

**Annual Program Review
CIEE Study Center in Bonaire
Summer
2006**

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CIEE Academic Consortium Board Program Evaluation: N/A
CIEE Academic Consortium Board Monitor: Jane Edwards, Yale University

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 summer CIEE Study Center in Bonaire focuses on diverse tropical ecosystems with an emphasis on marine plant and fish life. The goal is to offer students an interdisciplinary learning experience that stresses the interconnectedness of human interaction with nature. The program is unique due to the integration of classroom-based and field-based learning methodologies. The field-based activities are carried out through guided scuba diving and snorkeling exercises incorporated into the course objectives.

The brevity and the nature of this two-week summer program require academic as well as physical intensity that can be surprising to some students. Students with strong theoretical background, open to constant learning and curious about other disciplines fared better and enjoyed the experiences more. Throughout the program, the faculty used every opportunity to illustrate concepts and ideas with real life examples encountered during daily field activities.

Five students participated in the summer 2006 program. The most important recommendations from the summer 2005 monitoring report were to conduct a formal orientation for students upon arrival.

Academic Program

This program consists of one academic course, entitled "Marine Biology and Ecology in the Southern Caribbean". The course was taught by two faculty members from the Department of Underwater Sciences at Indiana University, each of whom presented lectures covering biology, ecology and environmental science. These lectures served as the basis of the final, written examination. Students prepared and gave 15-minute oral presentations on a topic of their choosing and also prepared a 6-page research paper. Students were required to maintain a relatively detailed journal containing lecture notes, observations, and answers to field assignments.

The 10-day program included diving on the coral reefs and touring upland areas of Bonaire to help the students understand and appreciate the diverse flora and fauna of the island. During most mornings, students went scuba diving and most afternoons were spent on lectures, field data analysis and land based field trips. Evenings were generally devoted to student presentations. Given the breadth of topics, the program relies on

interdisciplinary tools and a busy schedule to deliver the best educational experience to the student. The course, which is taught intensively, requires a certain level of familiarity with concepts and ideas that underlie biological, ecological and anthropological inquiry. The key to understanding human interactions with nature lies at the intersection of those three disciplines and the instructors sought to highlight the relationship between the disciplines using field examples, group work and direct student involvement.

Bonaire, a Dutch territory located in the southern Caribbean where English is widely spoken, is an ideal location for this type of program. The island is a top shore diving destination and home to the Bonaire Marine Park, a UN initiative, carried out by the Bonaire Marine Park, which facilitates fragile marine resource conservation. In addition, Bonaire offers interesting and challenging cultural diversity. Together, the cultural and natural riches of Bonaire serve as a perfect background for exposing students to the complexities of human interaction with the marine environment.

Non-academic Features

Upon arrival, students were met at the airport and transported to a local inn, which served as the housing for the entirety of the program. Given the short duration of the program, orientation was briefly conducted on the first day of arrival and included introductions and a discussion of the academic program. Although the program is very short, the orientation program should be enhanced so that students are better prepared for the duration of their stay.

Activities

Due to the integrative approach of the program, students experience the natural and cultural diversity of Bonaire through the academic program itself. In addition to the eight dives on the coral reefs, the students participated in two snorkeling trips from shore. Other activities included: touring the coasts by vehicle with numerous stops to view lighthouses, wildlife, the solar salt works, Washington-Slagbaai National Park, Lac Bay and the mangroves, Gotomeer, ancient cave drawings, and other features. The participants also visited the archaeology museum in Kralendijk.

Accommodation

Accommodations were arranged at a local inn and offered double rooms and common areas for course lectures. Although the services were excellent, participants in summer 2007 will be housed in the CIEE Research Station in Bonaire, which opened in August 2006.

Safety

Petty theft does occur in Bonaire. Most petty theft can be prevented by exercising personal caution at night. In addition, the CIEE Research Station has been equipped with extensive lighting around the premises, large safes and an alarm system.

Students

Enrollment		Gender	
Summer	5	Male	2
		Female	3

Average Student GPA 3.06

Top Enrollments by Major

Political Science
Environmental Science
Marine Biology

Top Sending Schools

Indiana University
University of Colorado at Boulder
University of Maine
University of Minnesota

Future Directions

Indiana University faculty and staff have been instrumental in the establishment of this summer program and assisting with the creation of the semester program. Indiana University will continue to run an IU summer program in future years. CIEE hired a new resident director in July 2006 to oversee the CIEE Research Station in Bonaire. She will direct the CIEE semester and summer programs and will provide a much needed full-time, on-site presence.