Proposal for Student Study Abroad
Program: Frontiers Abroad, New Zealand

Proposed by:
Guil Gualda, Associate Professor, Earth and Environmental Sciences
Dan Morgan, Director of Undergraduate Studies & Senior Lecturer, Earth and Environmental Sciences

I. Program Overview

This is a proposal to add a new study abroad program in New Zealand focusing on Earth & Environmental Sciences. We will take advantage of the programs developed and run by Frontiers Abroad (FA), which are offered at the University of Canterbury (Christchurch, South Island) and the University of Auckland (Auckland, North Island). The proposed programs go well beyond traditional study abroad programs in that they include a 5-week field camp course prior to the start of the academic semester, and a research project to be developed during the academic semester. The program will take advantage of the existing synergy and collaborations between faculty at Vanderbilt (Guil Gualda and Dan Morgan) and at Canterbury (Darren Gravley, full-time faculty and also director of Frontiers Abroad). Frontiers Abroad organized the field component of the very successful 2013 Maymester in New Zealand, offered by Gualda and Morgan, which is planned for a second iteration in May 2015. The proposed program is a specialized program that has unique elements that distinguish it from the current program run by IFSA-Butler. We expect it will be very attractive to students majoring in Earth & Environmental Sciences, and it could be appealing to other science majors and engineers, and we anticipate that more students will be interested in studying abroad. The program will not be suitable for students with other interests, so we envision that this program could coexist with, and with little impact to, the existing IFSA-Butler program.

The goals for offering this study abroad opportunity are to get more EES students (EES majors and those in closely allied programs) to take a field course, to study abroad, and to get involved in research projects. This program will be offered as a direct-credit program.

II. Rationale

While Vanderbilt currently has a study abroad agreement with IFSA-Butler for the University of Canterbury and the University of Auckland, we believe the subject-specific nature of the program and the research opportunities justify the addition of FA to the approved program list for several reasons.

1. Programs offered by FA will cater to a specific set of students, particularly those in Earth & Environmental Sciences, but possibly also Civil Engineering and other science majors in Arts & Science. It should be noted that Lafayette College, FA’s partner school, has an Engineering program and they have developed with FA curricula that are appropriate for Civil, Environmental and Mechanical Engineering students. Students with other interests would still enroll in the New Zealand universities through IFSA-Butler.

2. New Zealand is a very attractive location for Earth and Environmental Sciences, with many opportunities to go out in the field and see diverse geological environments in a relatively small area. Plus, geothermal and hydroelectric energy both play an important role in the energy portfolio of New
Zealand, with many interesting technological and environmental issues associated with them. And further, the location of the country in two islands presents many environmental challenges. Faculty at both Canterbury and Auckland specialize in many of these issues, and the programs offered by FA cover many of these aspects; as such, we anticipate that participation in the FA programs will greatly enrich the experience of Vanderbilt undergraduate students.

3. Field camp: Field camp is a course the Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences strongly recommends to our students. However, we currently do not offer our own field camp. This program would enable our students who want to study abroad to concurrently take a field camp. The offered field camps (Geology and Earth Systems) cater to different types of Earth and Environmental Science students, so we expect there would be demand for both programs. Part of the reason why our current majors do not attend field camp is the cost associated with attending the course elsewhere; with this arrangement, students would be able to attend a field camp at no additional cost beyond their study abroad costs, which would likely increase the interest in the program and ultimately increase the number of majors who attend field camp.

4. Research: FA has a strong research component, with the students working closely with FA faculty to develop a semester-long project. Guil Gualda (Vanderbilt) has an ongoing collaboration with Darren Gravley (Canterbury), with substantial graduate student interaction between both groups; Dan Morgan (Vanderbilt) has identified areas of common interest with faculty at Canterbury, particularly with Stefan Winkler. In general, there is good synergy between the areas of strength at Canterbury and Vanderbilt (e.g. volcanology, geomorphology, glaciology, etc.). We are very excited about the possibility of having EES majors participate in the FA programs, which would allow them to start research in New Zealand and continue to work on the project at Vanderbilt. This is particularly attractive considering the multitude of opportunities for field work in New Zealand and the much more limited opportunities in the Southern US. Furthermore, based on our departmental survey, students do not often feel that they have enough time to get involved in research and go abroad, so this opportunity would allow students to do both and have a richer educational experience.

5. Professor and Research Collaboration: FA programs are designed to incorporate partner US university research collaboration and exchanges. Every year, host university faculty members (FA partners with more than 20 liberal arts and Ivy League schools) are invited to participate in field camp and research activities. This not only increases faculty research opportunities but also provides program oversight from Vanderbilt University. Guil Gualda is currently collaborating with Darren Gravley on several research initiatives in New Zealand and in Brazil, including involvement of graduate students from both Vanderbilt and Canterbury.

6. Interest in the program: We anticipate that the FA programs would be of interest to EES majors and minors. We currently have 2 undergraduate students with ties to EES (one major, one minor) who intend to go to New Zealand for study abroad in 2014-2015. Unfortunately, they are not currently able to attend the FA programs because it is not one of the programs approved by Vanderbilt. Students cannot currently enroll in this program because Vanderbilt already has an approved program in Auckland and Christchurch offered by IFSA-Butler, so a new program needs to be approved for Vanderbilt students to be able to take part on this program. We expect that 1-2 students every year would be interested in the program; if this expectation is realized, this would represent a substantial number of EES majors.

Course Integration: The Frontiers Abroad program offers a wide variety of courses during the academic year in which Vanderbilt students could enroll. In particular, the partnership with FA would allow
Vanderbilt students to take more advanced courses at both Auckland and Canterbury than is currently possible via the IFSA-Butler program, a result of the agreements between FA and both universities. With the existing faculty connections, it would be possible to better select courses that are appropriate for Vanderbilt students attending the program. There are a number of courses that would be of interest to EES students which are not currently offered at Vanderbilt, including topics relevant for New Zealand such as Geothermal Energy, Natural Hazards, and Glaciology.

Frontiers Abroad students study at the University of Canterbury (Geology and Earth Systems Programs) and the University of Auckland (Earth Systems Program). Based in the two largest cities in New Zealand, these universities are consistently ranked highest in New Zealand for academic and institutional performance. Both schools have well-earned reputations for their commitment to world leading research and the development of Centers of Excellence and Research for the Sciences.

III. Selection and Requirements

A. Selection of students will be done by the home university and FA.

B. Each student will submit an application through the Vanderbilt Global Education Office and the FA website. Upon acceptance of the GEO application, the student will be eligible to participate in the FA program, granted that FA accepts said student. The final acceptance decision is thus designated by FA.

C. Each student who wishes to participate in the program must:
   a. Hold a 3.0 cumulative GPA
   b. Have completed at least two semesters at Vanderbilt.
   c. Have completed EES 101 and 111 (additional EES courses are recommended).
   d. Be in good academic and disciplinary standing at Vanderbilt University.

D. Non-discrimination
As with all Vanderbilt University programs this study abroad program will not discriminate against individuals on the basis of their race, sex, religion, color, national or ethnic origin, age, disability, military service, or genetic information in its administration of educational policies, programs, or activities; admissions policies; scholarship and loan programs. In addition, the program will not discriminate against individuals on the basis of their sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.

IV. Program of Study

Frontiers Abroad offers two different programs of study, in two different cities, Christchurch and Auckland. In Christchurch, FA students study at the University of Canterbury and can enroll in either the Geology of New Zealand or the Earth Systems Program. In Auckland, FA students study at the University of Auckland and enroll in the Earth Systems Program. At both universities, all classes are taught in English.

For both the Geology and the Earth Systems Programs, FA incorporates a 4 or 5-week field camp into the course of study. This field camp occurs before the regular semester begins. The field camps and academic semesters are compatible with the academic year at Vanderbilt, and the dates are given below (2014-15 academic year dates are given):
Vanderbilt Fall Semester
Earth Systems at the University of Canterbury, Christchurch
Field camp June 7 – July 11
Campus Semester July 13 – November 8

Vanderbilt Spring Semester
Earth Systems at the University of Canterbury, Christchurch
Field camp January 11 – February 18
Campus Semester February 18 – June 28

Geology of New Zealand at the University of Canterbury, Christchurch
Field camp January 6 – February 15
Campus Semester February 18 – June 28

Earth Systems at the University of Auckland,
Auckland Field camp January 11 – February 18
Campus Semester February 23 – June 28

Students in the FA programs take a combination of required and self-selected courses. There are two required courses for FA students in either program. One of these is the field camp course, which is completed before the academic semester begins. The second required course is a research course that is completed during the academic semester. Both of these courses are taught by full-time Canterbury and Auckland faculty who are also affiliated with Frontiers Abroad. In addition to these courses, students typically enroll in three other classes while at the University of Canterbury or Auckland. This means students take a total of five courses while abroad, but because the field camp is completed before the academic semester, FA students are typically enrolled for a total of four classes during the academic semester.

Below is a list of the program details for each program of study:

Geology of New Zealand – Canterbury
1. Geology Field Camp – GEOL 365
2. Geologic Field Research Methods – GEOL 356
3. One course within the Department of Geological Sciences. Glaciology students have the option of taking the graduate level Glacial Geology and Geomorphology
4. Two courses selected by the student in any field of study (pre-requisites do apply)

New Zealand Earth Systems – Canterbury
1. Earth Systems Field Camp – ENVS 364
2. Environmental Field Research Methods – ENVS 366
3. Three courses selected by the student in any field of study (pre-requisites do apply)

New Zealand Earth Systems – Auckland:
1. Earth Systems Field Camp – GEOL 364
2. Environmental Field Research Methods – GEOL 366
3. Two courses within the School of the Environment (Auckland)
4. Three courses selected by the student in any field of study (pre-requisites do apply)
Enrollment of students in the University of Auckland or in the University of Canterbury is handled by FA. Students consult with FA faculty on course selection prior to enrollment in specific courses.

Students receive a transcript from Lafayette College and a transcript from the New Zealand university (Auckland or Canterbury). The field camp course appears only in the Lafayette College transcript, while all other courses appear in both transcripts; we will use the Lafayette transcript to assign credit at Vanderbilt for the field camp course, and the New Zealand transcript to assign credit for the other courses. Lafayette College assigns 1 unit credit per course taken, which corresponds to 4 credit hours (see http://registrar.lafayette.edu/additional-resources/transfer-credit/). New Zealand universities assign credit-hours based on a point system; conversion of points into credit-hours will be made using the conversion table currently used by IFSA-Butler:

**University of Canterbury:**
- 15 Points = 4 U.S. semester credit-hours
- 30 Points = 8 U.S. semester credit-hours
- 60 Points = 16 U.S. semester credit-hours

**University of Auckland**
- 10 Points = 2.5 U.S. semester credit-hours
- 15 Points = 4 U.S. semester credit-hours
- 20 Points = 5 U.S. semester credit-hours
- 30 Points = 7.5 U.S. semester credit-hours

The grading system in New Zealand universities is based on the British grading system (see http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/aqua/grading.shtml). The conversion of grades will be based on the current conversion table used by IFSA-Butler:

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<th>AUCKLAND</th>
<th>CANTERBURY</th>
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Vanderbilt will ultimately decide how many credit-hours and what grade to award to each course. Vanderbilt grades and credit-hours will be assigned via direct-credit.

V. Housing

At the University of Canterbury in Christchurch, students have two options for housing: the FA house, and on-campus apartments.

Frontiers Abroad has a five-bedroom, two-bath house, which is a 20 minute walk to campus/10 minute bike ride, available for students who want a more residential experience. The house is fully furnished with a large yard and plenty of area for gardens. The FA House is often used for FA functions, events and BBQ’s. Internet and electricity are included in the housing fee. The cost ranges from $3,500 to $4,000 USD, depending on the choice of a single or double room. All housing is self-catered, meaning students provide their own food.

The on-campus apartments at the University of Canterbury are the Ilam Apartments. Ilam Apartments is a self-catered (students provide their own food), fully-furnished apartment-style complex that offers independent living in a supportive environment to students of all ages, at all levels of their academic career, and from all over the world. There are three apartment types (Manuka, Kowhai, or Hinau) offering students a choice of applying for a place in a two, three, four, five or six-bedroom apartment. Each apartment comes with an equipped kitchen, bathroom, a lounge/dining room, laundry facilities, and telephone. All bedrooms are furnished with a bed, study desk, wardrobe, bookshelves, and have a data outlet for prepaid internet.

At the University of Auckland, students live in on-campus apartments (The Wellessy Apartments). The cost is $4,500 USD. Wellessy Apartments offer flatting style city accommodation in a safe, supportive and modern environment. The apartments feature group living with each fully furnished apartment having 4 or 5 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms and a living area and kitchen. The housing is self-catered, meaning students provide their own food.

VI. Fees

The tuition for Frontiers Abroad varies on the program (either Geology of New Zealand or Earth Systems). The tuition for FA covers the following costs:

1. All field camp costs
2. Semester tuition
3. Travel and health insurance
4. Academic advising
5. Lafayette transcript
6. Pre-departure services
   a. Application and visa support services
   b. Housing support
   c. Course selection

The 2014 tuition costs for the FA programs were as follows: University of Canterbury
   - Geology of New Zealand: $20,200 USD
   - Earth Systems: $20,000 USD
University of Auckland
   - Earth Systems: $20,000 USD

Additional fees not covered by the FA tuition costs include:
1. Return Airfare – $1,500 USD (approximate)
2. Board – self-catered, approximately $250 NZD per week
3. Books – approximately $400 NZD
4. Internet – dependent upon usage (provided at FA House for residents)
5. University of Canterbury Gym Fee (optional)

VII. Safety and Security

Students and parents can find security and safety information about particular study abroad locations at the following websites, and, based on the information provided therein, students and parents can make informed decisions about whether to participate in a study abroad program.

GEO travel warnings and alerts:

Information for parents of students planning to study abroad:

Student International Travel Policy:
http://vanderbilt.edu/vio/travel/student---travel---policy.php

Frontiers Abroad Response to 2011 Christchurch Earthquake
http://frontiersabroad.com/students/2011---christchurch---earthquake---response---and---analysis/
Sept. 19, 2014

Martin Rapisarda, Associate Dean,
College of Arts and Science,

Karen E. Campbell,
Senior Associate Dean, College of Arts and Science

Dear Deans Rapisarda and Campbell:

This letter expresses my support for the study abroad program in Earth and Environmental Sciences in New Zealand with Frontiers Abroad, as developed by Prof. Dan Morgan of Earth and Environmental Sciences. I want to draw attention to three streams of students who would be potentially interested in the program: minors in Environmental and Sustainability Studies, majors in Sociology (a few have an environmental focus), and interdisciplinary majors in environmental studies. These students generally have an interdisciplinary interest in environmental studies that includes the environmental sciences, and many take the pre-requisites that are required for the program, EES 101 and 111, as part of their curriculum. I think this option will be a good one for these three groups of students.

Sincerely,

David J. Hess
Professor, Sociology
James Thornton Fant Chair in Sustainability
Associate Director, Vanderbilt Institute for Energy and Environment
Director, Program in Environmental and Sustainability Studies
Director, Undergraduate Program in Sociology
FROM: George Hornberger, Chair, Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences
       Guil Gualda, Associate Professor, Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences
       Dan Morgan, DUS, Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences

TO: Martin Rapisarda, Associate Dean, College of Arts and Science
    Karen E. Campbell, Senior Associate Dean, College of Arts and Science

SUBJECT: Proposal for student study abroad program: Frontiers Abroad, New Zealand

On behalf of the faculty of the Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences (EES), we submit a proposal to add a new study abroad program in New Zealand focusing on Earth & Environmental Sciences. The EES faculty voted unanimously in support of this proposal (11 in favor, 0 against, 0 abstentions) on September 2, 2014. The proposed program is a specialized program that has unique elements that distinguish it from the existing New Zealand study abroad program run by IFSA-Butler. Because of this, we propose that this new program be approved so that our students can take advantage of the many opportunities brought by it.

The goals for this study abroad program are to get more undergraduate students to study abroad, to attend field camp, and to do research. We believe that a study abroad program with Frontiers Abroad in New Zealand can meet these goals because of the following.

1. The Frontiers Abroad program would allow Vanderbilt students to take more advanced courses in New Zealand because Frontiers Abroad faculty are regular faculty in New Zealand Universities. This would allow students to fulfill major requirements towards their EES degree while abroad, as well as take upper division courses not currently offered at Vanderbilt.

2. Frontiers Abroad integrates a 4-5 week field camp course into the study abroad semester. The cost of the field camp is included with the tuition for the Frontiers Abroad program, so it does not add any cost to the study abroad semester.

3. Frontiers Abroad incorporates a research project into the field course and academic semester. This research project can continue with faculty back at Vanderbilt. We hope this will increase the number of EES majors who do research and will not force students to choose between doing research and going abroad.
DEPARTMENT VOTE

STUDY ABROAD VOTE

From: <Fowler>, William R <william.r.fowler@Vanderbilt.Edu>
Date: Friday, December 5, 2014 at 8:56 AM
To: Martin Rapisarda <martin.rapisarda@vanderbilt.edu>
Subject: RE: Notes from SA Chair

Prof. Brian Bachman
Faculty Chair, CEP

Dear Prof. Bachman:

The Study Abroad Committee met on 27 October 2014 to consider revised versions of proposals for programs at Pune, India, and in New Zealand.

Six of the seven members of the Committee were present: Professors Fowler (chair), Gualda, Modena, Scott, Werner, and Zamora. Professor Rife sent regrets. Also present were ex-officio members Dean Rapisarda and Dr. Bogenschid.

The Pune proposal was approved by the Committee with six votes in favor, none against, no abstentions.

The New Zealand proposal was approved by the Committee with six votes in favor, none against, no abstentions.

Sincerely,

William R. Fowler

William R. Fowler
Associate Professor

Director of Undergraduate Studies
Department of Anthropology
Vanderbilt University
Nashville, TN 37235
615-343-9505
VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY
Global Education Office

4 December 2014

Dr. Martin Rapisarda
Associate Dean
College of Arts & Science

Dear Martin,

I’m writing in support of the two new study abroad programs that were recently approved by the A&S Study Abroad Committee as well as the university-wide Faculty Committee on International Education.

The proposed program managed by the organization Frontiers Abroad, in conjunction with the Universities of Auckland and Canterbury, offers vital research and training opportunities for students in Earth and Environmental Sciences. These students currently have few options abroad, and we are pleased to work with the department to send students to New Zealand.

The proposed program in India, through the Alliance for Global Education, in cooperation with the Institute for Foreign Studies Abroad and the Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics, is likewise well-considered. We appreciate both the quality of instructional opportunities provided and the professional connections and support personnel involved in program operations. We know the Alliance and IFSA well, and are represented on the latter’s Advisory Board. The inclusion of a strong program in South Asia is very much welcomed, and we will work closely with the College and other campus units to promote and support our involvement there.

As with all new programs GEO will add to a growing list of responsibilities and tasks, from student advising, orientation, relations with providers, safety and security, etc. We appreciate continuing cooperation and support from the College for such services, and we look forward to working together on these important new initiatives.

Sincerely,

Thomas Bogenschield, Ph.D.
Director
FACIE – Meeting Minutes (EXCERPT)

Date: 11/17/14  
Time: 2:00-3:00pm  
Location: Furman Hall 003  
Attendees: Bart Quinet, Carol Dunne, Aimee Leavitt (from OUR); Joy Calico, Martin Rapisarda, Melissa Rose, Craig Smith, Brian Heuser, Cynthia Paschal, Samira Sheikh, Elizabeth Zechmeister, Isabelle Crist, Nabil Simaan, Guilherme Gualda, Virginia Scott, Timothy Novara

FACIE Additional Items (URO Departs)

- Review of “Frontiers Abroad in New Zealand”
  - Frontiers Abroad already has a history of working with Vanderbilt through Maymester programs.
  - This program will live side-by-side with an IFSA Butler program.
  - The field credit will come on a LaFayette transcript.
  - The field component comes at no extra charge and does a good job of meeting the immersion criteria the university is looking for.
  - CONSENSUS: Approved.

Several faculty on this committee are also on the Study Abroad committee. There were questions as to why FACIE is reviewing proposals they have already approved. What are we considering that the Study Abroad committee does not?
Brian O. Bachmann, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Chemistry
Associate Professor of Biochemistry
Associate Director, Vanderbilt Institute of Chemical Biology
Vanderbilt University
7961 Stevenson Center
Nashville, TN 37235-1822
615-322-8865

RE: Proposal for Student Study Abroad Program: Frontiers Abroad, New Zealand

Dear Professors Gualda and Morgan,

The Committee on Educational Programs convened on January 15 to review your proposal for the Student Study Abroad Program: Frontiers Abroad, New Zealand. The catalog copy was approved (6 voting in favor) with no revisions needed. I will forward your corrected proposal to Faculty Council after which, pending their approval, your proposal will proceed to A&S Faculty vote. Please let me know if I may be of any assistance.

Best Regards,

Brian O. Bachmann
cc: Karen Campbell