

## INITIAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR PROGRAM LEADERS

**Plan in advance:** Start conversations with your department head, college dean, and study abroad office staff who will be sponsoring the program AT LEAST one year in advance of the target term. Determine whether or not you will require support from Illinois Abroad and Global Exchange (IAGE). Some colleges on campus do have their own study abroad offices or at least designated staff for study abroad, so exploring your options with your college/department first is a good start.

- Proposal deadlines for IAGE's support of faculty-led programs are March 15 for winter programs and July 15 for summer programs being offered the following year.

**Seek support from campus:** If IAGE co-sponsors the program, our staff will lead you through this process, making it as efficient and smooth as possible. Developing and leading a course, especially for the first time, is a serious time-intensive endeavor. Given the amount of time and energy needed to create a program, it makes sense to think of programs that are viable for the long-term. Some things to think about:

- How much time, short-term and long-term can you commit to this endeavor?
- Is the academic idea flexible enough to allow other faculty to "join" in the future iterations of the program?
- Does the program meet a core academic need of the department such that the department would be able to provide faculty/staff participation on a regular basis?

**Prioritize academics:** It is important to consider academic design, instructional delivery methods, desired learning outcomes, curricular mapping and appropriateness, credit allocation and the proposed program's fit with your department's/college's existing education abroad programs. IAGE does not approve or provide guidance on the academic components of education abroad programs. This is entirely the domain of the sponsoring academic unit.

Your program has the greatest chance of success if it fulfills a real need for students and the department, fulfills an academic requirement for students, is open to a variety of majors and levels, and focuses marketing to the right audience. The question to ask yourself is:

- How will this study abroad program enhance the value of students' degrees?
- What learning and potential career outcomes can students expect to gain through participation on the program? What type of program might best help you and your ideal student attain these outcomes?

**Consider course and location:** At least one program leader should have recent firsthand experience in the host country and if applicable, possess host country language abilities. The study abroad course should be integrated with the location. It should facilitate comparative study within the field, and reflect the city, country, culture, significant people and sites, foreign language and more. Do not create your course without the country or the country without the course.

- How will the academic content relate to the chosen country/location?
- Some locations will be more expensive than others and multiple locations will always increase the cost. Are you flexible in where the program is based?
- Does the destination duplicate others offered by the sponsoring unit or college?
- Even if the location is familiar, will the program offer unique opportunities? (i.e. homestay or visits to less touristy locations)

**Decide on course selection and model:** Revise an existing Illinois course to include international content/component OR create a new Illinois course specific to your program. Existing course models include:

- Stand alone summer course (summer tuition will be assessed)
- 2nd 8 week course prior to winter or summer group travel abroad (does not increase tuition; preferred option. Most faculty-led programs use this model.)

**Plan your budget:** Accurate budgeting and affordability is critical to program success. A program can be cancelled because of insufficient enrollment and/or a budget deficit.

- What are ways you can keep the budget financially accessible to students?

**Know your role with recruitment:** The sponsoring study abroad office's role and purpose with recruitment is to provide the program leader support with recruitment material and to focus on a comprehensive recruitment approach, giving all programs equal attention by advertising them as a cohort. It is important that the program leader conceptualizes a recruitment plan for their own program that maximizes contact with the target audience. Program leaders are also encouraged to take an active role in program promotion, such as: join information sessions and promote the program to students directly and via departmental resources.

**Submit a proposal:** Must be done 8-12 months in advance. Selection criteria includes:

- Uniqueness of proposed program (destination, discipline, content, etc.)
- Projected ability to attract students
- Accessibility to students (cost, interdisciplinary, eligibility, etc.)
- Likelihood of program being offered repeatedly
- Field site engagement model facilitating on-site learning and interaction with local peoples
- Integration of intercultural learning with disciplinary content
- Alignment of proposed program with the international priorities of departments, colleges and the university.

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### Important Dates & Deadlines

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COMPONENT	TIMELINE: SUMMER PROGRAMS	TIMELINE: WINTER PROGRAMS
<a href="#">Deadline for program leaders to submit proposal online with IAGE</a>	July 15 the prior year	March 15
Recruitment (ongoing once program has been approved)	August 15 – February 15	April 15 – September 15
Budget and logistics development	August 15 – January 15	April 15 – August 15
Student application management and acceptance	The month leading up to the application deadline	The month leading up to the application deadline
Student Application Deadline	February 15 *Or no later than 2-2.5 months prior to the program's departure date	September 15 *Or no later than 2-2.5 months prior to the program's departure date
On-campus course (if applicable) and pre-departure orientations	Second 8 weeks of Spring semester	Second 8 weeks of Fall semester
Pre-Departure workshops for Program Leaders and Program Assistants	April	October
While abroad	May – August, *Depending on program dates	December – January, *Depending on program dates
Post-program	After program returns	After program returns