



Study Abroad Taxonomy

Definition of Study Abroad

The leading professional organization for study abroad, the Forum on Education Abroad, defines study abroad as “education that occurs outside the participant’s home country.” In addition to engagement in academic courses, this can include such credit-bearing international experiences as work, volunteering, and directed travel, as long as these programs are driven to a significant degree by learning goals.

Purpose of Taxonomy

1. Provide a resource for program leaders to develop and maintain high-quality program design and implementation by:
 - Identifying the key attributes essential for maximizing the overseas experience to enhance students’ intercultural learning
 - Encouraging program leaders to augment the depth and intensity of their program design for each attribute

2. Provide highest-quality learning experiences for students who study abroad

Attributes	High Impact	Higher Impact	Highest Impact
<p>Cultural Expertise: Program leadership has or brings in to the program deep knowledge of host country and culture.</p> <p>(Program development grants are available to provide faculty with funding to travel to the host country and explore local connections.)</p>	<p>Program leaders have previous travel experience in the host country. Program leaders have proficiency in the local language and understanding of the local cultural and historical context or has local collaborators who bring this expertise to the program.</p>	<p>Program leaders have previous travel experience in the host country, proficiency in the local language, and a deep understanding of the local cultural and historical context. Leaders have local contacts in the host country.</p>	<p>Program leaders have previous travel experience in the host country, fluency in the local language, and a deep understanding of the local cultural and historical context. Leader has a network of local partners in the host country.</p>
<p>Immersion: Diversity and depth of interaction and dialogue with local community members.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Local instructors or guest speakers infuse local expertise into course - Coursework with local students - Required extracurricular activities of a social nature with locals - Structured service/research/internship project working alongside locals - Host families/local student roommates 	<p>Program design includes at least one activity which requires students to interact directly with a local community member in a meaningful way.</p>	<p>Program design requires students to have ongoing connection with host country nationals through one program element or exposure to multiple experiences with host country nationals of a limited duration.</p>	<p>Program design requires students to have ongoing connection with host country nationals through multiple means.</p>

<p>Intercultural Learning: Integration of cultural learning with discipline-specific content. Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dimensions of Global Learning - Local history and culture 	<p>Program design and implementation include at least one concrete student intercultural learning outcome that is stated in the course syllabus.</p>	<p>Program design and implementation include multiple concrete student intercultural learning outcomes that are stated in the course syllabus.</p>	<p>Program design and implementation place equal emphasis on intercultural and discipline specific learning outcomes that are stated in the course syllabus.</p>
<p>Student Learning Assessment: Assessment of intercultural learning outcomes</p>	<p>Intercultural learning outcomes are assessed in an informal way.</p>	<p>Intercultural learning outcomes are assessed using a formal metric.</p>	<p>Intercultural learning outcomes are assessed using a formal metric and are factored into a student's grade.</p>
<p>Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: Program intentionally encourages and supports students from all backgrounds</p>	<p>Diverse abilities and identities are considered when selecting program facilities and logistics. Participants are encouraged to research climate and resources as it relates to their individual identities in the host community. Program is promoted to participants of varying backgrounds. Orientation addresses different identities and needs, and participants are supported as they transition into the experience abroad.</p>	<p>Program facilities and logistics are designed to include participants with diverse abilities and identities. Program leaders research potential opportunities and challenges for participants of different identities in the host community. Program leaders actively seek out and encourage underserved and underrepresented participants. Orientation addresses different identities and needs, and participants are supported as they transition into the experience abroad. Program includes a discussion of marginalized groups in the host community.</p>	<p>Program facilities and logistics are designed to include participants with diverse abilities and identities. Program leaders research potential opportunities and challenges for participants of different identities in the host community. Program leaders actively seek out and encourage underserved and underrepresented participants. Orientation addresses different identities and needs, and s participants are supported as they transition into the experience abroad. Academic program and activities abroad intentionally include perspectives and histories of marginalized groups in the host community.</p>

<p>Ethical Community Interaction: Program connects with host country institutions and individuals and the impact of the program on local community is considered.</p>	<p>Program interacts with host country institutions and is respectful of established rules and policies. Program prepares students to interact in culturally sensitive ways with local community members.</p>	<p>Program leader consults with local partners on community impact, program design, and program evaluation. Program provides students with an understanding of the cultural context which enhances their interaction with host country nationals.</p>	<p>Program is developed in conjunction with local partners with equal consideration to student learning and impact on host community. Program leader has ongoing conversations with overseas partners to assess community impact. Program provides students with a deep understanding of the cultural context which allows them to interact meaningfully with host country nationals.</p>
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<p>Reflection: Inclusion of critical reflection in course design which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Generates questions - Challenges assumptions, compares alternative perspectives - Examines causality - Explores theory and practice - Contextualizes community setting and students' roles within it - Connects to specific learning objectives - Communicates the value of cross-cultural understanding in today's interconnected world 	<p>The program leader asks students, on a limited basis, to create reflective products about the intercultural experience, usually at the end of the program. The program leader provides feedback which encourages students to think more deeply about their experience and the meaning that they make from it.</p>	<p>The program leader structures reflection activities and products about the international experience that connect the experience to academic content, require moderate analysis, and lead to new action. The program leader provides timely, ongoing feedback which encourages students to think more deeply about their experience and the meaning that they make from it.</p>	<p>The program leader builds student capacity to critically reflect on the relevance of the international experience to academic content, analyze sociocultural issues, recognize systems of power, understand their place in the world, all of which lead to a sense of responsibility as a citizen of the global community. The program leader provides timely, ongoing feedback which encourages students to think more deeply about their experience and the meaning that they make from it.</p>
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<p>Duration: Program length meets high academic standards and allows students to build meaningful connections with local community members and to develop a deep understanding of local cultural context.</p>	<p>Program is the minimum sufficient length to achieve the stated intercultural and disciplinary learning outcomes.</p>	<p>Program is a sufficient length to achieve the program's intercultural and disciplinary learning outcomes and allows students to explore the culture independently.</p>	<p>Program is ample length to achieve its intercultural and disciplinary learning outcomes and allows students to explore the culture independently and make deep connections with the host community.</p>
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<p>Orientation: Program prepares students for cultural adaptation; logistical necessities; safety, health, and security considerations; and course and program structure.</p>	<p>Program requires students to participate in one pre-departure and one onsite orientation which prepare students to adapt to the new cultural environment; logistical matters; health, safety, and security considerations; and course overview.</p>	<p>Program offers one or more predeparture sessions which provide an overview of the historical, political and social context of the host community and prepare students for cultural adaptation; logistical matters; health, safety, and security considerations; and course plan. At least one onsite orientation is offered which helps students navigate their new physical setting, reinforces safety and security considerations, and contextualizes the cultural environment of the host community.</p>	<p>Program offers a series of pre-departure sessions which provides a deep grounding in the historical, political and social context of the host community and prepares students for cultural adaptation; logistical matters; health, safety, and security considerations; and course overview. At least one onsite orientation is offered which helps students navigate their new physical setting, reinforces safety and security considerations, and contextualizes the cultural environment of the host community.</p>
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<p>Re-Entry Engagement: Program facilitates the transition back to students' home cultures and encourages them to maintain connections, share their experiences, and make lifestyle changes.</p>	<p>Program leader discusses with students the expected challenges faced when returning home. Program leader encourages students to maintain contact with their peers and host community as well as share their experiences abroad with family and friends upon return.</p>	<p>Program leader discusses with students re-entry into one's home culture which includes reverse culture shock, reflection on the international experience, and lessons learned. Program provides a structure to maintain contact with both the host community and peer group. Program encourages students to share what they have learned from their time abroad with the broader community.</p>	<p>Program leader organizes a structured discussion for re-entry into one's home culture which includes reverse culture shock, reflection on the international experience, lessons learned and potential impact on future decisions and lifestyle choices based on this new information. Program provides a structure to maintain contact with both the host community and peer group. Program provides organized opportunities for students to share what they have learned from their time abroad with the broader community.</p>
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<p>Health, Safety, and Security: Program leaders carefully consider the wellbeing of all connected to a program and appropriate measures are executed.</p>	<p>Only high intensity is acceptable.</p>	<p>Only high intensity is acceptable.</p>	<p>As described in the Forum on Education Abroad's Standards of Good Practice – Program leader is informed on potential health, safety, and security issues as they relate to the program site and activities. An emergency plan is established specific to the program and location. Students are properly prepared to identify and avoid hazards and are empowered to take responsibility for their wellbeing. Appropriate insurance is in place.</p>
<p>Program Evaluation and Continual Quality Improvement: Leaders seek feedback from students and local partners and use that information along with their own observations to redesign program as necessary.</p>	<p>Program evaluations are collected from students. Program leader has conversations with local partners about the strengths and weaknesses of the program. The program leader considers this information while planning future offerings.</p>	<p>Program leader seeks input from students through evaluations. The evaluation is intentionally designed to capture information related to the quality and effectiveness of the program. Program leader has conversations with local partners about the strengths and weaknesses of the program and impact on the partner and community. During the program, the leader considers the current structure and effectiveness of the program and is alert to opportunities for enhancement. The program leader adjusts the program based on this information while planning future offerings.</p>	<p>Program leader seeks input from students on the quality and effectiveness of the program through evaluations, discussions, and reflective exercises. Program leader has in depth conversations with local partners about the strengths and weaknesses of the program, impact on the partner and community, and effect of the international experience on the students and their learning. Throughout the program, the leader is constantly considering the current structure and effectiveness of the program and alert to opportunities for enhancement, making intentional modifications in future offerings.</p>
<p>For language learning programs - Linguistic immersion: Addresses linguistic demands of host country and program model such that students are able to communicate with the local community.</p>	<p>Course work and program activities take place in the target language appropriate to the students' incoming language proficiency. For students at lower proficiency levels, program may not take place completely in target language.</p>	<p>Course work and program activities take place completely in the target language appropriate to the students' incoming language proficiency. Program includes at least one structured opportunity to use target language outside of the classroom.</p>	<p>Course work and program activities take place completely in the target language appropriate to the students' incoming language proficiency. Program includes ongoing structured opportunities to use target language outside of the classroom. Students commit to using the target language at all times.</p>

For non-language learning programs in non-English speaking countries - Linguistic Preparation: Addresses linguistic demands of host country and program model such that students have a basic ability to communicate with local individuals.	Orientation includes basic language preparation such as greetings, introductions, common questions, and dealing with emergencies.	Orientation includes basic language preparation such as greetings, introductions, common questions and dealing with emergencies. The program includes optional, additional language instruction.	Orientation includes basic language preparation such as greetings, introductions, common questions and dealing with emergencies. The program requires supplemental language instruction.
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References

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Created by:

Stephanie Leslie, Director of Study Abroad, IUI
 Kevanne Monkhouse, Assistant Director of Study Abroad, IUI

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