

**Evaluation Executive Summary
Seoul, Korea Study Center
March 14-16, 2017**

I. Evaluation Team members:

Dr. Mary McMahon, ACB member and Regional Director, UC Education Abroad Program and Dr. Changhee Lee, Assistant Professor of Accounting at Ramapo College of New Jersey

II. Colleagues with whom the Evaluation Team met:

The Evaluation Team met with the CIEE Seoul staff members several times, Yonsei University's Associate Dean for International Affairs (Prof. John Frankl), the Associate Director of the International Education Center (Prof. Jon Soderholm), Prof. Paul Tonks (History), Ms. Hyewon Moon (Manager, Summer & Winter Programs), Ms. Aeju Joon (Coordinator of the Fall & Spring Programs), and with groups of CIEE students on three occasions during our visit.

III. Last Evaluation Conducted on:

An ACB evaluation conducted in 2008 along with ACB monitoring reports dated 2012, 2013 and 2015 were provided. Recent monitoring reports confirmed some student disappointment in the rigor of the courses designed for international students.

IV. Program Background/History:

The CIEE Seoul semester program started in Korea in 2005 with the first group of students arriving for study in 2006 at Yonsei University. The Yonsei International Summer School option was added in 2008, CIEE enhancements made in subsequent years (2011- 2017) included the BACK project for community engagement, homestays offered first on a short time and then as a longer term option, the Intercultural Communication and Leadership (ICL) course, changes to requirement of Korean language study and the GPA requirement.

V. Focus of Evaluation:

A focus of the evaluation was to learn how CIEE provides support services, cultural activities, and engagement opportunities for CIEE students enrolled in the regular Yonsei coursework. Student satisfaction with the academic program was among specific topics evaluated. The relationship between CIEE and Yonsei University was among program elements observed. Opportunities to increase the mutual benefit for students and the host university were among future possibilities considered.

VI. Key Discussions/Findings:

The CIEE programs in Seoul, Korea are academically viable, enriching, well-run and operationally efficient study abroad offerings. Students consistently praised the added benefit of enrolling at Yonsei University through CIEE. The program is strong and succeeds in immersing students into Korean society and the academic community of Yonsei. Some issues arose from prior monitoring reports, previous student evaluations and current student assessments that result in our recommendations. Suggestions for change are made in the spirit of program enhancement and improvement.

VII. Priority Recommendations:

- We recommend that CIEE continue ongoing dialogue with Yonsei University to maximize CIEE student access to the full range of courses offered at Yonsei, to maximize successful enrollment in courses beyond those offered for international students by the International Education Center.

- We recommend the continued collection of Yonsei course evaluations provided by CIEE students for the local CIEE office. Shared with incoming students, these peer-to-peer recommendations were felt to be essential in course selection by current students.
- We recommend that CIEE take a fresh look at its instructions and advisory materials about the challenging academic course enrollment process at Yonsei University
- We encourage CIEE to advise students in advance about the full range of Korean language study options at Yonsei, which include less intensive IEE language courses offered by the International Education Center and select language courses open to exchange students under the Underwood International College. This would allow students to approach their study at Yonsei more broadly, while encouraging language study as part of the intercultural learning objectives of CIEE.
- We encourage CIEE to engage in conversation about opportunities for degree-related internships or part-time work in Seoul while students are undertaking full time study at Yonsei.

ACB Seoul Site Evaluation - CIEE Action Plan and Updates

CIEE Action Plan and Update Summary

In response to the Academic Consortium Board (ACB) Evaluation of the CIEE Study Center in Seoul, South Korea

Action Plans for Principal ACB Recommendations

1. We recommend that CIEE continue ongoing dialogue with Yonsei University to maximize CIEE student access to the full range of courses offered at Yonsei, to maximize successful enrollment in courses those beyond those offered by the International Education Center. Some CIEE students have had some success in regular departmental offerings and in registration in Underwood International College courses taught in English and open to exchange students, both of which are considered by students to be more challenging and rigorous. The planned increase in STEM courses taught in English at Yonsei is among the items of note for the future; however access to lab courses taught in English may be problematic.

ACTION:

1. The Study Center staff will continue to work with the staff of Yonsei's Office of International Affairs (OIA) to maximize CIEE student access to the full range of courses offered at Yonsei and to maximize successful enrollment in courses beyond those offered by the OIA (IEE or Study Abroad courses) by improving the CIEE Course Readings to make students more aware of the wide range of courses that are available and encourage them to enroll in courses other than the IEE courses. In addition, we will work with the OIA to increase their STEM course offerings in English by providing them a list of core STEM courses that are commonly offered at U.S. institutions (in fact we have already started); this will involve soliciting help and advice from the CIEE Institutional Relations staff and possibly even canvassing our sending institutions to get an idea of what their students need.

2. We recommend the continued collection of Yonsei course evaluations provided by CIEE students for the local CIEE office. Shared with incoming students, these peer-to-peer recommendations were felt to be essential in course selection by current students. We also recommend that summaries of evaluations might be shared diplomatically with Yonsei University to give them a sense of how CIEE students feel about comparability of the various types of Yonsei courses to similar coursework offered in the student's home U.S. campus.

ACTION:

2. The Study Center staff will continue to collect evaluations of Yonsei courses from our students and share them with incoming students to help them better determine what courses to enroll in. In addition, we will, and have already begun, to share these evaluations with the OIA so that they can understand how the IEE courses are viewed by students, particularly in comparison to their home institution's courses. Going forward, we will strive to improve and develop a better method of sharing our in-house course evaluation such as a webpage or smart phone app.

3. We recommend that CIEE take a fresh look at its instructions and advisory materials about academic course enrollment at Yonsei University. With new technology at Yonsei requiring online course enrollment before students leave their home campus, the complex Yonsei system of "bidding" for classes, and number of classes with limited or no access for exchange students, it is confusing to those working on their laptop at home to understand how best to make course selections to meet their academic needs.

While appreciative of what had been received, students recommend some reconsideration of what is given by CIEE. They suggested that alternative means of sharing the information (not a lengthy text document but instead a video, PowerPoint, or

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webinar) might help them be more successful in identifying and enrolling in classes needed for their home campus degree requirements. Involving previous participants or continuing CIEE students at Yonsei was also among the recommendations from students.

ACTION:

3. The Study Center staff has already discussed this with the OIA staff; they acknowledged the difficulties students have and are considering making some type of online tutorial to help students understand the course registration process; we have offered to work with them on this. In addition, we are currently studying how to involve previous CIEE students and/or continuing students (AYP) in providing instructions and tips for navigating the Yonsei portal and doing online course registration; possibly a Webinar, Powerpoint, or video. And, we are considering assigning an onsite CIEE staff member as a point person for students to get “instant” help before and during course registration via Kakao messenger; this will include designating specific dates and times for “course registration help sessions via Kakao”.

4. With the relocation of the Yonsei Global Lounge and redesign of the building, the current CIEE office location is not optimal for CIEE students or staff. The campus location is distant from where students take classes and are housed. The office is not proximate to Yonsei University student offices with which the CIEE staff must have contact. Lack of accessible entry into the building does not conform with CIEE’s commitment to increase access to study abroad for students with disabilities. We recommend that CIEE engage in conversation with Yonsei to be kept in mind as other possible office locations might develop.

ACTION:

4. The Study Center staff will make Yonsei aware of the limitations of our current location and ask that they keep us in mind as other facilities develop. In addition, we will strive to develop the corner nook outside our office into a seating area/lounge/study space by placing some chairs and tables there to create an alternative space for our students (particularly homestay students) to hang out.

5. With the elimination of the requirement that all CIEE students take Korean language study each term, CIEE students indicated that the major degree requirements and other objectives for study abroad may conflict with their enrollment in the intensive Korean Language Institute (KLI) courses. The KLI courses meet hours per day every day of the week, and are very strict in structure. Most students felt that their KLI coursework was the most difficult undertaken at Yonsei.

We encourage CIEE to advise students in advance about the full range of Korean language study options at Yonsei, which include less intensive IEE language courses offered by the International Education Center and select language courses open to exchange students under the Underwood International College. This would allow students to approach their study at Yonsei more broadly, while encouraging language study as part of the intercultural learning objectives of CIEE.

ACTION:

5. The Study Center staff will improve the presentation of information about the different types of Korean language classes that are available in our Course Readings and other resources. In addition, we will include more information about the Korean language courses in our OPDO and during our onsite orientation.

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6. We recommend that CIEE continue the Seoulmates program and continue help CIEE students navigate the challenges of immersing into the Yonsei academic community and student clubs. While Seoulmates are not necessarily Yonsei students, they do provide a valuable personal connection with college-age students living in the capital of Seoul. CIEE students also value advice and support to help get into Yonsei student clubs. They ask for CIEE office help in understanding and accessing academic tools in the modern library and campus printing resources. We encourage CIEE to provide more orientation to students about these important campus resources.

ACTION:

6. The Study Center staff will increase its efforts to recruit Yonsei students for the Seoul Mates program (though this has always been a priority). In addition, the staff will make a navigating the library tour and printing facilities part of orientation. And, to help current students, we offered a library in early March. We will also include information about using the library and the printing facilities in our student handbook.

7. CIEE students shared no complaints about housing, but the few staying in homestays indicated that they would have liked more information prior to coming about the families with whom they would be staying, about the distance to campus, and estimated commute time and transit directions specific to their assigned location, etc. None indicated that they would likely have opted out of the homestay opportunity, but felt that more information on the family members, ages, work/study activities, transportation routes, etc., would have been instructive and helped them prepare.

ACTION:

7. The Study Center staff has been providing the information that the CIEE Homestay Policy stipulates. We would like to provide more information but the CIEE Homestay Policy restricts what can be provided to students prior to arrival. Perhaps we can ask that the Homestay Policy be improved/changed to enable Study Centers to provide more detailed information.

8. We encourage CIEE to engage in conversation about opportunities for degree-related internships or part-time work in Seoul while students are undertaking full time study at Yonsei. As internships and work experience are increasing of interest to students in the United States, and some of the student with whom we spoke indicated interest in future work or careers related to Korean business, education, etc., this would be a great opportunity to explore and prepare for what might be possible in their futures.

ACTION:

8. The Study Center staff will continue to introduce internship opportunities when we learn of them. However, the student visa precludes students from working even part-time. We know that many students wish to return to Korea to work and we will continue to provide information about this in our Returning Home Notes and Reminders that we provide at the end of the semester. In addition, we are striving to develop a program whereby returned students can share their experiences and tips with our students who are interested in returning to Korea after graduation.