Legon, Ghana – Fall/AY 2010-2011
IAP Program Handbook

Congratulations on being selected to participate in the study abroad program in Legon, Ghana!

This program is offered by International Academic Programs (IAP) at the University of Wisconsin-Madison in partnership with the Council for International Educational Exchange (CIEE). Throughout the course of your study abroad experience you will be communicating with both IAP and CIEE staff. It is essential that you pay close attention to all information provided to you from both organizations. This IAP Program Handbook supplements handbook(s) or materials you receive from CIEE as well as the IAP Study Abroad Handbook and provides you with the most up-to-date information and advice available at the time of printing. Changes may occur before your departure or while you are abroad.

CIEE handles the program’s day-to-day operations. Generally, questions about aspects of your program abroad should be directed to CIEE (e.g., program housing options, program facilities abroad, cultural tours offered as part of the program, etc.) Questions relating to your relationship with UW-Madison or your academics should be addressed to International Academic Programs at UW-Madison (e.g., course credits, equivalents, UW Madison registration, etc.)

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UW-Madison Information
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Web: www.studyabroad.wisc.edu

Kate Hamoonga
IAP Study Abroad Advisor
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Emergency Contact Information
In case of an emergency, call the main IAP number (608) 265-6329 between 7:45 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Monday-Friday; after-hours or on weekends call the IAP staff on call at (608) 516-9440.

In an emergency, you or a family member can call CIEE 24 hours a day at 1-800-40-STUDY (from the US) or 207-553-7600 (US and overseas). This number is monitored 24 hours per day and will put you in touch with CIEE program staff in Maine.

Embassy Registration
Program participants who are U.S. citizens must register at the U.S. Embassy before departure as this will help in case of a lost passport or other mishap. You can register online at: https://travelregistration.state.gov. If you are not a U.S. citizen, register at your home country’s embassy or consulate.

U.S. Embassy
No. 19 Fifth Link Road
Cantonments, Accra
Telephone: (233) 21-741-100 Fax: (233) 21-741-362/741-426
After Hours Emergency: (233) 21-741-775
Email: acsaccra@state.gov
Web: http://accra.usembassy.gov/

Program Dates
Fall 2010: Please see your CIEE program handbook.

*for more detailed program dates and breaks, please see your CIEE program handbook

Preparations Before Leaving
Refer to the Pre-Departure Checklist on pages four and five of the IAP Study Abroad Handbook as well as your CIEE program handbook for essential information.

Immigration Documents
Participants will need to obtain a student visa. CIEE will provide program participants with application instructions as well as necessary documents to apply for the student visa. Contact CIEE with any specific visa questions.

**Travel and Arrival Information**

Travel and Arrival Information will be provided by CIEE.

**The Academic Program**

**General Information**

The University of Ghana was established in 1948 as the University College of the Gold Coast, an affiliate college of the University of London. Following Ghana’s independence in 1957, it was reorganized as the University of Ghana and in 1961 began to award its own degrees. The university is located on a large park-like campus in the suburb of Legon, about nine miles northeast of downtown Legon. The university has a student enrollment of nearly 30,000, including over 1,000 international students, and a faculty of 400.

The CIEE program is designed to provide you with a broad understanding of contemporary Ghanaian culture, society, and politics as well as a working knowledge of Twi, a major Ghanaian language. Although the university has been adopting American academic customs, the British teaching style still dominates at the university. As a result, lectures rely heavily on the final paper or exam to assess student performance allowing students greater responsibility and initiative in a less structured environment. Teaching methods at the university normally involve a mixture of lectures, tutorials, seminars, and, in the sciences, laboratory classes.

The program also includes a required seven to eight week CIEE Twi Language course. This course is attended only by CIEE program students and meets for the first six weeks of the program. The remainder of the University of Ghana classes will have host country nationals, Americans, and other international students. Students are required to undertake a full program of courses, including all prescribed assignments and written examinations.

Students interested in examining the developmental challenges facing Ghana today can enroll in the Development Studies track. Participants take a seminar course and integrated internship as well as Twi Language and two additional university courses. Internship placements are available within a variety of local NGOs, schools, clinics and hospitals, orphanages, finance organizations, and community-based organizations. By combining in-class analysis of Ghanaian culture, history, family issues, politics, health care, and media with field-based practical training in and around Legon, students explore Ghanaian and global perspectives and think critically about the current issues impeding social and economic growth in Ghana. Students must apply for the Development Studies Track prior to arrival in Ghana. Students may also choose to complete an internship or take part in many volunteer opportunities once they arrive in Ghana. The CIEE staff is a great resource to help you find the opportunity best for you.

**Registration**
Registration information will be provided by CIEE. In general, CIEE will communicate with you by email. You will receive detailed information on courses and requirements in your online CIEE acceptance materials. Read all of the CIEE materials carefully and return all CIEE forms directly to CIEE by their deadline date.

Students should review their academic plan with their academic advisor before departure. The first step in the plan is to develop a list of courses offered at the home institution that fulfill requirements or electives. Students should then bring the course outlines for these courses to Ghana. Once at the University, students are able to identify the courses that are equivalent. Courses are offered in many disciplines. All degree courses have a three-digit number in one of the following ranges. The third digit of the course number is zero for a course that is offered both semesters. Odd numbered courses are offered in the fall semester only, and even numbered courses are offered in the spring semester only.

Second Year courses are numbered from 200–299
Third Year courses are numbered from 300–399
Fourth Year courses are numbered from 400–499

It is important to note that due to final exam scheduling constraints, students must select all of their elective courses from the same level e.g. take all their courses in the 200, 300, or 400 level. University of Ghana does not allow for students to take a mixture of year range courses. Visit www.ug.edu.gh for more details.

Course Information
A full course load is five courses including a required Ghanaian language course (Twi) and one African Studies course from the core curriculum. More specific course information will be provided by CIEE. Be prepared to have some flexibility in the choosing of academic courses, as offerings are not always the same each semester.

Equivalents and Course Equivalent Request Form (CERF)
Each course you take abroad must be assigned a UW-Madison "equivalent" course in order for your grades and credits to be recorded on your UW-Madison transcript. In order to establish UW-Madison course equivalents for your study abroad courses, you will submit a Course Equivalent Requests through your My Study Abroad account. Detailed information on the UW course equivalent process that you will use through your My Study Abroad account is available in the IAP Study Abroad Handbook.

Credits
CIEE requires that students enroll in at least 15 credits per semester. The recommended credit load for the semester is 15-18 credits. Most courses are worth three UW-Madison credits (including the required language course), although there are some courses that are worth less and others more. Courses that are three credits usually meet for three hours per week, although one of those hours is normally set aside for tutorials.

Pass/Fail/Drop/Audit
Please refer to the IAP Study Abroad Handbook for Academic Policies.

Grades and Grade Conversions
Students are normally graded based on a mid-term exam and final examination, but often with no mid-term. The grading scale at the University of Ghana is significantly different from grading at most American Universities. CIEE will discuss this further at your orientation program in Ghana. At the end of the program, CIEE issues official academic records for all participants. The grading conversion scale from CIEE to UW Madison is listed below and also available in your IAP Study Abroad Handbook.

The assignment of grades for regular university courses can sometimes be a lengthy process causing some delay in the reporting of final grades to CIEE and UW-Madison. Consult your CIEE program handbook for more details.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>CIEE Grade</th>
<th>UW-Madison equivalent grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+ / A</td>
<td>A</td>
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<tr>
<td>A- / B+</td>
<td>AB</td>
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**Living Abroad**

Educate yourself about your host country. Read the Preparing to Live in Another Culture section of the IAP Study Abroad Handbook. Consult the following resources as well as travel books and program binders in the Study Abroad Resource Room (250 Bascom Hall).

**Websites of Interest:**

- UW-Madison International Academic Programs (IAP):
  [http://www.studyabroad.wisc.edu](http://www.studyabroad.wisc.edu)

- CIEE website:
  [http://www.ciee.org](http://www.ciee.org)

- University of Ghana:

- For more general travel information:
  [http://www.worldwide.edu](http://www.worldwide.edu)

- U.S. State Department information:
http://travel.state.gov

U.S. State Department Students Abroad site:  
http://www.studentsabroad.state.gov/

Center for Disease Control (CDC):  
http://www.cdc.gov/travel/

Lonely Planet Guidebook:  
http://www.lonelyplanet.com

Comprehensive information on Ghana:  
http://www.ghana.com

Daily Graphic (a Ghanaian newspaper):  
http://www.graphicghana.com/index.php

Ghana Tourism site:  
http://www.touringghana.com/default.asp

**Communication**

When making calls, keep in mind time zone differences  
(www.timeanddate.com/worldclock) - Ghana is 5 hours ahead, 6 during fall daylight savings. To make an international call to the United States, dial the access code for the country from which you are calling plus the United States country code (always “1”) followed by the appropriate U.S. area code and local number. To call internationally from the United States, dial “011”, the country code, city access code (if necessary) and the phone number. Country and city codes can be found online  
(www.timeanddate.com/worldclock/dialing.html). Some of above steps can vary if you are using a calling card.

Skype is a free, downloadable software application that allows users to make live video and voice calls over the internet. Skype users can also add money to their account and can then use the service to call land lines and cell phones internationally at very low rates. Additionally, Skype also provides an instant messaging function as well as file sharing.

To create a Skype account, users must download the application from www.skype.com and create a user name and password. Once the application is installed onto their computer, they can search for friends either by first and last name or using their friends’ Skype usernames. Once a friend is added to a users contact list, they will be able to see whether that person is available to chat. If two users both have web-enabled video cameras for their computers, they will be able to chat face to face. For users without a web cam, a microphone is all that’s required for calls to another computer.

Refer for your CIEE handbook for detailed information regarding communicating via telephone, email, and mail while in Ghana. Cellular phones are dramatically changing communication throughout Ghana, and they have greatly begun to outnumber any other
kind of communication. They are inexpensive to buy, and usually fairly reliable. They are “pay-as-you-go,” and credits are typically inexpensive to buy as well.

Internet cafes are found throughout the country and time online can be purchased fairly inexpensively. Though it is nice to keep in touch via the internet, and post pictures and/or blogs of your experiences, understand that it can be sporadic.

**Student Testimonials**
The testimonials below are from past participants; they reflect various students’ experiences and are included to provide different perspectives. IAP does not endorse any specific view expressed in this section.

**Preparations Before Leaving**
I wish that I had left lots of clothing and toiletries at home, everything except eye-contact solution can be found there.

It would have been wise to leave more at home, as I ended up leaving quite a bit back in Ghana. I brought back many pieces of Ghanaian culture, which ended up filling almost an entire 50-pound suitcase.

Buy a guidebook; they can be very helpful when traveling (Lonely Planet).

**Travel and Arrival Information**
Traveling was great and cheap, it allowed you to see as much as possible in Ghana. Traveling outside of Ghana was very similar, and many country’s visas can be purchased at the border, for a low fee. Be sure to check the Department of State’s travel warnings at: [http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/tw/tw_1764.html](http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/tw/tw_1764.html). In general, take advantage!

Not much money needed in the beginning, the first few days are all taken care of.

I used traveler’s checks and they worked great! Debit cards are a great second option to have with you. ATMs are abundant, with a few located on campus. Otherwise the lone mall, (a great escape for air conditioning!), is an excellent place to find an ATM or foreign exchange bureau. Just be sure to watch for fees.

**Academic Program**
Not nearly as much homework as in Madison, but it depends on the courses that you take. The final exams there can typically be worth 100% of your grade, so it might be wise not to wait until finals week to study!

You will have a lot of free time, so use it wisely to immerse yourself in Ghanaian culture. Be ready for an academic environment that is definitely different than Madison. But if you want things to be just like they are in Madison, then you shouldn’t go to Ghana!

**Internship/Development studies Track**
I’m working at a micro-finance organization. They definitely face a lot of challenges, and it won’t be easy to make an impact on the situation, but as I spend more time here I feel I will be able to do so.
I'm teaching math at a school about 45 minutes away from campus. It was a little frustrating at first. The students' regular teachers haven't been very helpful with letting me know where they are in the material and how class should usually be structured, so I've been doing a lot of improvisation. I'm also teaching 5 different classes ranging from 4th grade to 8th grade so I have lots of lesson plans and homework to plan outside of class time. I think after I've been going to school a little longer, I'll understand how their system works better and how to communicate with the teachers and headmaster more effectively!

Teaching a class of 55 third-graders was not something I expected to do while in Ghana. My first day was also a little overwhelming- I arrived at the school, met the teacher, was given a mathematics lesson book, and told “you can begin now.” Definitely one of the greatest learning experiences I’ve ever had though!

Take advantage of volunteer opportunities! The CIEE office on campus is a great resource, and can help find something to match your interests. I miss everything about my volunteer experiences. I volunteered at a local orphanage, and that alone has the power to bring me back to Ghana.

My internship is with an international human rights and lawyering organization in Accra studying and doing research on human trafficking in Ghana. In Ghana, human trafficking most commonly takes the form of child trafficking for work on Lake Volta. And, while this is repugnant, much of it is based in cultural traditions and dwindling resources. To begin, there is a very old practice of apprenticeship in Ghana. In fact, for many parents, teaching their children to fish is of more immediate value than education. Therefore, many parents give their children to fishers to learn the trade. The parents receive a small stipend for their child. However, it is unclear that either the parents or the fishers are aware that they are doing something wrong. It seems unfair to punish them for their actions. Instead, education seems more appropriate.

My internship has been incredibly educational, in ways I didn't anticipate. I have learned more about health care in a developing country by just observing and working at the the clinic at my internship site than I ever have in my school books...... I have also learned about the strong negative cultural stigmas attached to AIDS. This is something that teachers talk about and books write about, but the experiences of real individuals here in Ghana, has truly been the best professor.

Living Abroad
It's just the right amount of "roughing it." When you're going to Africa you have to expect things to be different.

Don't always expect to have everything you have here in the U.S. Schedules aren't always kept, and running water isn't a guarantee. Ghana isn't your typical study abroad program.

I stayed in an off-campus house with other American students. I very much enjoyed living there. We were a great support network for each other. I did have less of a university community experience, but was able to instead live in the local community.

The family I stayed with was wonderful I would highly recommend doing a homestay to any student studying abroad, it gives you excellent insight into Ghanaian life.
Reach out and show that you are interested in getting to know people.
Make the most of your time, don’t waste time hanging out in the dorms when there is so much to see and do.

Make sure to see what the capital city of Accra has to offer, but also make it other parts of Ghana- the country is very diverse, in many ways!

Health issues are fine. There are plenty of hospitals to tend to needs. The staff is always very concerned when someone was sick and willing to help.

Once I got into Ghana, I felt safer than I thought I would.

[Women] be careful of how you dress, longer skirts are better. Just understand your foreign presence.

Be prepared to be an “obruni,” or foreigner. The incessant calling of “obruni” may sometimes become bothersome, but understand that it is not meant in a malicious way.

Things move at a much slower pace and often not as logically as you would expect them too which can be frustrating. You have to be patient, and understand that you’re not going to be able to explain or understand everything, but that is one of the things that I came to enjoy.

The first few days are spent in a nicer hotel, but don’t let yourself be fooled into thinking that this is what all of Ghana is like. There are varying degrees of wealth throughout Ghana, just as there are here.