the always-successful Spanish cooking class. As with last summer, few students participated in the Big Gynkama scavenger hunt and the photography contest. The Gynkama seems less appropriate to the summer as the short stay is already packed with things to do. All these activities received positive evaluations by the students. This year there were fewer activities than last semester based on the evaluations that the time was too structured.

This summer the ESCI program organized company visits as part of their business classes to avoid having a conflict of scheduling with CIEE Spanish courses, and the results were much better.

Housing

Three students lived in the Residencia Onix. Onix is close to ESCI, the CIEE offices at International House, is air conditioned, and has a swimming-pool. Students evaluated the accommodation highly. They shared kitchen with a non-English speaking student. None of the 29 students living in homestays asked to change their family. Evaluations were generally excellent.

Interestingly, summer students traveled mostly within Spain, and postponed travel to Europe until after the completion of the program.

Students

Enrollment		Gender	
Summer	30	Male	12
		Female	18

Average Student GPA 3.44

Top Enrollments by Major

Political Science
Economics
History
Business & Mgmt Economics
Finance

Top Sending Schools

Harvard University
Marymount University
Sarah Lawrence College
Texas Tech University
University of Colorado at Boulder

Future Directions

The summer program continues to develop in character and focus. It is, by all rights, no longer a Business program. A total of 16 students enrolled in humanities courses versus 15 for the ESCI business courses. This is now a solid summer program in Humanities, Business, and Economics. CIEE will clarify this in the program catalog description. There may be the possibility, in the future, of working with Universitat Pompeu Fabra for summer humanities courses at the main campus.

ESCI has taken the unfortunate unilateral decision to change the structure of its courses dramatically. Next year it will have two two-week blocks of coursework. During each block, students will take 5 hours of class per day for the entire two weeks and then switch courses. This decision was made with no consultation from CIEE partners except *ex post facto*. Recently, there has been some indication that ESCI may alter this program in consultation with CIEE.

For summer 2007, CIEE will offer International Economics as a CIEE course and another business elective to replace European Regional Economics, which was not highly rated if ESCI does not change their program structure.

The program will expand as a more broadly focused summer program, emphasizing academic rigor.