

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
Study Abroad Curriculum Integration

International Education for Undergraduates

ASSESS – MATCH – MOTIVATE

A discussion about study abroad with faculty and advisers

Learning Outcomes and Assessing Curriculum

Identify Learning Outcomes of your Major

“Who” are your students? Describe the students who are attracted to your major.

What do you expect your students to learn as part of their degree?

How do students reach these goals in your program’s current curriculum?

How does your program prepare students for the world of work?

How does your program’s current curriculum prepare students for work and life in a global society?

Assessing Curricula

Use the Geology Degree Plan Exercise

Think about how this example fits for your major, and how your major differs.

Using the Geology example as a template, look at your own major’s degree plan to identify:

1. Foundation or Pre-requisite courses
2. Major Courses
3. Major Electives
4. Breadth Requirements (Gen-Ed)
5. Curricular Categories
6. Sequences
7. Senior Thesis

To the faculty:

Assume that there are programs and institutions abroad that can deliver some of the courses your students normally take on campus. Assume also that programs and institutions overseas can deliver courses and experiences that are related to your discipline, but perhaps are not available on our campus.

Are there some courses or sections of the curriculum that students **cannot** do overseas? Why not?

Are there courses **preferably** completed on campus? Why?

How hospitable is your curriculum to study abroad, and is there some fine-tuning that could facilitate study abroad?

Can students find flexibility in your curriculum to count interdisciplinary coursework towards their major?

Does your curriculum allow students to pursue special areas in your discipline that are not taught on campus?

Matching

Match learning outcomes

At this stage, the study abroad staff should bring study abroad program information, including description and listing of courses available related to the major for each program.

Take time to carefully describe each program and justify why you believe the department should consider recommending the site. Reasons could include your understanding of:

- Potential course matches
- Access to unique resources or topics
- Overall quality of student experience

Also explain the overall philosophy used in choose the full array of recommendations. This could include:

- Geographic diversity
- Developmental range
- Range in program cost
- Different pedagogical approaches

Review Learning Outcomes of your Major and Discuss Program Match

What learning outcomes could these study abroad experiences add to your curriculum?

What do you need to know about the study abroad courses students choose in order to help the student with academic planning?

Who makes decisions in your department about how courses taken through study abroad will count toward requirements?

How does your unit or college track decisions made about how study abroad courses can be used by students in your major(s)?

Discuss process – how to approach “approving” or “recommending” programs. Things to consider:

Should you make a list of recommended programs, and then require students to have courses they choose evaluated on a case-by-case basis?

Are course evaluation decisions always, never or sometimes *precedent-setting*?

Help the department decide how to track these decisions.

Should the department choose a very small set of programs and do ALL of the course evaluations ahead of time?

Would that list be *illustrative* of how study abroad can fit? Or are students *restricted* to only those opportunities?

Given the set of programs that are available and will be recommended to students in this major, are their gaps in the offerings?

Are their topics that the department wish could be covered? How might you work with your program providers to solve this?

Describe your institution’s process for faculty-led or other direct faculty involvement with programs.

Are their faculty in the department who want to be more directly involved? Through short-term programs? Through teaching or collaboration on an existing program? Supervising directed research?

Motivating

Discussion points with the faculty

In your approach to motivating students to study abroad, begin by working from the **5 F's**. You might consider using the 5 F's as the foundation when you and your unit: assess your curriculum for study abroad, design new advising materials and new brochures, update your undergraduate handbooks, speak to new students and their families during orientations or advising sessions or talk with your colleagues about this work.

Fit—Dispel the myth that study abroad is not an add-on to the undergraduate degree. Good planning with an adviser can assure that study abroad coursework fits with the degree program and counts toward major, general education and elective requirements. Send the message to your students that study abroad is an important part of your program. Tell them why it's important.

- *What do you and your colleagues need to do in order to make study abroad "fit" into your undergraduate curriculum?*
- *What and where will be the messages that you and your unit share with your students about the fit of study abroad in their degree programs?*
- *How else will you support the fit of study abroad into your degree programs?*

Finance—Talk with your students about the cost and benefits of study abroad. Study abroad is an investment into their education. Students might not be aware that they are eligible for financial aid to pay for part or all of their study abroad. Students' existing scholarships can be used toward study abroad. Remind students that there is a range of cost options for study abroad. The University and (hopefully!) your unit have significant funds for study abroad scholarships.

- *What will you and your colleagues do to support students who study abroad?*
- *What and where will be the messages for your students about financing study abroad?*

Fear—Present other students who have studied abroad to your new students at orientations or during classes. Encourage returned study abroad students to contribute to class discussions so that they role model for other students. Talk about your experiences abroad. Encourage developmentally appropriate study abroad options to your students. Address safety issues in a rational manner.

- *How else might you help a student overcome their fear of studying abroad?*
- *What can the University do to support students regarding study abroad?*

Family & Friends—Present the benefits of study abroad to students' families. Include messages to parents in your publications about why your unit and the University encourage students to study abroad. Have returned study abroad students speak to parents at orientations.

- *What else do family and friends need to know about study abroad?*
- *What and where will be the messages you and your unit give to family and friends regarding study abroad? What messages should come from the University?*

Faculty—What do your faculty and advisers know about study abroad? Encourage them to support and promote international experiences for the students. Ask faculty and advisers to serve on selection committees. Include faculty and advisers in the Study Abroad Curriculum Integration work. Do any of key players in your unit need to see a study abroad site to understand study abroad better?

- *How will you engage the faculty and advisers in Study Abroad Curriculum Integration?*
- *How should the University engage the faculty and advisers in the process of study abroad curriculum integration?*

Analyze the structures and avenues for communication with students

Describe the current structure, philosophy and strategies of advising undergraduates in your unit.

What are the methods that you use to communicate with your students? What methods does your unit use to communicate with students?

In using the Communications Strategies handout, where and how might you and your unit communicate with students about study abroad?

What specific messages would you communicate to students regarding study abroad?

How will your unit use Portfolio or other web-based advising & communication tools with regard to study abroad?