Office of International Programs

Proposed Rollins Approved Semester Program Closures

**Overview and Process**

Over the course of 2020-21, International Programs (IP) put together a proposal for changes to our existing portfolio of Rollins Approved Semester study abroad programs.These changes, which include closing some programs and opening others, were designed to address the changing needs of our student body and increase access to semester study abroad. Our proposal will ensure that we are offering high-quality and sustainable programs that align well with our academic programs and offer a range of programs suitable for a diverse study body with different needs and goals for the study abroad experience.

The initial proposal for the full set of changes to our program portfolio was developed collaboratively by the staff in IP. This proposal was then shared with the 2020-21 CLA/Holt sub-committee of the Global Initiatives Committee who suggested the development and addition of a rubric to further standardize practices for program assessment and ensure a reliable and fair process for program changes. The revised proposal, including a rubric was then approved by that sub-committee in fall 2021 and thn moved forward to the full Global Initiatives Committee. The Global Initiatives Committee reviewed, discussed and approved the proposal in spring 2022.

Staff from IP then gathered data on participation rates for different majors and minors on any of the programs being considered for closure. Based on that data, IP reached out to the chairs of any departments or academic programs that could be impacted by the program closure to seek their feedback via email and in some cases, through virtual meetings. After reviewing this feedback, IP made final adjustments to the full proposal to better align with faculty needs and concerns and finalized it in July 2021. Throughout this process, IP also kept Provost Singer apprised of the proposed changes.

The next steps are to seek formal faculty governance approval to close specific programs and open new ones. This proposal is focused on one set of specific program closures and we are seeking Curriculum Committee approval for these proposed closures.

**Proposed Program Closures:**

It is important to note that in order to open new programs to better support students, there is a need to close other programs since resources are limited and it takes significant staffing resources to maintain a relationship with a program, even if we aren’t sending students on that program. Moreover, one of the goals of the program portfolio revisions overall is to eliminate programs serving very small numbers of students and develop a more balanced portfolio where each program is serving students consistently year to year.

The Approved Semester Program Rubric, used to assess the effectiveness of programs, is included at the end of this document for reference. The Global Experience Index, used to assess global engagement opportunities on programs, measures five factors: immersiveness, literacies for global stewardship, skills for global engagement, dispositions for global engagement, and reflection and wrap-up. IP expects programs to score at least 18 out of 24 on the Approved Semester Program rubric.

China: Beijing Foreign Studies University

* IP opened program at the behest of faculty; it was approved in spring 2017. We have not sent any students on the program since it was established and have never even had a student apply for the program. We have had one or two students express interest in the program but that interest was never sustained to the point of starting an application. The program only serves students with experience in Chinese language and ideally experience in China because students essentially streamline into the Chinese institution, which has a very hands-off approach to international students. We have two other program options in China (Shanghai and Hong Kong) with better student support and course options. It is also very difficult to maintain an active relationship with any program when we send no or very small numbers of students.
* Since Li Wei was the faculty member most involved in the development of the program and students studying Chinese are the most likely to be impacted by this closure, IP sought Li Wei’s feedback for this proposed closure. He argued that we should maintain the relationship, which developed out of a relationship with our Debate Team and Professor Smaw. Visits involving the Debate Team have been successful and Li Wei, Eric Smaw and Jenny Cavanaugh have all visited the institution.
* Approved Semester Program Rubric Score: 10 out of 21
  + Global Experience Index Score: 1
  + Student Feedback: N/A
  + Enrollment: 0. We have sent no students on this program.
  + Curricular Matches: 2
  + Student Grades and Perception of Course Difficulty: 2
  + Partner Organization: 1
  + Program Cost: 3
  + Addresses Particular Need: 1
* Close this program when the current agreement expires in fall 2022. Final sending semester would generally be spring 2022. However, in order to address concerns expressed by Li Wei about a particularly strong student who planned to study abroad in Shanghai and then Beijing, we would grandfather that student in and permit her to participate in the program during the fall 2022 term if she so desires.

Germany: Jacobs University

* This partnership was successful for a number of years but due to changes at the institution, the curriculum is no longer a strong match for Rollins students. Jacobs University is a private, international institution in Germany and was supported since it’s inception by the Jacobs Foundation. During this time, there was several changes in leadership, administration and curriculum as the institution determined how to develop a sustainable model apart from the Foundation funding. Funding from the foundation has now ended and while a different organization has stepped in, they are considering further significant changes to the institution that will likely make it even less of a good fit for Rollins.
* This partnership was initially driven by faculty in International Business and in German language. IP consulted with faculty in International Business who did not feel that closing this program would have a significant impact on their students. IP also informed faculty in Germany; however, since Jacobs is an English-speaking University and students only had the option to take one 3-credit German language course this program is not particularly well-suited to students focused on German and we have a program in Munich that offers a language intensive option. Based on sending majors, IP also checked in with faculty in Computer Science, who did not feel it would have a significant impact on their students. There were no other majors or minors that had significant numbers of students represented in the program participants.
* Approved Semester Program Rubric Score: 16 out of 24.
  + Global Experience Index Score: 2
  + Student Feedback: 2
  + Enrollment: 2
  + Curricular Matches: 1.5
  + Student Grades and Perception of Course Difficulty: 2
  + Partner Organization: 1.5
  + Program Cost: 3
  + Addresses a Particular Need: 2
* Close this program when the current agreement expires in fall 2022. Final sending semester would be spring 2022.

Italy: Inter-Collegiate Center for Classical Studies

* This program only serves very high-performing Classics majors and we have only sent 2 students on the program in the past 10 years. It is also an extremely high-cost program. We have another program in Italy and a program in Greece that are also appropriate for Classics majors. It is also very difficult to maintain an active relationship with any program when we send very small numbers of students.
* Faculty in Classics feel very strongly that we should maintain this relationship. IP staff have discussed this with Prof. Vander Poppen in prior years. Prof. Vander Poppen feels that this is such a high-quality program, we should maintain the relationship, in part because it is such a well-known and competitive program that if a student goes on the program, it will have a positive impact on their graduate school applications within Classics. Based on this proposal, IP staff reached out repeatedly to Prof. Vander Poppen in late spring and early summer 2021 to alert him to the proposed closure and seek his feedback. He did not respond to any queries so the feedback included here is from conversations prior to 2020-21.
* Approved Semester Program Rubric Score: 12 out of 24.
  + Global Experiences Index Score: 2
  + Student Feedback: 3
  + Enrollment: .5
  + Curricular Matches: .5
  + Student Grades and Perception of Course Difficulty: 3
  + Partner Organization: 1.5
  + Program Cost: 0
  + Addresses a Particular Need: 1.5
* Close this program in fall 2021. The current agreement is out-of-date so there is no active obligation to maintain the program.

United Kingdom: Lancaster University

* We currently have two University-based programs in the UK, which is quite redundant. We have only sent one student to Lancaster in recent years, and while Lancaster is a good program in many ways, students tend to select the program at Queen Mary, University of London. Moreover, a number of academic departments, feel strongly that the relationship with Queen Mary should be maintained because it serves their students; this includes International Business, Biology, Psychology, Computer Science, and Economics. Although there have been some challenges with student academic success at Queen Mary, several faculty feel this is a prestigious program that can benefit our high-performing students.
* The Lancaster relationship did have a connection with the English department through Prof. Ed Cohen, who is now retired. IP staff did reach out to the Chair of the English department and verified that there was not a concern from that department about closing this program.
* Lancaster Approved Semester Program Rubric Score: 16.5 out of 24
  + Global Experience Rubric Score: 2
  + Student Feedback: 2
  + Enrollment: 1
  + Curricular Matches: 3
  + Student Grades and Perception of Course Difficulty: 2
  + Partner Organization: 2.5
  + Program Cost: 3
  + Addresses a Particular Need: 1
* Close this program when the current agreement expires in summer 2024. Final sending semester would be spring 2024.
* In fall 2021, develop a process by which Queen Mary applicants are vetted more closely by faculty to ensure student success.

**Programs Under Consideration for Future Closure**

We are seeking Curriculum Committee approval for the plans proposed here.

Australia: University of Sydney

* Students consistently struggle on this program and bring poor grades back to Rollins. Students are drawn to the location, but this program is not a good fit for many Rollins students. As a result, we send very students on the program. Feedback on the program is also mixed with students expressing concern that it is difficult to meet Australian students due to the nature of a very large, urban University and the off-campus student housing.
* Rollins has had a very long-standing relationship with University of Sydney and it is consistently ranked within the top 75 institutions in the world. For high-achieving students, this is a prestigious program that could open doors to additional opportunities. Faculty in International Business and key faculty with connections to the program, Denise Cummings and Mike Gunter, feel strongly that the relationship should be maintained. Based on enrollment data, IP also sought feedback from faculty in Physics, Communication Studies, Economics, Computer Science, and Biology; however, no other faculty had significant concerns about the impact of closing this program.
* Approved Semester Program Rubric Score: 16 of 24
  + Global Experience Index Score: 2
  + Student Feedback: 2
  + Enrollment: 2
  + Curricular Matches: 3
  + Student Grades and Perception of Course Difficulty: 1
  + Partner Organization: 3
  + Program Cost: 2
  + Addresses Particular Need: 1
* Maintain this program through summer 2024.
* In 2021-22, take the following steps to address program concerns:
  + Develop a process by which applicants are vetted more closely by faculty to ensure student success.
  + Explore more integrated housing options or other ways to create connections with Australian students.
* In summer 2024, assess the program again, focusing on Spring 2022-Spring 2024. If the score increases to 18 or higher, maintain the program. If not, submit the program to the Curriculum Committee in fall 2024 for closure.

Germany: Junior Year in Munich

* This program only serves small numbers of high-level German students as it requires two-years of college-level German or the equivalent and all courses are in German. We believe a different approach to programs in German-speaking destinations could reinvigorate the German program at Rollins (see below). However, as this is our only German-language immersive program, we do not want to close the program unless we identify an alternative that would serve students seeking a fully immersive experience.
* IP consulted with faculty in German who do have a desire to maintain an intensive-language option for students studying German. While they are open to exploring other program alternatives, they feel it is important to maintain this relationship in the interim.
* Approved Semester Program Rubric Score: 17.5 out of 24.
  + Global Experience Index Score: 2
  + Student Feedback: 2
  + Enrollment: 1.5
  + Curricular Matches: 1.5
  + Student Grades and Perception of Course Difficulty: 2
  + Partner Organization: 2.5
  + Program Cost: 3
  + Addresses a Particular Need: 3
* Maintain this program until current agreement expires in summer 2023. During this time:
  + Explore alternate program options in Germany and Austria.
  + Work with key faculty and with staff and faculty at Junior Year in Munich to market the program more effectively to students in German language courses.
  + Identify Junior Year in Munich courses that could fulfill rFLA requirements to make the program more accessible to students in the sophomore year.
  + Gather data on what German minors are majoring in and consider identifying program courses appropriate for those majors. Also use this data to inform research into other program options.
* In summer 2023, assess the program again. If the score increases to 18 or higher, maintain the program. If not, submit the program to the Curriculum Committee in fall 2023 for closure.

Israel: Tel Aviv University

* The program at Tel Aviv University has only attracted very small numbers of students since we opened the program in spring 2013. The curriculum is somewhat limited, Israel is a high-cost destination, and many students and parents have risk concerns about Israel. The SIT programs in Jordan have been consistently more popular options in the Middle East region. However, the program is our only option in Israel and one of very limited options in the region.
* IP consulted with the Associate Director of Jewish Student Life and Professor Yudit Greenberg, who was involved in the initial development of this program. Both feel strongly that this program should be maintained. The relationship with Tel Aviv University is a selling point with prospective Jewish students and with potential donors.
* Tel Aviv Approved Semester Program Rubric Score: 17 out of 24
  + Global Experience Rubric Score: 2
  + Student Feedback: 3
  + Enrollment: 1
  + Curricular Matches: 1.5
  + Student Grades and Perception of Course Difficulty: 3
  + Partner Organization: 2
  + Program Cost: 3
  + Addresses a Particular Need: 1.5
* Maintain this program until the current agreement expires in summer 2024. During this time:
  + Work with Prof. Greenberg, the Associate Director of Jewish Student Life, and staff at Tel Aviv to promote the program to Jewish students, students involved with Religious and Spiritual Life on campus, and to students studying Religion and/or Jewish Studies.
  + Explore connections with other majors, identify potential sending departments, and promote the program to students in those departments.
* In summer 2024, assess the program again. If the score increases to 18 or higher, maintain the program. If not, submit the program to the Curriculum Committee in fall 2024 for closure.

**Approved Semester Programs Rubric**

International Programs aims to keep all programs at a score of 18 or higher (75% or above).

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **3**  **Exceeds Expectations** | **2**  **Meets Expectations** | **1**  **Does Not Meet Expectations** |
| **Global Experiences Index Score** | Score of 13-15 | Score of 10-12 | Score Less than 10 |
| **Student Feedback** | Student feedback is generally positive | Student feedback is mixed | Student feedback is generally negative |
| **Enrollment** | Send 5 students or more per year on this program. | Send between 1 and 4 students per year. | Send less than 1 student per year. |
| **Curricular Matches** | The program functions for multiple Rollins majors/minors and offers many courses that could fulfill competencies and rFLA seminars. | The program functions for a few Rollins majors/minors and offers a few courses that could fulfill competencies and rFLA seminars. | The program functions for only 1 or 2 majors/minors and offers limited or no courses that could fulfill competencies and rFLA seminars. |
| **Student Grades and Perception of Course Difficulty** | Grades earned on the program consistently fall into a normal range (accounting for GPA minimums for participation), the majority of students report courses to be similar to Rollins courses, and it is rare for students earn grades of C- or lower. | Grades earned on the program mostly fall into a normal range (accounting for GPA minimums for participation) student assessments of courses vary. On occasion (1 per year) students earn grades of C- or lower. | Grades on the program are consistently all As and all students report that the courses are easier than Rollins courses.  OR – students on the program consistently earn grades of C- or lower (1 student each term) and all students report that the courses are more challenging than Rollins courses. |
| **Partner Organization** | Partner organization provides strong student and institutional support, including good risk management and responsive communication, and there have been no issues or concerns. | Partner organization generally provides strong student and institutional support, including good risk management and responsive communication and there have been minimal issues or concerns. | Partner organization student and institutional support, including good risk management and responsive communication, is not consistent and there have been significant issues or concerns. |
| **Program Costs** | Rollins retains 40% or more of program revenue. | Rollins retains between 20% and 40% of revenue. | Rollins retains less than 20% of revenue. |
| **Addresses a Particular Need** | The program is needed to serve students from specific majors/minors or meets another need (for students with accessibility needs, students with lower GPAs, students seeking internships or service opportunities, etc.) | Alternate programs exist that serve students in the same majors/minors but they may be in different locations or have different structures and requirements. | Alternate programs exist that are very similar to this one in structure and location and serve students in the same majors/minors. |