

# Faculty Guide for Developing a Study Abroad Program

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*9 to 12 months in advance of trip*

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## **A. Program Vision & Curricular Issues**

### **How will students receive credit for the international experience?**

- Create a list of academic outcomes for the experience and adjust the goals of trip to achieve the outcomes
- Decide the number of credits to be granted (1 credit per week of travel is a reasonable standard), can combine pre-departure course contact hours and field trip contact hours. *A 3 credit course is the norm.*
- If the course offers letter grade, DVM students can use it to satisfy elective requirements.
- Consider if this course is open for undergraduate students from Animal Science. Many CVM study abroad programs do and offer modified course requirements and hands-on experience for those students.
- Establish prerequisites if appropriate.

### **Develop a rough syllabus for a pre-trip seminar or course**

- Academic background topics so students can appreciate the goals of travel
- Possible basic language instruction if applicable
- Information on what to take, how to pack, and how to act
- Consider using guest lecturers on campus who can add expertise to student preparation, including the ISU travel nurse

### **Identify resources on campus**

- CVM International Programs ([cvmip@iastate.edu](mailto:cvmip@iastate.edu))
- [Study Abroad Center](#)
- Faculty Partners (co-leaders, who know the host country)
- Experienced Program Directors
- Service Providers

### **Identify resources overseas**

- Faculty Partners
- Former Graduate Students/Colleagues
- Host Institution
- Service Providers

## B. Translating Concepts to Reality

### **Begin organizing logistics.**

- You are a general contractor making all arrangements for travel, hotels, buses, etc.
- Contract with a commercial travel agent to provide basics of travel and living and you fill in with more specific instructional activities
- Use contacts at universities or agencies in country and have them set up the entire experience with your input on academic content
- Revisit outcomes of the course and consider the kinds of activities and/or visits that will achieve those outcomes

### **Tips:**

- Look at a map of a country or region to be visited and decide on a travel route (with alternatives) to and through the region, specifying key locations and people to be visited
- Decide on approximate itinerary-- inclusive of dates, cities and events to be visited; anticipated activities and sites to give students a sense of what the trip is about. Try to set some concrete goals for each day, e.g. travel from xxx to xxx; or "to see the interior aspect of a rain forest and to investigate the concept of canopy biology"
- Lay out a tentative itinerary with one third day resolution; do this for morning and afternoon and evening. Set up instructional goals and list in the itinerary. Look at the itinerary and determine what is needed to accomplish goals, e.g. bus from xxx to xxx, guide in forest, and return transport. Pay attention to how you will feed, bed, instruct and transport group during each day. Group meals are nice in some remote locations or when itinerary requires it, other times students can get meals on their own so that they have a chance to mingle in the culture. If the duration of your trip allows, try to balance program time with free time students will have on their own. That way they are more receptive to group activities that follow.
- [Sample Itinerary 1](#)
- [Sample Itinerary 2](#)
- Use the [EAC Program Planning & Approval Form](#)'s budget form to help determine the program fee. It is better to estimate high costs at this point rather than low.
- Do a risk assessment on each phase of trip and review activities for potential liabilities taking steps to minimize. Use licensed carriers where possible. Add these risks to the risk section of the Program Planning Form

### **Then:**

Meet with CVM International Programs Coordinator ([cvmip@iastate.edu](mailto:cvmip@iastate.edu)) to discuss:

- Contents of application form that the students will complete which will assist you in the selection process
- Setting up an account to receive student payments
- Assistance in completing the Program Planning & Approval Form
- Help in advertising

- Information on insurance
- Work out how bills will be paid from trip account

Dates for required submission of proposals are about 9 months in advance of the course traveling abroad. Check the [Education Abroad Committee](#) website. This makes your trip an approved ISU course offering. Seek funding from your department and college to defray some of the course costs. Some programs have received funding from organizations affiliated with the scope of the course.

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*6 to 9 months in advance -Forming the Group*

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### **Recruiting:**

- Work with CVM International Programs to prepare a one-page flyer with a program description, estimated costs, time of informational meeting for students to attend and your email address.
- Go to appropriate classes to advertise the course
- Send a short announcement of the program to departmental colleagues and to appropriate departmental/program communication specialists and post it on appropriate websites.
- All courses will have an electronic brochure created for them as part of the application, the CVM International Programs will create this for all Vet Med programs. It is possible to set up a “virtual” trip by creating a list of links to hotels, museums, cities to be visited. Please share this information with CVM IP so we can refer students.
- All advertising materials should have your email address on it with a note to contact you immediately so that students can be put on an email list for further contact information. As list grows, send periodic announcements to keep students interested.
- CVM IP will assist with organizing informational meetings to advertise the program.

### **Student Selection:**

- Once you have completed the selection of applicants, send a letter of notification of acceptance including information about getting a passport and when you may contact them again with the orientation class meeting date, time, and place.
- Students are registered for pre-departure course by the CVM International Programs after they are accepted and committed to the program.

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*3 to 6 months in advance - Administrative Issues*

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- Contact service providers (hotels, buses, airlines, guide services, etc.) and get firm estimates of costs with amount due to make reservation and date of full payment. Investigate refund policy and latest cancellation dates. Inform students about refund policies and that late cancellations may well forfeit earlier deposits. Always ask about free of charge policy because many hotels will give a free room of leaders if group size is 20. This also applies to airline tickets.
- You may need to make deposits at this time. Advance payments can be made with credit cards (University T&H Cards), wire transfers, or checks. CVM International Programs have resources on making payments.
- Work with CVM International Programs to finalize program budget. The program fee will be added to the students' U Bills by the CVM International Programs. When students pay their bills, money is automatically routed to your study abroad account.
- Consider how you want to evaluate the trip. If you need a baseline, consider doing some pre-trip evaluation during the orientation.

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*4 to 5 months in advance - Pre-departure Orientation*

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- At a minimum, the pre-departure orientation **must** cover health, safety and risk issues. CVM International Programs can assist with this preparation. General travel tips, money issues, local language and cultural preparation are important as well. Technical background will help students develop a context for what they will experience and learn on the trip. You can do this alone or invite in guest speakers. The seminar allows the group to get to know each other and allows you to set the tone and expectations for the trip.
- Previous leaders have built in student ownership by having students complete assignments on trip locations, flora, fauna, geology, weather, politics, economics, and general tourist information. Have the students send links to you and insert in a trip web page or Facebook page that you develop. Some groups have had student "reporters" that take responsibility for weather reports, current events and interesting news from the host country.
- For example, a former international field trips in Biology program director, had students prepare a 10-page research paper with 10 references on some topic that relates to trip. These are called 10 X 10 papers. He suggested topics but was open to students proposing one. One-page outline was due in third week, 6-page outline in 6 week and paper is due about tenth week. Papers are read and commented on and returned to students before end of seminar. Students prepare a 20 to 30 minute talk based on their paper. Talks are delivered on-site in country to group (sometimes with outsiders listening in) at a location that is appropriate to topic chosen, e.g. those choosing a Great Barrier Reef topic deliver their talks on the fore deck of the dive boat during a rest period between dives.
- Share with students your concerns about the trip and have them participate in developing a sensible code of conduct for the trip. Responsibility should be on the

students and not always on the leader. Be sure to address expectations around alcohol and disruptive behavior.

- Layout a detailed itinerary with objectives, logistical information and day-to-day activities. Include phone, emails or links of locations where appropriate. This list can be shared with parents, etc. before you go on trip.
- Arrange extracurricular meetings so that group members can get to know one another. Have a student social committee to plan some games. Use it as an opportunity to share travel tips: packing, communication options, gear to bring, extending trip afterward, etc.
- As trip dates get closer watch currency exchange rates.
- If visas are needed for the country visiting, begin paperwork process for this. One service we have used successfully in the past is Perry Visa International, <http://www.perryvisa.com> if you need a service. CVM International Programs can assist with this as well.

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*1 to 2 months in advance*

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- Prepare an emergency packet of information: Emergency contact information for all students (part of application form); Medical information for all students (part of application form); copy of passport/visa of all participants (can help with replacement if lost).
- Purchase or collect gifts for hosts
- Decide how much cash you will need (university cash advance before trip, or ATM withdrawal in-country).
- Finalize any advance payments, take receipts or confirmation with you
- Consider what your financial needs will be on the trip

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*During Travel*

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- During trips, keep students informed of each day's activities and the goals of those activities through daily morning briefings
- Consider reflection activities throughout the trip to maximize learning
- Keep records on expenditures (keep all receipts, and take blank receipts as well).
- Encourage students to post program experiences on social media and share photos, videos with CVM International Programs for future promotional activities.
- Keep excellent records of incidences.

**Emergencies:**

- In the event of an emergency situation, it is the first responsibility of the Program Director to provide for the immediate safety and security of all participants.
- In the event of an emergency situation, it is the second responsibility of the Program Director to immediately contact CVM Study Abroad personnel.

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*0 to 2 months post trip - Wrapping it up*

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- Submit receipts to appropriate Account Specialist and reconciliation upon return.
- Post photos and comments on appropriate websites or social media sites. Helps to bring closure for group and sets up advertising for next group
- Submit a narrative report that summarizes the trip activities and suggests any changes that you might make for next time. If unexpected risks were encountered describe with suggestions for future minimizations. Be sure to evaluate educational value as well as travel arrangements.