

MACAULAY HONORS COLLEGE



Macaulay Abroad

Study Abroad Analysis 2017 to 2019



Ecuador, Galapagos

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Purpose and Sample

All students who study abroad are required to submit a post-trip evaluation after returning from abroad. The purpose of the evaluation is to provide the college with information that helps us better understand students' perception of the learning environment, intercultural experiences and administrative aspects of their study abroad experience. The population included in this report is all students who used their Opportunities Fund to study abroad during the academic years 2017-2018 and 2018-2019.

During the academic years 2017-2018 and 2018-2019, 451 students received grants from the Macaulay Opportunities Fund to study abroad. The average grant award was \$4,382 for 2017-18 and \$3,075 for 2018-2019. (Table 1)

Executive Summary

Macaulay Honors College offers exceptional students transformative opportunities and experiences, in and out of the classroom, that inspire a lifetime of intellectual curiosity and service to make positive change in the world. To support our mission Macaulay encourages students to engage in experiential learning activities and provides support to do so through an exclusive Opportunities Fund. Fully 53%¹ of the graduates of the class of 2019 engaged in a study abroad experience. In addition, 83%² of the 2019 graduates agreed that Macaulay increased their knowledge and understanding of people from different cultures.

Student Learning Environment

- Overwhelmingly, students were satisfied with the quality of their program: 95% of the students rated the quality as excellent or very good (72% and 23% respectively).
- The vast majority of students (98%) would recommend their program to others.
- Ninety-six percent of students indicated that their course content was excellent (69%) or very good (27%).
- The vast majority of students (93%) rated the integration of intercultural experiences into their academic courses as excellent (72%) or very good (21%).

Intercultural Experiences - Student Reflections on Interaction with Cultural Experiences

- A majority of students (83%) indicated that they frequently reflected on their interactions with the culture through conversations with other students.
- A majority of students (54%) indicated that they frequently reflected on their interactions with the culture through class discussion.
- Forty-three percent of students reported that they frequently reflected on their interactions through informal conversations with local residents.

Administrative Aspects

- A majority of students (75%) rated the assistance of study abroad staff at CUNY or the sponsor institution as excellent (53%) or very good (22%).

¹ Data extracted from the Macaulay Opportunities Fund Database.

² Data from Macaulay Graduating Student Survey – Class of 2019.

- Eighty-four percent of students felt the description of course or syllabus for study was excellent (59%) or very good (25%).

Next Steps - Closing the Loop

Given the overwhelmingly positive academic and personal experience students report, our response is to try to encourage every student to study abroad or “away” (i.e. in a very different part of the USA) to move participation from 53% to 60%. We will do this by creating more study abroad experiences that offer concentration-relevant academic credit and continue fundraising efforts to support the Opportunities Fund Grant through events such as the Gala.

Opportunities Fund Grants Awarded

Total Grants Awarded and Average Award Amount

Table 1

Academic Year	Number	Average Award
2017-2018	241	\$4,382
2018-2019	210	\$3,075
Total	451	\$3,784

Program Quality

Overall how would you rate the quality of your study abroad program?

Table 2

	Number	Percent
Excellent	308	72%
Very Good	96	23%
Good	19	4%
Fair	3	1%
Total	426	100%

Program Satisfaction

Would you recommend the program to others?

Table 3

	Number	Percent
Yes	390	98%
No	10	3%
Total	400	100%

Academic Aspects of Study Abroad Program

Please rate the following academic aspects of your study abroad program.

Table 4

	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
Course content	69%	27%	3%	0%	0%
Level of difficulty	37%	38%	23%	1%	0%
Overall integration of intercultural experiences into academic courses	72%	21%	6%	1%	0%
Quality of teaching	69%	24%	6%	0%	0%
Faculty accessibility	65%	26%	8%	1%	0%
Preparation of other students in the program	48%	38%	13%	1%	0%

Reflections on Study Abroad

Individuals reflect on their study abroad experiences in many different ways. Please indicate how often you reflected on your interactions with the culture in the following ways.

Table 5

	Frequently (5 + times per week)	Occasionally (2-4 times per week)	Rarely (once a week or less)	Never
Journal	24%	27%	20%	29%
Photography	78%	15%	4%	3%
Class discussions	54%	32%	10%	4%
Informal conversations with local residents	43%	38%	15%	3%
Conversations with other students	83%	15%	1%	0%
Texting/emailing family or friends back home	69%	25%	4%	1%

Administrative Aspects of Study Abroad

How would you rate the following administrative aspects of your study abroad program?

Table 6

	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
Description of course or syllabus for study abroad	59%	25%	12%	3%	2%
Pre-departure information	45%	25%	19%	8%	2%
Assistance of study abroad staff at CUNY or sponsor institution	53%	22%	17%	5%	4%
Assistance of study abroad staff at foreign institution	55%	20%	19%	4%	2%
Post-study abroad debriefing	35%	17%	25%	%	11%

Activities During Study Abroad

How often did you engage in the following activities?

Table 7

How often did you:	Frequently (5 or more times per week)	Occasionally (2-4 times per week)	Rarely (once a week or less)	Never
Interact with other students from the host country?	37%	29%	22%	11%
Interact with students from other foreign countries?	37%	21%	17%	25%
Attend cultural events?	24%	51%	19%	6%
Shop at/visit local markets?	63%	34%	4%	0%
Visit museums or historical sites?	42%	47%	11%	0%
Visit forests/parks/beaches?	34%	37%	23%	6%
Access local media (e.g. TV, newspapers, magazines, radio)?	20%	30%	34%	16%

Comments: Student Reflections

Students were asked to describe how their study abroad experience influenced or modified their future career plans. Here are some excerpts from those response:

"I now have a profound appreciation for nature and realize the importance of conservation. I will use my business skills to help with the conservation of our world and environment."

"Learning about the Nordic educational model and their take on Special Education impacted my view on disability... Thus, getting to learn about this and viewing this unfold through trips and field observations helped me to get exposed to a better way of providing more holistic interventions and services to people with special needs."

"I aspire to be a film composer, so taking a film course in Japan and learning about the differences and similarities between American and Japanese films expanded my knowledge of the field and gave me a new outlook on film production and publicity."

"This study abroad has widened my perspective and has enhanced my future career choice--I am even more eager to continue working in the sciences now, but now instead of being narrow-minded and focused on just medicine, I am more aware of and open to other things, such as conservation and ecological studies."