

Guide to Developing Faculty-led Study Abroad at NCCU

Office of International Affairs (OIA)

The following guide is designed to assist NCCU faculty members who are interested in starting a faculty-led study abroad program. It addresses the key issues that must be considered when developing a faculty-led study abroad program. Faculty members are advised to read through this guide prior to creating and submitting a program proposal to the Office of International Affairs (OIA) for review. All faculty-led study abroad programs must be approved by OIA before any arrangements are made or information is distributed to students.

Feasibility Study

Location

- Is the location popular enough to attract students?
- Does the location match the proposed academic courses and learning objectives?
- Is there a State Department Travel Alert or Warning for the proposed country?
- Are there any health or safety concerns?
- Are there any unique logistical challenges?

Note: University-sponsored travel is prohibited to countries under a U.S. Dept of State Travel Warning.

Time of Year

- Is the program planned at a time when students are on break from regular classes, i.e. summer, winter, spring break?
- Is travel more expensive during the proposed time due to peak travel?
- Are there major holidays during the proposed time that could affect logistics?
- Are the weather conditions favorable during the proposed time, i.e. winter/summer, rainy/dry?

Length

- What length is planned for the program?
- Does the length fit within the proposed time of year, i.e. spring break?
- Does the length allow enough time to earn the proposed number of credit hours?
- Does the program length work well for the intended audience, i.e. traditional vs. non-traditional, undergraduate vs. graduate?

Cost

- What is the estimated cost? Costs should include – OIA \$150/student program fee, tuition and fees, books and supplies, housing, meals, flight, local transportation, activities/excursions, passport/visa/immunizations, HTH insurance, and personal expenses.
- Is the cost comparable to other similar programs? Is the cost excessive?

Note: Eligible students may apply for additional financial aid for summer programs that meet minimum financial aid credit requirements (6 credit hours for undergraduates/4.5 credits hours for graduates), but not for winter break or spring break programs. Due to financial aid disbursement dates, students will likely have to pay program costs out-of-pocket and use financial aid to reimburse themselves.

Logistics

- Has an on-site coordinator/program provider been identified?
- Has an MOU/written contract been established with host institutions/providers?
 - Note: Prior to finalization, MOU's must be submitted to the Office of International Affairs who will review them and submit them to the Chancellor for approval.
- Have housing, meals, local transportation, academic facilities, healthcare facilities, local embassies been researched?
- What are the travel requirements, i.e. visa, immunizations?
- Will air travel be done as a group or will students book their own tickets?
- How will students spend their free time?
- What is the minimum number of students needed to make the program viable? What is the maximum number of students that can be accommodated?

Sustainability

- What is the funding source for the program, i.e. students, grants, academic dept, etc.? Will funding continue to be available?
- Is the lead faculty member able to continue directing program?
- Are there other faculty members willing and able to take over the program/rotate if necessary?
- Are the institutions/facilities abroad able to host future groups?

Site Visit

- Meet with on-site coordinators/providers
- Must conduct an evaluation of:
 - Housing
 - Dining
 - Classrooms, Libraries, Computer Labs
 - Security
 - Surrounding neighborhoods and city
 - Local transportation
 - Nearest embassy or consulate
 - Healthcare facilities
 - Banking options
 - Communication options
 - Excursion options

Academic Considerations

- Has a course been selected? If this is a new course, has it been approved by the academic dept?
- Does the academic standard of the course abroad equal that of courses offered on campus?
- Are there prerequisites? Are they clearly identified?
- How many credits will the course be worth?
- What are the academic goals of the program? Are these goals reasonable given the length of the program and the available resources?
- What method will be used to evaluate the course?
- Who is the target audience for the program, i.e. general student population, specific majors, undergraduate, graduate, etc.? What evidence is there of student interest for this program?
- What is the ideal number of participants needed to create an effective, engaging academic environment?

- What are the academic advantages of holding this course abroad in the proposed country?
- What are the qualifications of the faculty? Does the lead faculty have experience in the country? Has the faculty led students abroad before?

Proposal

As previously stated, a program proposal must be submitted to the Office of International Affairs for review. All faculty-led programs must be approved by OIA before any arrangements are made or information is distributed to students. Following the topic outline below, the proposal should address the issues mentioned in the sections on Feasibility Study, Site Visit, and Academic Considerations.

Program Title
Tentative Program Dates
Course Title

Program Introduction/Overview
Faculty Background and Course Instruction
Course Length and Planning Timeline
Course Credit
Syllabus
Educational Goals and Student Learning Outcomes
Method for Measuring Student Learning Outcomes
Student Responsibilities and Assignments
Housing, Meals, Classroom Facilities, Support Facilities, and other logistics
Excursions and Program Highlights
Budget
Orientation and Preparation Plan

Once a proposal is reviewed and approved by the Office of International Affairs, the lead faculty member and OIA will work together to plan and implement the program.

Suggested Program Development Timeline

18 Months Before Departure

- Feasibility study conducted
- Site visit conducted
- Academic content and credit issues, budget, and logistics considered
- Draft proposal submitted to OIA and Academic Dept for approval/denial

12 Months Before Departure

- Program dates and deadlines finalized
- Budget finalized
- Logistical arrangements confirmed
- Syllabus prepared

9-6 Months Before Departure

- Publicity and recruiting begin

4-3 Months Before Departure

- Students recruited, applications completed, and students selected
- Deposits made
- Space for housing, transportation, group flights (if necessary), etc reserved

90-60 Days Before Departure

- Students registered
- Financial aid need assessed and paperwork completed
- Final payments made
- Travel authorizations and fund requisitions submitted
- Payments to service providers made

60-30 Days Before Departure

- Orientation conducted
- Airline tickets issued
- Payment for HTH insurance made and cards distributed
- Payment for OIA program fee made
- Visa applications submitted and arrival of visas confirmed (if necessary)

Study Abroad Takes Place

Within 30-60 Days After Return

- Grades submitted-immediately
- Evaluations distributed, collected, and reviewed
- Financial reconciliation paperwork submitted
- Reports submitted OIA and Academic Dept.
- Debriefing session completed

Much of the information for this guide was obtained from The Guide to Successful Short-Term Programs Abroad published by NAFSA: Association of International Educators. Last updated 5-20-2010.