

Annual Study Center Review

CIEE Study Center Liberal Arts Program at the Pontificia Universidade Católica de São Paulo

São Paulo, Brazil

2007

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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 Liberal Arts program at the CIEE Study Center in São Paulo, Brazil aims to improve students Portuguese language skills and knowledge of contemporary Brazil while at the same time allowing participants matriculation into a broad range of course offerings in the humanities, social sciences, and sciences. Participants must have a strong interest in living in a large, cosmopolitan South American city.

Program goals are met through intensive Portuguese language training, specially designed CIEE courses, direct enrollment courses, a wide range of cultural activities with strong educational components and homestays with Brazilian families.

The most important recommendation from the 2006 monitoring process was to explore ways to increase the consistency of the academic quality of host institution courses.

New & Noteworthy Features

Academic

Portuguese Language

Except for certain portions of the orientation which include safety information, the program is conducted entirely in Portuguese. Students benefit from a five-week intensive pre-session during which they enroll in a language and content course taught in Portuguese. At the start of the regular semester, most students have gained considerable confidence in the host country language and speak it with their CIEE and Brazilian peers. Therefore, adherence to the Community Language Commitment is very high among participants.

There are three language instructors that provide all the Portuguese language instruction to CIEE students only. Due to the fact that CIEE has control of the language instruction, teachers can develop their own materials and use various textbook resources to tailor-make the courses. The teachers meet with the CIEE Academic Director, Dr. Lourival dos Santos, to coordinate the content of both the language and the CIEE subject area

course in order to draw connections. Language courses are highly evaluated by students.

Students visit the Museu da Lingua Portuguesa, attend Brazilian movies and plays, and visit a traditional "feira" (open street market) as part of their language course.

During the 2006-2007 academic year, the following language courses were offered:

Fall 2006

Intermediate Portuguese II – 9 students

Advanced Portuguese I – 5 students

Advanced Portuguese Syntax and Composition – 7 students

Intensive Language and Culture Program, Winter 2007

Intensive Basic Portuguese I – 5 students

Intensive Basic Portuguese II – 15 students (two groups)

Intensive Intermediate Portuguese I – 7 students

Intensive Intermediate Portuguese II – 20 students (two groups)

Portuguese for Spanish Speakers – 15 students (two groups)

Spring 2007

Semester Intermediate Portuguese I – 4 students

Semester Intermediate Portuguese II – 12 students

Semester Advanced Portuguese I – 8 students

Semester Advanced Portuguese II – 2 students

CIEE Courses

During the five-week pre-session, the interdisciplinary course, Contemporary Brazil, is taught and during the regular semester, Brazilian Issues and Realities, is offered. Both courses are taught by the Academic Director, Dr. Lourival dos Santos, and are highly evaluated by students in post-program evaluations. The semester course highlights social movements in Brazil. All of the CIEE organized cultural activities and field trips are developed in coordination with these courses.

In addition to this course, an elective course was offered jointly by CIEE and the host institution, Pontificia Universidade Católica de São Paulo (PUC-SP). The course, Metropolitan Brazil: Recent Trends and Challenges, was jointly designed by both parties to highlight the city as a topic of study and to provide students the opportunity to explore issues of urbanization, gentrification, poverty and development in the São Paulo context. The course was well evaluated and included excursions to areas in the city related to the content of the course such as: favela Monte Azul, Alphaville (area with large houses built by affluent families, outside the city, protected by high walls and security guards), and "areas de manacial" (dams which provides drinking water to the city but does not follow the city plans; the land is being occupied by needy homeless population). Both CIEE and PUC-SP students may enroll in this course.

Direct Enrollment Courses

CIEE participants may enroll in courses taught at the Pontificia Universidade Católica de Sao Paulo. AS mentioned above, this past year CIEE worked with PUC-SP to create a course focused on issues of urbanization entitled, Metropolitan Brazil: Recent Trends and Challenges.

As in past years, course evaluations were mixed this year.

Course enrollment for fall 2006 was as follows:

Philosophy

Knowledge Theory II, History of Philosophy VIII

Literature

Brazilian literature – Poetry; Portuguese Literature – Realism and Symbolism

Economy

Globalization and External Economic Insertion; Macro Economy Theory I; Micro Economy Theory I; Economic Interpretations about Brazil

Journalism

Cultural Journalism and Brazilian Song; Photojournalism II; Cultural Journalism and Fine Arts

Social Sciences

Sociology III – Sociology of Latin America; Sociology IX – Social and Environmental Conditions of Hunger and Malnutrition; Sociology IX – Image and Memory in the "entertainment society"; Politic VI – Contemporary Brazilian Politics; Future of Minorities
Anthropology VI – Patterns and Cultural Interpretation

International Relations

The Popular Republic of China in the International Context; History IV – Diplomatic History of Brazil; History of America before the European Conquest; Politics II – The Modern State; Politic VI – Compared Politics; Politics X – Inter American Politics
The Islam – Political Force in a Globalized World; Politics X – Inter-American Politics
Politics XI – Regional Integration Process; Sociology III – Latin American Sociology
Anthropology II – Nationality and Ethnicity; Culture and Motion

Foreign Languages

Basic Spanish II; Intermediate French I

Geography

Fundamentals of Geology; Brazilian Regional Geography IV; Social Conflicts and Movies; Cartography

History

Modern History II

Tourism

Environmental Impact and Tourism

Course enrollment for spring 2007 was as follows:

Administration

International Finances; Macroeconomics; Finances I; Human Resources Administration; Introduction to Marketing I; Statistics I

Arts of the Body
Fragmented Body

Communication and Multimedia
Art and Technology; Introduction to Photographic Language; Video Production; Video clip; Image Edition; Systems General Theory I

Economy
Globalization and External Economic Insertion; Political Economy and International Relations; Econometrics I; Topics on Education Economy; Stock Market

Geography
Political Geography

History
Modern History II; Introduction to Theological Thought II; History of America; Global Marketing; Diplomatic History of Brazil; Cinema and Power Relations; Brazilian Diplomatic History; Colonial System at Portuguese America; Contemporary Latin American History

International Relations
International Political Organizations; Contemporary International Relations; International Relations Theory; Comparative Politics; Diplomatic History of Brazil; History of America before the European Conquest; The Modern State; Compared Politics; Inter-American Politics; Islam: Political Force in a Globalized World; Regional Integration Process, Latin American Sociology; Nationality and Ethnicity; Culture and Motion

Journalism
Language of Brazilian Song, Photojournalism I

Literature
Brazilian Literature: Realism and Symbolism; Civilization Study: Portuguese

Social Sciences
Metropolitan Brazil: The Political Dimension of /on Art and Media

Tourism
Tourism; Environment and Society; Culture and Globalization; Aquatic Ecosystems

CIEE will be adding another academic host institution in the coming academic year in order to widen the range of academic offerings (see below under "Future Directions").

Non-Academic

Orientation

Based on a recommendation from the monitoring process last year, a new orientation manual was printed in both English and Portuguese to better ensure that student comprehend the material. In addition, the session on safety and the program philosophy (based on Paulo Freire's educational philosophy) was given in English orally. Otherwise,

the location, length, structure and content of the orientation were similar to previous years. The orientation was well evaluated.

Cultural Activities

During each session (fall semester, winter intensive language and culture program, and spring semester), the program organizes many cultural activities including the following:

- Tour of the historical downtown area of the city, including the Bairro da Liberdade (where most of the Asian immigrant population and their descendents live and work: Japanese, Chinese and Koreans);
- Visit to the Ibirapuera Park – one of the largest green areas in the city where we rented bicycles and rode around;
- Visit to the Museu de Arte de São Paulo (MASP) – São Paulo Art Museum – which had a special Edgar Degas exhibit (the permanent collection includes Brazilian and European art including Tiziano, Bosch, Rembrandt, Goya, Degas, Turner, Van Gogh, Picasso and the Brazilians : Almeida Júnior, Portinari and Eliseu Visconti
- Visit to the primary Brazilian Art collection at Pinacoteca do Estado, located at the traditional, old and remodeled Praça da Luz.
- Attendance at Brazilian films, Brazilian music concerts, Brazilian theater productions, candomble ceremonies, and soccer games
- Visit to and participation in a local Escola de Samba Mocidade Alegre (Champion of the 2007 Carnival in São Paulo!), which included learning the words to the long "samba" and the choreography of the dance and parading in the arena alongside Brazilians
- Visits to the following museums: Afro Brazilian Museum at Parque do Ibirapuera, Pinacoteca do Estado, Museu da Língua Portuguesa.
- Visit to the Aparecida do Norte
- Visit to a Landless Agrarian Movement settlement
- Visit to a Brazilian favela

Overnight Fieldtrips

In addition to the cultural activities, students participated on two excursions during the regular semester. The first is to Rio de Janeiro and the second is to the colonial city of Paraty. In addition, spring students had the option of visiting Ouro Preto. All excursions include visits to churches, museums, attendance at cultural events (such as theater or musical concert). The excursions are very highly evaluated by students.

Housing

All students live with Brazilian host families. Although most students view their experiences as positive, they do experience some frustrations due to their perception at the outset that they would prefer to live with a traditional Brazilian family (father, mother, children in the home). Although, CIEE does have some families that fit this description, there is a wide variety of family types in Brazil. In an effort to shift the student perception from housing as a CIEE service to housing as an opportunity for cultural learning, a mid-semester orientation regarding housing was initiated by the CIEE resident staff in spring 2007. A psychologist who specializes in intercultural issues assisted the staff in two separate meetings with host families and students to facilitate discussion of perceptions of and challenges in hosting a U.S. student or living with a Brazilian family. These meetings will be continued in the 2007-2008 academic year.

In addition, the Academic Director will offer two to three sessions of Brazilian culture to the host families on specific issues that students discuss in their CIEE courses so that families are aware of why their students may be asking them questions. Some of the topics include the landless agrarian movement, favelas, issues of race and poverty, social movements of gays and lesbians in Brazil. The hope is that these culture sessions on some of these “taboo” subjects will facilitate discussion between students and hosts.

Community Engagement and Integration

For-Credit Internship and Community Service Options

For-credit internship and community service options are not available on this program.

Not-for-Credit Community Service/Volunteer Projects

CIEE participants may opt to participate in non-credit community service projects. Six fall 2006 students and one spring 2007 student chose to become involved in the following activities:

- Gaspar Garcia Center for Human Rights. A student worked as researcher and fund raiser for the organization, which works to achieve a higher standard of living among people by offering adult education, community activities and free legal advice and representation. The student worked to expand the center’s statistical database on the demographics of residents in the certain central neighborhoods of Sao Paulo. The student presented the results of her research at the COINT-SEMESP International Congress of Scientific Initiation at the end of the year.
- Fala Preta. This is a non-governmental organization founded in 1997 with the mission to “promote the sustainable human development of the black population through the defense of human rights and citizenship, striving for the elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence, especially racial and gender discrimination”. The student translated documents from English to Portuguese of recent publications and speeches given by English speakers of the African Diaspora to keep Afro-Brazilians aware of current events in international gender and race relations. Through this involvement, the student was able to become more connected to the Afro-Brazilian community and learn more about the issues that create barriers between races and gender in Brazil.
- Projeto Esporte Talento. This is an organization whose mission is to build self-esteem among children in poorer neighborhoods through sports and team-building activities. The student joined other Brazilian university students, primarily psychology and physical education students, to promote and participate in activities.
- Habitat dos Mellos. This is an alternative development initiative that seeks to promote cultural, economic, social, and environmental by bringing together the local community, government, private, and third sector/non-profit actors to promote sustainability and holistic development in the region. The student worked on planning and advertising a multicultural festival put on by the organization. The student also worked with Fundação Semco to further develop

an eco-consciousness campaign in the region to elaborate on the environmental aspect of sustainability.

- Public School. A student taught English in a public school where she was able to see the issues regarding the situation of public education in São Paulo.
- Núcleo de Consciência Negra. The student taught English to prepare Afro-Brazilian students to better prepare for college education.

Finally, one student worked with an organization to assist homeless people in Sao Paulo.

Providing opportunities for non-credit volunteer work is possible in Sao Paulo but does present some obstacles including a necessity of a high level of Portuguese, a willingness to travel to neighborhoods located further away from the city center, and a commitment to participate fully for the entire length of their time abroad.

In the coming year, the CIEE program will be exploring the possibility of facilitating a short-term volunteer project that could include more CIEE participants.

Challenges & Future Directions

Academic Challenges

Although the five-week pre-session focusing on language and culture and the continued semester-long Portuguese language course prepares students adequately in the host country language, students with previous knowledge and exposure to Portuguese sometimes adapt more quickly to the host environment.

Course registration has improved at the host institution, Pontificia Universidade Católica de Sao Paulo, but can still be frustrating for U.S. students because it is perceived as much more unorganized compared to the North American educational norms.

Non-Academic Challenges

CIEE would like to create more opportunities for both short-term and long-term community service activities for its students. In addition, CIEE hopes that the mid-semester housing orientation will foster a higher engagement between students and hosts.

Future Directions

Overall, the program is evaluated well. Resident staff plan to focus on establishing short-term (or more long-term) non-credit volunteer opportunities for CIEE participants and to continue the development of the mid-semester housing orientation with host and students.

In addition, the CIEE program plans to add another educational host institution in order to widen the academic offerings to participants. Beginning spring 2008, students will be able to enroll at Fundação Armando Alvares Penteado (FAAP) in the following departments: architecture, cinema, fine arts and urban planning.