

Type of Experience – STUDY ABROAD

Title of the Program: International Engineering Program (University of Rhode island)

Program Description

The University of Rhode Island International Engineering Program is a five-year curriculum leading simultaneously to degrees in an engineering field (BS) and a B.A. in Chinese, French, German, Italian or Spanish with a Japanese program in the making. The program includes both a semester of study and a six-month professional internship abroad. The IEP also offers opportunities for joint global research through its dual degree Masters and doctoral programs.

This model combining long-term study with a six-month internship component in the target language provides an unparalleled experience for students looking to become truly global engineers.

Mission Statement: The mission of the URI International Engineering Program is to produce bilingual, cross-culturally competent engineers for successful careers in the global workplace training practitioners, researchers and educators who are proficient in their target language and function effectively in a professional setting in cross-cultural environments.

Program Highlights

Students are prepared for rewarding careers in a diverse array of fields around the world. The six-month corporate internship, bi-lingualism along with a year of perseverance in another country is seen as especially valuable by recruiting companies and grad schools.

The IEP requires a healthy dose of risk taking. Its students are technically, linguistically and culturally prepared on campus but then need to leave their comfort zone and have to be highly engaged in the learning process to get the most out of the experience.

Tips for Replication

- Look at your own institution's strength and determine with which combination of engineering/language it makes the most sense to start. Start slowly, then increase offerings.
- You need buy-in from faculty in engineering/faculty in Languages: show what's in it for them!
- A combination of a grass-roots bottom-up and a top-down approach are best – someone needs to lead, fundraise first, then administration will jump on the band wagon.

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www.uri.edu/iep

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Program Details

- Tenure of the program:
 - 1987 (German IEP) – 30 yrs
- Participation rates (annual):
 - Now about 70 students per year
- Target population:
 - Students enroll as freshmen/go abroad as seniors, finish as super-seniors
- Duration of experience:
 - 6 months study +6 months internship
- Engineering related?
 - Combination of a B.S. in Eng./ B.A. in Foreign Language; internships are technical projects
- Course credit?
 - 12-15 FL, GenEd, Eng. credits for semester of study+ 6 Language credits during internships while enrolled in internship course taught by URI faculty
- Service component?
 - Internship is usually a corporate one but can also be a service learning or research-based experience
- Reflection component?
 - Reports, videos, posters, online faculty/peer-to-peer interventions during internship and Intercultural classes during study part.



*Hallmarks
Of
Success*

