GUIDELINES FOR SUCCESS

STUDENT EXPERIENCE

IMMERSION & INDEPENDENCE

Design the program with your target audience in mind. Highly structured programs should be geared towards freshman, while seniors should have more free time for purposeful self-exploration.

PACE OF PROGRAM

Programs should allow students time to read, reflect, form connections with their peers, and most importantly learn how to become confident travelers and global scholars. Less time spent in transit means more time for students to develop cultural awareness and knowledge of their host site. Time is a primary resource on short-term programs; use it wisely.

ON-SITE ACTIVITIES

When considering what activities to include, keep in mind that students want to see and do things that the country is known for, but that should be balanced with activities that engage them as learners.

GROUP SIZE

Group size is appropriate for program structure, encourages active participation and personal reflection. Taking a larger group could save money, but it can make students feel removed from the location and hinders deeper connections that are at the core goal of global learning.

LOCATION

LEADER EXPERIENCE

The location should be chosen based on a leader's direct knowledge and experience. In the event that the leader does not have direct experience, there should be a clear purpose for why this location was chosen above others in relation to leader's previous experience and knowledge.

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VIABLE LOCATION FOR STUDENT INTEREST

Has the location been attempted in the past with success? How does the location appeal to MSU students? Is this location a popular travel destination? It is great to push students out of their comfort zones, but students may opt for other destinations if other value is not clearly apparent or relevant to them.

OVERLAP WITH OTHER PROPOSALS

We want to encourage a diversity of program options, otherwise programs will be competing with one another for participants. Diversity is encouraged in relation to the locations, timing, target audiences, and content.

ACADEMICS

LOCATION ENHANCES COURSE CONTENT

The location that the students are exposed to directly enhances the discipline-related content and the learning objectives relate to cultural experiences. Choose program locations and excursions that will lead to the best discussions about your courses, the place, or the people.

CONTACT HOURS

Each credit requires 15 contact hours of instruction. Contact hours can include direct instruction and experiential learning. Experiential learning is considered any guided experience that directly contributes to the learning goals of the course.

CURRICULUM INTEGRATION

Though offering a course as a General Education requirement or elective is acceptable, there is more value to students when the course directly fulfills major requirements.

COLLABORATION ACROSS DISCIPLINES

Does the course meet a major requirement for multiple majors? If the program is open to any major, then collaboration is encouraged. The proposal should indicate how the course would appeal to more than one major or student population.

COURSE SUSTAINABILITY

Course success rate goes up when students know that it is offered on a regular basis and can plan accordingly. For this reason, it is encouraged to offer an existing course. A Special Topics course is acceptable for the first year, but should be made into a permanent thereafter.

PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS

BUDGET VALUE

We strive to make study abroad available to all students, regardless of their backgrounds. Lower cost equals more access, but value for the location, activities and time matter as well. Budgeting in advance is difficult, however the budget that is submitted should be safely realistic, cost sensitive, and utilize the template. All budgets must be for 10 students. Price cannot increase after OSA approves program.

USE OF LOCAL, ON-SITE EXPERTISE

As a way to enhance the student experience abroad, we urge Faculty Directors to partner with affiliated third parties who can provide logistical, academic, and/or student support services. This preferably should be done through Custom Programming by a study abroad provider company, a partner university, a language school, etc. for quality assurance. Affiliated third parties are those in which MSU has a signed MOU. Working with third parties is an important asset in regards to risk mitigation.

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