Providing Leadership in Academic and Enrollment Services

Advancing Global Higher Education
Facilitating Credits & Degree Recognition
US Recognition

- Department of Education as National Education Information Center (NEIC)
  - regulates federal student grants and loans
- States determine licensure to operate and enforce standards largely dependent upon regional and/or professional accreditation standards recognized by but not governed by states and federal departments of education
  - Public vs. Private institutions
Framework of Quality Assurance and Governance in US Higher Education

**State government role:**
- License institutions to operate
- Support for public colleges and universities
- Partial tuition support for students

**Regional and Professional Accreditation Bodies roles:**
- Set standards for quality
- Review institutional quality
- Provide assurance to state and federal governments

**Institutional Role:**
- Self-study of adherence to accreditation standards
- Compliance with state and federal regulations

**Federal government role:**
- Funded research support for institutions
- Grant and loan support for students
- Enforce compliance with federal Equal Opportunity Laws
Character of Systems

**US Higher Education**
- Decentralized complex interacting systems and subsystems.
- U.S. Department of Education influences, but does not govern.
- Flexibility
- Admission tests are designed, written, and scored by private organizations. Requirements and standards differ among schools.

**French Higher Education**
- Centralized and hierarchical
- Ministry of Education governs schools from the top down
- Fixed
- Admission tests and standards are centrally administered.
Credit Systems

**US Credit Hour**
- Carnegie Unit: foundation is the contact hour
- 1 hour per week of scheduled class/seminar time + 2 hours of student preparation time.
- Average 15 credits per semester/30 credits per year

**ECTS**
- Concept of workload
- Each ECTS credit = 25-30 hours of student workload (29 hours in France)
- 30 ECTS per semester/60 ECTS per year
### Calculation of Student Workload

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>US</th>
<th>France</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Credits per year</td>
<td>30-36</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Credits per semester</td>
<td>15-18</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student work hours per credit</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>25-30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total work hours per semester</td>
<td>675-810</td>
<td>750-900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total work hours per year</td>
<td>1350-1620</td>
<td>1500-1800</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Different yet comparable approaches to defining workload
  - one year = one year
- Most US institutions will divide ECTS by 2 in order to determine credit hour in transfer
Grades--ECTS

- The ECTS grading scale is based on a statistical distribution curve.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ECTS Scale</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>% receiving grade</th>
<th>US Grade equivalent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Excellent—outstanding performance w/ only minor errors</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Very Good—above the average standard but w/ some errors</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>B+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Good—generally sound work w/ a number of notable errors</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Satisfactory—fair but w/ significant shortcomings</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>C+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>Sufficient—performance meets the minimum criteria</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FX</td>
<td>Fail—some more work required before the credit can be awarded</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Fail—considerable further work is required</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Grades - US

- No mandated grade scale
- Norm-based vs criteria based
- Scale variations by institution and will be reflected on the transcript

### US 4.0 Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>A Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>B Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>C Average, Fair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>D Poor, Minimum Pass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>F Failure</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### US Percentage Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>90-100%</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Excellent/Superior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80-89%</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Very Good/Above Average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70-79%</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60-69%</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>Minimum Pass/Poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-59%</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Failure</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: AACRAO EDGE*
Recognition of Foreign Credits and Institutions

Institutional autonomy to determine policies

- 24% of institutions exclusively use an evaluation service
- 75% of institutions do some in-house credential evaluation

Source: 2015 AACRAO Survey on International Recruitment Practices
Recognition of Foreign Credits and Institutions – The Role of AACRAO

- International Education Standards Council (IESC) 2006-Present
- AACRAO EDGE
  - United States Citizenship and Immigration Service (USCIS) of the Department of Homeland Security
  - Used by +530 institutions and +1725 individual users

Source: 2015 AACRAO Survey on International Recruitment Practices
Study Abroad Transfer Practices

• Defined by institutions
  – Institutional Exchange Agreements
  – Internal review of equivalency

• Many institutions rely upon external expertise
  – AACRAO EDGE
  – Credential Evaluation Agencies
  – Third-Party Providers
Study Abroad Transfer Practices

• Inconsistency of institutional policy
  – Admissions, Registrar, Study Abroad, Faculty

• Lack of inter-office communication/coherence

• Lack of training

AACRAO actively working to address
Study Abroad Transfer Practices—The Role of AACRAO

- International expertise moving out of universities
- Role of associations as a unifying force for policy creation
  - AACRAO, NAFSA, TAICEP
- Need for Training and Development
  - AACRAO International Institutes
  - AACRAO Annual Meeting Sessions
  - AACRAO EDGE
TOP TEN DESTINATIONS FOR U.S. STUDY ABROAD STUDENTS

- U.K. 13%
- Spain 9%
- Italy 10%
- France 6%
- Germany 3%
- Ireland 3%
- China 5%
- Japan 2%
- Australia 3%
- Costa Rica 3%

Source: IIE Open Doors 2014
Points of Consideration for Franco-American Exchange

• Portability of US Federal Aid for Study Abroad
  – Student must be enrolled full-time at the foreign institution and receive credit for the program toward a degree at the home institution.
  – Home institution may require a consortium agreement with the foreign institution.
  – Student must meet the full-time enrollment requirements of the home institution (generally 12-13 credit hours minimum—24-26 ECTS)

• Awareness of credit transfer policies
  – Grade of “D” concept in the US, French grade of 8-9, may not be accepted in transfer, causing the student difficulty.
  – Academic Calendar considerations—requirement timely release of grades.
  – Syllabi may be required for coursework within the discipline.

• Progress toward degrees
  – Flexibility of US Program allows for some choice, but students should have courses pre-approved before departure.
  – Importance of articulated exchange programs.
Further Recommendations for Franco-American Exchange

• Awareness of the basic similarities and differences in US and French higher education so that these do not become an obstacle for increased in-bound flows.
  – Continued work with recognition and with institutional familiarization

• Continue to develop relationships with key players in the international higher education community who deal with both in-bound and out-bound students between the US and France.
  – IIE, NAFSA, AACRAO, and the Forum would be important players in that community.
  – Actively seek out conferences or study abroad fairs on US campuses so that French university administrators can chat one-on-one with students interested in studying abroad.
Further Recommendations for Franco-American Exchange

• Understand the academic needs of US students studying abroad as they look to convert their French study experience into a tangible asset at their home institutions (direct application toward required or elective course requirements)
  – Work with institutions to develop collaborative exchanges—this is key for graduate level exchange
  – Offer courses and degrees in popular disciplines like computer science, engineering and business.
Further Recommendations for Franco-American Exchange

• Learn from other European colleagues with successful models
  – Actively work to create more English language courses and degree programs.
  – Familiarization tours?
    • Consider the Baden-Württemberg model

• Offer more programs outside of Paris that offer opportunities to experience the French countryside and that are less expensive than Paris living accommodations.

• Create funds designed to encourage study in France through grants
  – DAAD model

Country | Programs in English
--- | ---
Germany | 480
Spain | 259
Italy | 195
France | 166

*Source: studyineurope.eu*