

OFF CAMPUS PROGRAMS

MISSION STATEMENT

An understanding of a culture or region of the world other than one's own is an important part of being an educated person in an increasingly interdependent global community. Moreover, it is one of the means by which we can cultivate our Christian understanding of humanness. Westmont College therefore encourages and assists students who wish to participate in the college's diverse OCP opportunities.

GOALS

OCP has developed program goals in the areas of:

- (1) **Accessibility** All students will have the space in their college program to enroll in an off-campus program.
- (2) **Cross-cultural effectiveness** Students will develop skills, knowledge, and affections that are useful for effective living in and engaging another culture. There are a number of elements of the College's *Six Learning Standards* that are synonymous with this cross-cultural effectiveness goal as indicated in "Results".

WESTMONT IN MEXICO

Westmont in Mexico (WIM) was used as a case study for assessing the effectiveness of meeting program Goal #2 through an off campus program.

Description of WIM:

- Extensive pre-trip orientation seminars
- Spanish language, history and culture instruction at the University of Queretaro
- Westmont faculty member serves as resident director and instructor of integrative seminar
- Field trips to archeological and cultural sites
- Living with a Mexican family
- Reentry seminars

METHODS OF ASSESSMENT

- **Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI)** - A measurement of an individual's fundamental worldview orientation to cultural difference, and thus the individual's capacity for intercultural competence. Scores are generated on the following scales:

- **Defense/Denial** - Indicates a worldview that simplifies and /or polarizes cultural differences.
- **Reversal** - Indicates a worldview that reverses "us" and "them" polarization, where "them" is superior.
- **Minimization** - Indicates a worldview that highlights cultural commonality and universal issues.
- **Acceptance/Adaptation** - Indicates a worldview that can comprehend and accommodate to complex differences.
- **Encapsulated Marginality** - Indicates a worldview that incorporates a multicultural identity with confused cultural perspectives

- **Portfolio** of student work including written assignments, reflection essays and journaling. Selected portfolios archived by resident director.

CONCLUSIONS

1. Quoting from the resident directors' report, "By all accounts, the semester was an enormous success. Students learned much about Mexican history and culture, gained greater fluency in the Spanish language, and experienced the rich diversity of Mexico through numerous field trips. Through regular readings, discussions, and written reflections, they were also challenged and grew greatly in their faith. Finally, as a result of the experience students became more culturally sensitive individuals, more aware and observant of their surroundings, of others, and of themselves. They came to not only recognize cultural differences, but to accept and appreciate them."
2. Students' self-assessment and reflections were rich in examples of expanded knowledge and cultural sensitivities from their experiences.
3. The use of the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) provided strong quantitative evidence supporting the qualitative measures that significant changes occurred in students' understanding and appreciation of cultural differences.

RESULTS

Student Portfolios - Excerpts from students' portfolios indicated thoughtful reflection and growth related to the cross-cultural effectiveness goal and to several of Westmont's *Six Learning Standards*:

(a) Christian orientation standard:

"Opened my eyes to see the international character and love for God."

"I learned a lot about Catholicism, got a broader perspective of God's kingdom."

"It taught me a lot about how God is not confined by any one culture and helped me make my faith my own."

"It allowed me to have more understanding of the global church and to see my faith from a different perspective."

"Able to better see what part of my religious thought may actually be shaped by culture as an American."

(b) Diversity:

"Being able to respect my host family and their beliefs."

"Learned much about the Mexican culture through spending time with my host family."

"Saw another view of the world and different lifestyle."

(c) Active-societal and intellectual engagement:

"It challenged me to think about what my role as a Christian is in the world. Specifically, how I could show God's love when helping people who are poor."

"I met many people with different ideas about spirituality, politics, and ways of thinking that helped me to be more open-minded."

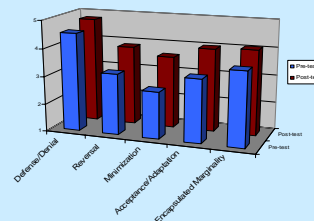
Intercultural Development Inventory

- The IDI was administered prior to the orientation program and again at the end of the re-entry seminar.
- Data presented is from those students who took both the pre-test and the post-test.
- The instrument assesses the respondent's location on each of the scales in terms of whether they are **Unresolved** (1.0 to 2.33), in **Transition** (2.33 to 3.66), or **Resolved** (3.66 to 5.0).
- The IDI results confirm that the WIM program indeed achieved its goals. Students increased their abilities to perceive cultural difference as well as to make the appropriate cognitive and behavioral shifts to adapt and communicate effectively in a cross-cultural context

Westmont in Mexico IDI Results

IDI Scales	2004 WIM		2005 WIM	
	Pre-test	Post-test	Pre-test	Post-test
Defense/Denial	4.53 - R	4.79 - R	4.80 - R	4.85 - R
Reversal	3.19 - T	3.86 - R	3.90 - R	4.19 - R
Minimization	2.69 - T	3.60 - T	2.77 - T	3.74 - R
Acceptance/Adaptation	3.27 - T	4.00 - R	3.19 - T	3.99 - R
Encapsulated Marginality	3.67 - R	4.07 - R	3.96 - R	4.08 - R

2004 WIM IDI Results



WIM 2005 IDI Results

