

Introduced by Senator Migden

January 17, 2008

Senate Resolution No. 18—Relative to University of California study abroad programs.

1 WHEREAS, Study abroad programs are an important aspect of
2 a well-rounded college education because these programs expose
3 students to different cultures and provide them with the necessary
4 tools to understand the increasingly complex problems facing the
5 international community; and

6 WHEREAS, The University of California ~~Education Abroad~~
7 ~~Program (UC EAP) (UC)~~ should not seek to limit study abroad
8 opportunities, but rather should expand them, ~~especially in certain~~
9 ~~regions of the world, including the Middle East, and to assure the~~
10 ~~availability of rich and diverse experiences throughout the world~~
11 ~~that meet student needs and provide academic benefits; and~~

12 WHEREAS, ~~In the 2004–05 school year, only one-half of 1~~
13 ~~percent of United States education abroad participants studied in~~
14 ~~the Middle East, while nearly two-thirds of United States education~~
15 ~~abroad participants studied in Europe; and~~

16 WHEREAS, ~~The UC EAP currently limits its study abroad~~
17 ~~opportunities by excluding all programs in countries with a United~~
18 ~~States Department of State travel advisory, forcing interested~~
19 ~~students to travel abroad on non-UC EAP sponsored programs;~~
20 ~~and~~

21 WHEREAS, *The UC, through the Education Abroad Program*
22 *(EAP), does not offer programs in countries with a United States*

1 *Department of State Travel Warning, requiring interested students*
2 *to travel abroad on sponsored programs, other than EAP; and*

3 WHEREAS, This policy forces interested students to go through
4 unnecessary obstacles, including officially withdrawing from the
5 University of California if they study longer than one quarter,
6 forfeiting any potential financial aid, jeopardizing their readmission
7 to the university, and losing credits since there is no guarantee that
8 they will transfer; and

9 WHEREAS, ~~The existence of a UC should reevaluate the use~~
10 ~~of United States Department of State travel advisory was not~~
11 ~~created Travel Warnings as a gauge to determine the suitability of~~
12 ~~UC EAP programs since many of these advisories are not outright~~
13 ~~travel bans, but rather recommended warnings with differing levels~~
14 ~~of severity; and~~

15 WHEREAS, ~~The UC EAP policy does a disservice to interested~~
16 ~~students by judging potential programs without weighing the~~
17 ~~potential academic benefits against the potential nominal risks of~~
18 ~~traveling in a country subject to a less severe travel warning; and~~

19 WHEREAS, ~~The current UC EAP policy is outdated and is not~~
20 ~~comparable to several study abroad programs of other public peer~~
21 ~~institutions; and~~

22 WHEREAS, ~~The University of North Carolina (UNC) has~~
23 ~~enacted a more flexible, student friendly policy that independently~~
24 ~~reviews programs in countries subject to travel advisories and~~
25 ~~differentiates between less severe advisories that warn of~~
26 ~~heightened risk and more dangerous advisories that restrict travel~~
27 ~~altogether; and~~

28 WHEREAS, ~~This policy prohibits programs in countries under~~
29 ~~the restricted travel category and gives students the option of going~~
30 ~~on UNC sponsored programs to countries under the “heightened~~
31 ~~risk” category only if the interested students sign an additional~~
32 ~~waiver that acknowledges the added risks incurred while traveling~~
33 ~~to these countries and completely releases the UNC from all~~
34 ~~liability resulting from injuries sustained while abroad; and~~

35 WHEREAS, ~~As a result of the UNC policy, the UNC maintains~~
36 ~~active study abroad programs in Israel and Kenya, two countries~~
37 ~~subject to less severe travel advisories; and~~

38 WHEREAS, ~~The University of Wisconsin (UW) has a similar~~
39 ~~policy which requires students to sign additional liability waivers~~
40 ~~that enables the UW to maintain study abroad programs in Kenya,~~

1 ~~Israel, and Nepal, another country subject to a less severe travel~~
2 ~~advisory; and~~

3 WHEREAS, The Associated Students of the University of
4 California, Berkeley and the Associated Students of the University
5 of California, San Diego have passed similar resolutions urging
6 the UC EAP to revise its study abroad policies and reinstate its
7 study abroad program to Israel; and

8 WHEREAS, An online petition in support of reinstating the UC
9 study abroad program to Israel, started by students at the University
10 of California, Santa Barbara, has over 700 signatures and a petition
11 to reinstate the program is currently circulating at the University
12 of California, Davis; and

13 WHEREAS, ~~Failing to revise~~ *Revising* its study abroad policies
14 ~~would negatively~~ *could positively* impact the University of
15 California's position as a leading global institution committed to
16 academic freedom; now, therefore, be it

17 *Resolved by the Senate of the State of California,* That the
18 ~~Legislature~~ *Senate* of the State of California recommends that the
19 UC EAP ~~revise~~ *maximize student opportunities by regularly*
20 *re-evaluating* its policies regarding study abroad programs in
21 countries ~~with less severe~~ *throughout the world, including those*
22 *with* United States Department of State ~~travel advisories~~ *Travel*
23 *Warnings*; and be it further

24 *Resolved,* That the ~~Legislature~~ affirms that the UC EAP should
25 only infringe on a student's decision to study abroad in a particular
26 country if the country is subject to a severe advisory restricting
27 travel altogether; and be it further

28 *Resolved,* That the ~~Legislature~~ *Senate* acknowledges the
29 concerns of the UC EAP regarding students' safety and the
30 university's assumption of liability; and be it further

31 *Resolved,* That the ~~Legislature~~ recommends that the UC EAP
32 enact policies modeled after institutions including the University
33 of Wisconsin and the University of North Carolina, which
34 differentiate between severe and less severe advisories and require
35 students to sign additional documents waiving their right to take
36 legal action against the university in order to study abroad in
37 countries with less severe travel advisories; and be it further

38 *Resolved,* That the ~~Legislature~~ recognizes the recent efforts of
39 the Regents of the University of California to remove all real or
40 perceived barriers to studying abroad in non-UC EAP sponsored

1 countries, including attempting to transfer UC financial aid to
2 non-EAP host institutions, and creating new extended leaves of
3 absences from the university for students who study on non-EAP
4 programs; and be it further

5 *Resolved*, That the Legislature believes that this directive is only
6 a first step toward expanding study abroad opportunities for UC
7 students, and respectfully requests that the UC EAP fully reinstate
8 previously suspended programs that have less severe travel
9 warnings, including programs in Israel and the Philippines, and
10 investigate incorporating new locations, including Kenya and
11 Nepal, into the study abroad program; and be it further

12 *RESOLVED*, That the Senate commends the recent efforts that
13 the regents of the University of California have made to remove
14 all real or perceived barriers to studying abroad on non-UC
15 sponsored programs, including providing UC students with
16 guidance regarding the potential credit status of course work,
17 assuring students access to California and federal financial aid
18 for which they qualify, and assuring that students can re-enter the
19 university without penalty, provided they successfully complete
20 their academic work abroad; and be it further

21 *Resolved*, That the Secretary of the Senate transmit copies of
22 this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.