ASSESSMENT PLAN:
THE INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS RESOURCE CENTER (IBRC)

1. What evidence do you have that students achieve your stated learning outcomes?

As part of its effort in UW-Platteville to promote international education awareness and advances on international business, the IBRC uses different assessment tools to evaluate the Center’s outcome. Among the different types of assessment tools used are workshop evaluations, faculty development surveys, study abroad evaluations, trade mission outcomes surveys, export readiness surveys, and grant evaluations. Specifically, in assessing student achievement of a pre and post-short study abroad, evaluations are conducted by the IBRC. The IBRC has strong support for study abroad, coupled with the belief that students who study abroad will need to have as much information as possible to help them succeed in both academic and personal levels while abroad and when they return home. The IBRC provides detailed orientation materials, sessions, and re-entry programs, which will enhance their success based on information received from our study abroad participants.

To measure outcomes, the IBRC has adopted a pre test and post-test evaluation guidelines within a pamphlet produced by the Institute for International Education of Students (IES). The IES MAP (Model Assessment Practice) for study abroad www.iesabroad.org is divided into four major sections, the student learning environment, students learning and the development of intercultural competence, resources for academic and student support and program administration and development. The IES MAP includes questions that ask students to rate on a 1-5 scale various components of the orientation while abroad and re-entry questions to help assess their study abroad activities.

The IBRC can track the fact that our short study abroad to China in particular that serve the students has grown from 10 to an average of 18 students per year over the past four years, this signifies and achievement. The IBRC also provides advisory services to area businesses that need international consultation, repeat request for such services are part of our evaluation methods.

In addition to utilizing the IES MAP Assessment Model, the IBRC also strictly adheres to the Higher Learning Commission’s, “Five Fundamental Questions for Conversations on Students Learning” in planning our Program.

Higher Learning Commission lists “five fundamental questions for conversations on student learning.”

1. How are your stated learning outcomes appropriate to your missions, programs, and degrees?
2. What evidence do you have that students achieve your stated learning outcomes?
3. In what ways do you analyze and use evidence of student learning?
4. How do you ensure shared responsibility for assessment of student learning?
5. How do you evaluate and improve the effectiveness of your efforts to assess and improve student learning? (See The Higher Learning Commission/Annual Meeting Resource Book 2005, p. 8.)

2. What have you learned as a result?

The IBRC through the post- and pre-evaluation survey adopted from the IES MAP has learned to adopt to the needs of our students. The IES MAP provides related suggestions regarding non-academic issues such as housing, travel, and food social activities. Results from students who have participated in the IBRC Short Study Tour abroad program continue to show positives changes in what we offer our students. Based on the students suggestions, we have engaged in providing our student opportunity to participate in planning different site visits prior and while on a study tour. The number of sites visits have been reduced from two to one per day to help our students comprehend on the study objectives. We have also made good use of the information from our seminar participants, through post-seminar evaluations.

3. Document specific changes that have resulted from your assessment efforts.

Although the IBRC has wonderful anecdotal stories from our students participants, a more systematic study could help improve the impact that study abroad has had on our students. The IBRC will continue to review new assessment instruments and update periodically what we presently use. This would enable us to continue to provide quality study abroad program opportunities for our students. We will continue to improve on the mission and goods of our short study abroad program to reflect cross-cultural learning experiences in addition to non-academic elements of our program, such as interaction between our students and people in the countries we visit. We have adopted the use of effective communication to meet our grant objectives. In addition, we have been able to develop a systematic method that enables our study tour participants to communicate with their guardians while on the study tour abroad.