

**DRAFT**

**Report of the Working Group  
International Initiatives Academic Initiative**

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## Introduction

Never has the world been more connected than at the present moment in history. People and ideas move across traditional borders with ease, and changes in one part of the world rapidly ripple across the globe. At the same time, disconnections within and between societies have become more visible. Globalization has opened up new markets and linked the most disparate possible groups, but it has also exposed, and in some cases exacerbated, inequality and injustice. Understanding the causes and consequences of these global connections is one of the central challenges facing us today, and acting on our understanding in the future will be crucial. The liberal arts are the perfect site for such cross-border exploration; indeed, liberal arts colleges have been at the forefront of many important trends in higher education, many of which involve the crossing of figurative boundaries. Curricula tend to be more interdisciplinary and student bodies more diverse at selective liberal arts colleges than at many graduate universities. It is during their undergraduate years that students are most likely to be exposed to other cultures and regions of the world, an experience that often broadens perspectives and deepens self-reflection.

When we encounter another culture, we not only begin to understand difference and gain a new understanding of that culture, we also begin to experience ourselves and our own culture in a new way. We often develop a profound sense of humility, realizing that our own region's societal model, value system, and habits of engagement with the world are historically and politically specific rather than universal, and not necessarily superior to others. It can be uncomfortable to encounter unfamiliar patterns of behavior, but that discomfort often leads to personal growth that can in turn contribute to social change.

Williams is well-positioned to make internationalism central to its educational enterprise.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, connections to the global surround already infuse many aspects of life at the College, both with regard to the degree to which our faculty and students venture out into the world and in the essential presence of international students, staff, and faculty on campus. Each year, over a quarter of the student body takes at least one foreign language course—all voluntarily, without being compelled to do so by a language requirement. The Office of International Education and Study Away at Williams works closely with students to find the best study abroad situation for them from a constantly updated list of approved programs; over 50% of our students take advantage of this opportunity every year. Our Fellowships Office offers exceptionally generous funding and advice for students to experience international summer or post-Baccalaureate research and study; during their Williams careers, students have an unusually high degree of access to summer language study or research, and Williams boasts an extraordinarily high number of Fulbright, Watson, Gates, and other national scholarships. Close to ten percent of the student body is international, hailing from some 70 countries around the globe. The Center for Development Economics, too, bridges worlds, providing a master's degree to economists with some practical experience from low- and middle-income countries. The College's alumni live and

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<sup>1</sup> In fact, an orientation toward the larger world is already one of the values that guides the College's mission: "Through the increasingly global reach of our curriculum, as well as the diversity of our campus community, we seek to develop in students the capacity to see beyond the limits of their own experience."

<https://president.williams.edu/college-governance/college-mission/>

work across the globe. Finally, Williams's faculty and staff maintain close ties to nearly all regions of the globe through their research, teaching, and professional work.

At first blush, because of the air travel involved, international programs seem directly at odds with the College's objective of shrinking its carbon footprint, yet the relationship is not a simple one. We have long been committed to making Williams's international programs both educational and equitable—educational in that they include prior academic preparation, personal contact with locals in the destination, and reflective terminal projects, and equitable in that for many students, the opportunities for international travel afforded by Williams may represent the first and only ones in their lives. Moreover, when appropriately structured and advised, educational travel can also work against the ravages of climate change, a global phenomenon. Climate change and environmental degradation are at the center of many of our students' academic interests. For many students, though, climate change is only a theory until they have seen its effects on natural environments and communities first-hand when traveling abroad. Understanding the interconnectedness of our world is directly related to our sustainability objectives. Academically focused travel contributes to international cooperation toward our climate goals by providing insights into other regions' efforts and by helping students reflect more critically, upon their return, on the high level of resource consumption bound up in their style of life—more consequentially than they would have done, we think, had they not traveled. All in all, Williams seeks to inculcate engaged, thoughtful, and responsible global citizenship, and this cannot be achieved without international travel. At the same time, the carbon cost of this travel should spur us to ensure the quality of the programs Williams conducts and approves, as well as the appropriateness of the amount and mode of travel, while seeking to find trade-offs as appropriate.

Measured by the sheer number and variety of connections to the larger world that are already in place, Williams already provides international education. However, there are several obstacles that have thus far prevented the College from becoming a truly global community. First, there is too little coordination among the various internationally-oriented programs at Williams. Second, the rich international dimension of a Williams education is not visible enough, within the College and certainly in the world beyond the campus. Additionally, in some cases, our international resources do not end up being accessed by all of our students equally. Finally, there is untapped potential for more and deeper relationships among internationally oriented groups: study away students, international students, CDE fellows, alumni, and faculty.

In order to address the gaps we have identified, and with the goal of a fuller integration of global learning into the academic experience at Williams, we propose that Williams take the following steps:

- integrate the services and programs already offered, and make their workings more visible to all potential users
- deepen the connections among the various constituencies that are engaged with the College
- create signature programs that will position Williams as unique among its peers, and expand access to long and short-term global academic experiences

- work toward creating a more flexible academic model that can accommodate innovative learning related to international education, both within and outside of the academic semester

In what follows, we will first detail the current state of international education at Williams and then outline how we propose to help the College become a more innovative, legible, inclusive and equitable global education community.

## The current situation

Our students belong to a generation that already operates without borders via the Internet, and across borders in their activism and their social life. They are eager to make connections among their various courses, and between their non-semester and semester academic experiences, but this urge to integrate is often thwarted. To be sure, in any given year, we have over 275 students studying abroad; 170 international undergraduate students enrolled, plus 13 foreign-language Teaching Associates and Teaching Fellows; 27-30 international graduate students studying at the Center for Development Economics; close to 600 students studying a foreign language; 15-20 faculty-led international trips during Winter Study or Spring Break plus around 25 student-initiated independent studies abroad; and almost 2 million dollars in endowed funds for summer travel and research through ASIP Grants and Fellowships. There are also over 1200 or so alumni living and working internationally. But each of the offices and individuals responsible for keeping these many balls in the air operates more or less independently, despite the friendly relations and good intentions of all involved. Our goal is to supplement existing expertise and relationships with technological tools and administrative structures that will allow for a more thorough integration of work in the international arena with work on campus. We would extend to all forms of international academic engagement this statement about why study away should be central to undergraduate education: “First, because today's world requires broad understanding. People, goods, and capital stream across borders and oceans with the same ease as ideas, images, viruses and pollutants. Natural and man-made disasters demonstrate the fragility of the networks linking our local existence to remote cultures and economies. In our own communities, political, cultural, and linguistic differences divide us as effectively as seas.”<sup>2</sup> Below, we look at the programs that drive the College’s approach to global education one by one, describing in each case how their work could be enhanced through better coordination, and in some cases with additions.

On the curricular level, the College offers students a remarkable array of internationally-related opportunities. Williams’s eight language programs offer a full complement of courses that allow students to achieve up to the level of Advanced Proficiency according to the standards of the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages. The Programs in Comparative Literature and Global Studies are devoted to engaging students intensively with myriad cultural and sociopolitical realities. In addition, the curricula of nearly all departments and programs in Divisions I and II, and some in Division III, include courses that are based internationally and/or provide comparative study. From AMST 223, “Eating Empire: Asian/Pacific Islander/American Foodways and Culture” through PSCI 253, “The Tragedy of Venezuela” and PLHL 220, “International Nutrition” to WGSS 314, “The Social Ecology of Racial and Gender Inequity,” the Williams curriculum certainly has no dearth of courses focusing on content beyond the United States. Study abroad enriches the Williams curriculum even further. Students with majors from all three Divisions at the College take courses for college and in some cases major credit at universities around the world. The academic experiences they have in these venues represent not only a collection of additional courses, but also a glimpse into alternative modes of teaching and learning. But while students have worked hard with departmental advisors and the Office of International Education to craft curricula abroad that work with their Williams education, the

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<sup>2</sup> Scott D. Carpenter, Helena Kaufman, Malene Torp, *Integrating Worlds: How Off-Campus Study Can Transform Undergraduate Education*, (Sterling VA: Stylus, 2019), p. 1.

College could do more to provide opportunities for students to link their courses abroad with their on-campus courses. The Global Scholars Program (see below) would be a pilot in this direction.

Faculty are driven to look beyond the US border for their own research as well as their teaching; the two often dovetail, of course. For language faculty specifically, first-hand immersive exposure to the actively changing dynamics of the languages they work in and teach is essential. But for other faculty as well, even in the era of that invaluable tool, the Internet, it is essential to keep abreast of one's area of specialization by spending time on the ground, where developments take place. Interacting with people on site yields more nuanced observations than those gained from a distance. Through their own international research activities, faculty model for their students what it means to be not just conscientious researchers but also engaged global citizens, able to straddle cultures and appreciate divergent points of view. Finally, international work reminds faculty that they, too, can be in the position of learners rather than established experts. Faculty are supported in their international endeavors through several College funding opportunities, including the Global Ventures Fund and the World Fellowships. This can include embedded course travel, support for research abroad, or even assessment of study abroad programs. These are generous funds that would benefit from more visibility for interested faculty.

Many of our faculty first developed their academic interests while studying abroad themselves, either as undergraduates or as graduate students. Our students, too, study away at a rate that far exceeds the national average (> 50% vs. 10%). The highly professional work of the Office of International Education and Study Away has ensured not only this widespread interest in study abroad, but also significant success by the measures of student satisfaction, academic compatibility, and program quality. Nonetheless, global learning experiences could be incorporated more thoroughly into the curriculum through the coordination of high-quality pre-departure and reentry programs, and the expansion of opportunities for students to gain foreign-language proficiency both before and during study abroad. The visibility of study away as a crucial part of a Williams education could also be increased across the board. Winter Study could be better deployed as the site of both preparation for Study Abroad and programming after students return that would help them bridge their experience abroad with their life at Williams.

Indeed, the Winter Study period (WSP) represents in general a significantly underused resource for the internationalization of the Williams curriculum. Every year, professors propose more Winter Study travel courses than can be funded. The limits derive from the expected uptake by financial aid students, which yields an estimate of outlays, and these in turn are capped. But these travel courses, as well as international "99s," are among the very best pedagogical uses of the January term. They have the potential to change students' academic trajectories and their lives—much more than a typical on-campus WSP course. Moreover, many of the students seeking to go abroad in January are doing so because they find study abroad during the semester impractical or daunting. Financial aid students, for example, are over-represented in WSP travel courses. First-generation students often find international travel hard to imagine, as the potential risks loom large. Students who are double majors might give up a semester abroad because they cannot miss the offering of a required course. The same goes for student-proposed and faculty-advised international independent study courses. For these reasons, it would make sense to

expand the opportunity to do academic work abroad during Winter Study. Winter Study work abroad also begs to be integrated into semester courses, either as a culmination or a preparation.

An equally rich opportunity for the enhancement of students' international education, and ripe for integration into the existing curriculum, are the fellowships offered by the College for summer study. Williams offers generous funding opportunities for students to experience international research and language study, administered by the Office of Fellowships, but also by several other campus departments and offices, such as language departments and the Center for Learning in Action. The Office of Fellowships administers internal funding for summer endeavors abroad, as well as funding for graduate study in the UK. In addition, it administers funds whose bequests do not specifically require international travel, but that are nevertheless often used by students for international endeavors. Several other campus departments and offices offer funding for summer projects that can or must be conducted abroad. None of our peer institutions possess funding opportunities to the degree that Williams does. None of our peer institutions sponsor as many students traveling and studying abroad in the summer—or after graduation—as we do.

However, at this point we do not effectively communicate to internal or external audiences what resources and opportunities we offer. Summer funding is scattered across campus, and each fund has a different application process and deadline date. The terms of the funding differ widely. Some, for example, cover only students' expenses, while others also offer stipends. Students, faculty, and student-facing staff are often confused about the funding options that are available to students. This lack of transparency leads to inadequate advising and suboptimal integration of students' summer experiences into their Williams education. Moreover, the “embarrassment of riches” in available funding has been associated with a decline in the quality of students' summer research proposals, while summer language fellowship availability does not meet the high demand. Here is a policy area in which our problem is not so much lack of money—and certainly not lack of effort—as lack of organization and communication. Too little coordination leads to opportunities being missed by some students, particularly first-generation college students and others who have not become habituated to seeking all possible chances for self-optimization through their families or high schools. Additionally, students who do pursue summer study with these fellowships are not granted credit toward graduation for their often very intensive work, even when, as regularly happens, their language study ends up being the equivalent of an entire year of Williams languages courses. This is especially a disincentive, again, for students from underrepresented groups who are not otherwise able to travel abroad, and who might be double-majoring for practical reasons and are therefore particularly motivated to accelerate their language study.

The Center for Development Economics also represents a rich but incompletely utilized opportunity for the integration of both the domestic and the global and also the undergraduate and graduate spheres. In a formal institutional sense the most purely and identifiably international part of the college, the CDE is unique among liberal arts colleges. It enriches international education at Williams by several routes: attracting and retaining internationally-minded faculty; allowing undergraduates to take classes with CDE fellows; sponsoring major campus events; and fielding the activities of CDE alumni. More specifically, the CDE has been instrumental in helping Williams attract and retain both tenure-track and visiting faculty who have expertise in issues facing developing nations. The Center offers at least seventeen tailored

courses per year for the MA program, in which undergraduates may enroll subject to permission of the course instructor; in recent years, the numbers of undergraduates enrolling in courses with CDE fellows has averaged about 80 per year. The CDE presence gives undergraduates a greater array of courses with a focus on international economic and development issues when compared with other liberal arts colleges. The CDE also sponsors talks by outside speakers, normally including an annual conference. These talks are open to undergraduates and have included five Nobel Prize winners, two former prime ministers (both CDE alumni), and others highly involved in the policy-making process.

Probably the CDE resource with the most under-realized potential are the Fellows themselves, and their connections in their home countries. The annual class of up to thirty new Fellows per year contributes to campus diversity on several parameters: the countries represented, the educational and personal backgrounds from within their countries; and their years of professional experience. Their time constraints in an extremely intensive program prevent them from crossing into the world of Williams undergraduates as much as they might like. But the more than 1100 living CDE alumni, residing in upwards of 100 countries, hold strong potential for greater interaction with the larger Williams community, on campus and among alumni.

All in all, Williams is starting with a strong foundation in global education, with dedicated professionals of every sort shepherding students across multiple programs and offices to reach their desired goals. But we feel strongly that the College can do even better, by coordinating the various available options and by strategically revising or adding programs to achieve higher visibility, greater opportunity, and more equity of access.

## Proposals

### Integrated and transparent administration of international programs and opportunities

As we note above, administrative fragmentation is an important reason why the College's international opportunities might be underused and underappreciated. A centralized system that provides and promotes information about all campus opportunities for travel and funding, and that coordinates the application processes for such opportunities, is currently lacking and should be put in place. A virtual space for all the College's resources and opportunities for international learning could be built quickly and relatively inexpensively. In addition to a thoroughly redesigned and actively maintained "Williams International" website,<sup>3</sup> we recommend a comprehensive software system that unifies the College's inbound and outbound application and administrative processes. Advances in software now permit a more comprehensive approach to the administration of such programming. A webpage using Terra Dotta, a package in use at other institutions, could integrate the scattered international endeavors at the College, as well as streamlining application processes, communicating visa requirements and providing other pre-departure support to travelers, displaying connections among courses, and programming events for students re-entering campus life after time abroad. According to our research, this system would support all international operations on campus and minimize the risk of administrative error for important inbound immigration documentation. The software system would also provide consistency in form collection and pre-departure support across campus offices. This system would be connected to the new "Williams International" a website that would highlight all the various departments and offices offering courses, research funding, lectures, curricular and co-curricular travel opportunities, internships, independent study, language study, and alumni connections specific to international interests. It would also provide a platform for international students to have more presence and recognition on campus than they feel they have at this time.

Improved operating systems are important from a risk management standpoint as well as an access standpoint, since it allows the College to know where students, faculty, and staff are traveling and what kinds of work they are pursuing across the globe. It can also align with International SOS, an emergency response system in which the College has already invested. While this new system would represent a significant financial commitment, it would greatly benefit the institution in the long term.

### Community building

#### *The CDE*

The CDE is on the physical edge of campus, and its academic program is unique; nevertheless, many undergraduates are in courses with CDE Fellows each year, and various interests held by CDE Fellows are shared by others at Williams. Making a more systematic effort to invite CDE

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<sup>3</sup> The implementation of such a website was already recommended in the 2012 "Committee on International Programs Report" (see Appendix X), but it has since languished. At the moment, a search for "Williams International" yields a link to the Center for Foreign Languages, Literatures, and Cultures, which is an important component of international life at Williams, but does not exhaust it.

participation in additional Williams circles would be valuable. Between the CDE and undergraduate students, opportunities to forge community ties include activities with the International Students Association, especially when members of the group are enrolled in courses with CDE fellows. The same is true for other student groups that have a specific geographic interest. Religious interaction with Muslim students has worked well in recent years, as well, and could be expanded. Finally, joint activities with the Economics Students Advisory Committee also have been successful in recent years due to overlapping interests and to continuity of faculty involvement. Further connections could be forged via, for example, a September event to enable CDE fellows, international undergraduate students, and language TA's. Later in the year, all-campus events such as Mountain Day and Claiming Williams Day present opportunities for Williams groups to invite (though not require) CDE participation.

With CDE alumni, steps to include them in Williams Alumni publications and in EphLink have been well received. These have coincided with an improved CDE tracking of CDE alumni e-mail addresses (now 82 percent). Upcoming opportunities for additional community building with CDE alumni include the upcoming CDE 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary event in mid-October 2020. CDE alumni are curious about parts of Williams beyond the CDE including the Office of Admission, Williams Alumni Relations, and students/faculty active in CDE countries; perhaps tours and meet-and-greet events could be organized to offer information about these interests for CDE alumni returning to campus in October. For the majority of CDE alumni who will not attend the CDE 60<sup>th</sup> in person, we can work to identify circles of overlapping interest. This could begin with highlights in "EphNotes," for example. Designating a CDE-affiliated staffer in the Williams Alumni Office could be another helpful step in thinking about points of connection.

### *Alumni and The Global Williams Network*

The global Williams network is powerful, and perhaps one of the institution's greatest resources. Alumni are located in every corner of the world, working in their communities to make a difference in society. In 2018, the '68 Center for Career Exploration created EphLink to provide a more convenient way for students and alumni to build meaningful relationships. This is a global program and any student or alum from anywhere in the world is invited to participate, which is important as we recommend global community building at both the personal and professional level. Moreover, it is advantageous for the College to recognize the depth and breadth of its global network – which encompasses international students and their families, study away students, fellowship students, students pursuing international internships or winter study abroad, faculty with research lines abroad, staff with international pursuits, Ephs living abroad, international alumni (particularly CDE alumni), alumni travelers, international admissions, alumni that studied abroad or studied a language, and other relevant populations. There is great synergy and deep impact when the College leverages the relational capacity of constituent populations already invested in some aspect of internationalization. The College requires greater transparency and visibility around these populations, with enhanced cross-campus collaboration to manage these efforts to best effect.

### *International Students*

In the spirit of community building, we recommend that Williams aim to re-establish a need-blind admission policy for international applicants. This is an issue of equity—our domestic

applicants enjoy a need-blind admissions policy—but also an issue of inclusion, and, not incidentally, branding. At a meeting with members of the International Students Association, the committee learned that only a small number of schools are perceived as being financially accessible in the community of those international high school students who actively seek to study in the US; Williams is not among them, but Amherst is, as the only liberal arts college in the group.

There is no question that Williams is extraordinarily generous in its international admissions policies, even in the current need-aware situation. Sixty percent of Williams’ international students receive financial aid from the College—compared to 50 percent of the overall student body—and their financial aid grants average more than \$65,000 annually. At nearly all other need-aware colleges, international students are funded in much smaller numbers and their average grants are considerably lower. Moreover, the College remains committed to enrolling a geographically diverse international cohort. At many need-aware schools, international students enroll from a relatively small and homogenous group of countries. At Williams, by contrast, international students represent nearly 70 countries of citizenship. And the word seems to be getting around: since 2014, international applications have increased 76 percent and now total more than 2,200 annually. Still, these features of our aid profile seem not to be as fully appreciated as they could be out in the world of potential applicants, and this puts us at a disadvantage with respect to schools with need-blind international admissions. Theirs is a simple pitch, ours nuanced.

Once they are on campus, it is important that international students feel that they are a core part of Williams from the start and that their experience is a shared experience with their peers. Equity and inclusion in policy as well as transparency in resources and support will go a very long way. So will the understanding of international students’ specific needs and the celebration of their achievements. We want to do all that we can to be sure that the international student community is supported from admission through graduation, whether that has to do with residency and storage during breaks, travel home, or appropriate space for community gatherings and events.

### Signature programs

Research has shown that what attracts prospective applicants to Williams the most is its array of academic opportunities. Hence we offer below ideas for two unique programs that we believe to be particularly exciting.

#### *The Global Scholars Program*

We conceive of the Global Scholars Program (GSP) as a signature initiative at Williams, akin to the tutorial program, that would build a core group of students who are thoroughly committed to international education. The GSP would be a multi-year initiative that would integrate traditional courses at Williams, Winter Study, and study abroad. Academically and administratively, GSP could be based in the Center for Foreign Languages, Literatures, and Cultures, together with Global Studies, but its development would necessitate collaboration among many administrative offices at the College such as the Study Abroad, the Fellowship Office, and CliA, in addition to various academic programs and departments.

## Timeline:

- *First year.* Each spring, faculty and staff would nominate/recommend first year students for participation in GSP, and 12-15 Global Scholars would be selected. Over the summer, the students would read an assigned common text or set of texts that lays out the overarching theme for the year.
- *Sophomore.* It seems appropriate to us that the sophomore year would be the core of the Global Scholars experience. It is a crucial year for most students: cut loose from the structure of the entry, they are primed to explore their options in a broader way, culminating in the crucial decision of a major, but they also often have less support. For the Global Scholars, we hope that the close contact with faculty and academic (rather than merely social) peers will help facilitate that decision and make the sophomore year more meaningful. In September, the GSP would have two meetings where scholars would discuss the summer reading with faculty facilitators. In October and November, they would meet twice to discuss and prepare for their upcoming Winter Study trip, which would be led by a faculty and/or a staff member. Two of these trips would be offered, based in different areas of the world and focusing on distinct themes, e.g. public health, the environment, or war and displacement. The purpose of the trip would be to build bridges and forge partnerships with local university students. Upon return from their Winter Study trips, the scholars would build on their travel experience in a (required) interdisciplinary course during their sophomore spring semester. The course would consider the latest theories and epistemological assumptions in the humanities, social sciences and even the natural sciences about international cooperation and understanding. In the course, the students could analyze the relationship between the local and the global, using their Winter Study as a basis for their theoretical discussion. It would ideally be co-taught, but led by the professor who travelled with the students on their Winter Study trip. During the latter part of their sophomore spring, scholars would focus on preparing for the upcoming summer experience, as well as on their choice of major. Ideally, the interdisciplinary course, based in lived experience as well as theory, would help the students discover their strengths, weaknesses, and interests and thus better prepare them for choosing their academic major at Williams.

During the summer after their sophomore year, the students would have the option, funded by GSP, to return to the culture that they visited during Winter Study. . As a side note, such summer study abroad would be an exciting alternative to conventional study abroad for many Williams students. Many, such as junior advisors and two-sport athletes or winter athletes, do not have the opportunity to study abroad. In addition, some Div III majors and pre-meds do not go abroad because of their major requirements.

- *Junior.* After their sophomore summer, some Global Scholars may return to Williams for junior year. But in all likelihood, many would study away either for one semester or for the full academic year. In the summer between junior and senior year, GSP would provide the students with research funds should they choose to prepare for a senior thesis or independent study their senior year.
- *Senior.* In the fall, the participants would be expected to participate in a series of colloquia on their class year's international topic; to take on leadership roles on campus

related to international issues; and to mentor the new class of sophomore Global Scholars.

### *The International Language Fellows Program*

We propose that the College fund up to eight weeks of intensive language study in an approved program abroad for all students after their first, second, or third year. As we have learned from our close contact with students, Williams students want and need foreign languages for a variety of different reasons that include, but also go beyond, career preparation. The Arabic student whose senior thesis is on new museums in Dubai, the German student preparing for a PhD program in philosophy, the Chinese student researching ancient manuscripts—all of these depend on foreign-language skills for achieving their goals. Summer intensive language programs can accelerate a student's progress toward meeting these goals.

This program would provide long-term curricular and even staffing-related benefits for the College as well. More students would achieve advanced proficiency in languages through the addition of intensive summer study, which in turn would make better use of language FTE because of larger enrollments in upper-level courses. In addition, the increased student interest and proficiency in foreign languages would rejuvenate the Global Studies program, as well as fueling comparative studies in many disciplines. Finally, it is quite possible that summer intensive language study would allow the idea of language-across-the-curriculum, which has been articulated in the past but has not been realized, to become a reality.

The infrastructure for implementing the summer intensive language study program is already in place. Together, the CFLLC, the Office of International Education and Study Away, and the Office of Fellowships are already able to advise students about the best available programs, and monitor their progress. The Wilmers Summer Language Fellowships program—which has been expanded, but still does not come close to meeting the strong demand—can be regarded as a test case, or, if you will, a "proof of concept." Based on the number of applications for the existing Wilmers Summer Language Fellowships requests (around 40-45 per year) plus an increase of approximately 25% if the initiative were in place, we estimate that around 50-65 students per year would study language abroad in the summer. The success of students who have already managed to accelerate through our programs via summer language study points to the effectiveness of the summer courses themselves, if they are judiciously chosen. Natural partners would include (in addition to the Study Away and Fellowships offices) the Global Studies program, as well as individual faculty in many departments and programs whose work is international in its focus.<sup>4</sup> This incentive-based approach to promoting foreign-language study as an enhancement to students' internationally-oriented coursework would, we submit, be more in line with Williams's curricular profile than a requirement. It is also an approach that is likely to be more successful on many levels.

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<sup>4</sup> Our proposed program would be an expansion, not a replacement, of the existing fellowships that fund language study, including the Wilmers, but also the Linen grants for Asian languages, the Lansing grants in Classical languages, and Bronfman Hebrew/Yiddish Study programs. These programs would continue to fund the study of specific languages.

### A more flexible academic model

The Strategic Planning process in general is an opportunity for Williams to think hard about the educational goals it wants to have at the center of its work over the next decades. We assert that some of those goals—including but not limited to the internationalization of the College—will ultimately require a more flexible academic model than we currently have. In the context of a Strategic Planning process whose working group titles imply its values—Learning Outside the Classroom, Diversity/Inclusion/Equity, the arts, and, of course, international initiatives—the educational experiences for which the College gives credit are too limited, and the path through the curriculum is too rigidly structured. More specific to the project of internationalization, our current model, requiring 32 academic courses to graduate, 4 courses per semester, makes it more difficult to bring about our goal of more integration between regular semester coursework and work abroad than other structures would.

While Williams is at the forefront when it comes to monetary resources invested in programs and opportunities, academic credit is the “currency” that is the most meaningful to students; their time is golden. Ideally, students should have more control—and faculty more leeway—over the way in which they accrue and spend this currency. In our own bailiwick, we imagine students receiving credit for summer language learning abroad, for example. The higher level of proficiency for more students would be an additional incentive for taking upper-level language courses at Williams. A language-across-the-curriculum initiative could gain more “buy-in” too, if students knew that they could receive some kind of credit for doing research for (and possibly even writing) one of their papers in a foreign language. Co-curricular activities, such as plays, poetry slams, or mini-conferences in a foreign language could much more easily be linked to courses with credit involved.

The devil, as we know, is in the details. Proposals for a credit-hour system, or the introduction of half-credits, have foundered in the past over arguments about faculty workload (which is a separate issue) or the linkage of academic credit with some kind of intrinsic value of a discipline. But over the last years, the College has added more and more programs, notably internationally related programs such as the Summer Fellowships and the Spring-Break travel enabled by the Global Ventures Fund, that expand the boundaries of our current model. At the same time, we have been forced by the limitations of that model to create exceptions for students, for example occasional reduced course loads that are only available in the direst circumstances, or the intensive Winter Study courses to make up a deficiency, born of the impossibility for many students of doing that in the traditional way (with a fifth semester course or a summer course). We believe that the energy of the Strategic Planning process should allow us seriously to consider, together, the possibilities for rendering our system more flexible while retaining the core of the Williams system.

## **Conclusion**

According to its Statement of Mission and Purposes, Williams seeks: “to develop in students both the wisdom and skills they will need to become responsible contributors to whatever communities they join, and the richly textured inner lives that will make them rigorously self-reflective, ethically alert, and imaginatively alive.” We believe that intensive, contemplative, and locally-focused engagement with the world beyond one’s home is a crucial part of the path toward responsible global citizenship. We hope that our report provides a blueprint for building a stronger global community on campus and beyond. The discussions we have had among ourselves and with key members of the community have revealed to us how robust our individual international programs and offices are, but also how much more visible the international could be at the College.

In this report, we have outlined several steps toward our goals: better coordination among existing programs, the introduction of signature programs, new means of forging and expanding connections among internationally facing groups, and the possibility of reworking Williams’s academic model to foster more integration between curricular and co-curricular work in international studies. Please note that we include two appendices: 1) the 2012 Report of the Committee on International Programs and 2) a proposal for a credit hour system presented to the CEP in the early 2000s, but never formally taken up. Comparison of these two documents with the current report shows both continuities and developments in thinking at the College. We look forward to continuing the Strategic Planning process with our colleagues across the College.

# Appendix 1: Committee on International Programs, Final Report and Recommendations

December 2012

## Committee Members:

Lois Banta (Biology)  
Magnus T. Bernhardsson, Chair (History)  
Sam Crane (Political Science)  
John Gerry (Office of Dean of the Faculty)  
Katya King (Fellowships Office)  
Laura McKeon (Office of Dean of the College)  
Gail Newman (German and Center for Foreign Languages)  
Tom Powers (Center for Development Economics).

## Overview

When Williams College was established in 1793 it educated primarily the sons of the New England elite. Over the next 150 years, it slowly evolved from a *local* and *regional* college to a prominent *national* institution. In the last decades of the twentieth century, it began to reach even farther, seeking more students and faculty from outside the U.S. and offering an increasingly diverse, interdisciplinary, and flexible curriculum. Now, at the beginning of the 21st century, the College is fully engaged and active in international education. However, Williams does not tend to think of itself as an international college and others do not identify it as such. The College's institutional identity has not grown to reflect its global ambition. Nor have its administrative structures evolved to support an international mission.

In the report that follows, we propose a number of important changes to better coordinate international education at Williams. We also suggest ways to make international education more prominent. This starts at the rhetorical level, to better communicate why the College values and promotes international education. Our suggestions are based on careful consideration of campus culture, and correspond to the ultimate objectives of the College as reflected in its mission statement: "to provide the finest possible liberal arts education ... and to serve well our students and the world."

The fundamental principle guiding the work of our committee is *access*. From our isolated geographic location, how can the world be accessed? How can we provide access to the world beyond Williams to *all* students and faculty? And how can we display to interested constituencies -- from prospective faculty and students to alumni and others -- our engagement with the world? Ultimately, all our recommendations are intended to enhance international access.

## 1. Introduction

The ad-hoc Committee on International Programs (CIP) has been active for the last five years. Former President Morton Schapiro established the committee in 2008 in response to a series of in-depth discussions by faculty leaders, trustees, and senior administrators about the most significant challenges the College would likely face by the year 2020. In its first year, the committee comprised 20 faculty, student, and staff members who worked to consider the many dimensions of international education at Williams. In the last four years, the committee has been smaller and has worked to identify specific initiatives to carry forward. A 2011 planning grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation has helped the committee to better explore the potentials, not least by enabling its members to visit other colleges and to invite external consultants to campus.

The scope and longevity of the CIP has led it to become part of conversations, collaborations, and initiatives that have resulted in several concrete outcomes. These include:

- a new associate dean of international students;
- a new visa and immigration specialist in the Dean's Office;
- two new academic majors: 1) Arabic Studies and 2) Environmental Policy;
- a new "Williams International" website ([international.williams.edu](http://international.williams.edu));
- a new student led weekly forum - Williams World Views.

The basic assumption guiding the work of the CIP is that the local, the national and the international are interconnected; they are not separate categories. "International" implies movement and connectivity. It is a dynamic and energetic process that is constantly evolving. Internationalization at Williams is and should continue to be a constant practice that utilizes a number of strategies and approaches. In particular it should seek to promote international access.

We believe that it is vital in the 21st century that the College continue to articulate in word and deed why offering an international education is paramount, especially to reflect a changing global labor environment. As a recent State Department report noted, around 6 million US nationals are working or studying abroad -- the highest number ever recorded. What is more, the percentage of Americans ages 25 to 34 planning to move overseas has quintupled in two years from less than 1 percent to 5.1 percent. Among 18- to 24-year-olds, 40 percent are interested in moving abroad, up from 12 percent in 2007.

In the process of their Williams education, students should develop an understanding of a place (e.g. a country or an ecosystem) outside of their own home by utilizing the analytical skills they honed through their liberal-arts education at Williams. They should better appreciate the existence of multifaceted perspectives on a particular global issue or issues to better comprehend the complex processes that contribute to the problems of our day. Such appreciation and empathic understanding will empower students to engage in the world after Williams. The liberal-arts approach to educating a person is well suited for preparing students to develop international competencies needed in the swiftly changing world.

### **1.1 International Access**

The student body at Williams is constantly changing, and graduates are entering an increasingly competitive labor market. How do we instill in students a passion for things international and develop their confidence to see themselves as productive participants in our globalized world?

Currently, the College allocates considerable resources to facilitate international experiences. Many students already take advantage of these opportunities, as evidenced by the high number (around 50%) of students who study abroad. Furthermore, the number of international students at the College has increased substantially. The amount of money spent by the College on accessing the world is significant, especially with the increasing numbers of financial aid students, the increasing numbers of international students, and the changing international environment.

This investment helps to ensure that every student gets an international experience in some form, whether through friendships with international students, a study abroad program, or one of the summer fellowships for study or research abroad. But the College's international programs are decentralized. This organization (or lack thereof) works well only for self-motivated and resourceful students. Others need a single point of entry to facilitate access to the multitude of opportunities open to them. We must provide that access.

The CIP advocates starting at the rhetorical level, demonstrating to students as soon as they arrive on campus as first-year students that they are entering an international college and that among the many purposes of a liberal arts education is to make them more competent and confident in the world beyond our borders. A message to the incoming students could be "Your destination: Williams. Your direction: the world." Indeed, we must make explicit and clear the fact that each and every student has access to an international education.

The CIP considered framing this idea as a “promise” or “guarantee” that Williams will provide an international experience for all. We ultimately decided, however, that such language has too many unintended implications, including the prospect of students asking for funding for questionable projects because they have been “guaranteed” support. We feel it is more meaningful and more in line with institutional priorities and culture, in particular with diversity initiatives, to declare that Williams offers an international education and experience to all its students and that such experience can and should be expected. Williams’s *International Access* reflects that the world is accessible to our community during and after Williams.

This notion of international access can be part of all aspects of College life from the time of admission to life beyond Williams. It can help focus fundraising efforts on specific funding opportunities to make international education more accessible. It can also motivate faculty to consider ways that their classroom or lab can better access the world and to encourage connecting students with our extensive alumni network.

## **2. Current International Resources at Williams**

### **2.1 International Access through the Curriculum**

By almost any measure, the curriculum at Williams is already infused with international courses and programs, and student interest in international subject areas only continues to grow. The foreign language programs, for example, are thriving. We have no language requirement, yet 20-25% of all students enroll in a foreign language or literature class each semester, and language courses comprise c. 14% of all courses offered at the college. The total number of enrollments in those courses has remained steady over a twenty-year period (1034 in 1990-91 compared to 1048 in 2010-11) but the number of majors over the same time period has almost doubled, from 24 to 46 annually. Arabic and Chinese have seen the most growth over the past decade.

The International Studies program provides another example of rapid growth. Established just seven years ago, it has hosted an average of 27 concentrators annually and currently has the highest number of senior concentrators of any program at the College (33 in the Class of 2013). A key feature of the concentration is the weekly International Studies Colloquium, which features invited lectures and discussions on international issues. It is well attended not just by concentrators, but by other students, faculty, staff, and community members. The International Studies program also sponsors “Williams World Views,” a weekly student-led forum typically attended by 30-40 students. The program is staffed by faculty members from various academic units but does not have any dedicated faculty FTE. There is, however, a fairly new distinguished visiting professorship focused on international studies. The visitor this year is Kaye Edwards of Haverford College, who will offer courses on global health.

The Stanley Kaplan Program in American Foreign Policy is another international curricular initiative that has a large and enthusiastic student following. Many of those who participate pursue a concentration in Leadership Studies via the American Foreign Policy track. In recent years, the Kaplan program has funded two visiting positions: a post-doc and a distinguished professor. Like International Studies, this program hosts a student led discussion each week that is attended by about 40 students. For the past two years, the faculty most closely associated with the Kaplan program have also run an intensive four-week summer institute for students, combining classroom instruction with group research and a final presentation to a panel of experts. Some of the students then take on sponsored summer internships in Washington, DC or elsewhere.

Two more curricular programs that have focused international elements are the Winter Study travel courses and the Exploring Diversity Initiative. Approximately 50% of the Winter Study travel courses have been to foreign destinations (e.g. Nicaragua, Georgia, Egypt, and Uganda) and about 75 students participate in these trips each year. They are subsidized by the College, i.e., students on financial aid pay according to the level of their aid. Students can also propose independent Winter Study projects (99s) and although these courses are not as fully subsidized, many students choose to go abroad: 51 last year and 42 projected this year. In total, approximately 110-120 students go abroad during Winter Study each year. First Year students

have to be on campus in January, so about 7% of those eligible choose an international experience during Winter Study.

## 2.2 International Access through Study Away

Though we tend not to think of study away as a core curricular initiative at Williams, this is what it has become. In fact, student desire for international experience has trended steadily upward for the past several decades, such that the majority of Williams students now spend at least one semester away, and many go for a full year. Participation in study away programs from the mid-1980s through the mid-1990s ranged from 26-35% of each graduating class, compared to 43-55% over the last five years. These numbers are not unusual in the liberal arts sector, and some colleges have study away participation rates that are even higher, approaching 70% of each class. We believe the ceiling at Williams is probably about 60%. As we approach this plateau we feel that the college needs more deliberately to recognize study away as *a part* of the curriculum, rather than *apart* from the curriculum.

There are several ways in which we already facilitate access. For example, we do not charge the regular Williams tuition to students who study away, contrary to the practice at some of our peer institutions. Many study away programs are less expensive, so our policy reduces cost as a factor in the decision-making process, and can even serve to make study away a financially attractive option. We also allow financial aid to travel with students when they study away, again contrary to the practice among more and more of our peers. Through these simple policies the College removes the big financial hurdles that might otherwise prevent students from going abroad. We think this is important. Finances should not be a factor in a student's decision to study away or not.

Even more important in terms of access is that Williams students are not constrained to a fixed number of approved study away programs (Haverford, for example, has 50), nor just to the programs directly operated by the college. They seek approval to attend programs all over the world. The geographic distribution of last year's study away cohort (276 students, or 53% of the class) was as follows: Europe, 63%; Asia, 8%; Latin America and Caribbean, 7%; Middle East, 6%; United States, 5%; Africa, 4%; Oceania, 4%; multiple destinations (e.g. SIT Cities), 3%. Providing such global access is challenging. We have prior experience with many of the programs that students want to attend, and those are easy to approve. Others require a new and thorough review before students are permitted to attend. And with a world of choice the student advising is complicated and time consuming. Nevertheless, we believe that broad international access is well worth the effort.

A further point of access is provided by the two study away programs that carry the Williams name. First, the Williams-Mystic program has been in operation for 35 years. Operated in partnership with the Mystic Seaport Museum, it is a highly interdisciplinary program focused on maritime literature, history, policy, and science. Second, the Williams College Oxford Programme (now known as WEPO, for the Williams-Exeter Programme at Oxford University) has been in operation for 27 years. It is not topical, nor disciplinarily specific, but emphasizes Oxford-style tutorial education. Since 2003 our students have gained full status as visiting students at Exeter College and thereby enjoy all the privileges and resources of regular Oxford students. In contrast to the non-Williams study away programs that our students attend, the Mystic and Oxford programs are more broadly recognized as Williams equivalents, at least in terms of rigor. The grades transfer directly to student transcripts and many more of the courses count as major or concentration requirements. It's notable that our tutorial initiative in Williamstown was at least partially inspired by the experiences of our pioneering students in Oxford.

There is a competitive application process for WEPO that involves considerable effort on the home campus each year. Students are required to submit an application essay and to attend an interview, to justify why they want to study away as undergraduates and to reflect on how the experience might complement their major field of study. We regard this piece of the application process as a "best practice." That is, if we seek to better integrate study away into the education that we offer, it's not enough simply to send students into the world and hope that good things will come of it. A sense of intentionality, facilitated by proactive planning and goal setting, is critical to success.

It is noteworthy that the Mystic and Oxford programs both require significant administrative support and financial resources. The Mystic program has its own dedicated buildings and a faculty and staff (10 people in total) who run all aspects of the program, from classroom instruction and field seminars to admissions, alumni relations, and development. Similarly, the Exeter program has a Williams faculty director plus a staff of five to help maintain the residential properties and to service various aspects of student life.

In addition to WEPO and Mystic, Williams operates an innovative experiential educational program in South Africa. The Williams in Africa Initiative was launched in 2006 to create a set of curricular and extracurricular programs to encourage students to engage meaningfully with the African continent. The initiative began with a pilot year of summer internships and now consists of the fall semester Cape Town Policy in Action Study Away Program and a post-baccalaureate research fellowship open to graduating seniors and recent Williams alumni. The program is directed by a Williams faculty member who lives part-time in South Africa and directs the Economic Policy Research Institute (EPRI), a non-governmental think tank. The Policy in Action students take two courses at the University of Cape Town, plus a tutorial with the director in which they are paired with a South African parliamentarian or minister. The students also do 20 hours of EPRI fieldwork each week to cultivate their research skills. This is a model program founded on the ideals of a Williams education under the careful guidance of Williams staff members in Williamstown as well as in South Africa.

Many students who study abroad have clear and compelling academic reasons, such as working on a foreign language or accessing cultural, political, and natural resources. For others the motivation may be experiential; to travel to an unfamiliar place, to live in a foreign country, and to learn from people with different backgrounds. Upon return, students typically report a high degree of satisfaction with the learning experience. Most of the benefits are intangible, but there is evidence that studying abroad is helpful in securing post-graduate fellowships, such as the Fulbright or Watson. In 2010, for example, 45 seniors were awarded national or Williams College post-graduate Fellowships. Of those students 21 had studied off campus for one or both semesters. In 2011, that ratio was 30:16, and in 2011 32:22. It is also noteworthy that among the students who were elected to Phi Beta Kappa in 2012, approximately 65% had had a significant international experience such as study away. Whether or not there's a causal relationship is undetermined.

For some, study away is also a break from the usual routine -- a chance to get off the stressful college treadmill. But students generally do not go away to game the system. Their courses and grades abroad do not appear on the Williams transcript (except for those students who study at the Williams study away sites). And in truth, a 2009 report by the Williams College Project on the Economics of Higher Education found that studying away generally had an adverse effect on class ranking of 4-11 class rank positions.

Overall, Williams has in place all the mechanisms to offer robust and healthy study away experiences to its students. The College places very few obstacles in front of the student who wants to study away. It does not set up any financial hurdles nor does it limit the choices to a select number of programs. Furthermore, there is little opportunity to use study away to game the system to raise the GPA or to get easier credits towards the major. The College has a study away system, that is transparent and accessible to all, and that incentivizes studying away for the right reasons.

### **2.3 International Access through Fellowships**

For many years, students from Williams have excelled in the national fellowships arena. The College holds a steady position as one of the top producers of Fulbright Scholars in its institutional category, and figures regularly among the institutional affiliations of recipients of fellowships awarded by the Gates, Truman, Watson, NSF, and other foundations. Less well known, but no less important for the academic and personal development of our students, are the College's generous summer fellowships for travel and research abroad – the Wilmers, Bostert, Lawrence, and Class of 1945 World Fellowships – which are administered by the Office of Fellowships. Some academic departments also have their own travel funds, which they make available to their top students.

Most of the summer travel fellowships, which are open to sophomores and juniors in all departments, must be used for independent projects abroad. Candidates propose a substantive project of their own design that spans six or more weeks. Part of the application is a budget proposal. Awards range from \$500 to

\$6,000. In 2012, 30 students (60% of applicants) received \$100,122 in endowed funds, an average of \$3,337 per student.

The majority of summer travel fellowships build on students' academic work at Williams or during their junior year abroad. Most students articulate a connection between their summer project and coursework or thesis research that they plan to pursue upon their return to campus. Many students present their summer projects in public forums.

A recent addition to the summer fellowships roster is the Wilmers Language Fellowship, newly endowed by a major gift. It supports language study abroad and is open to first-year students, sophomores, and juniors. Every year, between five and seven students will receive a \$5,000 award. The fellowship may be used for language study at any level, whether or not the language is taught at Williams. That 44 students applied last year points to high interest among students at Williams in foreign language study and travel.

An important aspect of all these fellowships is that the application is rooted in a proposal. They are not prizes for outstanding academic achievement in a particular field, nor rewards for a high grade point average. Applicants are expected to reflect on the value of their project for their personal and academic development and to articulate its impact on their Williams education. Upon their return from the fellowship, they must write a report assessing the experience.

Some of the applicants for summer travel fellowships have studied abroad as juniors. Some have participated in international research or public service during winter study or spring vacation. Many fellowship recipients, after graduating from Williams, go abroad again to pursue graduate study, research, or teaching. In 2011 for example, 53 students, more than 10% of the senior class at Williams, applied for a Fulbright scholarship. Of those applicants, roughly 25% had held a summer travel fellowship from Williams. Many more had studied abroad in their junior year. The great majority had significant international experience that served as a credential in their Fulbright application.

## **2.4 International Students**

In recent years there has been a large increase in the number of international students at Williams. They now constitute about 8% of the student body, many more than just 10-15 years ago, and they bring real benefits to the classroom and to the life of the College. Together with first-generation students, another new constituency, they offer new perspectives and new experiences to the mix. They also come new to the liberal arts model and to the general milieu and culture of Williams.

The perceived status of international students at the College has changed significantly since 2009 when the College rescinded "need blind" admissions for international students and instead became "need aware." In our extensive discussions with international students, they felt that they had become second-class citizens. Some expressed concerns that they had been admitted to fill a "diversity quota" and wondered why they were the "first to be thrown off the boat when the storm came." Similar sentiments were aired at an international student forum that the CIP organized in September 2011.

Partly as a result of the CIP's efforts, the College has recognized some of the particular needs of international students such as visa and immigration guidance and holiday housing. These have been very positive and constructive steps that have alleviated a number of practical concerns. In 2011 the Dean's Office also designated one of the associate deans to focus more on international students. However, that dean is also responsible for Study Away. We have staffing of just 1.75 FTE at Williams to work with study away and international students. Other schools of our size typically have as many as 6-7 FTE dedicated to these areas. Our consultants agree that a larger staff is necessary to properly advise the ~250 Williams students who study away each year, plus the 160 international students.

## **2.5 Further Access: The Center for Development Economics and the College**

One important and unique feature in the international landscape at Williams is the Center for Development Economic (CDE). For fifty-two years, the Center for Development Economics (CDE) has operated a specialized master's degree program for public sector professionals from developing countries. The program has been a success as measured by the policy-making responsibilities of its 1200+ graduates in more than 100 nations. The CDE also has close working partnerships with various foreign

governments, private foundations, the US Department of State, and the World Bank. What is less appreciated about the CDE, however, is the quiet but valuable role that this small graduate program has played in making the larger Williams community more international, both on campus and around the world.

At Williams, the CDE's impact ranges from faculty recruitment to an eclectic mix of undergraduate engagement and experiences. For economics, a field in which the College faces keen competition in faculty hiring, the CDE's tailored curriculum has required up to four full-time faculty equivalents and has been a foundation for the institution's commitment to economics research and courses with a developing-country focus. This has helped directly in faculty hiring and retention for many professors (including Steve Lewis, Morty Schapiro, Dick Sabot, Cappy Hill, Gerard Caprio) whose impact has stretched far beyond the CDE. In course offerings, the CDE makes available more than fifteen specialized courses annually to undergraduates. This positions Williams ahead of any other liberal arts college and on a par with many research universities in the number of international economics course opportunities. In recent years, undergraduates have recognized this wealth of access and have enrolled alongside CDE fellows at an average rate exceeding 60 per year. Along with the CDE curriculum come additional benefits of CDE-sponsored speakers and conferences. In the last three years, the CDE has supported ten or more talks per year and has attracted speakers including a Nobel Prize winner, the IMF's Chief Economist, the President of the Center for Global Development, two former prime ministers (both CDE alumni) and many others. Finally, in a new forum called the "CDE Development Dialogue," undergrads and CDE fellows engage in questions and discussion on development issues after hearing from guest speakers (using the Log Lunch model).

Beyond the conventional experiences of CDE courses and academic talks, the CDE has an extensive impact on campus in more subtle ways as well. Informally, CDE fellows share experiences with undergraduates in campus activities that include an annual reception for all international students and the CDE Intercultural Night. Each CDE fellow delivers a brief talk about an issue from home in well-known undergraduate venues that include the International Studies Colloquium, the CES Log Lunch, and the Williams World Views. Undergraduate writing tutors are paired with CDE fellows as the curriculum calls for papers increasingly during the year. Professors in different disciplines invite CDE fellows to share their home-country experiences when relevant for courses ranging from religion to psychology. Going forward, we anticipate more shared experiences during academic breaks with the initiation of joint undergrad/CDE trips during Dead Week and Spring Break.

Off-campus, the CDE network is being woven into the Williams Community as well. With increasing frequency, the CDE staff has provided CDE alumni contacts and support to those going abroad during their time at Williams or afterwards. For example, the CDE arranged a year-away for a current undergraduate to teach English at the central bank of Laos. In another instance this year, CDE contacts in Sri Lanka helped to guide a Chandler Fellow's research after Williams. To ensure responsiveness and consistency, the CDE has met with Career Counseling and the Office of Fellowships to learn more about how those offices advise interns and post-graduate fellows and about how to integrate the CDE's capabilities and contacts. Increased inclusion of CDE alumni in the Williams Society of Alumni communications will help as well. Finally, with the Office of Admission, the CDE has promoted the involvement of CDE alumni in several international recruiting efforts. While unrealized potential remains, the off-campus coordination of CDE alumni with the broader Williams Community is well underway.

## **2.6 Faculty Access**

Intellectual work is not defined by national boundaries. Ideas and concepts and arguments spill across the globe. The empirical worlds of politics, history, economics, and social forces are limited not by conventional geographic frontiers but only by the imaginations of theorists and writers. The Williams faculty, if it is to remain relevant academically, must maintain regular interchange among scholars in various parts of the world. Technology, of course, has brought us all closer, expanding our opportunities for gathering information from a truly global domain. Thus, the question of whether our international study creates further opportunities for faculty research and student learning is its own answer. It is simply inescapable: our international study *is*, by very definition, our research and the very foundation of our teaching. If we were to cut ourselves off from data and interpretations from other countries, we would find

ourselves, very quickly, in an intellectual cul-de-sac. If Williams is to continue to nurture high quality faculty research and publication, it must also continue to support international exchange.

A 2010 survey of the Williams faculty revealed and confirmed that the faculty is already heavily engaged in internationally. For example, about 75% had travelled internationally for professional work within the past four years and 50% regularly conduct research abroad. Sixty percent of the faculty collaborated with colleagues in other countries and 45% regularly read, write, speak or listen to a language other than English in their professional work. Finally, about two-thirds of the faculty stated that their courses include substantial international content. The College is clearly making resources available for faculty to further their international work because 50% of the faculty had used College funds to support research or teaching abroad within the past four years.

## **2.7. The World Accessing Williams**

In order to highlight the vibrant international scene, the CIP started and has maintained a new website ([international.williams.edu](http://international.williams.edu)). It includes interviews with students and faculty, reports of study away experiences, and accounts of campus activities. The website is not yet prominently featured on the Williams home page (such as under a Quick Links). Other colleges in our comparison group, such as Grinnell and Middlebury, clearly feature international (e.g. Global Grinnell) on their home pages. They have websites devoted to all things international (academic and extracurricular) that make it convenient for users to access pertinent information in one space. At Williams, it is harder to access that information. Each year, our websites receive ~ 4 million hits, approximately 10% of which originate from abroad -- from 213 foreign countries or territories. Basically every corner of the world clicked at least once on a website associated with Williams. It is vital that the international activities at Williams are highlighted and given the same prominence as other important activities such as sustainability, athletics, or the arts.

## **3. The CIP's Recommendations**

### **3.0 A Consolidation of Resources**

We recommend that the College work immediately to unite many of its international efforts. While the existing decentralized approach may empower individual students, faculty, and staff members, it makes some feel isolated. Terrific student projects completed abroad may go unnoticed by most faculty, even in students' home departments, and wonderful learning experiences created by faculty in one department or division may be overlooked by faculty in other departments and divisions. Students with little international experience, especially students from underrepresented groups, must be encouraged to explore and use the College's resources to their full advantage, including opportunities for international study and research. As an educational community, all of us -- from the most globally active students and faculty to those who are only beginning to explore the world beyond our borders -- will benefit from better means to connect with one another and to showcase our achievements.

### **3.1 The Coordination of International Access: An International Center**

We recommend the establishment of a new academic and administrative center provisionally titled "The Center for International Programs" (CIP). Its function would be to promote and facilitate international endeavors on and off campus -- from research, to study, to lectures and other events. It would create a clear structure to coordinate and sustain the College's international efforts. We envision this to be a dynamic space that would foster creative collaborations, synergies and maximize opportunities for serendipitous encounters.

#### **3.1.1 Foundations**

The Center for Foreign Languages and Cultures, CFLLC, offers an ideal foundation on which to build a Center for International Programs. By joining the Center, the CFLLC's scope would be expanded and linked more closely to other relevant departments, programs, and offices. It is already a home for international teaching and research, drawing together students and faculty from several departments and programs. It is physically situated at the hub of a busy academic building (Hollander Hall). The CFLLC is

overseen by an executive committee comprising the faculty chairs of the foreign language departments and the Comparative Literature program, and a professional administrator. It has an established record of supporting and enriching the curriculum, and of organizing events that focus on international issues. For these reasons the offerings of the CFLLC are critical to any international initiative going forward.

We believe that the academic scope and administrative structure of the CFLLC can be augmented—efficiently and economically—to create a broader based international center. The alternative is to create an entirely new international center from scratch. But a new and separate entity would inevitably overlap and compete with the CFLLC for faculty and student attention, and for financial resources. We therefore recommend enhancing the CFLLC’s mission and relaunching it as the Center for International Programs, to serve as the umbrella under which most of the College’s international activities, programs, and resources can be organized.

### **3.1.2. Mission**

The new center will centralize and consolidate responsibility for international students, activities, and programs at Williams College. It will promote the holistic integration of international concerns into the curriculum, including foreign languages, the arts and humanities, the social sciences, and the natural sciences. It will promote study away opportunities and other forms of experiential education in the world, such as Winter Study travel courses, summer internships, and international fellowships. It will sponsor co-curricular events and special activities to enhance international awareness and to build on the identity of Williams as an internationally focused college. The center will be responsible for maintenance of the [Williams International](#) website.

The new center will also provide opportunities for faculty development. An excellent Center should be an instrument for faculty to continuously develop their own skills and knowledge. The more the Center becomes a resource for faculty, the more faculty will view it as an essential element of the Williams College landscape. The following are some ideas of the Center’s activities:

**3.1.2.1** providing funds to bring international scholars to campus for short-term visits.

Faculty could propose to embed such visits in existing courses for a particular unit (e.g. a German chemist coming to campus to co-teach a unit on metals or an Indian economist to lecture on microfinance) as well as to have extended time with these guests to discuss research topics. These visitors could also do public presentations/performances, visit classes, and/or meet with faculty and/or students individually or in small groups. There is an unmet need and support for short-term visits by international scholars that could potentially benefit the College.

**3.1.2.2** hosting faculty research discussions, perhaps in cooperation with the Oakley Center, on broad global themes and processes that transcend disciplinary borders.

**3.1.2.3** mentoring new Williams faculty, to direct them to appropriate resources for supporting international research or the internationalization of their teaching.

**3.1.2.4** encouraging faculty to visit study away programs, not simply as reviewers of the programs but also to connect with research partners and/or work on curriculum development. Some of these visits might take the form of participation in faculty development seminars sponsored by the programs (see above).

### **3.1.3 Physical Space**

As a physical entity, the new Center should comprise faculty and staff offices associated with the CFLLC and the International Studies program, the Study Away office and the International Student Services office, possibly the Fellowships Office, and space for instruction and social gathering. We do not recommend, however, that the CIP be housed in its own building, nor that it be annexed to student life or administrative space. We visited several campuses that had built stand-alone centers, such as at Macalester

College in Minnesota. While there are certainly some advantages to building a center from scratch, there is also a danger that it could become isolated and not sufficiently integrated into College life.

We feel that to emphasize its educational mission the new Center at Williams should be embedded within academic space, and that this would maximize connectivity, synergy, and serendipity. Hollander Hall, with some reassignment of space, could accommodate this vision. The CFLLC is already there, as is the International Studies program. The opening of new faculty offices in Stetson Hall by the summer of 2014 will create elbow-room within Hollander that could be used to accommodate the Study Away and International Student Services staff. Human resources are more important here than a physical landmark (although bringing those human resources together in one place should raise the visibility of international education). Hollander is located on the main artery between the Paresky Student Center and the new Stetson Library and close to Hopkins Hall. This space will be easily accessible and will have natural foot traffic. It has the potential of being a vibrant, informative, and exciting place and a student's first step in accessing the world.

### **3.1.4 Staffing**

We recommend that the new Center be overseen by a faculty director. The director would be appointed by the Dean of the Faculty and the President in much the same way that department and program chairs are appointed, i.e., in consultation with relevant faculty. The director would ideally serve a three-year term with the potential for renewal, and would be granted release time from teaching to attend to the business of the Center. The director would serve concurrently as chair of one of the Foreign Languages departments, Comparative Literature, or the International Studies concentration program.

At present, the Committee of International Programs is an *ad hoc* group. It should become a regular advisory committee, similar to other College committees, working with the Center director on matters of governance and programming for the Center. In this way, more and more faculty will feel that being involved in the Center is part of their service to the College. The advisory committee should include five faculty members in addition to the director, with at least one from each academic division. The *ex officio* members would be the administrative director of the CFLLC (by function, if not title), the dean of international education, the director of the CDE, the director of fellowships, and the international student services coordinator. The director of the international center would work closely and coordinate with the directors of other centers at the College such as the Science Center, the Davis Center and the Oakley Center and also collaborate with the Office of College Relations.

The Center will also require administrative and support staff. We have had extensive discussions and have concrete ideas on how the administrative structure would look like but this needs to be finalized during an implementation stage. As indicated elsewhere, a critical element of this proposal is that the dean of international education, as well as the international student services coordinator, would run their operations out of the new Center. They would nevertheless continue to report to the Dean of the College. In addition, we agree with our external consultants that an additional study away advisor will be needed to advise and help students integrate study away into their college experience. We recommend further that the international student services coordinator become a full-time position.

## **3.2. Rethinking the Place of Study Away in the College Curriculum**

### **3.2.1 Articulating the Value of Study Abroad**

The CIP grappled at length with the question of study abroad. Why do students study away and what do they gain from it? Should we implement a college wide policy about study away? How can we better integrate the study away experience with the regular curriculum at Williams?

At this point, the College does not articulate clearly the value of study abroad; what students should learn from the study abroad experience or how such experience should be integrated into the larger Williams education. This is a problem for our students and in the long run, for the College as a whole. As an institution we generally succeed at defining standards and expectations for our students' liberal arts education; we must do equally well at explaining the value of off-campus study. Study abroad should not be viewed as a

diversion or time out from a Williams education, but as a serious and productive part of the Williams experience.

Through discussion and analysis, the CIP concluded that it is neither practical nor desirable to propose a one-size-fit-all solution to study abroad. Departments and programs, as well as individual faculty, have different views on off-campus study, and advice to students may vary widely. This is as it should be. But it is important that any program's recommendations and policies on study away be based on current information and communicated clearly in any materials aimed at students.

### **3.2.2. Equal Access to Study Abroad**

A recent College analysis indicates that different student groups participate in study away at different rates. Between 2006 and 2010, 48% of all students studied away with no significant variation between various racial and ethnic groups, nor between students from different income levels. But the male-female divide was dramatic: 60% of all women studied away versus just 36% among men. This divide is not unique to Williams but it is notable nonetheless. In absolute terms, it means that more than 160 women study away in an average year compared to just 90 men.

Another significant divide is the one between divisional lines: 54% of all Division I students studied away versus 45% from Division II and 33% from Division III. Finally, the participation rate among student athletes lags just slightly below the average at 44%. We need to monitor these numbers and trends in the coming years to ensure that study away is accessible to all.

The College also needs to involve academic departments and programs more directly in Study Away. A four-question query sent out last spring to department and program chairs regarding study abroad revealed a general inconsistency of policies and a lack of transparency in departmental practices. The query also revealed vast differences among departments in the criteria for granting credit. The CIP recommends that all departments clarify and standardize their approval practices of courses completed on study away and specify how they will translate into credit for the major. Each department and program needs to be more explicit about their policies on their websites or departmental publications to make them readily accessible to all students.

We propose that each department map a path through the major that takes into account the option of off-campus study. This information should be distributed to students in their first or second year so that their planning for a major can include study away. Each department needs to determine departmental goals for study away as well as provide lists of programs appropriate for specific areas of inquiry. This will enable the student to better assess how studying away may affect their progress through their academic major at Williams.

### **3.2.3 Integrating the Study Away Experience into the Williams Education**

By articulating the position of study abroad in the Williams curriculum, we will help our students reflect on the value of their off-campus experiences in the context of their education. Studies show that it is important for students to think about their learning goals before departure, and to reflect on their experiences upon their return. As an institution, we need to do more to help our students process their off-campus learning and to help them capitalize on that learning when they come back to campus. Some of the successes of the summer fellowships program might serve as models for other programs, including study abroad. From the very beginning of a summer fellowship – the application process – students are asked to reflect on their learning goals and on their education in general. Once the fellowship has ended, students are asked to assess the experience in writing. And many present their work on a panel. All students engaging in junior year abroad or in other international experiences would benefit from productive pedagogical exercises of this sort. Efforts to help students articulate their goals for off-campus study is already underway. In the next application cycle, the Dean's Office will be reintroducing questions about learning goals into its new study abroad petition process. Staff will follow up with the students when they return to campus, asking them to revisit what they wrote before their trip and to consider the implications for their studies and future directions. Other programs should consider adopting similar approaches.

Compared to peer institutions, the College does very little to facilitate the return to Williams from studying abroad. We do a great job of sending students away, but what about their re-entry? Many students speak about return culture shock and a difficulty re-adjusting to Williams, socially and academically. The College should do more to facilitate connections between students returning from abroad and those aspiring to international study and research. A number of colleges in our cohort, including Smith, Beloit, and Grinnell, sponsor an annual symposium focused on students' international endeavors. Such events help students to integrate their international experiences with their undergraduate education, and benefit the college community as a whole. We recommend that Williams institute an "international day" to celebrate the achievements of students back from international travel and study, and to awaken others to opportunities beyond America's borders. This could be a weekend conference featuring panels and poster presentations or a series of workshops and lectures during the semester. The proposed new Center could be instrumental in organizing events such as these.

#### **3.2.4 Realistic Staffing for Study Away**

Although there has been a striking increase in the number of students studying away over the last 20 years, the College has not responded to this increase by expanding the staff who advise and mentor students. Having less than one FTE overseeing the approximately 250 Williams students who study away is not sustainable. Williams allocates significantly fewer FTEs to study away advising than our peer institutions. The College already has in place a robust and extensive advising system for the WEPO program. The kind of services provided by the College to the limited number of WEPO candidates should be made accessible to all students interested in studying away.

#### **3.2.5 Faculty Engagement with Study Away**

In order to better educate faculty about the study abroad experience and sites, the Study Away Office should invite each year, via an open call for self-nominations, three faculty members (one from each division), to each visit one different study away site. The faculty member would write a report on the site and the study abroad experience. This will cost about \$7,500 per year though we believe this is a small price for quality control of study away sites. Further, it will make these faculty members better advisers and give them a better sense of what students experience. These visits will therefore enhance student advising, a core value of Williams. Further, it may open up new lines of inquiry and stimulate new thinking.

### **3.3 Consistency of Expectations and Coordination of Resources**

#### **3.3.1 Setting Clear Expectations for Student Learning**

A number of our peers with a clear international identity or a stated philosophy of international education, such as Grinnell, Beloit, and Middlebury make explicit their goals and expectations for each student's international competency. (For example: "At the time of graduation, each student should be able to identify and explain a topic, issue, and/or historical debate on which people in different parts of the world have different opinions.")

We are not behind such institutions in resources and international programming, nor in the activities of our students and faculty. International education is, in fact, already part of our mission, thanks to the driving interests of our students and faculty. To catch up as an institution, however, we need to make it part of our mission statement, too.

#### **3.3.2 A Common Application**

Each summer, thirty to forty students benefit from research or study funding through the Fellowships Office. An additional number of students receive funding for international endeavors from other academic or administrative departments, including (Asian Studies, the Career Center, Special Academic Programs, the Center for the Environment, and others). No central tracking system for the variety of opportunities exists, either on the student side, or on the institutional side (how much money is actually spent on student projects across the institution? How much on international education?) We can and should do better on this score.

Some of our counterparts coordinate (but do not mean centralize) all applications for summer funding, and thereby help students to identify opportunities suiting their needs, as well as streamline administrative efforts. We should explore such an option.

### **3.3.3 Knowing What We Have, Understanding What We Need**

Better tracking of resources and student activities would also help us identify areas of need. Are we serving the whole student body, or primarily those students with previous international experience and high academic achievement? Are science students proportionally represented? Should we facilitate -- and raise funds for -- more experiential endeavors, such as volunteering and public service projects abroad? Can we do more for first-year students, to whom many internship and research programs are closed? Can we do more for students who lack the cultural capital or experience to venture abroad on their own?

These are questions that require a wider campus conversation. We have resources that some of our peers only dream of, and we spend liberally on our students thanks to generously endowed funds designated for student projects. We need to understand what we have and what our students do so as to better steward our resources and serve our educational mission.

### **3.4. Faculty Access International Collaborative Networks**

The Williams in Africa as well as Williams in Georgia examples show us that faculty connections can provide sound networks around the globe. We want to encourage the development of similar networks using already existing contacts among Williams faculty and alumni/ae. We would expect these networks to develop opportunities for summer, Winter Study, junior year, and post-graduate internships in places where we know we have good contacts and where faculty have serious expertise. As a general rule we would expect that these networks would involve more than one Williams faculty member to ensure continuity and to ease the burdens of establishing and maintaining these.

These networks will involve faculty in all three divisions, but could have an especially transformative consequence for Division III students and faculty. Enhanced funding for Winter Study 99 courses, travel courses, or internships would allow students to spend time at a field station as part or all of a winter-study course, a summer, or a post-grad year. There is also substantial interest among Division III departments in increasing funding for faculty and students to travel abroad to conferences or short-term courses, as well as to bring international speakers for seminars; both initiatives would significantly enhance the scholarly climate we provide for our students and faculty members.

In the longer term, one model would entail Williams students and faculty traveling for a semester or a year to a field station where they could focus on one or two particular themes or interests. Examples might include a semester abroad at the University of Madagascar with geological field study involving Williams and local students, led jointly by a Williams faculty member and local faculty; or a semester focusing on evolution and conservation biology as exemplified by the natural history of Namibia or Indonesia, again led by a Williams faculty members in cooperation with local experts, and including students from both Williams College and local institutions. A third model might focus on the environmental and social justice issues resulting from urbanization in any of several regions in Latin America, Asia, or Africa. There is also significant potential in such a model to leverage and complement the incipient growth in Environmental Studies at Williams and the possible Public Health concentration.

Even with multiple faculty commitment to these networks, we recognize that they may ebb and flow with changes of personnel. The downside to a dynamic rather than a static "Williams abroad" model is that it would not build up the connections and structures that come with a long-term presence in a particular location. The upside is that a dynamic network strategy, not tied to a permanent connection to a particular locality, could allow students and faculty at Williams to engage directly with active research areas of faculty in a wide range of areas including ecological, policy, and cultural areas. We recommend this dynamic approach.

### **3.5 Funding Access**

The Global Initiatives Venture Fund was established by the Class of 1962 on the occasion of their

50th reunion. It is meant to support expanded opportunities for foreign language acquisition and for educationally rigorous and enriching international study, research and fieldwork in collaboration with faculty. The fund currently yields an annual income of c. \$25,000, which should grow to more than \$50,000 annually by FY18. We recommend that the Dean of the Faculty Office have an open call for proposals each year for faculty and student groups to propose projects to be funded from the Venture Fund. In the future, this competition could be overseen by the CIP.

### **Final Thoughts**

The CIP is grateful for the opportunity to study internationalization at the College and for the institutional goodwill to consider and implement some of its recommendations. There is more work ahead. Williams College is constantly evolving. The College has grown and developed in many areas including the area of internationalization. These new developments have had a positive impact on learning as demonstrated in the number of students studying foreign languages, the increase in students travelling and studying overseas during the semester and/or Winter Study, and the emergence of new interdisciplinary programs and concentrations (often with an international focus) in the College curriculum. There is often a lag time in administrative response to these changes. Paying attention to some of the issues and problems that often emerge in new realities, the CIP has advocated for specific changes that will contribute to a more conducive and effective learning environment.

The College is already doing significant work in the field of international education and the campus is already internationalized. This is reflected in the curriculum, in faculty research, and in student participation in study away programs and overseas research. The College needs to communicate explicitly the value of international education and the implications of internationalization for students and faculty. It also needs to better coordinate and centralize its various activities and resources. As a way to evaluate whether the College has succeeded in this task, our aim should be to nominate the College in 2015 for the Paul Simon Award for Campus Internationalization awarded each year by NAFSA, the Association of International Educators.

Internationalization is never fully completed. It is an ongoing process that is constantly in response to a changing global environment and institutional priorities. Nevertheless, applying for this award could serve as a way to seek outside verification that the College is indeed meeting the excellent standards that it sets for itself.

It is hoped that the CIP's recommendations in this report will bring better coherence and a clearer direction to the internationalization of Williams College.

### **Appendix The CIP and the Mellon Grant Period**

During the Grant Period, the CIP met regularly to discuss ideas and our various proposal. We invited consultants to campus and visited five institutions. We had conversations with various campus stakeholders, such as the Board of Trustees, and also met with students on several different occasions.

#### **Outside consultants and visits**

In December 2011, we invited to Williams Professor Kaye Edwards, a biologist at Haverford College. Professor Edwards was the founding director of the Center for Peace and Global Citizenship at Haverford as well as the coordinator of their Multicultural Scholars Program. Professor Edwards spent a full day with us during which she talked about the role of the Center for Peace and Global Citizenship on the Haverford campus and in particular the ways in which the Center connects its grants for internships and study away with a regular course at the College. The Center is also a venue for a number of social events on campus,

including a world café. Professor Edwards also discussed ways to integrate faculty and students from the natural sciences into the programming of a Center. Professor Edwards will be a visiting professor at Williams (Class of 1955 Visiting Professor of International Studies) in the spring of 2013 and therefore can further consult and advise the CIP as we move forward.

In October of 2012, we invited to campus three outside consultants to campus for a two day visit. They were: 1) David Harrison, Director, Center for International Studies, Grinnell College; 2) Elizabeth Brewer, Director, Office of International Education, Beloit College; and 3) Paul Monod, Acting Dean of International Programs, Middlebury College.

These visitors met with senior administrators, faculty, staff and students and submitted a 13 page report to us which was very helpful. Their report strongly recommended that Williams consider establishing an international center. They also emphasized the need to increase the number of staff members in the study away office.

In the spring of 2012, we visited five liberal arts colleges that have committed significant resources to internationalization and have established and/or built new physical spaces to organize their international activities. The visits were:

- 1) February: Smith College, Center for Global Studies
- 2) February: Hampshire College, World Language Enrichment Program
- 3) March: Macalester College, Institute for Global Citizenship
- 4) April: Mt. Holyoke, McCulloch Center for Global Initiatives
- 5) May: Grinnell College, Center for International Studies

Each of these Colleges had thriving centers and innovative ways to coordinate and enhance their international activities. We looked carefully at what worked well at these campuses and considered what could be translated and incorporated at Williams. Some of these centers (such as at Smith and Macalester) are relatively new and still in the process of defining their role on campus. These visits were helpful. They guided our thinking that building a separate, stand-alone international center would not work on the Williams campus.

## Appendix 2: Proposal for a Credit-Hour System at Williams

A credit-hour system would allow us to enhance equity and flexibility in the Williams curriculum. Applied to student workloads, extra credit could be given for courses that demand significantly more time, encouraging the study of laboratory sciences and languages while broadening participation in tutorials. By permitting less-than-regular-credit courses, it would allow us to account properly for music lessons, for a variety of ensemble participation in the arts, and for impromptu additions to existing courses. It might also be used to facilitate team teaching, permit students under stress to take a lighter load, allow seniors to miss fewer classes when interviewing in their Fall semester, enhance the educational role of Winter Study, and give credit for course-related work in the summer.

Two current practices testify to the stultifying rigidity of our system as it stands: “credits” given for music lessons, which are nonetheless valueless toward graduation; and intensive Winter Study courses, an *ad hoc* answer to academic deficiencies, which give semester credit for work done in January.

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### THE BASIC PROPOSAL

- a. Assign credit for Williams courses as follows:
  - regular semester courses, 3 credits;**
  - laboratory courses, intensive language courses, and tutorials, 4 credits;**
  - reduced-credit courses (e.g., lessons, ensembles, colloquia, workshops), 0.5- 1 credits;**
  - regular WSP courses, 1 credit.**
- b. Set graduation requirements at a level that would require more than a regular number of credits ((32\*3)+4 = 100), say **102 credits, while requiring eight semesters in residence (“in residence” defined as, say, 9 credits).**

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### Core objectives: to promote equity and liberal arts

*a. Assignment of differential credit to remedy inequities in student workload.* Currently at Williams, students in intensive language courses spend much more than the average amount of time on their studies, in class and out, yet the courses yield the same credit. The situation is similar in tutorials and in the laboratory sciences. What is worse, at Williams the additional workload of laboratories is recognized for faculty but not for students: professors get a half-course credit for teaching a lab section, but students get no extra credit for taking one.

*Reduced-credit semester courses.* Peer schools with credit systems make extensive use of less-than-regular-credit courses for independent studies, music lessons and performance, ensembles, colloquia (especially in the sciences), and writing workshops. At Williams, the most obvious immediate applicability would be in the Music Department and possibly in Theatre. Another possibility, found at peer institutions in their natural science departments, would be department colloquia, offered to (or required of) senior majors.

*b. Graduation requirements set to encourage enrollment in challenging courses and participation in the arts.* Offering extra credit for time-consuming courses, lessons, or ensembles would be merely symbolic unless extra credit corresponded to extra progress toward graduation. If we wished to maintain the equivalent of the current four-course load via a residency requirement, we could raise the number of credits needed for graduation slightly, thereby in effect requiring students to have a few extra credits to graduate.

This step addresses more general issues. Some faculty have expressed worries that too many students manage to spend nearly all of their four years sitting in the back rows of big lecture classes, avoiding the most important challenges of a liberal arts education. Yet we as a faculty also hesitate to impose curricular

requirements. The flexible incentives permitted by a credit-hour system offer a middle path between imposing a requirement and doing nothing. Some students decide that they cannot continue on their musical instrument, or dare not audition for ensembles, because the time commitment would not be counted toward graduation.

Aside from its treatment of tutorials, this proposal resembles existing credit-hour systems at our peers. A survey of 24 such institutions, conducted in late 2004 (Appendix 1) shows that twelve adopted full or partial credit-hour systems. Among these schools, additional weight went most often to laboratory courses in sciences and to introductory Asian languages (Appendix 2). On graduation requirements, our proposal most resembles the system at Colby, where most courses count for 3 or 4 credits, “full time” means at least 12 credits in a semester, and the graduation requirement (since 2003) is 128 credits.

## **POSSIBLE EXTENSIONS**

A major attraction of a credit-hour system lies in its flexibility. The survey of peers and our own recent experiences suggest a few other ways in which Williams could put this flexibility to good educational use.

### **Semesters**

*Additional credit for interested students.* Institutions with full credit-hour systems often grant students the option of electing, by a deadline about midway through the semester and in agreement with the instructor, to have a course count for additional credit (say, 4 instead of 3 hours). Students who find themselves unusually excited by a subject might wish to do a longer term paper or other additional independent work, possibly of an experiential kind. Or, students could be encouraged to take on applied language study in a non-language course (“Language Across the Curriculum”) by the prospect of extra credit.

*Additional credit for activity during Spring Break.* In recent years, a few Spring semester courses have required travel or fieldwork over break. An additional credit hour could recognize this added work—and it could also allow the instructor to make it optional, enrolling a mix of students who could, and could not, arrange to travel over break.

### **Winter Study**

Peer institutions with one-month interterms assign various levels of course credit to courses taken during that time. Winter Study offers excellent opportunities for recognizing other kinds of extra-credit work.

1. *Extra credit for theses.* In line with the equity considerations noted, students writing a thesis during WSP could be granted extra credit—in the example above, two credits instead of one.

2. *Other extra-credit WSP offerings.* If they wished to use WSP to gain one of their necessary extra credits toward graduation, students might want to take intensive writing or language courses. (The former would be attractive to students who wanted to work on writing before taking a writing-intensive semester course.) Intensive laboratory work or experiential commitments could be rewarded with extra credit. Each full week of Winter Study, distinguished scholars could be invited to campus to offer one-week, one-credit colloquia to students already carrying a single WSP course.

3. *Why count WSP and semester credits together?* Like many schools with one-month interterms, Williams currently has graduation requirements that separate semester courses (32) from Winter Study courses (four). A credit-hour system would not necessarily affect this. However, the College has already in effect abolished this separation by instituting intensive courses for students with deficiencies (these courses could carry three hours of credit under the proposal). By formally counting Winter Study credits and semester credits together

in the graduation requirement, the whole system gain flexibility. This could benefit students who wanted to make better use of Winter Study to make progress toward graduation. Currently, some students find the fast pace of regular semesters difficult to manage, yet they nevertheless face the opposite problem—too much free time--every January.

## **Summer**

A credit-hour system would grant the flexibility we currently lack in giving proper credit for intensive language instruction. It could also be extended to fieldwork completed during the summer under the supervision of Williams faculty, much like the laboratory work often done in the sciences (for which students are paid as RA's), but using credit rather than pay as compensation.

## **THE FACULTY SIDE: A CLOSER LOOK**

A credit-hour system need not affect faculty teaching credits at all. It could be used to facilitate team teaching (and classroom interdisciplinarity) by providing a way of accounting for fractional teaching commitments. However, it might also introduce too much administrative difficulty in doing so.

*1. Facilitating team teaching.* As was recognized in the so-called “free agent” model of team teaching, quite often such enterprises have a single person as their central figure and a variety of others in satellite roles (say, giving a few guest lectures or serving as project consultant to students). A credit-hour system would allow department chairs to grant partial teaching credit for the latter. Where such fractional participation is currently uncounted, it would be encouraged; where it is currently counted as equal to a regular teaching assignment, a credit-hour system would eliminate the inequity. Moreover, even where team teaching involves only two people, department chairs currently face a disincentive to commit faculty to such courses, because they currently “pay” the regular 0.2 FTE but receive “credit” for only half of the enrollments. A more appropriate accounting system could promote team teaching and thus advance the goal of interdisciplinary learning at the College, although at a cost in complexity.

*2. Adjust hours to reflect faculty workload?* Above, one of our main arguments was that it is inequitable to grant faculty credit for teaching laboratory sections when students get no additional credit for taking them. One possible implication of would be to extend extra credit to faculty teaching intensive language courses and tutorials. However, any such judgment would have to take into account not only the amount of class time but also the preparation time and the number of students taking the courses, as indicators of faculty workload. Given that tutorials are limited to ten students, it would seem inadvisable to grant faculty extra credit for them. The same applies to small language classes. (And of course, nobody would argue that if students writing a thesis during WSP were to be given double the credit of regular WSP courses, their faculty advisors should get double WSP teaching credit for each thesis they advised.) This decision would have to rest with the appropriate committees, but our inclination is to stay with the status quo, and study the possibility of phasing in differential teaching credit.

## **AVOIDING OTHER PITFALLS**

*Complexity and “credit inflation.”* To those who worry about excessive complexity or “credit inflation,” it should be noted that the lists of extra-credit (and reduced-credit) courses from other institutions show an important and reassuring thing: there is substantial consensus about what deserves extra (or reduced) credit, and such courses have not wildly proliferated anywhere. Were Williams to adopt such a system, we would expect that a very strong case would have to be made before any course could be designated as receiving extra credit (this leaves aside the question of extra-credit options for interested students, noted above). For

example, among lab sciences we might set the 3-/ 4-credit boundary line at three hours of required laboratory per week.

*Student course loads and residency.* Where credit-hour systems exist, graduation requirements routinely include minimum and maximum credit loads and residency requirements. Together, they insure that students do not accumulate enough credits for graduation after only three or three-and-a-half years and then become part-time students. Departments that offer reduced-credit courses also typically impose limits on the number of such courses that can be taken in a semester or a career, and keep open the option of taking them for no credit (for example, a music department might offer credit for lessons for only one instrument or only one performance group). College-wide limits on the number of credits from reduced-credit courses could have the same effect. A reduced (say 9-credit) load would be especially welcome for students under stress, or those in their senior Fall who are spending time off campus at interviews for employment or graduate school.

*Science or language “fanatics” will use the system to avoid taking courses outside the division.* A credit-hour system would have no bearing on current distributive requirements. If anything, it would encourage such students to stretch themselves: if they had already accumulated plenty of extra credits, they would worry less about failing a course in a field outside their comfort zone. We might also place limits on the number of extra credits that could be granted from labs or any other particular source.

*“Sciencephobes” will not be motivated to take more lab science courses (or “languagephobes,” language courses) just by the prospect of an additional credit.* Of course, if a student truly has a clinical phobia of science or languages, extra credit would make no difference. Extra credit for labs and introductory languages would probably have a marginal effect on the distribution of majors, but it is a step in the right direction and, more importantly, a matter of equity.

*“But professors don’t get credit for advising theses.”* True enough, but since this holds across divisions it is not an equity issue, nor is it likely to affect the proportion of majors across fields. However, if it *were* seen as desirable, in pursuit of equity, to grant faculty members credit for advising a given number of theses and independent projects over a given number of years, a credit-hour system would make this easier to manage by allowing grants of partial teaching credit.

## **SUMMARY**

A credit-hour system could help us respond constructively and flexibly to important issues we currently face—equity in workloads, participation in languages and tutorials, the distribution of majors, helping students cope with personal problems without having to withdraw, and accounting for course-linked participation in the arts. Appropriately extended, it could invigorate Winter Study academically, facilitate the management of team teaching or course-linked travel and fieldwork, and encourage further student participation in experiential education, language study, and summer research.

## Appendix 1. Peer institutions, graduation requirements, and course weightings (2004-05)

Institution	Grad Req	normal weight	extra weight on	Partial weight on	other reqs	misc ideas
Amherst	32 courses	1	None	None	1st yr sem	
Bates	32 courses + 2	1	None	None	comp exams	
Bowdoin	32 courses	1	None	None	Distrib	minors
Bryn Mawr	32 units	1	1.5 lab sci, intro Asian lang		dist, lang	
Carleton	210 credits	6	Some sci labs +2	topical 2-3, music 2-4		
Claremont-McK	32 courses	1	None	None	detailed Gen Ed	
Colby	128 hours	3 to 4	5 lab sci, intro Asian lang	conversation lang, symposia, art docent work, music lessons and ensembles, indep studies		nongraded expository writing workshop, 1 credit
Colgate	32 courses	1	None	None	Core	
Dartmouth	35 courses	1	None	None	8-course dist, lang	
Davidson	32 courses	1	None	None	10-course core	
Grinnell	124 credits	4	Intro Chinese 5	topical courses 2, conversation lang 1, some music 1-2		
Haverford	32 courses	1	None	None	for lang, dist	
Harvard	32 courses	1	None	None	core incl for lang	
Middlebury	36 courses	1	None	None	7-course core	
Oberlin	112 hours + 3 Winter credits	3 to 4	sci labs +1-2; intro Asian lang 5	science for non-majors 1-2	dist, writing	
Pomona	32 courses	1	None	None	10-course Gen Ed	
Reed	30 units	1	None	None	qualif exams, senior thesis, orals	
Smith	128 credits	4	Intro Asian lang 5; sci labs 5 or +1	contemp poetry 1; indep studies 1-4		Jan term courses 1-3 credits
Swarthmore	32 credits	1	Intro languages 1.5	Various topical	for lang, dist	
Vassar	34 units	1	Chem instrumtl anal 1.5, intro Asian lang 1.5	some music 0.5, indep study		
Washington & Lee	121 credits	3	sci labs 4; intro lang 4; compsci 101 4	colloquia; theses 1-3; some music		
Wellesley	32 credits	1	sci labs, Intro Asian lang 1.25	music 0-1 perf, lessons		winter session 0-1
Wesleyan	32 credits	1	sci labs, intro Asian lang 1.5	indep study 0.25-1		

Yale	36 credits	1	sci labs +0, +.5, +1; Intro Asian lang 3	none (except labs)	Distrib	
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### Appendix 3. Details of course weightings at 24 peer institutions (2004-05)

<b>Courses granted extra credit (number of institutions)</b>	<b>weights (credit given/ standard course credit)</b>
Introductory Asian languages (8)	5/3, 5/4, 5/3, 5/4, 1.5/1, 1.25/1, 1.5/1, 3/1
Laboratory sciences (7)	5/3, 1.5-2/1, 4-6/3, 5/4, 4/3, 1.25/1, 1.5/1
All other intro languages (3)	4/3, 4/3, 4/3
Greek	4/3,
Const Law	4/3,
CompSci 101	4/3,
Music Theory	4/3,
Instrumental Analysis (Chem)	1.5/1
<b>Courses granted less than full credit, but not zero (number of institutions)</b>	
Independent Study (8)	1-3/3, 1-3/3, 2-3/3, 1-4/4, -0.5-1/1, 1-3/3, 1-3/3, 0.25-1/1
Music lessons or ensemble participation (5)	2-4/6, 1-2/3, 1-2/4, 0.5/1, 1-2/3
separate optional laboratories (3)	1/4, 1/3, 0.5/1
topical courses in sciences	1/3, 2/4
lecture series or symposia	1/6, 1/4
conversational language	2/6, 1/3
foreign-language classics in translation	3/6,
docent work in museum	1/3,
nongraded expository writing workshop	1/3,
<b>Additional credit in same course</b>	
many, in credit systems	usually +1 if approved by deadline near end of course
<b>January/May interterm courses</b>	
	0-3/3, 1-3/4, 0-0.5/1