

**DIS ACADEMIC  
PROGRAM REVIEW**  
with DIS response

**MAY 2019**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The review team is pleased to present the following report on the DIS programs in Stockholm and Copenhagen with an emphasis on the newer program in Sweden.

We greatly appreciate the cooperation and openness of the staff, faculty, and leadership at DIS without which the depth of this review would not have been possible.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The DIS Study Abroad in Scandinavia programs offer quality educational programs for undergraduates enrolled at North American colleges and universities. The Stockholm campus offers 45 courses across 37 disciplines and served around 130 students in spring 2019. This number and scope are projected to grow to meet enrollment demands. The Denmark campus offers 240 courses across 70 disciplines. This curriculum has stabilized with enrollment at a targeted capacity around 1,200, although it will evolve to meet academic trends and students' interests. As the Stockholm program continues to grow, the goal is to have two DIS campuses that share the same high quality academic rigor, programming models, and student learning and support, while having some distinction in disciplines offered.

The DIS mission statement is as follows:

*By inspiring each student's curiosity and love of learning, DIS fosters academic achievement, intercultural understanding, and development of life skills essential for engaged citizenship.*

The review team offers a number of recommendations, although we found the overall structure and student opportunities to be impressive. Highlights include, the program in Stockholm developing its own identity and strengths while exceeding enrollment expectations. The Stockholm campus is particularly strong in gender studies, and the research initiative is off to a solid start both in local industry as well as in class learning around research. Both centers continue to offer excellent experiential learning opportunities for students as a defining feature of the curriculum. We found these excursions to be unique, engaging, and effectively designed to enhance the classroom experiences. The faculty learning lab developed in Copenhagen offers a robust set of workshops to enhance the teaching and learning capabilities in both locations.

The recommendations are presented within each section so that their context can be fully appreciated. DIS leadership has asked this team to focus on research, teaching pedagogy, and the relationship between the two centers.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The evaluation site visit team was composed of:

- Adrienne Christiansen, Associate Professor, Political Science, Macalester College
- Nanette Hanks, Assistant Dean for Curriculum, CLA, University of Minnesota
- Tania D. Mitchell, Associate Professor, CEHD, University of Minnesota
- Christine Anderson, Academic Director, LAC, University of Minnesota

The members of the site visit team reviewed the history, annual reports, and student evaluations of the program produced by the DIS. They reviewed course syllabi, statistical information on the participants (numbers, gender and ethnicity statistics, sending institutions, etc.), instructor curriculum vitae, the pre-departure orientation portal for students, as well as the main website.

During the six-day visit the team engaged in a host of activities mainly, but not only, on the Stockholm campus. They observed a range of classes; spoke with students from the University of Minnesota and other institutions, faculty, and student affairs staff, and faculty development staff; attended a study tour and an excursion; visited housing options in both Stockholm and Copenhagen; and met with two students and their mentor at an off campus research site.

Prior to the team visit, Adrienne Christiansen participated on a week-long study tour to the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland for the core course Communication and Conflict and attended an earlier short study tour to Sweden and Denmark with this same course.

The site visit team jointly drafted and agreed on the recommendations in this report.

## **STRUCTURE OF THE PROGRAM**

DIS is a non-profit study abroad foundation established in Denmark in 1959 and in Stockholm in fall of 2016. The program provides semester, academic year, and summer programs taught in English. The curriculum is broad, particularly in Copenhagen, cutting-edge, and enriched by experiential learning components such as Wednesday excursions around the host-city, and week long, faculty-led study tours across Europe, which deepen core course content.

The goals leading up to 2021 are as follows:

1. To offer a European-based study abroad program of the highest quality designed to enhance the very best American undergraduate education
2. To support student development through academic excellence and a holistic approach to identity formation, with an emphasis on experiential learning and cultural engagement
3. To be a dynamic and inclusive workplace attractive to the most talented and dedicated faculty and staff and committed to empowerment, teamwork and well-being
4. To achieve our goals through strategic leadership driving a sustainable enrollment strategy, agile processes and data-driven decision-making
5. To engage our stakeholders in the development of DIS programming, the advancement of the study abroad field and in making positive contributions to our local environments

## **SYNERGY BETWEEN STOCKHOLM & COPENHAGEN**

Communication between the Stockholm and Copenhagen staff seemed effective and efficient. Issues as they arise at one site are known at the other and there is sufficient interaction between staff. The ease of travel between Stockholm and Copenhagen seems especially important to this relationship. It feels clear that there is one DIS with two unique locations to serve students.

As the enrollments grow in Stockholm, it is important to begin to distinguish the individual identities of the two programs so that one program does not cannibalize from the other. A specific focus or brand should be developed for Stockholm that students could easily differentiate from Copenhagen while maintaining the overall DIS identity. When the student population is sufficiently increased, autonomous academic program directors should be put in place in Stockholm.

### **Recommendations:**

- Further development of a strong program in Stockholm that is unique in some way and clearly distinguishes it from the Copenhagen program.
- Develop program directors in Stockholm

## **DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION**

The review team was provided with an impressive number of documents detailing the Diversity and Inclusion efforts initiated by DIS over the past 3 years. The efforts have been extensive and encompass recruitment, scholarships, teaching and learning, student focus groups, and faculty workshops. It is very clear that DIS leadership is committed to ensuring that their programs are inclusive and welcoming for all students, and we applaud their efforts in this challenging and critical area. We know there are plans to develop a strategic plan centered on diversity and inclusion for the organization, and we strongly encourage this work. A diversity strategic plan should focus on coordinated goals, strategies, and expected outcomes, utilizing appropriate metrics and performance indicators with the resulting concrete action plans that are clear and succinct. To this end, we recommend hiring a Diversity and Inclusion professional with experience in curriculum development and student services to lead this effort. We have found that this combination of skills is essential for meaningful change and most U.S. colleges and universities have such positions on their campuses. As with many other areas in learning abroad, DIS is poised to be a leader in this initiative and could serve as a model worldwide. A Diversity and Inclusion professional will be skilled in developing an overall strategy that has less emphasis on detailed descriptions of numerous programs and activities and more emphasis on measuring impacts of processes and initiatives. In the U.S., colleges and universities are experiencing the biggest surge in student activism since the 1960s and students are actively organizing around issues of diversity, equity and inclusion. These are the same students who are most likely to seek out opportunities to expand their knowledge of these issues beyond U.S. borders, and DIS is in a position to offer them these critical experiences. These are your current and future students and your willingness to engage with the issues that are critical to them is both welcomed and encouraged. These students are demanding institutions where they feel seen and heard, which includes curriculum that addresses these topics directly, and mentors, teachers, and peers who can challenge and encourage their development. We feel confident that DIS has the resources and institutional will to move diversity and inclusion initiatives to the next level.

### **Recommendations:**

- Develop a strategic plan for diversity and inclusion
- Hire a staff leader for diversity and inclusion with expertise in curricular development and student services

## ACADEMICS

### Curriculum

The curricular offerings in Stockholm are well rounded and offer students excellent opportunities with a variety of electives. In the area of economics, we note the difficulty students have in transferring courses taken abroad back to their home institutions. This is not unique to DIS but an issue we see across many programs abroad. DIS could be a leader in strengthening the connections between the curriculum they offer and the top ranked U.S. economics departments by more closely aligning to the curricular norms of top sending institutions. U.S. institutions are looking for particular types of comparative courses to enhance students' overall knowledge base and DIS is in a perfect position to develop and offer this course content. The interest in world economies continues to grow and DIS can expect to see more students focused in this area. The development of a few strategic partnerships with sending institutions that capitalizes on integrated curriculum would move DIS to being a leader in this field.

The staff acknowledged that there is decreased student interest in the area of terrorism and security. We recommend that this curriculum be reviewed and possibly moved to fit more securely in either political science/international politics or refreshed and considered from a sociological lens of law and criminology or societal norms.

The inclusion of gender diversity was in high evidence across many of the courses we visited and it was noted that many faculty have specific expertise in gender studies. In several of our class observations, students emphatically expressed the desire to include racial diversity in the discussions, lectures, and course materials. For American students, issues of race are particularly salient and they are looking for ways to understand race in international contexts that can be applied to a variety of disciplines. As an example, in one class, students at the beginning of class were asked to rank the issues they wanted to discuss as it pertained to the reading materials. The majority of students ranked race as the number one concern they wanted to discuss but it was left to the students to discuss among themselves during the final 10 minutes with no framing or guidance from the instructor. The students expressed frustration in trying to understand how to frame their understanding of race and the materials and reconciling their lived experiences with historical and contemporary Swedish society. In another case, students in small group discussions were grappling with difficult and problematic issues they had encountered in their homestays and during excursions in Sweden without appropriate support or follow-up. In another course, readings included diverse viewpoints but the visual examples that would best illustrate the readings were exclusively white and did not help the students contextualize the readings with appropriate examples.

The reviewers commend DIS on their previous diversity efforts, particularly in the area of gender diversity and as the faculty have noted, American students are bringing issues of race more forcefully to the fore. We recommend the diversity efforts be expanded to include curriculum review that includes readings, examples, discussion questions, and guest speakers, and additional faculty training and support around diversity and inclusion issues that focus on race.

No guest lecturers were observed in DIS Stockholm. One guest lecturer was observed at DIS Copenhagen and the quality was extremely high and engaged students directly with the course content.

We note that your General Program Evaluation data show that all areas are rated good to excellent. Due to a lack of time we were not able to review the data in depth and acknowledge that DIS may already be looking at the evaluations by subsets of students. For example, in the U.S. we have seen a remarkable difference in the evaluations of courses and programs by gender and race. As your diversity efforts continue to grow and expand,

we would encourage you to parse out the data to review how specific student populations are experiencing the program to gain more insight into possible changes or improvements. We appreciate the focus DIS has shown on the statistical analysis of curriculum and overall program evaluation with a focus on data driven decisions about changes to programs, courses, and overall curriculum.

## **Faculty**

Overall, the experience and expertise of DIS faculty is extremely high and we were impressed with the number of faculty who hold PhDs and/or terminal degrees in specific disciplines. We encourage this high level of expertise in future faculty hires and the continued regular review of current faculty for the quality of their teaching, appropriate disciplinary expertise, and student evaluations.

Students asked, and we concur, that faculty should be available for stated office hours so that they may ask questions and have conversations about the course and assignments. While we understand that faculty are generally available for students via email, it is difficult to have follow-up questions or get additional clarification electronically. U.S. students are accustomed to having access on a regular basis for in-person conversations outside of class time. In person office hours is a policy requirement of all faculty at the DIS School of Record (University of Minnesota): <https://policy.umn.edu/education/instructorresp>

### **Observe Office Hours or Appointment Times**

Instructors must schedule and keep a reasonable number of office hours or appointment times for student conferences. The minimum number of office hours or appointment times may be defined by the academic unit.

## **Syllabi**

We noted in our review of syllabi, for both Copenhagen and Stockholm, the consistency and clarity of the materials. Readings and texts seemed appropriate for the level of the course and assignments were consistent with requirements. Student Learning Outcomes were clearly noted along with expectations of attendance and adherence to stated policies.

## **Excursions**

The experiential learning components of the DIS curriculum include Core Course Week, Field Study, and Long Study Tours. Each are a defining feature of the curriculum. We found these excursions to be unique, engaging, and effectively designed to enhance the classroom experiences where students are focused during their study.

The Long Study Tour to Northern Ireland that a review team member participated in raised the need for more formal and integrated opportunities for reflection. The pacing of the tour was fast and opportunities to reflect together as a class were not available until after students returned to the regular classroom. This is in contrast to the preparation for the Long Study Tour to Paris by the Affective Neuroscience course. While team members did not observe this tour, students were told they would be responsible for a reflective journal throughout and that part of their assignments would include reflective conversations with other students. These intentional reflective opportunities should be embedded in all of the excursions.

All members of the program review team traveled with the Economics of Gender course to Scania as part of a field study. The excursion was a great opportunity for students to see a corporate environment. To the knowledge of the review team, the visit was not prefaced with any kind of framing regarding the visit however; students were informed on-site that they would be quizzed on the experience. There were some students who had specific



concerns about the presentation on gender equality and we hope there was opportunity for reflection after the visit to further explore these concerns.

In line with previous recommendations, the logistics of study tours should be communicated earlier to the students. In Stockholm, we heard concerns about costs, clothing, and logistics that were frustrations for students as they sought to prepare for the excursions but had limited knowledge to do so. Students also reported safety and cost concerns regarding early morning flights for study tours and the lack of access to public transportation in those hours. In one case, a student reported that her cab ride to Arlanda would cost in excess of \$100 to ensure she arrived at 2:30 a.m. as required. Another student planned to sleep overnight in the airport on Saturday because public transportation was not available at the time she needed to arrive on Sunday morning and the student does not have the resources for private transit. This student presented this to members of the review committee as a safety concern, and we agree that this should be addressed as such. With this knowledge, consider how processes are coordinated or communicated in advance and perhaps covered to best facilitate accessibility for all DIS students.

### **Evaluation of Instruction/Classes**

There was a significant amount of group work required for the courses we observed both in terms of in-class and out of class assignments. Students generally seemed to accept this format but individually they expressed some frustration with unequal efforts particularly by those students who are not taking the course for a letter grade. We learned on further investigation that this was a misunderstanding on the students' part and that some of the U.S. institutions will not count the courses taken at DIS into the overall GPA. In other words, it "doesn't count" toward the GPA and a lower grade was a lesser concern for those students. The student focus on grades is a continual concern both in the U.S. and abroad, but given that students seem to be adjusting their efforts based on how the courses will transfer it would be important to reconsider how much group work counts toward the grade so that students who are contributing at a high level to achieve excellence are not hampered by their peers whose efforts may not be as motivated.

### **Recommendations:**

- Closely align curricular offerings to map onto curricular norms of top sending institutions for the stated areas of study: economics, finance, government
- Reconsider the terrorism and security area to fit more securely in either political science/international politics or from a sociological lens of law and criminology or societal norms
- Be more intentional and explicit about the inclusion of racial diversity in the discussions, examples, and course materials for classes
- Require office hours for teaching faculty included in syllabi
- Communicate logistics, requirements and specifics for long study tours earlier
- Include more formal opportunities for reflection during long study tours
- Coordinate airport travel for long study tours or compensate students for expenses related to this travel when public transit is not available
- Review the amount of group work required for each course and how many of the group projects are graded

## RESEARCH

A review of the DIS website lists research as one of several options under experiential learning on the main page, but it took multiple clicks to find specific information about the application process, prerequisites or specific projects on the site-specific pages. In order to inform students and increase the applicant pool for the research opportunities, we recommend that the information should be more clearly communicated on the website and in printed materials. Application deadlines and specific prerequisite requirements should be made clear to students.

Once students are placed, clear expectations for attendance and effort should be agreed upon. We recommend either strongly encouraging or requiring a signed learning agreement between the research assistant and the mentor. Students often have to complete such agreements for directed research or individualized instruction at their home institutions. We note that the expectations are outlined in the syllabus; however, a written and signed agreement would be an appropriate expectation of students, an effective tool in the mentor/mentee relationship and would benefit students when returning to their home campus for faculty evaluation of the experience.

Given the current issues with the attendance and relevance of the research workshops, we recommend offering the information in a course format (1 credit) and require students to engage in reflective journaling about the research experience. Doing so will provide students with a valuable record that can be used in future career opportunities as well as demonstrate an understanding of the key concepts of research. You might also consider offering this content in an on-line format that could be customized for the specific type of research experience. Having access to the student journals would give the academic team and the research mentor a better understanding of what was working well in the actual research experiences. Some of this is outlined in the specific requirements of a research assistantship for each individual experience but we recommend bringing this into a course format for accountability and conformity.

Although the six-credit research placement in Stockholm is currently working academically due to the background and interests of the mentor, it seems unrealistic to have research mentors responsible for a 6-credit class as well as the mentorship of DIS research assistants. If the goal is to increase these opportunities while ensuring the quality and consistency of the academic component, we recommend that a course be added that is taught by DIS faculty or that the workshops currently on offer are formalized and part of the 6-credit grade. This may make finding placements easier if the mentorship requirement is only to mentor and oversee some content specific student work. It would allow for mentors who may not be qualified to teach and/or grant credit. It would ensure consistency in academic content and assessment, and allow for peer-to-peer discussion. As these options are still rather limited in Stockholm, this may not be imperative until additional placements are found. A class that combines the 3 and 6 credit research options could be created to satisfy this expectation. Another option could be to have a video course that enrolls students from both campuses. In all scenarios, a course should be designed, or the current research workshops formalized to be credit-bearing. If this were the case, part of the grade and assessment would still be from the mentor, and part of the assessment would be from the instructor of record at DIS. A specific required course for research assistants could help build community and give the group a clear focus.

Students who are engaged in research in outside locations noted that they felt less connected to the DIS cohort but more connected to the on-site community. Students did not see this as a negative and they were pleased with the connections they were making with Swedes and other international research personnel. Students in the research lab associated with the core course (neuroscience) expressed a high level of satisfaction with the research opportunity.

We understand that the research mentor training has been started and the goals of this effort are still being developed. Using their feedback as a guide for future programming and support will be very valuable in strengthening the research program.

The assessment of the effectiveness of the faculty research support is ongoing and we look forward to learning more about the outcomes in future program reviews. All of the faculty members we spoke with who are currently receiving research support expressed a high level of satisfaction, and we noted several collaborative opportunities between DIS faculty and U.S. based partners. We are excited to find more ways of facilitating collaborative research between faculty and students. DIS is definitely leading the way in this regard and we are eager to see this model expanded to even more disciplines and particularly the humanities.

The six-credit research model that incorporates a three-credit research content class with a three-credit research lab appeared to be successful for students and faculty. If DIS would like to increase research options for students, this may be a good model to pursue and expand the disciplinary offerings.

One of the stated goals of research at DIS is “creating deep learning opportunities for undergraduate students to prepare them for continued studies in the United States (capstone projects, senior theses, graduate schools, etc.), develop their critical learning skills, and provide a culturally embedded research opportunity during their studies abroad.” In order to realize this goal, the issue of IRB approval of findings must be addressed. We understand that currently the research experience, but not specific findings, is seen as sufficient to meet this goal, but it is our belief that the research experience would be greatly enhanced if students had a clear understanding about the IRB process as part of the research course. It would alleviate concerns about the use of research findings or the opportunities to use such findings in productive ways once they return to their home campuses. If collaborative partnerships with U.S. based partners is a goal, the IRB issues will need to be addressed and the University of Minnesota, as the School of Record for DIS is ready to assist in this effort.

**Recommendations:**

- Communicate research opportunities, learning outcomes, prerequisites, and application process more clearly on the website and in printed materials.
- Incorporate a signed learning contract for all research options outside of the formalized classes such as Affective Neuroscience: Emotion, Cognition, and Behavior.
- Make research workshops credit bearing, perhaps one-credit, in order to demonstrate the importance and relevance of content.
- Create a course taught by DIS faculty, or formalize workshops currently on offer, to ensure foundational learning and assessment across all of the 6-credit research placements.
- If increasing research opportunities for students is a goal, the six-credit research model that incorporates a content class with a research lab seems to be a successful model.
- Develop IRB protocol in consultation with UofM as the DIS School of Record.

## **FACULTY DEVELOPMENT**

### **Areas of Strength**

DIS' commitment to providing an exemplary learning experience for its students and faculty can be readily demonstrated through its distinctive faculty development efforts. The Faculty Learning Lab located in Vestergade 7 reflects DIS' broadly conceived and systematic approach to faculty development, from orienting newly hired colleagues to helping faculty members learn about new technologies and additional pedagogical methods, to serving as a hub for collegiality and conversations about new research opportunities.

Somewhat comparable faculty development centers have become more common in the United States during the last 10-15 years, especially at large research universities, but they are still quite rare in Europe. They are even rarer among international education providers and DIS' Learning Lab may well stand alone among its peer institutions in having a dedicated space and three full-time staff members. Without question, providing developmental resources to faculty pertaining to both scholarship and teaching distinguishes DIS with some of the most innovative faculty development models to date. [1]

75% of instructors at DIS are part-time faculty/practitioners who may have no previous experience teaching students from the US and/or who have little knowledge of the currently contentious issues on American campuses, particularly around race, gender identity, etc. Replacing those faculty members who take maternity/paternity leaves or take jobs elsewhere, combined with the hiring requirements at the Stockholm campus demonstrate the continuing need for faculty development at DIS. We believe that faculty development can continue to play a critical role in creating a robust learning environment especially as DIS grows its research-related programs and as faculty learn to adapt to this generation of student concerns about race and other aspects of "identity politics."

We found much to praise concerning the scope, originality, and reach of DIS' faculty development efforts. Most impressively, the staff, led by Dr. Helle Rytkønen, have created an environment in which the Learning Lab sees heavy "foot traffic." The expertise and assistance of Dorte Marie Aggergaard and Esben Lydiksen are in high demand from faculty; the Learning Lab is almost always buzzing with consultations, colleagues using the audio-visual equipment, or picking up Lego supplies for their classrooms. The Lab is also home to collegial conversations and celebrations of professional successes. In short, the faculty development staff have created an environment where faculty members want to meet and their needs for assistance are met.

In addition to the success of the on-campus faculty development efforts, the (now) bi-annual Danish Educator's Workshop (DEW) is truly extraordinary. For the DEW, approximately 25-30 faculty members travel to the United States for an intensive week of teaching-related workshops and talks about the American model of higher education at state research universities and small liberal arts colleges.

The DEW is essential in helping DIS' faculty better understand their students and the assumptions such students bring to the classroom. It allows DIS to introduce some of the most trenchant and meaningful changes among the student cohort who will study at DIS and it creates a collegial environment among the faculty cohort who travel to Minnesota. Additionally, the DEW creates a network of colleagues at the four institutions in Minnesota that are visited (the University of Minnesota, Macalester College, Saint Olaf College, and Carleton College) who learn about DIS and can advise their students to consider applying.

In addition to the DEW, faculty members have extraordinary opportunities to learn from one another's experiences or from guest experts who are brought in for talks. For example, the Faculty Learning Lab regularly offers workshops during New Faculty Orientation and throughout the semester. Moreover, the annual DIS Faculty

Seminar in September attracts more than 150 participants during a weekend in September in which faculty members from Stockholm and Copenhagen come together to learn about a wide range of professional activities, research opportunities, and classroom challenges.

We have identified three other overall faculty development strengths at DIS. These include:

- Excellent material resources (computers, video and audio recording sets, i-Pads, Whisper-Soft kits, virtual reality goggles, Lego sets, and pop-up cafes);
- Thoughtful and systematic roll out of new technology-oriented resources with extensive follow-up trainings. Esben Lydiksen's hiring and his work with the Canvas course management system is a good illustration of this successful approach.
- Bringing in visiting colleagues whose responsibility is to work with the Learning Lab staff doing faculty development (such as course observations or assisting with the design and implementation of new programs for peer review of teaching) rather than providing direct student instruction.

All of these development efforts are deeply impressive and we applaud DIS for its foresight and for its financial commitment to the continued growth of the faculty cohort. In so doing, DIS demonstrates its understanding that teaching and learning is an ongoing, dynamic process that is as relevant and necessary for the DIS faculty as it is for the DIS student.

### **Areas for Continued Attention**

Faculty development centers throughout the United States have been grappling with how to help their colleagues contend with institutional goals and student demands for an "inclusive" campus. Such demands are both overdue and difficult to implement for many university-level teachers. Some issues, such as changing norms about gender pronouns, for instance, are baffling to faculty. Others, such as institutional racism, can prompt a sense of guilt or shame.

That students to DIS bring their expectations for an inclusive curriculum is entirely warranted. That they sometimes expect DIS faculty members to see or analyze identity-related issues exactly as they do is not warranted, nor are the "call out culture" practices of attacking colleagues or faculty in the classroom. [2]

It is, thus, not surprising that difficult issues related to identity politics have also come to the DIS classroom and that faculty sometimes express confusion and discomfort in dealing with it. We are all learning how to deal with it with more or less success.

DIS and the faculty development staff are keenly aware of, and deeply concerned about, issues related to "inclusivity." Helle Rytikønen, Dorte Marie Aggergaard and Esben Lydiksen have taken a number of concrete steps to expand faculty conversations and skills in this realm. This includes programs at the annual seminar, one-on-one consultations with faculty, open workshops, specialized workshops in departments that have requested assistance, and have been discussing the possibility of an internal podcast program to address some of these issues. We are encouraged and impressed by all of these efforts, particularly the recent workshops at the September Faculty Seminar [3] the Fall 2018 initiatives on "Decolonizing Your Syllabus," and the review of all syllabi in the Architecture and Design program.

Conversations with students and our observations of classroom practices suggest that continued attention to issues about "inclusivity" and especially discussions of race and racism are warranted.

## Recommendations:

- A more extensive program of new faculty orientation, especially for part-time colleagues who have little or no previous experience teaching American students. Such colleagues should receive information about their students or US circumstances that are likely to deeply affect classroom dynamics. For example:
  - students' tendency to travel extensively and therefore not study over the weekends;
  - the difficulty students experience meeting with group members outside of class to work on group projects, especially when they have group projects assigned in multiple classes;
  - The importance of, and tension around, race-related subjects *on campus* in the United States, such as protests over whether to remove Civil War era statues; growing attention to the history of slaves who helped to build campus buildings; student protests against structural racism on campus; the proliferation of Nazi and white supremacist iconology on campuses; challenges to campus Affirmative Action policies that have reached the US Supreme Court, student participation in the Black Lives Matter movement; highly-visible cases of white students singing racist songs at the University of Oklahoma; and anti-racism protests at a host of American colleges and universities in the last five years.
- Attend more systematically to issues of inclusivity and "identity politics." Make this a *focus* of faculty development efforts in much the same way that CANVAS was the focus of systematic development programming.
- Bring in experts in educational inclusivity who can help faculty, especially new and part-time faculty, understand trends in American higher education, in diversifying the curriculum, including at the level of syllabus design.
- Perhaps most importantly, we recommend that faculty learn about contemporary trends in analyses of race, gender, class, sexual and gender identity, in "intersectionality," and how these analytic approaches are likely to be raised *by students* in their classes. Faculty who dismiss or minimize such concerns almost certainly will continue to experience tense and/or counterproductive classroom dynamics in which both students and faculty feel disgruntled and misunderstood.

## QUALITY OF FACILITIES

### Office and Class space

The Stockholm campus is a single building in a newer facility that is part of Kungliga Musikhogskolan (KMH) in a premium location in the city. A train station is directly in front of the campus and the site is walkable to the city center. Students commented on the brightness of the campus and the distinctions between the modern architecture and the "dark and old" buildings of their home campuses. Students reflected positively on the modular nature of the classroom spaces and the review team saw the rooms configured in multiple ways to facilitate different pedagogical styles. The technology appeared functional and user-friendly, and instructors and students accessed it regularly during class periods. Students noted that there were instances where it was difficult to hear a soft-spoken instructor and would have appreciated amplification of her lectures.

Students identified that the "quiet room" at Stockholm "isn't very quiet" but they also admitted that students have ownership for the volume maintained in the space despite its label. Students also desired more comfortable chairs and lounge furniture that might support deeper relaxation and napping. Especially given commute times (frequently in excess of an hour), students spend long hours at the DIS campus before returning home for the evening and desired space that recognizes their needs for space to rest and to work while at the DIS campus.

Students also lauded the discount for students in the restaurant of the building where DIS is located. They appreciated the quality of the food provided and felt that the discounts provided through DIS made it affordable. "I eat there basically every day," was heard from more than one student.

Students expressed a desire to attend some of the music events at KMH but noted that many of the tickets were reserved before they could obtain passes. DIS might consider obtaining some reserved seats/passes for students to a few of the concerts throughout the semester or give students more information about how to be proactive in securing access to these events.

The shared space with KMH is another advantage of the DIS Stockholm campus that might be leveraged to address students concerns about the lack of connection to local Swedes of similar age. As a college campus, the building where DIS students spend significant portions of their day is filled with local students of similar ages. There may be possibilities to leverage the shared campus in ways that the Copenhagen site has done with the Studenterhuset membership that fosters opportunities for connection across institutions. In particular, is this an opportunity for affinity groups to meet (especially if organizations exist at KMH already) or might there be a way to take advantage of the lunchtime as ways to encourage interaction across the institutions? For example, could there be a designated English language table or an "Ask an American/Swede" table? Students noted that local students were friendly but initiating interactions was difficult.

### **Library**

The library facilities and staff in Copenhagen are excellent. A library in Stockholm has yet to be developed. Although students receive their textbooks at the beginning of the term and have access to some online resources, we recommend that a library be created in Stockholm. This could also be used as a quiet study space if some of the current study space is used for relaxation.

### **Recommendations:**

- Develop a space with comfortable chairs and lounge furniture that might support deeper relaxation and napping for students with long commutes.
- Create a library in Stockholm.
- Help students obtain seats/passes for the music events at KMH (as possible).
- Build opportunities for DIS and KMH student interaction.

## **STUDENT SERVICES**

### **Pre-departure services and materials**

The addition of the DIS Compass Course to the orientation process for DIS students is valuable and a useful resource for students in preparing for their DIS experience and to reference when questions arise. Housing and Student Life staff report that the volume of calls and questions regarding housing types and assignments were much lower as the Compass course resolves many of the issues students typically raise. The Compass Course reviewed was specific to the Copenhagen experience, but a similar course exists for the Stockholm program, ensuring students are receiving comparable onboarding experiences.

Issues of diversity and identity that students will face during their experiences with DIS only receive a cursory overview via the Compass course. The Compass course also says that more resources will be provided to support students in this understanding, but they do not appear in the Compass course and were not located via a search of the DIS website. Given the issues of diversity and identity raised by students in the classroom and in other spaces, it is clear that students need more information about issues of identity and how to navigate the differences between the ways that these issues are perceived and experienced in the US versus the DIS locations where they are spending their semesters. This discussion needs to be historically situated, brought into the current context, and comparative.

A few students (n=4) in Stockholm reported challenges with their visas that would limit their travel and the Student Life staff reported challenges with securing appointments with US embassy services that might allow these issues to be resolved. The primary issue seems to concern the dates at which time students applied for their visas; therefore, more communication regarding timing and process for visa application submission may be needed to prevent these kinds of instances.

### **On-site Orientation**

We did not sit in on the orientation sessions in order to fully assess this part of the DIS program. There is a three day orientation that includes (among other information) health and safety, cultural and academic information, housing and homestay tips, and a walking tour of the city.

### **Housing (Dorms, Apartments, Hotels)**

DIS provides multiple housing options that respond to student interest and need. The housing toured was unique, spacious, and offered nice furnishings and storage space that afforded students basic amenities but also personalization. The spaces were clean and were accessible via public transportation. Some housing options meant that students had significant commutes (many in excess of an hour according to students with whom we spoke), but students reported ease in navigating various transportation systems. The housing spaces offered kitchens or kitchenettes for meal prep (rather than meal plans) and students receive food stipends (~\$600 US) in order to facilitate their eating. Many students reported eating a lot of “college food” (e.g., ramen, eggs, take n bake pizza, etc.) but also reported that the organization of the housing (particularly residential communities (RC) and the Kollegium/Studentboende options created opportunities for “family dinners” that allowed for more extensive cooking opportunities. Because DIS students are typically advanced undergraduates, many of them already come to DIS from apartment experiences where they have responsibility for shopping and meal prep that does not intimidate them. The experience of the shared laundry spaces (particularly those in the Kollegium/Studentboende) that require scheduling in advance and restrict times during which students may access laundry facilities (including locking students out of a space (Stockholm) when their laundry is complete even if they have not retrieved it) represents a learning curve for students that they have to navigate. This process of time management and pre-planning for a household chore that in the US is able to be spaced out and casually approached may suggest that advanced coaching would be helpful to students navigating this new system. Housing and Student Life staff reported that there were videos in process and apps in use to support students. The transition from the part-time, paraprofessional Social and Resident Assistant (SRA) to the full-time professional Community Assistant (CA) is an opportunity to bring student life professionals into the residence in more direct student-facing roles that can respond more effectively, efficiently, and responsibly to issues that arise. The ongoing efforts to partner with facilities so that CAs and Facilities Managers can respond to concerns in shared properties is a responsible and collaborative model that demonstrates the kinds of effective and efficient service that can support students in these shared housing opportunities in a more holistic way.

Students in Stockholm generally reported regret that they had limited opportunity through housing to build relationships with Swedes--even in the experience of the Studentboende, designed expressly for that opportunity. This is in contrast to the Kollegium experience where permanent residents (especially at Nimbus, the site visited) shared apartments with DIS students that facilitated greater interaction and those residents took on the roles of host and cultural ambassador in ways that the Studentboende layout could not support. Students in a temporary RC (at a business hotel) also felt like their opportunities to connect with Swedes were limited because of the nature of the placement and its distance from the center city. Many students reflected a perception of locals (in this case Swedes) as closed off and difficult to engage, so this may require some kind of cultural discussion that better prepares DIS students for the work of building relationships and rapport. To facilitate aims of interaction with local residents and diversity and inclusion, DIS may consider efforts to intentionally recruit individuals with



diverse identities as permanent residents in Kollegium/Studentboende options. Permanent residents were sometimes identified through connections with DIS staff members or as people whose families had served as homestays, which creates a significant opportunity to engage those who know and understand DIS. However, this unique and affordable housing option can serve as an inclusion and equity opportunity if targeted toward those with diverse identities who are less familiar with DIS, U.S. college students, and may have limited access to higher education and housing opportunities. This effort to bring local students from marginalized racial backgrounds into DIS housing options can also be responsive to comments from students in the focus group materials shared with the research team to have spaces to connect with “someone with a similar background” and “hang out in a space where they are not in the minority”.

The Living Learning Community (LLC) options for student housing within RCs have provided meaningful social interaction for students that allows them to develop relationships with fellow DIS students while spending significant time on an issue or activity they enjoy. It appears that LLCs fluctuate in popularity and interest and students may use the opportunity of the LLC to manipulate housing assignments so they are near friends or romantic partners. This may require deeper exploration of the application process. Students reported enthusiasm for the opportunity to participate in activities related to a topic where they hold significant interest but also concern that the weekly commitment may require more time than they feel able to give to the community given the other requirements of their experience at DIS. The connection of a coordinator to the LLC provides a valuable mentor/connection for students and the possibility that there might be more opportunities to link LLCs to faculty members with interests may strengthen the academic ties of those LLCs and also may encourage students to take more ownership for planning experiences and activities (as the faculty may not be able to commit the same amount of time/energy as individuals hired specifically to support the LLC). In the review, we saw the music LLC in Stockholm where the weekly events were planned by a coordinator and the Green LLC that is coordinated by a faculty member. The structure of the Green LLC (apartment style RC) versus the Music LLC (student rooms on a shared hallway) seemed to facilitate greater identity, interaction, and commitment.

The need and desire to expand the housing stock in both Copenhagen and Stockholm was evident and warranted. Prioritizing those kinds of housing opportunities (and the configuration of those spaces in ways) that facilitate greater engagement with other students and local residents would respond to student concerns of isolation and limited opportunity for relationship building.

### **Housing (Homestays)**

We had the opportunity to meet with six students who were in homestays in Stockholm. All of the students felt good about their homestays and simultaneously identified challenges regarding their DIS experience. In one instance, the student reported limited interaction with his host family as they traveled every weekend (Thursday to Sunday) to support their son’s amateur skiing training. This meant the DIS student spent three to four nights each week at home alone (including 24 hours after arrival in Stockholm). The student found other opportunities through table tennis to connect to local residents (including building a strong relationship with the coach and his son) that facilitated some connection but the student expressed regret that he did not have a homestay situation that was “more homey.” Other students in the homestay found that their relationships with locals were strongest (or only) with their families and other families in the immediate neighborhood which meant that their connections were often significantly older or younger (e.g., one student commented, “All the Swedes I know are middle aged ladies or babies.”). Similar to students in shared housing, homestay students lamented the lack of opportunities to build relationships with local residents closer to their own age.

As the Copenhagen program experiences a decline in interest in homestays, the Housing and Student Activities staff is considering a mentorship program that might partner students with local professionals whose careers match the intended pathways of DIS students. This opportunity would encourage regular interactions with the

mentor including shadow experiences at the mentor's workplace. While this experience would not replace the intimacy and continuity of the homestay experience, it might provide significant engagement with local professionals in ways that satisfy students' desires to build relationships with people in the local context in different ways from the homestay.

## **Health & Wellness**

In both locations, significant networks have been established to respond to students' medical needs. Both locations have single room occupancy opportunities in accessible spaces that can accommodate students with different mobility and/or disability concerns. Students have access to discounted memberships at local gyms in both host cities to respond to fitness needs. In Stockholm, subsidized classes and engagement in sports teams via the Stockholm Student Sports Union also facilitates wellness opportunities while offering cultural learning for DIS students.

Students did express (and Student Life members did suggest) that the shorter days and colder weather at the start of term in Stockholm did affect their mood, engagement, and wellbeing. The Compass course for Stockholm and other materials may need to address this.

The Copenhagen campus has a significant care team that has established a network of psychotherapists and mental health professionals that can support students with a diverse range of mental health and wellbeing challenges. The Stockholm campus has relationships with three counselors who can see students who have mental health concerns or desire therapy sessions. Two of these counselors, while licensed professionals, are also instructors in the DIS program which raises significant concerns regarding privacy, power, and conflicts of interest. The inclusion of instructor/therapists in Stockholm aims in part to mirror the process in Copenhagen which sought to build a network of professionals who could understand the context of DIS. Staff expressed desire to ensure the Stockholm therapists had a good sense of what it means to be a study abroad student and build out the network of who can be responsive to DIS students' needs, as well as respond to access issues to mental health services that may be complicated by the Swedish healthcare system. These process aspects are understandable and the efforts that staff report are made to ensure that the counselors are not paired with students who they teach is helpful in mitigating the power and privacy concerns. However, the small size of the Stockholm program and the close interactions of those students make the engagement of instructor as counselor a challenging one to endorse, so DIS should aim to build this network as promptly as possible to limit the engagement of instructors in therapeutic relationships.

## **Student groups and sports teams**

DIS staff expressed an approach to student groups and organizing activities that focused on student interest and initiative. Shared housing experiences encourage students to develop networks based on common interest that often result in organized ongoing activities (e.g., interest in a TV show, video games, or sports activity). Some of the shared housing spaces have outdoor sports courts that have been used to support forming teams within the housing communities. The subsidized opportunities with the Stockholm Students Sports Union also facilitates engagement in sports teams that are valuable for students. An activities fair (either in person or virtual) is organized at each campus to support students in connecting with issues and opportunities of interest (e.g., volunteer opportunities, sports teams, houses of worship). Resources are also made available to support students in facilitating spaces to connect with fellow students. To respond to issues of identity, DIS facilitates a Diverse Identities group (in Copenhagen) and a Queer and Allies group (Stockholm). Students in Stockholm have also organized a group regarding Disability Issues, Concerns, and Identities. The Student Life staff, recognizing the pervasiveness of homesickness amongst DIS students organized meetings (Coping in Copenhagen and Stuck in Stockholm) to give students a space to process feelings of homesickness and to witness that they were not alone

in their struggles. This approach to student organizations seems to appropriately balance the collegiate atmosphere of DIS while also supporting the freedom and flexibility that students desire to take full advantage of their time abroad.

### **Volunteer opportunities**

The activities fair is where students are introduced to volunteer opportunities. These opportunities are reiterated through flyers in housing spaces and the Student Life Office. Volunteering is largely self-initiated which has a tendency to wane over the course of a semester as students get invested in other opportunities, academics, social activities, and travel that compete with their commitments to community organizations. To encourage interaction with local residents, increase opportunities to explore issues of diversity in the local context, and facilitate longer engagements and commitments with community it may be useful to think about credit-bearing community engagement opportunities that would sustain commitment.

### **Activities to prepare students for re-entry**

The review team did not have the opportunity to learn about formal experiences planned by or offered through DIS for re-entry; however, meetings with students revealed interests in specific areas that may be useful to consider in organizing re-entry activities. In particular, students expressed a desire to be able to talk about the skills they developed through their work at DIS that may be communicated to potential employers, internship supervisors, or graduate programs. They also desired a better understanding of opportunities that would allow them to return to Sweden/Copenhagen for graduate school or work in the future.

### **Recommendations:**

- Expanding the discussion on “unpacking identity” in the Compass course to more deeply engage issues of diversity and difference and what it will mean to navigate these issues in Copenhagen and Denmark
- More communication regarding timeline for visa application to facilitate timely submission and mitigate challenges with student visas
- Intentional recruitment of diverse and underrepresented identities in the permanent resident process for the Kollegium/Studentboende
- Include information about the weather and shorter days in the Compass course or other onboarding information
- Expand counseling network, including Identifying new counselors who are not also DIS faculty, in Stockholm
- Develop student organizations (particularly those focused on issues of identity) in concert with local universities or community organizations that may facilitate engagement of local residents to support students in (a) learning about these experiences of diversity in the local context and (b) understanding how to navigate the local context given the identities they hold
- Consider development of credit-bearing community engagement experiences that might facilitate ongoing engagement in the local community
- Organize re-entry activities to support students in skill development and translation and that includes information about opportunities to return to Scandinavia for future work or schooling.

## **PERCEIVED SATISFACTION OF STUDENT PARTICIPANTS**

The team mainly interacted with students on the Stockholm campus. We had dinner with about 10 students and interacted with many more during classes, the excursion, and housing visits. The students overall were very happy with their experience at DIS. Additional student suggestions have been incorporated into the appropriate sections.

### **Cultural Learning**

Students who are enrolled in language classes are learning about Danish or Swedish culture. Many of the classes also incorporate information about Scandinavian culture and practices. Yet, outside of some discussion on culture at orientation, DIS students as a whole do not seem to have access to intentional intercultural learning. We hope that findings that may emerge through Kirsten Kolstrup's research will offer more insight into students' experiences with intercultural learning as part of DIS. We recommend development of a holistic intercultural learning component for all students that spans from orientation to a final reentry session. This should add to student satisfaction and adjustment.

### **Language Partners**

There does not seem to be language partners available for the language courses. We recommend adding language partners even if at a high school level or adult, although college age would be ideal. This would have the dual purpose of increasing students' language skills while giving them access to more host-country locals.

### **Recommendations:**

- We recommend that a holistic intercultural learning component be designed for all students that spans from orientation to a final reentry session.
- Adding language partners in Danish and Swedish classes.

## **SAFETY & SECURITY ISSUES**

### **Crisis and evacuation plans**

These are clearly communicated through the compass course and available as a standing resource on the DIS website making it easy for the students and families at home to understand the plans should an emergency arise.

### **Managing daily health and safety issues**

The Compass course has a significant section on health and safety that addresses many questions and concerns that students or parents may have as students prepare for DIS. The student-produced video on issues of consent is an especially useful resource to help students navigate distinctions and differences between the Danish and US cultures.

### **Transportation safety**

Students are largely encouraged to utilize public transportation to get to and from DIS courses and their housing. The transport system in both Stockholm and Copenhagen are easily navigable and students report ease in learning the transit systems. In Copenhagen, biking is also encouraged (with students being able to rent bikes in advance of arrival) though it was not clear if there were opportunities for students to learn or train to better understand biking culture and rules.

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[1] See, for example, Alice Adams, "Helping Faculty Find Time to Think," Chronicle of Higher Education, December 5, 2016. <https://www.chronicle.com/article/Helping-Professors-Find-Time/238569>

[2] See for instance, Conor Friedersdorf, "The Destructiveness of Call Out Culture on Campus," The Atlantic, May 8, 2017. <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2017/05/call-out-culture-is-stressing-out-college-students/524679/>

[3] For example, the workshops in Fall 2018 included: *Cultural Sensitivity, Diversity and Freedom of Speech in Academia*; *Intro to Trans - Language, Responsibilities & Tools*; *Inclusive Classroom: Gender Pronouns, Trigger Warnings, Brave and Safe Spaces*.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The members of the evaluation team benefited greatly from the care and concern for this process by the staff of the LAC and of DIS, and in particular Jamie Cathell, DIS for her thorough and detailed organization of the review materials and schedule. We also thank Malene Torp, Helle Rytönen, and Tina Mangieri for their transparency and openness, which enabled the review team to complete a thorough evaluation. We are enthusiastic about the opportunities for growth in the Stockholm program and the continued commitment to excellence by all DIS faculty and staff.

## SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

### Diversity and Inclusion

- Develop a strategic plan for diversity and inclusion
- Hire a staff leader for diversity and inclusion with expertise in curricular development and student services

#### *DIS Response:*

*The Diversity and Inclusion project, which runs until August 2020, is presenting a plan for the Executive Team in early summer 2019. The plan details actions for: implementing a recruitment and funding model aimed at students of high financial need; strengthening inclusion across the organization; building community onsite; and continuous stakeholder engagement. One of the recommendations of the project is to hire a staff member who is responsible for driving diversity and inclusion across the organization. Additionally, the project recommends creating an ad hoc advisory team that involves staff, faculty, and students in the ongoing diversity and inclusion work.*

### Academics

- The development of a few strategic partnerships with sending institutions that capitalize on integrated curriculum and close alignment of curriculum would move DIS to being a leader in the fields of economics, finance and government.
- The terrorism and security area should be reconsidered to fit more securely in either political science/international politics or from a sociologic lens of law and criminology or societal norms
- Be more intentional and explicit about the inclusion of racial diversity in the discussions, examples, and course materials for classes
- Require office hours for teaching faculty included in syllabi
- Communicate logistics, requirements and specifics for long study tours earlier
- Include more formal opportunities for reflection during long study tours
- Coordinate airport travel for long study tours or compensate students for expenses related to this travel when public transit is not available

#### *DIS Response:*

*DIS is fortunate to have a network of faculty at partner institutions involved in our curriculum development. This group of faculty know the DIS curriculum very well as they have participated in an on-site International Educators Workshop, taught at DIS as a Visiting Faculty Member, and/or have been reviewing the DIS curriculum extensively in the capacity of department chair or member of a curriculum committee. As we work to fine tune our curriculum in economics/finance/government, we will draw upon the knowledge and feedback from these partners.*

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*We have not previously experienced students requesting formal office hours from faculty. Currently, faculty members are usually available after class, and electronically – often at night and over weekends, though we do not require that - and they will meet with students who request to see them about assignments or any class related matter. We will keep an eye and an ear out for whether we should change this practice.*

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*Often, logistics and other requirements are conveyed to students by their core course faculty well in advance to finalization of the study tour materials, which is made available in the week prior to the tour. Given the variability of this information being conveyed, Study Tours will explore the implementation of a “fact sheet” for each tour that can be posted to Canvas at the beginning of each semester. This would cover the specific tour dates (within core course week and the long study tour), flight and hotel information, public transportation options to the airport, and other essential items to assist students in their preparation.*

*The long study tours are faculty-led and fully integrated into each core course. Faculty members plan the tour and decide the sequence of activities as it relates to the overall development of the syllabus. We will continue remind faculty members to create reflection opportunities on tour as part of the overall development of experiential pedagogy at DIS.*

## **Research**

- Communicate research opportunities, learning outcomes, prerequisites, and application process more clearly on the website and in printed materials.
- Incorporate a signed learning contract for all research options outside of the formalized classes such as Affective Neuroscience: Emotion, Cognition, and Behavior.
- Make research workshops credit bearing, perhaps one-credit, in order to demonstrate the importance and relevance of content.
- Create a course taught by DIS faculty, or formalize workshops currently on offer, to ensure foundational learning and assessment across all of the 6-credit research placements.
- If increasing research opportunities for students is a goal, the six-credit research model that incorporates a content class with a research lab seems to be a successful model.
- Develop IRB protocol in consultation with UofM as the DIS School of Record.

### *DIS Response:*

*While research opportunities, learning outcomes, prerequisites, and application information are currently available on the DIS website (both collectively under the research heading and individually for each research opportunity), we agree that increased visibility and more details are welcome. We are currently changing the Academic webpages for both Stockholm and Copenhagen to move “Research at DIS” so it appears directly when students choose courses through the link “Build Your Semester.” We are currently creating additional materials for the web, in addition to new catalog descriptions and research-specific materials, to further distinguish each opportunity. With contracts already in optional use, formal mentorship contracts outlining mentor/student/shared expectations will expand to all research assistantships from fall 2019. DIS is currently updating the research workshop approach – incorporating student feedback from evaluations and mentor feedback to ensure appropriate foundational learning across all research placements. Mentor training is being formalized through workshops to reflect on the past semester experience and plan for the upcoming term, ensuring commonalities across disparate fields and research stages. The model of research lab with a co-requisite content course works well for our offerings in neuroscience and is expanding to other fields in fall 2020. We are committed to providing a variety of mentored research opportunities, including research assistantships (which are expanding in 2020) and independent research projects. DIS welcomes the opportunity to work with UofM to develop US-focused IRB protocols for student research involvement in the context of the specific ethical requirements adhered to by researchers in Sweden and Denmark (governed by Etikprövningsnämnderna/Ethical Review Boards and the Danish Research Ethics Committee system, respectively).*

## **Faculty development**

- A more extensive program of new faculty orientation, especially for part-time colleagues who have little or no previous experience teaching American students. Such colleagues should receive information about their students or US circumstances that are likely to deeply affect classroom dynamics. For example:
  - students’ tendency to travel extensively and therefore not study over the weekends;
  - the difficulty students experience meeting with group members outside of class to work on group projects, especially when they have group projects assigned in multiple classes;
  - The importance of, and tension around, race-related subjects *on campus* in the United States, such as protests over whether to remove Civil War era statues, growing attention to the history of slaves who helped to build campus buildings, student protests against structural racism on

campus, the proliferation of Nazi and white supremacist iconology on campuses, challenges to campus Affirmative Action policies that have reached the US Supreme Court, student participation in the Black Lives Matter movement, and highly-visible cases of white students singing racist songs at the University of Oklahoma, and anti-racism protests at a host of American colleges and universities in the last five years.

- Attend more systematically to issues of inclusivity and “identity politics.” Make this a *focus* of faculty development efforts in much the same way that CANVAS was the focus of systematic development programming.
- Bring in experts in educational inclusivity who can help faculty, especially new and part-time faculty, understand trends in American higher education, in diversifying the curriculum, including at the level of syllabus design.
- Perhaps most importantly, we recommend that faculty learn about contemporary trends in analyses of race, gender, class, sexual and gender identity, in “intersectionality,” and how these analytic approaches are likely to be raised *by students* in their classes. Faculty who dismiss or minimize such concerns almost certainly will continue to experience tense and/or counterproductive classroom dynamics in which both students and faculty feel disgruntled and misunderstood.

*DIS Response:*

*There is no doubt we need to systematize and expand our already existing training on diversity and inclusion for new and returning faculty and is one of the key focus points of our 2018-19 diversity initiative. We are currently in the process of developing a professional development framework that takes our faculty’s different relations to DIS into account (the majority of our faculty is part-time and hold full-time positions outside of DIS). Our goal is to come at this from a pedagogical angle – how do we best equip our faculty to develop constructive classrooms for our students from U.S. campuses? How do we best learn from our partners and experts, as well as some of our own faculty? At the same time, we consider which unique learning moments might occur in the study abroad classroom and we ask ourselves; do we have an opportunity to move beyond the hurt and counter-productive classroom dynamic? How can we support students and faculty to achieve this?*

The point about helping students connect for group work is also well taken. As for students’ tendency to travel over the weekends, we do not plan to ease up on our expectations that they prepare for classes, also over weekends.

**Facilities**

- Develop a space with comfortable chairs and lounge furniture that might support deeper relaxation and napping for students with long commutes.
- Create a library in Stockholm.

*DIS Response:*

*As we develop and expand the DIS Stockholm program further, we will work to ensure that we continue to provide the optimal academic resources and study environment to support student learning.*

*During the academic orientation on arrival, students visit the extensive library systems in Stockholm both at nearby universities (including Stockholm University and the Royal Technical College/KTH), and public & private spaces, including renowned Stockholm Public Library, the National Library of Sweden, and specialist libraries, including those at Kulturhuset and ArkDes at Moderna Museet. The goal is to introduce students to local resources and encourage them to get outside DIS to maximize their intercultural interaction and take advantage of the world-class resources available locally. Additional information is available on our [website](#) and is currently*



*being updated. At DIS Stockholm, we are primarily developing digital resources in collaboration with our Copenhagen library colleagues. We will be expanding our online databases, acquiring e-readers to support digital collections, and prioritizing sustainability, technological innovation, and actual user-experience to guide our library development.*

### **Student Services**

- Expanding the discussion on “unpacking identity” in the Compass course to more deeply engage issues of diversity and difference and what it will mean to navigate these issues in Copenhagen and Denmark
- More communication regarding timeline for visa application to facilitate timely submission and mitigate challenges with student visas
- Intentional recruitment of diverse and underrepresented identities in the permanent resident process for the Kollegium/Studentboende
- Include information about the weather and shorter days in the Compass course or other onboarding information
- Identify new counselors in Stockholm who are not also serving as DIS faculty
- Develop student organizations (particularly those focused on issues of identity) in concert with local universities or community organizations that may facilitate engagement of local residents to support students in (a) learning about these experiences of diversity in the local context and (b) understanding how to navigate the local context given the identities they hold
- Consider development of credit-bearing community engagement experiences that might facilitate ongoing engagement in the local community
- Design a holistic intercultural learning component for all students that spans from orientation to a final reentry session.
- Help students obtain tickets for the music events at KMH (as possible).
- Build opportunities for DIS and KMH student interaction.

### *DIS Response:*

*Our Compass team plans to work with U.S. and on-site staff, as well as Danish Language & Culture faculty, to frame issues of diversity and difference in a thoughtful way that prepares students and prompts their curiosity as they prepare to experience life in Scandinavia. However, since the Compass course is only available to enrolled students preparing to study abroad, a broader aim is to develop more resources and tell more student stories on the DIS website, so that prospective students, their university advisors, and their parents/families may also hear these voices.*

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*We agree that it is important that we continue to strive for a diverse resident population at our kollegiums. We currently recruit from various universities and other institutions of higher education in the Greater Copenhagen area. We also strive for having a diverse population when it comes to age, gender, interests, as well as knowledge/familiarity with DIS; however, we do need to recruit students as this is a legal requirement for living in a kollegium.*

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*We acknowledge and agree that the best way forward is to work with psychologists who do not simultaneously have teaching commitments at DIS. Our plan is to have a network of external psychologists by beginning of the spring 2020 semester*

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*We will pilot meet-up groups in CPH in fall 2019 related to being diverse. These meet-up groups will be integrated into the new initiative called DIScover events/activities. The groups will run once a week for the first three weeks of the semester. No sign-up is required and they will mainly be social in terms of content. We will have members from relevant local minority communities facilitate the groups. The goal of these groups is twofold: 1) to help*

students connect with likeminded students in the beginning of the semester and 2) to help students connect to the local community/relevant organizations. STO will not develop these meet-up groups for now, as we currently believe the Diverse Identities Social club serves the needs of the students given the smaller size of the student body. This is something we will follow closely to be aware of changing needs.

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We continue to find new ways in which we can build and sustain opportunities for DIS and KMH students to interact. As a new initiative in fall 2019, we will have a few KMH students come to DIS to have a 'coffee talk' during the Arrival Week to tell our students about what they do at KMH, what KMH has to offer, and how they might get involved. This 'coffee talk' will be voluntary for our students. We will continue to advertise the free KMH concert tickets and help students navigate the Swedish website for booking the tickets.

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Over the years, we have tried various forms of credit-bearing community engagement experiences without success. Students find it to be busy work and they cannot get the credits transferred to their home campus. We decided a few years ago that the best place in a DIS context for intercultural learning is in academics as part of the classes we teach. We disagree that students "as a whole do not seem to have access to intentional intercultural learning" outside of orientation and Swedish and Danish Language & Culture classes. All of our classes are designed to take advantage of the local context, and while students are involved in many intercultural exchanges and engagements (e.g. homestays and volunteer opportunities), intentional intercultural learning takes place in academics. The ambition is to make that happen in every class. We are not interested in teaching students a topic the same way it is taught on their home campus. Even in labs, we ask students to reflect on possible cultural differences in hierarchies, gender dynamics, etc.

### **Synergy between Stockholm & Copenhagen**

- Further development of a strong program in Stockholm that is unique in some way and clearly distinguishes it from the Copenhagen program.
- Develop program directors in Stockholm

#### *DIS Response:*

*DIS opened DIS Stockholm in 2016 with the goal of creating a study abroad opportunity for students in Sweden based on the well-established DIS model and learning philosophy and, at the same time, with a distinctly Swedish identity. As we develop DIS Stockholm further, it is a high strategic priority to continue to strike the right balance in terms of both curricular content, cultural programming, and the organizational set-up – leveraging the strength of the long-standing DIS organizational knowhow and model, while encouraging DIS Stockholm to develop its own curricular and organizational identity.*