

International Programs

2024-2025 Report



2024-2025 Profile 411 students

International Students
90 F & J students/scholars
18 F-1 graduates on Post-Completion
Practical Training

Off-Campus Participants
182 semesters abroad
22 Campaign Semester
17 Kahane U.N.
45 summer '25 study abroad
29 Global Projects
6 faculty-led Richter
2 DC semester

Preparing Global Citizens

Whether gathering with families and friends to celebrate international students' graduation, above and page 3 . . .

. . . or semester abroad and Faculty-led Richter students developing leadership, research and analysis skills in challenging cross-cultural settings, pages 2 and 4 . . .

. . . our gifted and diverse Tigers demonstrate meaningful critical engagement with and enthusiasm for **global learning**. This report documents International Programs' contribution to these activities, processes and outcomes over the '24-'25 academic year.

Semester Abroad

Student Learning

Commensurate with national dialogue about transformative educational practices (ACE & AACU), Occidental's semester abroad programs result in **powerful global learning outcomes** (see chart, below) . Program affiliation guidelines and the College mission call for purposeful alignment of experiences with the academic program. The self-directed educational application process requires research, detailed articulation of scholarly purpose and explicit connection between location and goals. In determining eligibility and preparedness, faculty recommenders and IPO staff assess the **relevance** of the proposed study abroad **to the applicant's academic program** and the **student's intellectual curiosity** with regard to the program focus and site.

Semester Abroad (Fall 2024, 83% response rate) How did semester abroad impact your LEARNING ?	% very strongly, strongly or agree
Deepened or enhanced knowledge/skills in the subject matter	97
Familiarity with the local culture, people and customs	97
Personal development (maturity, independence, confidence)	96
Global citizenship (connection of people, ideas, problems)	93
Enhanced career exploration/preparation	84
Increased research or analytic skills in the subject matter	84
Increased capacity in the local language	80

Inclusive Excellence

International Programs' diverse portfolio of opportunities - U.N., Campaign Semester, DC internship, study abroad, faculty-led courses and research, Global Projects - serves our diverse student body. Participants **include 52% of persons of color** compared to 34% nationwide, according to national census on student study abroad mobility, Open Doors 2024 (Institute for International Education, NY) .

Operational Enhancements

Due to increasingly early visa and partner application processes, we **established new deadlines**, enduring two semesters of double processes in the transition. Rising sophomores now apply **one full year in advance** of their intended junior semester abroad (apply sophomore fall for junior fall abroad or sophomore spring for junior spring abroad). The change aligns us more closely with best practice in our comparison group. Commensurate with their experiences, we already observe positive outcomes:

- **higher quality applications** by qualified students with serious, well researched goals
- **holistic educational discernment** (a documented resilience practice) and intentional academic plans which may contribute to **retention**
- **efficient and accurate** administrative processes across campus
- **accuracy of IPO and College budget** forecasting & academic department **curriculum planning**
- improved student **self-efficacy and satisfaction** during the task-heavy pre-departure processes

Program Goals '25-'26

- Continuously review articulation between **Oxy curriculum and semester abroad offerings**.
- Realign semester abroad learning goals/assessment practice with Oxy's new learning goals.

Lesson Learned!

Fall 2024 we supported an off-campus study cohort 30 % larger than usual. Responding to student and family anger over an historic number of semester abroad applicant denials, Dean Sternberg wisely encouraged constituents to **"consider the capacity of the International Programs Office to support the students**, given the College's responsibility for the safety and crisis management." While safety incidents did not increase, our administrative capacity vis-à-vis our staff size was strained. The fall abroad cohort experienced longer wait times for visa documents, less frequent and more content-jammed communications, a higher number of meal stipend adjustments and slower processing times for transcripts. The surge impacted workloads in other departments including ResEd, Financial Aid, Admissions, etc.

International Students

International Students '24-'25

... From Whence They Came ...

Afghanistan
Cambodia
Canada (6)
China (40)
Denmark
Ecuador
El Salvador
Finland
France
Hong Kong (4)
India (8)
Indonesia
Italy
Jamaica
Japan (2)
Korea (2)
Lesotho
Mexico (2)
Myanmar
Palestine
Pakistan (3)
Portugal
Singapore
Spain (2)
Taiwan
Thailand
Turkey
United Kingdom (2)
Vietnam

... Not including dozens of US citizens who lived abroad, Oxy's "global nomads."

Regulatory Compliance ... and hugs

Associate Director and Occidental's lead international student advisor Marisa Grover Mofford has not waived in her **unyielding commitment to keeping up with constant changes** in regulatory interpretation and to **informing students of their rights, obligations and possible perils**. Throughout we have balanced realism with hugs, listening to fears and comforting tears.

Programming for Success

The 2025 international graduates on the cover of this report persevered despite a first year marked by masks, COVID tests and significantly modified programming including IPO orientation. Fall 2022, we revived our "best practice" orientation which builds knowledge and skills to **connect** to campus resources including the IPO team, develop a sense of **community** with each other and U.S. students, and thereby increase **confidence** to embrace academic and cross-cultural challenges. Commensurate with these goals, class of '28 program assessment was **resoundingly positive**. Participant feedback validated the varied methods of delivery (pace, tone, activities), specific content and balance of content and community building.

Operational Enhancement

January 2023 in collaboration with colleagues in Oxy's ITS, we began the development and implementation process of a state-of-the-art international student visa management portal. The system securely integrates Occidental's operating systems with the U.S. Customs and

Immigration Services Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) as required by law. The new portal increases staff operational efficiency and streamlines the student experience.

Program Goals '25-'26

- **Welcome and build community** with the international class of '29
- Collaborate with leadership across campus to synthesize and augment supports and programs to **advance inclusive excellence** for international students.



International Student Enrollments
Matriculated and Exchange/Visiting

Faculty-Led Richter Research & Creative Projects

Associate Director Julie Santos and faculty committee chair Mariška Bolyanatz Brown shepherded a **40% growth in Faculty-Led Richter (FLR) research and creative projects** since the 2019 inception of this innovation. Generously funded by the Paul E. Richter and Evalyn Cook Richter Trust, **2026 projects will include 19 student collaborators and these faculty mentors:**

- Shengyun Gu,* Cognitive Science, China
- Lydia Harmon, Geology, New Zealand
- Sarah Kozinn, Theater, Scotland
- Karla Peña, Urban and Environmental Policy, Ecuador
- Alexandra Pivovarov, Gretchen North, Stephanie Birnbaum, Biology, Costa Rica
- Natasha Sekhon, Geology, Philippines.

International Programs Faculty Committee 2024-2025

Chair: Mariška Bolyanatz Brown, Spanish and French Literary Studies

Members: Jesse Mora, Economics; Karla Pena, Urban and Environmental Policy;

Removing financial barriers to high impact programs and consistent with Occidental's commitment to **EQUITY** and

ACCESS, International Programs and the faculty committee contributed

\$70,000 of 2025

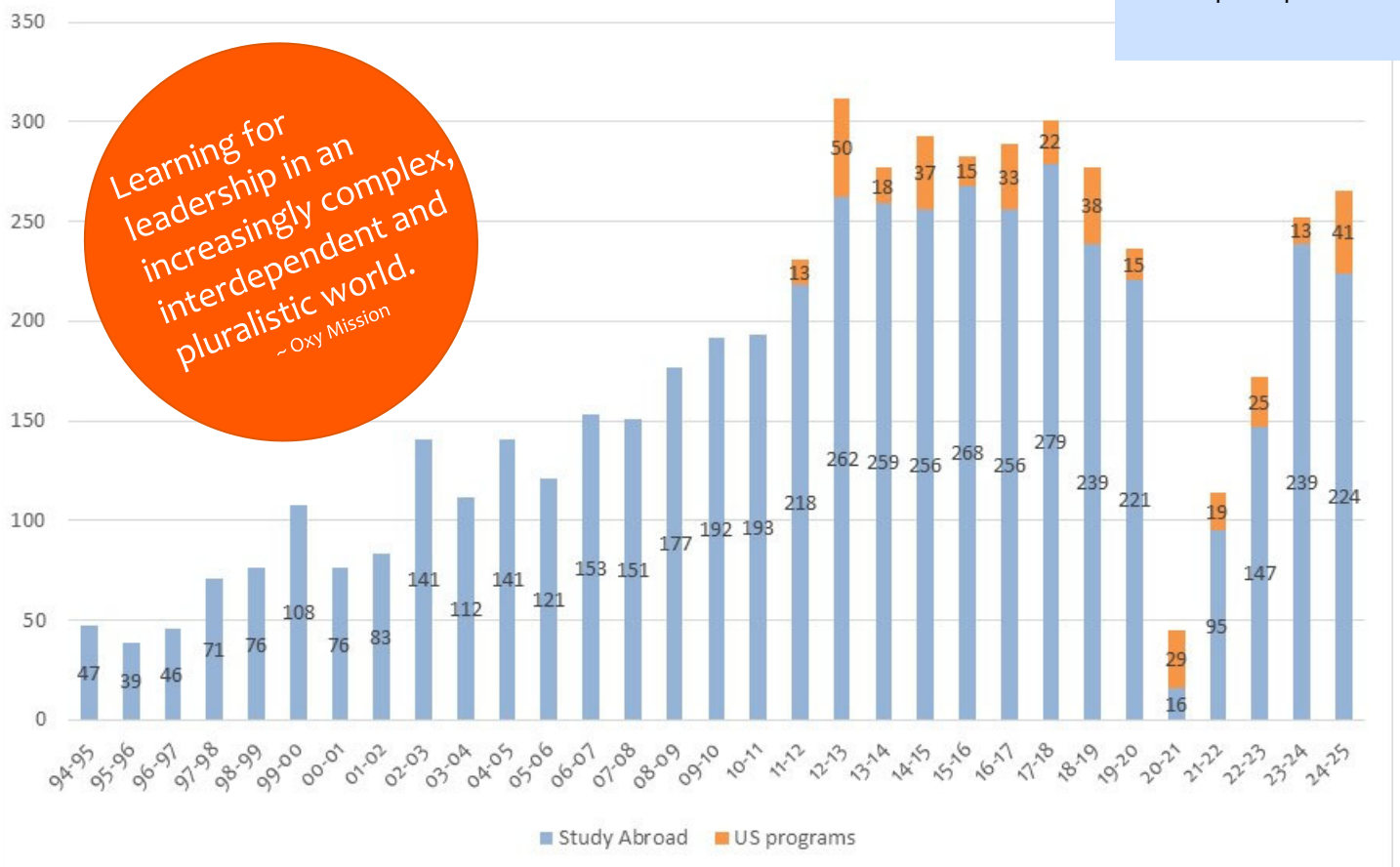
Richter funds to the Undergraduate Research Center to support the Summer Research Program.

AND we awarded

\$92,600 need and merit-based grants to summer study abroad participants including 61 % who otherwise might not participate.

Off Campus Study Participants

Study Abroad (credit) = semesters, summer, faculty led courses
US = UN, Campaign Semester, DC internships



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