

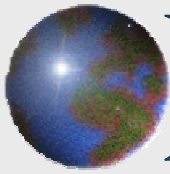
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RAMP:

North American Regional Academic Mobility Program

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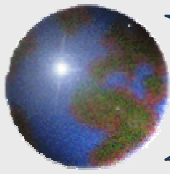


Opening Minds to the World

What is IIE

- **A US-based not-for-profit organization which assists governments, foundation and corporations in developing the capacity of individuals to think and act on a global basis.**
- **An administrative partner to the US Government in implementing the Fulbright Program, the Gilman Scholarships and other educational exchanges.**
- **A membership network of 800 universities around the world.**
- **An information resource through our publications (e.g. Open Doors), educational advising offices (e.g. Mexico City) and websites www.iie.org and www.iienetwork.org**

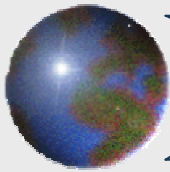
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RAMP – What is it ?

An informal consortium of Canadian, Mexican and US universities whose aim is to foster academic and professional mobility in engineering, business and environmental issues



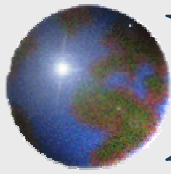
The North American Regional Academic Mobility Program (RAMP) is an innovative approach to serving higher education, government and industry in Canada, Mexico and the United States.

RAMP was implemented in 1992 under a grant from the U.S. Department of Education's fund for Postsecondary Education (FIPSE) with cost sharing by IIE, and participating universities.

The formal program ran from 1992 through August of 1996. RAMP continues to exist informally and on a somewhat reduced scale without FIPSE-funding.



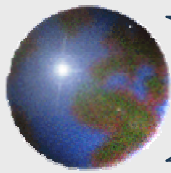
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Who is eligible to participate ?

- Students at member institutions are eligible to participate prior to the completion of their regular academic degree program.
- RAMP students are usually in their Junior year
- Each participating school sets its own criteria for student eligibility





Participating Institutions – 2003

CANADA

Carleton University
Dalhousie University
École Polytechnique
McGill University
McMaster University
Saint Mary's University
Technical University of Nova Scotia
Université de Montréal
Université de Sherbrooke
Université du Québec à Montréal
Université Laval
University of Calgary
University of Manitoba
University of New Brunswick
University of Ottawa
University of Waterloo
University of Western Ontario

MEXICO

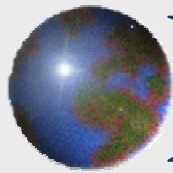
Centro de Enseñanza Técnica y Superior
Instituto de Estudios Superiores de Tamaulipas
Instituto Tecnológico de Autónomo de México
Instituto Tecnológico y de Estudios Superiores de Monterrey
Universidad Autónoma de Baja California
Universidad Autónoma de Nuevo León
Universidad Autónoma de Querétaro
Universidad Autónoma de San Luis Potosí
Universidad de Guadalajara
Universidad de Guanajuato
Universidad de las Américas-Puebla
Universidad Iberoamericana
Universidad La Salle
Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México

UNITED STATES

California State University, Sacramento
Claremont Graduate School
Eastern Michigan University
Montana State University
University of Cincinnati
University of Maryland
University of Missouri, St. Louis



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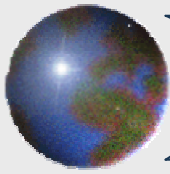
RAMP Impact Evaluation

The evaluation assesses the downstream impact of the North American Regional Academic Mobility Program (RAMP).

Using written survey instruments and follow-up phone interviews, a substantial body of information was assembled from various participants, including campus administrators and students.



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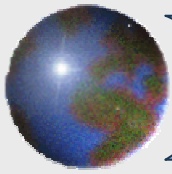


GOALS

The evaluation was designed in the context of the original program objectives.

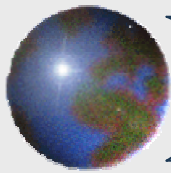
These were to promote and support:

- Student exchange
- Faculty involvement
- Cooperation among North American institutions and academic personnel
- Curricular compatibility and comparability including acceptance of academic credits (to be achieved through exchange activities)
- Development of cultural & linguistic skills
- Preparation of graduates capable of working in an international context



These objectives were matched to four principal outcomes

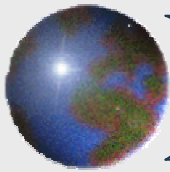
1. Durable vehicle for student exchange, faculty and staff development, and provision of useful information.
2. Constructive dialogue on articulation & credit transfer policies and practices.
3. Increased institutional awareness leading to improvements in the cultural and linguistic preparation of students.
4. Production of graduates with international experience and a comprehension of academic standards and professional practice in other countries.



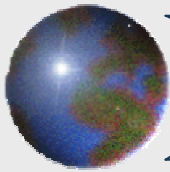
Early Findings

RAMP conducted a thorough evaluation at the end of the funded project in 1996. The positive findings were as follows:

- **Quality of student participants and acceptance of academic credits rose during life of project.**
- **Number of institutions increased; new and productive institutional linkages emerged in addition to the RAMP affiliation.**
- **IIE coordination was effective; the institutions encountered only occasional routine logistical problems.**
- **RAMP-NET provided a cost-efficient communications vehicle.**
- **Greater faculty and staff awareness; better understanding of partner systems and the information required for a well-run exchange.**



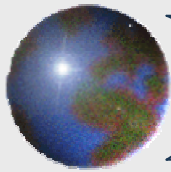
- **Greater faculty and staff understanding of student capabilities; greater proficiency in evaluating courses for placement or credit; minimal controversy about course and credit acceptance.**
- **Students adapted well to the host institutions; problems with language were fewer than expected; the support of campus advisors had a decisive effect.**
- **Students adapted to differences in class size, facilities, access to faculty, the balance of theoretical and practical work, and a greater emphasis on case studies and practical work.**
- **Students affirmed the value of their personal and academic experience, and would recommend exchange to other students.**
- **The RAMP experience influenced subsequent academic plans, career choices, and willingness to work abroad in the future.**



Catalytic Effect

For many of the institutions surveyed, the greatest impact of RAMP has been its “catalytic effect.” It came at time when international exchange was less well developed on many campuses, especially in Mexico and Canada.

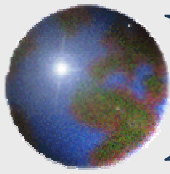
- **For many advisors, RAMP became their “training ground.”**
- **The program stimulated changes in policy and procedures.**
- **Led institutions to apply for grants to mount trilateral programs.**
- **Marked increase in the number of linkages formed.**
- **Created strong bilateral linkages**
- **Participating universities continue to meet annually**



Issues for Further Attention

- **Government and/or corporate support were needed in the three countries, but were not available.**
- **The balance of trade within the consortium and at specific institutions had become a significant problem, taxing the commitment of university administrators.**
- **Some U.S. institutions, unable to persuade their own students to study in Mexico or Canada, placed limits on the incoming applications they would accept. Others reverted to a one-for-one principle or dropped out of the program entirely.**

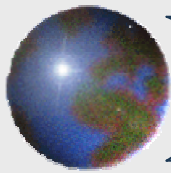




- **Support for annual meetings was needed to maintain the consortium, especially with a shift from central to decentralized management.**
- **There was a need for ongoing work on course articulation and credit transfer.**
- **Uncontrolled external factors were recognized: e.g., the Mexican monetary crisis and political problems of the mid-1990's. More recently the impact of September 11 and the continuing economic slump on the international outlook of students and faculty.**



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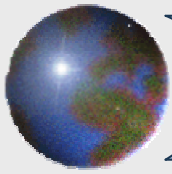


Current Evaluation

The object of the current evaluation was to learn more in six areas

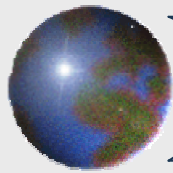
- **The impact of RAMP experience on students, especially on their academic and career objectives.**
- **Impact on alumni: educational and professional outcomes.**
- **Impact on U.S. institutions**
- **Catalytic Effect**
- **Sustainability**
- **Principles and lessons**





Proposed Evaluation Participants

- Original and current RAMP member institutions.
- Administrators and faculty responsible for international exchange.
- Faculty and staff directly involved with students and exchange partners.
- Student cohorts: Currently enrolled & those who participated in RAMP from August 1996 - present.
- Alumni cohort: All RAMP graduates.



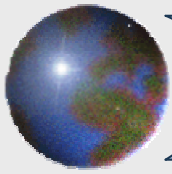
Impact of Evaluation

With few exceptions the respondents were RAMP campus advisors. The lack of response from faculty and policy-level administrators might be explained in two ways:

- **A limited direct role in RAMP.**
- **Many people who were actively involved in RAMP have simply moved on.**

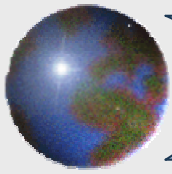


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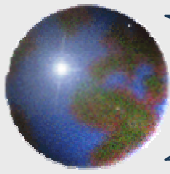
Challenges to Evaluation Process

- **2/3 of the advisors active between 1992 and 1996 had changed jobs.**
- **Well-intended but uninformed responses came from people who came on staff well after 1996.**
- **Student alumni contact information not available.**
- **Career information not accessible from alumni or employers.**

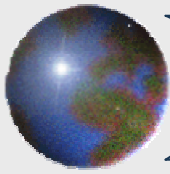


Survey Findings – Campus Staff Feedback

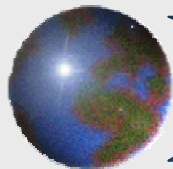
- **RAMP had a strong impact on the international awareness and skills of staff, but minimal impact of faculty and campus-wide administrators**
- **RAMP had a positive impact on institutional support for exchange. This was more the case at smaller institutions that were still developing their international programs.**



- **In larger institutions with already substantial international programs, RAMP seemed to have had less impact on changes in policies and procedures.**
- **The overall advisor response indicated a weak impact on curricular change, but the impact was a bit stronger in the more active institutions.**
- **The “large consortial model” received a fairly strong approval rating 4 out of 5.**



- The largest challenge in evaluation was in reaching RAMP alumni and their employers
- While anecdotal feedback showed the positive impact on a few alumni, we were not able to reach more than a handful, so could not compile meaningful data on RAMP's impact on their career.
- Instead, we joined forces with other organizations to develop a separate survey of US employers to ascertain their general impressions of the value of study abroad.



Complementary Research

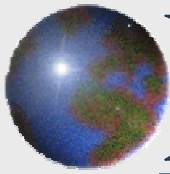
A portion of the RAMP evaluation grant was used to support a complementary research initiative involving the British Council, German DAAD, Australian Exchange Organization, and IIE (conducted by JWT).

The research proceeded on three levels: study abroad alumni, human resource directors, and senior executives.

Alumni responses were consistent with the RAMP anecdotal findings:

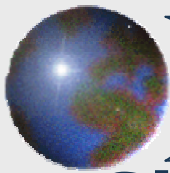
- real gains in cultural understanding**
- applied language skills**
- independence**
- motivation**
- self-sufficiency**

The students came away with a sense that their experience was “job-marketable.”



JWT's "employer" research involved 100 Human Resource directors and senior executives in U.S. companies. The HR directors took a narrower and more functional view of recruitment requirements.

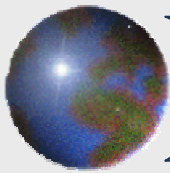
- **They confirmed that international study experience had a distinct impact on students personal attributes and job-related soft skills.**
- **The relevance of international study and cross cultural experience depended on the actual job requirements.**
- **International experience was not a key item for recruiters, although they did seek the "soft skills" which study abroad tends to produce.**



Skills Desired in a BA Degree Candidate

	Overall	National	Global
Interpersonal skills	79%	84%	73%
Relevant work experience/ internship	62%	66%	58%
Majored in relevant subjects	46%	47%	44%
Compatibility with present employees	38%	42%	33%
Independence	28%	27%	29%
A degree from high standard/ reputable school	25%	27%	22%
Good or acceptable GPA	23%	20%	27%
Attendance of high standard/ reputable program	12%	13%	11%
Writing skills	9%	9%	0%
Leadership skills	6%	2%	2%
Internship with our company	1%	2%	0%
Overseas education/ experience	1%	0%	2%
Team work	1%	0%	9%
Other	34%	24%	47%
None	1%	2%	0%
No of Respondents	100	55	45

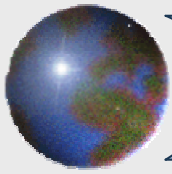
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Importance of Skills when Recruiting a New Candidate

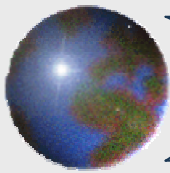
	Overall	National	Global
Compatibility with present employees	8.2	8.3	8.2
Flexibility	8.2	8.3	8.1
Maturity	8.0	8.3	7.8
Ambition	7.9	8.1	7.6
Leadership skills	7.8	8.1	7.5
Their major	7.7	8.1	7.3
Innovation	7.5	7.8	7.2
Independence	7.4	7.7	7.1
Presentation skills	7.4	7.5	7.2
Autonomy	7.3	7.6	7.0
Cultural awareness	7.2	7.2	7.2
The quality/ reputation of the program from which they graduated	7.0	7.2	6.9
Cross-cultural communication skills	6.8	6.9	6.7
The quality/ reputation of the school/ university they attended	6.7	6.8	6.6
Grade point average	6.5	6.5	6.4
The country in which they studied	4.9	5.0	4.9
No of Respondents	100	55	45

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But the challenge is

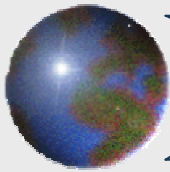
- **Recruiters don't necessarily equate an overseas education experience with the acquisition of these key interpersonal skills as the following charts highlight**



Perceived Benefits/Skills Possessed by Candidates who have an Overseas Study Experience

	Overall	National	Global
Exposed to different cultures more than someone educated in the US	82%	77%	86%
Capacity to bring a more global perspective to our work and projects	49%	42%	55%
More mature and self reliant than someone educated in the US	9%	8%	10%
The education they received overseas was superior to that in the US	4%	8%	0%
Came to the company with a strong network	4%	8%	0%
Less inclined to leave the company to travel	2%	4%	0%
Other	11%	12%	10%
Nothing	6%	4%	7%
No of Respondents	55	26	29

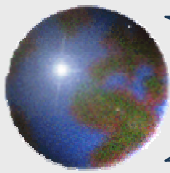
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Do HR Reps Specifically Recruit Candidates Who Have Had Some Overseas Study

	Overall	National	Global
Yes	20%	11%	31%
No	80%	89%	69%
No of Respondents	100	55	45

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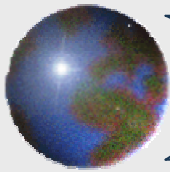


Reasons HR Reps Do Not Specifically Recruit Candidates with Some Overseas Experience

	Overall	National	Global
Overseas experience is not a requirement of the job	46%	45%	48%
Technical skills are more of a priority	20%	18%	23%
Overseas experience is not a priority	20%	14%	29%
Prefer to recruit US students	6%	6%	6%
Overseas experience does not add value	5%	4%	6%
Overseas studies are not transferable	4%	6%	0%
Other	8%	10%	3%
No of Respondents	80	49	31

- **Only includes HR personnel who indicated that they do not specifically recruit candidates with some overseas educational experience**

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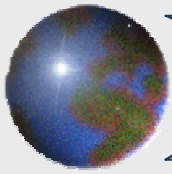


Reasons HR Reps Specifically Recruit Candidates with Some Overseas Experience

	Overall	National	Global
Require cross cultural skills	50%	33%	57%
If job requires it	20%	33%	14%
Require overseas liaison	15%	33%	7%
Other	20%	17%	21%
No of Respondents	20	6	14

- **Only includes HR personnel who indicated that they specifically recruit candidates with some overseas educational experience**

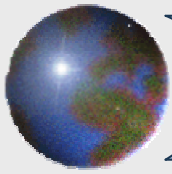
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These findings show that while these employers did not make international experience a priority item, they still recognized what this type of background can bring to a company.

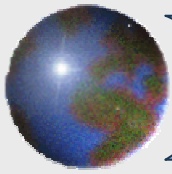


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Why participating campuses remain in RAMP - even after the funding ended.

- **On many campuses , RAMP triggered efforts to secure new grants that provided support for faculty visits and student exchanges.**
- **Advisors strongly agreed with the proposition that RAMP was a catalyst. This was most pronounced on the U.S. campuses that were committed to using RAMP to achieve their international objectives.**

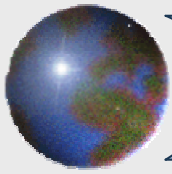


The catalytic effect was stronger among Canadian and Mexican partners who had a strong commitment to internationalization but often lacked the contacts, experience, or funding.

The model seemed to work best for Mexican institutions, where international experience is more highly integrated into academic degree programs.

US and Canadian faculty and students continued to view study abroad as an enhancement, rather than a core component of the undergraduate major.

Feedback from students in RAMP and other North American Mobility programs shows the educational value of these programs, a value which US employers are still slow to recognize.



FIPSE's vision and support, matched by Mexican and Canadian colleagues, has broadened and extended the RAMP concept, making possible the many North American partnerships that exist today.

IIE thanks FIPSE and the participating universities in all three countries for their help in constructing and maintaining a vital and ongoing RAMP to North American cross-border learning.