

December 7, 2016

To: Undergraduate Associate Deans

From: Robert McMaster, Vice Provost and Dean of Undergraduate Education  
Leslie Schiff, Associate Dean for the University Curriculum

Re: Liberal Education certification for U of M instructor-led study abroad courses

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The Office of Undergraduate Education (OUE), in consultation with the Council on Liberal Education (CLE), the Learning Abroad Center (LAC), and the Office of Admissions, has revised the process by which University of Minnesota instructor-led study abroad courses will be certified to meet Liberal Education (LE) requirements. These include U of M courses for credit taught abroad by U of M faculty in a shortened time frame (e.g., spring break, winter break, May term and Summer term). These courses have U of M designators (e.g., HIST, BIOL), and the credit is transcribed as U of M credit. The Learning Abroad Center refers to these courses as “U of M instructor-led learning abroad programs.”

In the past, such courses were reviewed for LE designation by the Office of Admissions, and they were considered to automatically fulfill the Global Perspectives theme if students were abroad for 21 or more days. However, some study abroad courses, particularly shorter term offerings, are designed to maximize a particular content-oriented educational experience and focus less on the cross-cultural global perspectives. These courses often had a clearer affinity to another LE theme.

Effective fall 2018, U of M instructor-led study abroad courses, regardless of length of travel, will be reviewed and certified by the CLE as are other U of M courses. Instructors can propose study abroad courses for the Liberal Education requirement(s) that best align with course content. Study abroad courses may be proposed for a Liberal Education core and/or theme requirement or, in consideration of the unique nature of these courses, they may be proposed for two themes (Global Perspectives plus one additional theme). To ensure the review process is completed in time for course promotion and program development, fall 2018 courses being proposed for LE should be submitted in ECAS by April 1, 2017.

Once a U of M instructor-led study abroad course is approved by the CLE for a theme and/or core requirement, those attributes will be documented in the searchable [U-Credit Abroad Database](#) for students as well as in the class search through MyU. Learning abroad programs taught through other institutions will continue to be reviewed by Admissions, in alignment with the practice for transfer courses (these programs will continue to use the LAC liberal education database, now part of the “U-Credit Abroad Database”).

For more information about entering Learning Abroad courses in ECAS and the LE Proposal Process, [click here](#). Please direct questions regarding this change to Katie Russell (OUE), [russellk@umn.edu](mailto:russellk@umn.edu).