

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Study Abroad Curriculum Integration

International Education for Undergraduates

Learning Outcomes for Studying Abroad

The following document outlines learning outcomes and some possible reasons for students in your department to study abroad. Departments may use them as a provisional set of program elements that help hone their rationales for education abroad in relation to home campus curricula. The bullets under each learning outcome indicate elements within a program that can help to achieve the particular outcome or set of outcomes. This list is not intended to be exhaustive, please help add to it.

- A. Discipline-specific learning.** Study abroad can permit students to take:
- Courses that supplement the home campus curriculum
 - Courses designed to take particular advantage of local resources
 - Courses that substitute for courses at home in order to allow for study abroad
 - Courses with outstanding local pedagogues, and/or that expose students to different perspectives on the discipline
 - Courses that supplement or substitute home campus curricula, offering access to different pedagogical styles.
 - Courses that have US students learning in discipline-specific courses with host country students
 - Field research projects
 - Discipline-specific internships or voluntary work experiences
- B. Placement of a discipline in its international context.** Many different experiences can help students understand other ways of knowing, other perspectives on disciplinary content and methods, etc., including:
- Instruction by host country faculty
 - Study in the classroom with host country students
 - Study in host country classrooms, laboratories, and workshops
 - Apprenticeships with host country practitioners
 - Research in collaboration with host country researchers
 - Attendance at international meetings and conferences
 - Internships and work experiences
- C. Country/region-specific learning.** Students can learn about another society and culture through such means as:
- Disciplinary or interdisciplinary coursework related to the country or region
 - Coursework on contemporary social mores or on intercultural learning in specific environments
 - Exposure to different educational system
 - Curriculum-related travel
 - Lecture and presentation series by local speakers, performers
 - Fieldwork
 - Internships and apprenticeships

D. Language acquisition. Students can develop or improve language skills through such means as:

- Coursework
- Homestays
- Selection of site to favor immersion
- Conversation partners
- Opportunities for formal and informal presentations in the target language
- Oral Proficiency Inventory testing
- Language pledges
- Community involvement

E. Student development. Study abroad can be transformative for its participants. Among the outcomes often cited are improvement in critical thinking skills, cross-cultural skills and perspectives, tolerance for ambiguity, self-confidence, independence, flexibility, self-knowledge, appreciation of difference, reevaluation of personal values, new direction and skills for job/career path, and new perspectives on American society and culture and on the US role in the world.

- Orientation program
- Intercultural training
- Required journaling
- Opportunities for local engagement, including community service
- Homestays, host-country dorm roommates, or other integrated living situations
- Career-related opportunities
- Re-entry training
- Appropriate mechanisms for fostering independence and self-direction