

Faculty-Led Study Abroad Development Grant

Setting Goals and Objectives for the Faculty-Led Development Grant

Experience Funded by UC International

Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation & Evaluation

Use this worksheet to help you work through what you as a faculty member designing a program needs to know and think through before, during and after your travel experience. Visiting the location where you will be traveling with students is a key element needed to plan a study abroad program.

PLANNING THE SITE VISIT:

You must consider several factors when arranging a site visit:

- Timing - the timing of this visit should be carefully planned to coincide with dates that the foreign institution is in session in order to collect syllabi, inspect facilities, or observe classes.
- Previous experience in the region - In many cases, it is advisable that faculty members have prior experience with the host country or in conducting site visits in overseas locations.
- Making contact with foreign institutions - There is no formula for an initial contact with a foreign institution or organization. The nuances and culture of the host country and the foreign institution will dictate the approach you should use when making initial contact visits.
- Be as thorough as possible - Bear in mind that thorough site visits provide information that could ultimately make your job easier. While on site, you should gather information to facilitate administrative planning and explore the locale. It is a good idea to utilize a checklist of items that need to be researched and considered while on a site visit.
- When appropriate, cultivate relationships with key representatives in city government and civic organizations. Good relationships with local governments can sometimes produce unexpected, interesting, and memorable program enhancements.
- Establish contact with the nearby U.S. embassy or consulate, and request from the embassy a list of local English-speaking doctors and lawyers.
- Meet with corporate representatives if your program plans to include internships or company visits.
- Meet with any third-party service providers you may wish to use during the course of your program.

ON-SITE PLANNING:

- Collect samples of any important documents or forms, including insurance forms, student forms, and academic forms that students will be required to complete.
- Tour the classroom facilities and examine the equipment that will be available and how the use of these facilities is arranged.
- Make arrangements for space that will serve as a base for the program.
- Determine computer access, including email access and Internet access, and clarify usage policies for faculty and students.
- Inspect the housing accommodations that will be available to students and faculty. Determine any restrictions on the number or type of students that can be accommodated.

CONSIDERATIONS DURING THE VISIT:

Making Contacts in the host country:

- Prior to departure, devise a schedule to meet with appropriate faculty, student services personnel, current participants, and host families, and set up visits to tour facilities such as dormitories, classrooms, etc.
- If possible, meet with a faculty leader of another program currently in session at the site or who has led programs to the same location.
- Selects gifts appropriate for individuals in the host country whom you will meet.

 Inquire about linen services and laundry facilities, meal options, student ID cards, exercise or sports facilities, and communication access at the housing site.

 Explore meal options and make arrangements for meal plans.

EXPLORING THE LOCALE:

 Explore and learn as much of the local area as possible.

 Review local transportation services and plan for any needed transportation upon arrival.

 Explore possibilities for field trip/excursion opportunities.

 Determine the amount of time required for every stage of travel.

 Obtain tourism booklets, city maps, and transit information to give students.

 Locate post offices and inquire about services offered and prices of postage.

 Determine how students will use local telephones, cybercafés, and place calls to the U.S.

 Take note of the costs of food, clothing, entertainment, and public transportation (trains, subways, taxis, and buses).

 Familiarize yourself with the local emergency facilities and services, including medical clinics, hospitals, and police.

 Locate nearby markets, grocery stores, and drug stores.

 Sample food served in local restaurants as well as the host institution's or hotel's meal options.

 Become familiar with the local money exchange and banking procedures (i.e. ATM, credit card advances).

 Take extensive photographs/video footage for publicity brochures and orientation purposes.

 Examine safety and security issues in the area and determine unsafe regions or neighborhoods.

ACCOMMODATIONS

In securing student accommodations, consider the following:

-  Housing options available at the overseas site
-  Logistics of housing arrangements
-  Housing allocation and availability
-  Procedure for addressing complaints
-  Special arrangements that need to be made for certain students

TYPES OF ACCOMMODATIONS

Before looking at accommodations, determine the approximate number of rooms or homestay placements needed before you begin to look for accommodations. Be sure to take into account the gender of participants.

Dormitories

Dormitory space is most often available during the summer when most local students are off-campus, but rooms may also be available on a limited basis for study abroad/exchange students throughout the year.

Advantage:

-  American students may live among host national students.

Consider:

-  Residence facilities with either student cafeterias or self-catering cooking facilities for residents are preferred as they help students cut down on costs.
-  Availability of laundry facilities, computer labs, gym/exercise facilities, phone/computer access, and a linen service is important in making decisions regarding student housing in residence halls.

Homestays

Some programs arrange homestays in which students have single or shared bedrooms and typically are served one or two meals each day. The kind of family with which the participants are placed varies. Families may not be "typical" families and may in fact be single hosts or childless couples.

Advantage:

-  Homestays are generally less expensive than dormitory, hotel, or apartment living.
-  Host families may offer program participants a more intimate cultural experience and, where applicable, a language immersion setting.

Consider:

-  Students will need to follow family guidelines and respect smoking policies, curfews, limits on the use of electricity, hot water, the telephone, Internet, etc.
-  Living with a host family does not guarantee that the student will be included in family activities.
-  Family and student expectations should be clearly outlined before the program begins.

Apartments

Advantage:

- 🌍 Apartments allow students a great deal of freedom and usually include cooking and laundry facilities.

Consider:

- 🌍 There may be other costs associated with apartment living such as security deposits or utilities.
- 🌍 Students renting overseas apartments often have American roommates; therefore, the opportunity to interact with host-country nationals is limited.
- 🌍 Finding apartments for students may prove to be difficult, especially if the duration of the study abroad program is short.

Hotels or Pensions

Advantage:

- 🌍 Students have freedom in selecting their room accommodations (single, double, triple), and often a meal or food service is available.

Consider:

- 🌍 The quality of the hotel or hostel available may differ significantly from US standards.
- 🌍 The number of students per room can vary.
- 🌍 Breakfast or other meals may be included in the cost (common among European pensions).

LOCATING ACCOMMODATIONS OVERSEAS

It is imperative that the housing be in a safe neighborhood, relatively close to the educational facilities, in good repair, and near local transportation.

Elements to consider in evaluation of housing:

- 🌍 Availability of laundry services
- 🌍 Availability of computers, Internet access, and phones
- 🌍 Availability of exercise or sports facilities
- 🌍 Meal plans or food service options
- 🌍 It is important for the faculty leader to be easily accessible to all students, especially if students are housed in various accommodations throughout the area and not centrally located near the faculty leader's accommodations.

PLACING STUDENTS IN ACCOMODATIONS

- 🌍 Housing questionnaires are a useful way to match students with their housing preferences and can be beneficial for homestay arrangements or housing with roommates in dormitories, hotels, pensions, or apartments. Using this type of questionnaire may help cut down on the number of participants who request a change in housing once they are overseas.
- 🌍 Make sure to think about housing for students with health conditions and/or dietary restrictions or students with disabilities. Host families or roommates should be informed ahead of time of any special accommodations that must be made for students.

PROGRAM MEALS

Learning about another country's culture includes experiencing the cuisine. Organized meals should take advantage of the host country culture as much as possible while taking into account the program structure and budget. Ideally, there should be a balance between quality, authenticity, affordability, and convenience. The meal plan you select for your program will be determined by the type of accommodations selected. Host families typically provide students with one or two meals per day. Hotels and pensions rarely provide meals, with the exception of breakfast, and meal options at residence halls will vary. Some dormitories have student cafeterias while others provide facilities where residents can cook their own meals.

Cafeteria plan considerations:

- 🌍 Sample several meals during the site visit.
- 🌍 Make sure that menus can accommodate special diets.
- 🌍 Ensure that meal times will not conflict with classes or other scheduled activities.

Self-catering apartment or hotel considerations:

- 🌍 Investigate whether apartments or dorms have kitchen facilities equipped with necessary appliances and utensils.
- 🌍 If participants will be cooking for themselves, determine the proximity of the housing and the availability of transportation to grocery stores/markets, as well as food prices and availability.

Housing options when there is neither self-catering nor a cafeteria:

- 🌍 Provide one or two meals per day at a local restaurant, and include the cost in the program fee.
- 🌍 Be aware that arranging for meals at a local restaurant may be difficult. In order to find a local restaurant willing to provide student meals, plan on spending a great deal of time investigating this option during a site visit. Network with other program directors and faculty leaders in the area and talk to faculty at local universities for assistance in identifying suitable restaurants.

Routinely allocate money from the program budget to each participant to apply to the cost of meals

- 🌍 A realistic per diem must be established based upon the area's cost of living and the options available.
- 🌍 This amount should be included into program costs in order for students to determine their own personal budgets.

Have students purchase meals using their own money

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-  This amount should be included into program costs in order for students to determine their own personal budgets.

Consider the following in deciding on participant meal plans:

-  The number of meals per day/number of days per week which should be included in the program fee
-  The cost of meals while on program-sponsored excursions
-  Faculty and staff meals
-  Whether the cost of the faculty/staff meals will be paid through students' program fees
-  Whether faculty/staff meal plans will be the same as those provided to students

EXCURSION COSTS

It may be appropriate to include the cost of required trips into the overall price of the program fee. Not only will this inform the students that the program will provide more than a classroom experience, but it will also reduce the likelihood that students will elect not to participate in excursions. If transportation is required, make arrangements during the site visit.

-  Transportation costs
-  Entry fees
-  Guides
-  Meals
-  Housing

EXCURSIONS AND ACADEMIC

Accommodating both the need for cultural immersion and the required number of class contact hours takes some creative scheduling. It is good practice to make the excursions a required part of course work to ensure that students will take full advantage of those experiences. It is not uncommon for faculty leaders to schedule longer class times during the week in order to accommodate a weekend excursion. Deadlines and expectations for assignments regarding field trips - whether these assignments are journals, reports, or major papers - should be clearly explained to students and included in the course syllabus. Well-planned and pertinent excursions should provide a unique opportunity for students to incorporate their cultural experiences into their academic work.

CONSIDERATIONS IN DEVELOPING EXCURSIONS

Begin planning for excursions during site visits. Suggested planning activities include the following:

-  Gather information brochures and a calendar of local events.
-  Consider the possibility of planning uncommon excursions that are not directed toward tourists.
-  Define the underlying purpose for selecting a particular excursion. Why are you selecting a particular museum, site of interest, etc.? If, for example, you intend for students to visit a local

market to learn about local commerce rather than just buy gifts, then that purpose should be clearly stated before the excursion.

-  Determine the number of faculty members who will need to be present throughout the excursion.
-  Decide whether the field trip requires structured organization. Is it necessary to organize transportation, accommodations, and/or meals for the students?
-  Determine the provider for transportation, accommodations, and food services, and when payments for these services will be required.
-  Consider whether participants' program fees should include train passes, bus tickets, entrance fees, etc., for excursions.
-  Make sure that the meeting places, times, and itinerary of the excursion are clearly communicated to participants.
-  Develop a contingency plan to account for variations or substitutions to the itinerary.
-  Establish procedures to communicate with the home campus if there are changes in your emergency contact information.
-  If an excursion is made to a remote location, determine how emergencies will be handled.

FOLLOW-UP

Often, the follow-up can help resolve questions or uncover weaknesses of the program. At the conclusion of the review, an official report of findings and plan of action should be produced. The purpose of the follow-up is to determine whether the program's objectives and the students' interests will be met. The strengths and weaknesses of the program should be described. Budgets and financial procedures should be reviewed. The relationships between institutions and organizations should be a subject of this review as should each of the elements of the program, including the following: