

Instructionally Related Activities Report Form

SPONSORS: STEPHEN CLARK AND JOSÉ ALAMILLO

DEPARTMENT: SPANISH PROGRAM AND CHICANA/O STUDIES PROGRAM

ACTIVITY TITLE: UNIV 392: CUBA TODAY

DATE (S) OF ACTIVITY: MAY 21-30, 2013

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Attach:

- 1) Student evaluations or assessments
- 2) A list of attendees complete with each student major and expected graduation date, and
- 3) Images demonstrating student participation (up to 6 images)
- 4) A summary of expenses

E-mail to the IRA Coordinator at lisa.ayre-smith@csuci.edu within 30 days after the activity.

Thank you for your commitment to engaging our students!!

ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

(1) PROVIDE A DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTIVITY:

This UNIV 392 course was a culminating experience for students who took either of the following Special Topics courses in the spring 2013 semester: SPAN 490 (Cuba in Literature and Film) or CHS 490 (Cuban History, Culture and Politics). We spent one week in Havana visiting cultural centers, museums, community projects, historical landmarks, and interacting informally with everyday Cubans during free time.

(2) HOW DID THE ACTIVITY RELATE TO A COURSE(S) AND/OR LEARNING OBJECTIVES?

The learning objectives were closely linked to the IRA-sponsored activity because students were able to interact with experts in the fields they studied during the spring 2013 semester (Cuban arts, politics, culture, history, economics, Afro-Cuban religion, health care, U.S.-Cuba relations etc.). In their informal interactions students were also able to speak to everyday Cubans in order to receive additional perspectives on life and culture in Cuba.

(3) WHAT DO YOU SEE AS THE STRENGTHS OF THE ACTIVITY?

The strengths of this experience were the visits to the community centers (such as Muraleando, Taller Experimental de la Gráfica, Proyecto con Amor y Esperanza) that allowed us to interact directly with Cubans who are using art and music to bring meaning to their lives and provide opportunities for themselves and others. These community projects engaged students by enlisting them to participate in their activities, such as art workshops, dance performances, and other cultural activities.

We also felt that the opportunity to get out of the capital to Pinar Del Rio for a day was very positive in providing a glimpse at another side of Cuban life. The visit to a nature reserve, Las Terrazas, was another highlight for many students. They visited a coffee plantation and tasted homegrown coffee in a unique pastoral setting.

(4) WHAT WOULD YOU SAY ARE/WERE THE ACTIVITY'S WEAKNESSES?

We had a problem with only one student who did not consider the trip as an academic course and thus did not complete all the assignments and failed the UNIV 392 course. We have to do a better job at screening the applicants next time. Next time we will investigate each student's record with the Office of Student Life.

Because we did not have enough gatherings between both classes prior to departure, it was difficult for students to get to know each other. In Cuba, students from Professor Stephen Clark and Professor Jose Alamillo's class kept to themselves for the most part, with some exceptions. It was suggested by some students that next time we should have ice-breakers so students can let their guard down and get know each other before the trip. We believe these icebreakers will help in reducing tension and preexisting divisions because they will be in close company with each other for an extended time period on the trip.

One of the drawbacks about traveling to Cuba with a group is that at all official venues we were only given the government's view on life in Cuba and the political conflicts with the United States. We were given quite a bit of anti-US propaganda that at times felt out of place and a bit too one-sided. Unfortunately, we were not able to engage with speakers who have a critical view of the Cuban government and who are working to create a more free and inclusive Cuba.

(5) HOW WOULD YOU IMPROVE THIS ACTIVITY FOR NEXT TIME?

A good suggestion by students was to reduce the quantity of museums and focus more on the quality of the museums. Many expressed frustration that they were "rushed" through the *Museo de la Revolucion*, especially since many did not visit the outdoor museum where the ship Granma was located. The one museum that they suggested to delete for the next trip is the *Museo de la Danza* since many of the students have never attended a professional ballet performance

and the explanations were very technical in nature. We will also choose between the museum in Regla and the one in Guanabacoa because both focus heavily on the Afro-Cuban experience.

Reducing the number of museums will also free up time to simply walk around central Havana and visit the *Capitolio*, *Calle Prado* and *Parque Central*. The last-minute stop at *Calle Prado* was very popular with students because it allowed them to interact with local artists and experience everyday life in Cuba.

Another great suggestion was to schedule a longer visit to the University of Havana and interact with college students in similar majors. They really wanted to meet Cuban university students to learn about their majors, campus life and career goals. Perhaps we can make arrangements with college professors at the University of Havana to schedule a visit and colloquium.

Another suggestion was to better integrate the Cuba trip with the courses. Since we already knew the itinerary in advance we could have integrated more fully the daily visits with the literature/films/videos that related to the topic. For example, very few students have read Ernest Hemingway and did not know about his love of Cuba and Cuban people, so they would have liked to learn more about why Ernest Hemingway was so loved in Cuba. This would have better prepared students to visit Hemingway's residence in Cuba.

(6) WHAT DID YOU LEARN FROM THE PROCESS?

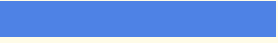


As faculty, we learned how much students appreciate the opportunity to travel abroad as a component of a class. Many students remarked to us how moved they were by the overall experience and how much of an impact it made on them. Many remained connected to Cuba by having mini-reunions at Cuban restaurants in Los Angeles and attending community events in Ventura County that focused on U.S.–Cuba relations. Many expressed interest in sharing their experience with CI Students during International Week (Thurs. Nov. 14th)

We also learned the importance of screening students carefully and not to focus only on the academic side of their application but the need to check into their files with student life in case any prior misconduct has been reported.

My Report

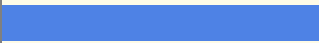

Last Modified: 06/30/2013

1. I feel the orientations sessions were informative and beneficial.

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Strongly agree		7	58%
2	Agree		4	33%
3	Neither Agree nor Disagree		0	0%
4	Disagree		1	8%
5	Strongly Disagree		0	0%
	Total		12	100%

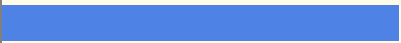

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	4
Mean	1.58
Variance	0.81
Standard Deviation	0.90
Total Responses	12

2. I believe that the Cuban tour agency "Amistur" did a good job in the services it provided.

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Strongly agree		8	67%
2	Agree		4	33%
3	Neither Agree nor Disagree		0	0%
4	Disagree		0	0%
5	Strongly Disagree		0	0%
	Total		12	100%

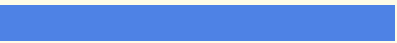

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	2
Mean	1.33
Variance	0.24
Standard Deviation	0.49
Total Responses	12

3. I feel the transportation arrangements were comfortable and efficient.

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Strongly Agree		10	83%
2	Agree		2	17%
3	Neither Agree nor Disagree		0	0%
4	Disagree		0	0%
5	Strongly Disagree		0	0%
	Total		12	100%

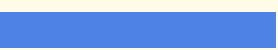



Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	2
Mean	1.17
Variance	0.15
Standard Deviation	0.39
Total Responses	12

4. I feel the hotel was a good choice in terms of comfort, value, and security.

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Strongly Agree		10	83%
2	Agree		2	17%
3	Neither Agree nor Disagree		0	0%
4	Disagree		0	0%
5	Strongly Disagree		0	0%
	Total		12	100%

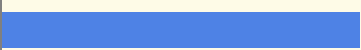

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	2
Mean	1.17
Variance	0.15
Standard Deviation	0.39
Total Responses	12

5. The student group was appropriate in terms of group dynamics, maturity, and cross-cultural sensitivity.

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Strongly Agree		7	58%
2	Agree		3	25%
3	Neither Agree nor Disagree		0	0%
4	Disagree		1	8%
5	Strongly Disagree		1	8%
	Total		12	100%

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	5
Mean	1.83
Variance	1.79
Standard Deviation	1.34
Total Responses	12

6. I feel that health and safety issues were handled appropriately before and during the trip.

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Strongly agree		9	75%
2	Agree		3	25%
3	Neither Agree nor Disagree		0	0%
4	Disagree		0	0%
5	Strongly Disagree		0	0%
	Total		12	100%

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	2
Mean	1.25
Variance	0.20
Standard Deviation	0.45
Total Responses	12

7. Please describe key positives and reflect on reasons for the success.

Text Response

Googd

It was great having the opportunity to walk and interact amongst the Cuban people.

Everything was well scheduled

This has been the best thing I have ever done for myself. I have learned so much not only about the country's culture and politics, but about myself. Our tour guide Raul and Julio were the kindest people I have ever met, and so full of knowledge.

It is very important that the area was not a very tourist area compared to other parts of Cuba. That helps with engaging in the real culture of the country.

The community projects were the most influential because we got to experience the upside of what the Cuban people and government are doing to help the community.

The bus driver, I felt save with him driving; the interaction in the community projects we really got to learn about these specific people's lives day to day in Cuba; the union de juristas very informative gave great insight to the way the government works (although she talked alot);

Both professors were very helpful at all times

Professor Alamillo did an amazing job choosing the books, peer reviewed articles and other materials to prepare the class to travel to Cuba. We had weekly discussions on current issues and history.

Very Organized and had a great itinerary to look at and follow

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	10

8. What did you learn on this program that you couldn't learn at CSUSU Channel Islands?

Text Response

gaosjasd

The personal interaction and connection with the Cuban culture.

The strong cultural pride Cubans have

I was able to interact with the Cuban people. That is something that would not have happened at CSUCI. Eat authentic food and be able to experience the country in a hands on way.

I believe that I saw the complexity of the culture and the people that I believe is hard to capture on paper or films, the social changes that are happening and the mindset of regular common citizens.

I learned how caring the people are and all the great things that they do for each other. "Los cubanos son los pobres más felices porque sonríen" -Talisman (hotel bartender)

I learned how people live day to day in Cuba, the culture that exist there and how to manage yourself in the culture, all about traveling safely, learning about individuals lives directly from them

I believe that you can study a lot about a place, but once you are there your perspective on certain aspects may change.

The interaction with locals and the cultural exchange is a huge component to the success. It cannot be learn at CSUCI. There is so much history and it is important for future relationships with the Country

What I learned was the hands on experience being there having the feeling of being in Cuba and talking to the Cubans about there culture and government.

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	10

9. What suggestions would you provide the faculty directors for revisions that would produce a better international experience for future groups?

Text Response

sdaasfd

More time to interact with the Cuban population and less time at museums.

Careful look at the places visited and make sure students get an opportunity to interact

To be honest ten days is not enough to visit a country so full of life and culture. This trip needs to be for a longer amount of time. I also feel that taking 20 students is too much. To begin most of the spaces in the museums are small and to try to fit the amount of people is just insane. 20 people is too much. I will also add that some of the people that went on this trip were immature and insensitive to the culture and people. Some students saw this trip as a vacation and not like a class. I found it embarrassing that a majority of the Chicano Studies students were constantly rude by comments that they would say to Cuban people. Another thing that showed their disrespectfulness was the fact that a majority of this class would often talk when someone was giving a presentation, mainly docents at the art galleries, and our tour guide sometimes. I think that a certain level a maturity needed to be required, and I feel that a majority of the Chicano Studies students did not meet those expectations.

I think there should be some time set after each tour to be able to buy some books. I really wanted to buy some but had no time to really look and choose.

I would suggest having more interaction with the people and possibly visiting more community projects.

During orientation do some more activities that allow the two groups to interact, start pushing them out of their comfort zone; be more clear about traveling expenses what we have to spend in airports,

I think that one free day would be really helpful

Materials for the class should remain the same. I hope this is not a one time trip because it is worth it.

Communicating with us exact amounts of payments due. Had no idea how much the trip would cost till the last week.

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	10

10. Please comment on your faculty directors (organization, leadership, preparedness, knowledge of the country, helpfulness...).

Text Response

asfadsf

The faculty was professional and well prepared. They were there to help with anything that was needed by the students.

Wonderful.

I really appreciated the fact that Professor Alamillo was always so open minded about everything. He is the kindest Professor I have ever met, and I highly regret not taking him as a professor. My roommate and I got stomach sick and both professors were more than prepared to help solve this problem. On that day I was beyond impressed by the level of empathy that Alamillo and Clark both possess. They were constantly asking if I needed anything and if I was doing ok.

I loved that they were open minded and approachable. They set the example and standard of sensitivity for the culture as well as respect.

Faculty directors did very well. I felt that there were different behavioral expectations from each professor.

Both professors did an amazing job! I could not think of anyone better to have gone on the trip with. They both have their own knowledge of the country in their own way they brought in a great dynamic and different perspectives although they are both professors, the organization of the trip was great again I think the biggest thing was the knowledge of the money in airports. I never felt lost, or uncomfortable with them, I felt secure like they knew what they were doing.

Both Prof. Alamillo and Clark were willing to help us all the time and to guide us in whatever question we had.

Professor Alamillo and Clark were prepared and did an amazing job preparing and organizing for this trip. They both have traveled to Cuba and are very knowledgeable and helpful.

Our faculty directors were the best. Very patient with us they were very organized. They had knowledge of the country as well.

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	10

11. Please comment on the academic quality of the program (content, learning objectives, assignments, feedback, evaluation...).

Text Response

adafsd

Taking the course in the spring helped with content and made it an awesome experience when we had the opportunity to actually see what we had been learning during the spring semester.

All executed perfectly

I was able to visually see the effects that the revolution has done to Cuba. I was able to connect what I had learned during the semester to this trip. Like I said before, it is the best academic decision of my life.

The content was amazing, learning objectives are the same standard as any other course if not higher. I would have loved to have spent some time with students there.

Very informative. I learned more than what I expected to and at times there was information overload because of everything we had to take in. Overall a great experience.

I feel like we needed more interaction with the places we went to, some similar interaction like we had in the community projects but other than that most of the locations had some relation to what we had discussed during the semester course, it was all very infomative and gave us insight into the culture an dhistory of Cuba. I do think that for the one unit the course is a paper, journal and presentation is too much.

The program had different activities that I could easily find a connection with class, this help me understand to another level aspects that we had studied for a whole semester

The work assignments were rigorous and both professors had high expectations of the learning outcomes. In my opinion, the international experience benefited the Spanish Major, Chicano Studies and Sociology. We were able to apply theories learned in class. This trip should continue to be founded.

I did learn a lot doing this program. I'm a Cuban American student and I had no idea about all of the things that were going on in the country of Cuba until this international experience.

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	10

12. What do you know now that you wish you'd known before you went?

Text Response

adfadsf

I wish that I would have had the courage to be less shy and sit outside my hotel and talk to the workers and other people about the cuban life.

Bring hot sauce

I wish I had known that there would be no hot water, extra memory for photos, and a bit more information about laws in the country. For example, I saw people drinking in the streets and to them it was okay. However, they will pull you over for having more than four people in a taxi cab. Other than this, I believe our professors did an amazing job at preparing us for the course and the trip.

Tipping, exit fee, safe fee, and other money issues that arose while we were there and learned about last minute.

The exange currency, if we would have like practiced it, like the exange currency is .87 for the dollar how much would 20 dollars give you; a little more details on average of prices like water, and food (more detailed because we did discuss it),

To don't worry too much about security, we were out late at night and I always felt safe

Nothing. Both courses prepared us well.

Probably a better sense of the currency and how salesman out in Cuba are trying anything they can to make a dollar

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	9

Images:



Touring Old Havana



Visit to neighborhood clinic in Havana.



Welcome dinner on first evening in Havana



Visit to neighborhood project in Pinar del Río that teaches art to children with Down Syndrome

Summary of Expenses:

		15		Cuba Today Spring 2013	
		2		Clark and Alamillo	
Students traveling expenses:		Cost/ea	# Requested	Total	Comments/Additional Notes
Airfare	\$989.00	20	\$	19,780.00	estimated cost of airfare
Ground Transportation	\$0.00	0	\$	1,200.00	ROADRUNNER SHUTTLE (FOR ENTIRE GROUP)
Hotel Accommodations	\$1,555.00	20	\$	31,100.00	double occupancy rate per person (single \$125 pp additional)
Registration Fees	\$95.00	20	\$	1,900.00	entrance visa and processing fees from travel provider
Entrance Fees	\$125.00	20	\$	2,500.00	program and service fees from travel provider
Meals	\$0.00	0	\$	-	breakfast at hotel daily, some other meals included
Cultural Activities	\$ -	0	\$	-	included
Travel Insurance	\$ -	0	\$	-	included
Vehicle/Van Rental	\$ -	0	\$	-	included
Other:	\$ -	0	\$	-	
Faculty Traveling Expenses:		Cost/ea	# Requested	Total	
Airfare	\$ 989.00	1	\$	989.00	one faculty free
Ground Transportation	\$ -	0	\$	-	
Hotel Accommodations	\$1,805.00	1	\$	1,805.00	single occupancy rate for one faculty (the other is free)
Registration Fees	\$ 95.00	1	\$	95.00	entrance visa and processing fees for one faculty
Entrance Fees	\$ 125.00	1	\$	125.00	program and service fees from travel provider for one faculty
Meals	\$ -	0	\$	-	breakfast included, some meals included
Cultural Activities	\$ -	0	\$	-	included
Travel Insurance	\$ -	0	\$	-	included
Other:	\$ -	0	\$	-	**
Other:	\$ -	0	\$	-	**
Operating Expense Budget	Cost	Comments/Additional Notes: Please be Specific			
Supplies	\$ -				
Printing/Copying	\$ -				
Other:	\$ -	**			
Other:	\$ -	**			
Other:	\$ -	**			
Out of Pocket Student Expenses	Cost/ea	Comments/Additional Notes: Please be Specific			
Health Insurance	n/a				included with flight
Tuition/Registration	n/a				Not funded by IRA or the University
Other:	n/a				Not funded by IRA or the University
Other:	n/a				Not funded by IRA or the University
Total Student Traveling Expenses				\$	56,480.00
Maximum IRA funding @ 2/3rd total cost				\$	37,615.68
Remaining 1/3 is payable by students through course fee				\$	18,864.32
Faculty Travelling Expenses, funded at 100%				\$	3,014.00
Operating Expenses, funded at 100%				\$	-
Total IRA funding Requested (Total of A, B & C)				\$	40,629.68
Out of Pocket Student Expenses, not funded by the University				\$	18,864.32