

**Name of Assessment Project:** International Scholar Mentoring Program

**Name(s) of Person(s) Responsible for Assessment Project:** No Roles Selected

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**Providing Department:** International Center

**Units/Departments Involved in Assessment Project:**

**Program, Service, or Event Related to Assessment Project:** The project was planned in the following manner. IFSO would maintain a database of international faculty and researchers interested in serving as mentors to undergraduate students considering scholarship and study abroad opportunities. The Academic Integration Program and Programs Abroad Office would forward to IFSO the contact information of students interested in the decision-making and pre-departure sessions and individualized mentoring program. IFSO would set up the group sessions, at which both the international mentors and PAO staff would be present, and would also match the students with international faculty/researchers for the individualized mentoring sessions. IFSO would arrange the facilities, refreshments, and marketing for the group sessions, and would coordinate the follow-up assessment plans.

**Assessment Project Description:** The UC San Diego International Faculty & Scholar Office (IFSO) matched international scholars, researchers, visiting students and visiting professors ("scholars") with UC San Diego students ("students") going to the scholars' country of origin. Students asked questions about university systems, customs, and academic expectations in individual one-on-one settings or in group orientation sessions for that particular country. IFSO surveyed students and scholars involved to determine learning outcomes and program effectiveness.

**Unit/Program Specific Goals and Learning Outcomes:** The goal was to cover high impact learning outcomes and student affairs learning outcomes (SALOs). By exposing students to scholars from their countries of destination, and involving them in discussion, we stimulated student reflection, in order to help them understand why they may be making certain choices, reinforce what they may need to do to be more successful during their time abroad, and understand better the complexities of intercultural communication. Another goal was to connect American students with international scholars to build cross-cultural education and professional networks.

**Relationship to Student Affairs Learning Outcomes:** Advance a Plan for Personal, Academic, and Professional Success, Lead in a Diverse Global Society

**Assessment Project Start:** 7/1/2013

**Assessment Project End:** 6/30/2014

**Population/Sample:** The primary population targeted was students going abroad for an opportunity to conduct research or studies. The secondary population targeted was scholars from countries that could provide a window of learning about the destination country, culture, and education systems. The program intended to reach as many students as possible, which ended up posing a challenge. We reached out via email lists, AEP and PAO info sessions, workshops and orientations, and posted flyers in key campus locations, but only got about 100 students participating in group mentoring sessions and 5 students participating in individual mentoring. In total 12 students completed our survey.

**Type of Assessment:** Student learning outcomes and/or behavioral outcomes

**Other Assessment Type(s):**

**Assessment Methods:** Surveys

**Other Assessment Method(s):**

**Data Collection Tools:** We used surveys emailed to target populations, which included closed-ended questions such as ratings, as well as open-ended questions that required students and scholars to reflect on high impact learning outcomes and write about their experience. Due to the personalized nature of this mentoring program, Kevin DelMastro, IFSO Assistant Director and program coordinator, elected to email students and scholars directly and tailor questions to their situation. There was a high response rate (about 25%), which may have resulted from the personalized nature of the survey instrument.

**Data Analysis Methods:** Kevin DelMastro, program coordinator, collected surveys over several weeks and analyzed the results. He measured the ratings and synthesized key findings of open-ended, experiential questions.

**Presentation of Findings:** Findings were presented at staff meetings for IFSO and the entire International Center.

**Progress:** 100%

**Link Assessment Project in Campus Labs Baseline :**

Name	Source
No items to display.	

**Summary of Findings:** Students found the scholars to be very helpful in learning about social customs and academic culture and expectations in their destination country. For example, students learned how to approach people in the destination country, how to

communicate with professors, and how to navigate university systems. They also reported learning about attitudes and expectations for their chosen field of study in that destination country; they reported that their interactions with scholars helped them reflect on their own background, research, studies, and culture, and changed their view of these aspects on the global scale.

Students reported that scholars communicated clearly and were very enthusiastic about the students' opportunities to make an academic visit to their country. In fact, students said they were encouraged and excited by the scholars, and felt more at ease about their upcoming trip. One student reported that scholars "were the most helpful predictor of my experience abroad. Most of what they said was not information I could get from a book or from an American student who had been there." After this mentoring experience, students felt more prepared for their experience and comfortable, especially as many of them had the scholars' contact information if needed. Some of the students reported feeling more hopeful of their own success after meeting scholars who had succeeded in coming to UC San Diego.

Scholars involved in the program reported much success in their connections with American students. They learned about American university systems in a different way than they had in doing their research at UC San Diego, from the student perspective. They enjoyed getting to know students personally, sharing information about their country and educational and research systems there, as well as cultural stories and differences. Some of them said they were looking forward to keeping in touch with their student mentee throughout the student's experience abroad.

**Impact of Assessment:** This assessment was useful in that we learned about many benefits students gleaned from scholar mentors, and scholars from student mentees. Our hope is to continue using scholars in the various steps of the student experience: when deciding on whether to go abroad and to which country, when planning specifics for the trip, while abroad and dealing with culture shock and academic issues, and upon returning to UC San Diego and reflecting on experiences. As evidenced in our report, we were successful in terms of high impact student learning outcomes.

**Lessons Learned:** Although the program helped those who participated, it did not reach many people, given the amount of staff and resources that were used throughout the yearlong process. Going forward, we must engage more students through more effective marketing and strategic planning. There are certain times of the year that would be better suited to recruit student participants and now we understand the cycles and patterns to better utilize marketing efforts. We also have developed stronger partnerships across offices and will use those relationships going forward with this and other cross-disciplinary programs. Lastly, we need more direction from our sister offices that support students to help this program gain traction.

**Supplemental Information:**

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