This annual report celebrates International Programs’ achievements over the 2013-2014 academic year. Embracing a growing national movement among international educators to “count what matters,” we expand our traditional data by highlighting College-Sponsored travelers, page 3. Beyond numbers, we seek to understand the student experience. For out-bound students, we delve deeply into the contribution international experiences make to vocational development, page 2. For international students, we document our manifold efforts to apprehend and support their success, page 4.

For highlights of the year include:

Student Mobility - Up from under half the class historically, participation in credit-bearing study abroad rose to 54% using the methodology of the national study abroad census, IIE’s Open Doors. Our 108 Richter/College-Sponsored travelers (Young, Richter, Glee Club, NSF, URC, Anderson, Maes, Luce, etc.), increase our global engagement rate to 76.8%, page 3.

Program Development - Informed by our history of collaborative management with DWA and with directors Sherry, Hirsch and now Gardner of the The William and Elizabeth Kahane United Nations Program at Occidental College (Oxy at the UN), we partnered with Politics faculty to prepare eleven Fall 2014 Campaign Semester participants and three DC internship semester participants (pilot, Spring 2014).

International Student Services - Continued assessment of and advocacy for 107 international students. Methods included a three-part series of discussions with campus stakeholders (faculty, Center for Academic Excellence, student services, admission, etc.); first-year student interviews; faculty survey; and analysis of key success indicators such as GPA and student survey results, page 4.

Diversity of Participants - Students of color make up 29% of study abroad participants and 42% of College-Sponsored travelers. Compare the box (right) and the chart on page 3.

Diversity of Programs - We launched two new short-term faculty-led courses: Eric Frank’s Art and Biography of Michelangelo (Fal on campus, plus January field-study in Italy) and Beth Braker and Jeremy Claisse’s Tropical Ecology (Spring on campus, plus May-June labs in Costa Rica and Panama). Both courses resulted in excellent student evaluations and strong evidence of student learning in appropriate domains.

Administrative Practices - We strengthened our infrastructure and core practices by implementing Terra Dotta, a web-based application and data management software. The system increases administrative efficiency, enhances our data management and enhances our capacity for crisis avoidance and response, thus creating a foundation for continued innovation.
Understanding the Student Experience - VOCATIONAL DIRECTION

What meaning do students derive from their experiences abroad and what new skills and behaviors do they embrace? Simply put, what do they learn? Of IPO’s established student learning outcomes, we focus our review of just one in this report: students will identify international and comparative dimensions of an emerging vocational direction.

Our intentional, educational interventions start with advising. On the study abroad planning worksheet, sophomores must address “How study abroad fits into (their) career and/or educational plans.” We probe their answers, challenge the program choice, point out inconsistencies, suggest options with a stronger thematic connection, suitable internships, research placements, or relevant courses. The application process builds on this. After demonstrating research related to the country and program, aspirants detail “How study abroad will contribute to (their) development (intellectual, cultural, career, or otherwise).” In her proposal to study in Peru, Mikayla Brantz (Psych/Spanish, ’15) set this vocational learning goal: “I will gain a greater appreciation for the impact that different backgrounds can have on people, including an understanding of how South American families function and how this might affect their experiences in the US. I will be able to be understanding and compassionate as a clinical psychologist.”

Mandatory orientation continues to stimulate intellectual curiosity and motivation to learn more, according to student evaluations.

Upon return, opportunities abound to deepen meaning and sharpen purpose/career goals. Valerie Savior, director of the Career Development Center, provides specialized workshops. Her powerful presentation emphasizes understanding and marketing the skills and knowledge gained abroad, the very attributes sought by employers (NACE, 2014). Finally, our annual photo contest aligned submission categories to three of IPO’s student learning outcomes, including career. Harnessing Global Crossroads technology, 28 students demonstrated their learning visually and in writing through over 100 entries. Grace Bender ’15 (Biology) submitted the photo (left) and this interpretation - “The real cost of a banana includes the health of workers, communities, and the rainforest. Bananas cost far more than the $1 we pay at Oxy” - as evidence of her “international vocational perspective.” She won first prize in that category!

Finally, our returnee evaluation and impact assessment survey asks students to connect their experience with vocational aspirations. Semester abroad participants attribute learning to understand global perspectives (97%); growth in leadership skills (86%); and enhancement of career path (83%) to their experience. Their writing corroborated this vocational impact:

- “I want to have a career that has a positive impact on society. Studying abroad made me question my personal values about what are and are not positive contributions to the global community.”
- “(I gained an) understanding that will contribute to my literary work, social justice campaigns and a career involving communication.”
- “I now have the resources to represent and express a voice that is marginalized internationally. (It is my duty to work with this voice so the world hears it and understands its value so global decisions become more empathetic and inclusive.”

All of the participants in the faculty-led biology course to Costa Rica and Panama affirmed that their learning included “enhanced career exploration/preparation” in addition to many other course outcomes. In response to an open-ended question, one wrote, “So glad I could end my four years at Oxy with this experience. At the beginning of the trip, I felt relatively sure that grad school was in my future, at a vague time to be determined. Going home, I have a list of prospective schools, a strategy for finding a program to work with, reassurance and confidence that this is what I want to do with my life, and a plan to start grad school next fall. I’d call that a success – THANK YOU!”

In their unscripted “thank you” notes to the Paul K. and Evelyn E. Cook Richter Memorial Trust officer, summer 2013 scholars unanimously linked their learning abroad with intended graduate study and professional paths. One wrote: “(My interest in this issue was magnified by my research, without which, I would never have known how much love I have for this kind of work and probably would have never pursued this as a potential career, like I am doing now.”

For a snapshot of international students’ capacity to align the Oxy education with career interests, see page 4!

Innovating beyond traditional “study abroad,” these College-vetted student projects are funded or sponsored by faculty grant-sharing such as the National Science Foundation, academic departments, or College funds such as Young, URC, Richter, Luce, Anderson and Schwartz. IPO began supporting and tracking these travelers in the 2011-2012 academic year. Since then, participation has grown steadily. See graph, right. They impact student learning, internationalize the Oxy experience and ensure access by our diverse student body. They make a significant contribution to Oxy’s global engagement. See Diversity box, below, right.

The winter spike includes 45 participants in the Music Department’s Glass Club Europe concert series. Sanjeev Khagram’s student delegation to the Global Entrepreneurship Summit in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia in October 2013 are the 10 “other timing” indicated on the graph, right.

The IPO services to College-Sponsored travelers include:

- faculty/administrator's pilot workshop (19 participants including Global Affairs, Title IX Officer, Biology, Urban and Environmental Policy faculty, Emmons staff, etc.)
- stewardship and guidance through the U.S. Department of State travel warning appeal process

Mission-aligned outcomes include a group of student participants even more diverse than traditional study abroad. Compare the charts on p.1 and the chart, right.

Richter Scholars 2014

Christina Crittenden ’15 (LLAS)
- Addressing Arpilleras As a Means of Gendered Political Participation in Chile
  - Supervisor: Alexandra Puerto

Tom Mirovski ’16 (Biochemistry)
- Deconstructing with Creative Experimentations: A Non-Anthropocentric Narrative for the Post-Human Reader in Australia
  - Supervisor: Cheryl Okumura

Arielle N'Diaye ’15 (Sociology)
- The Power of Music How Public Health Organizations Utilize Music in HIV Education in South Africa
  - Supervisor: Movindri Reddy

Beatrice Spirakis ’15 (ECLS)
- The Link Between Maternal and Neonatal Health and Improved Water Access in Rural Cambodia
  - Supervisor: Bhavna Shamasunder

Christina Seyfreid ’15 (DWA)
- The Impact of Budget Transparency on State Stability - Kenya Case Study
  - (not implemented due to unstable conditions)
  - Supervisor: Sanjeev Khagram

Brittany Wightman ’15 (ECLS)
- Poetry and Collective Identity: Examining Themes of Absence in Women’s Workshop Poetry and Contemporary Women’s Poetry in Malaysia
  - Supervisor: Adelaida Lopez

Measuring Global Engagement: College-Sponsored Travelers