

## VITERBO STUDY ABROAD PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT GUIDE

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### PROGRAM DEFINITION

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A Viterbo sponsored, short-term faculty-led program:

- Provides a study experience off-campus, typically outside of the United States
- Is led by two Viterbo faculty, staff, or administrative members of each gender, per the Viterbo University Travel Policy
- Involves a group of ten or more students going to the same location for the same time period, less than a semester in duration, but for at least 1 week
- Allows students to earn Viterbo credit by taking a Viterbo course for a letter grade, listed on their transcript, and included in their GPA
- Is supported by the Viterbo Study Abroad Office

### PROGRAM LEADER RESPONSIBILITIES:

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Program leaders wear many hats: instructor, logistics coordinator, student support (both academically and personally) and at times disciplinarian. Program leaders should be comfortable taking on all these roles in order to lead a study abroad program.

At least one program leaders should have:

- First-hand, specifically relevant experience in the country/ies involved to achieve the goals of the program and ensure the health and safety of participants.
- Academic expertise in the content areas covered by courses for which credit will be awarded

All program leaders should have:

- First-hand, specifically relevant experience to achieve the goals of the program and ensure the health and safety of participants
- Organizing and planning skills, and the ability to keep track of a number of details simultaneously
- Recruitment techniques, enthusiasm, and willingness to promote the program
- Good health to handle the physical and emotional demands of the program
- Leadership qualities and willingness to take charge in any situation where students need to be directed rather than consulted
- Appreciation for the increased contact with students that is inevitable in a study abroad setting
- Time to devote to the development of the program and all of its processes
- Willingness to adhere to Viterbo's policies, procedures and code of conduct, host institution policies (if applicable), U.S. and host country laws

Program leader responsibilities:

- Be familiar with the Study Abroad website and the resources available to faculty members interested in developing a short-term, faculty-led program

- Communicate with a faculty member that has led a Viterbo-sponsored study abroad program in the past to gain insight and knowledge of the program development process
- Allow sufficient time to develop the program. A study abroad program typically takes 12-24 months to fully implement and complete
  - Long lead time is also necessary because it allows for departments to plan accordingly for the scheduling of course rotations and prospective students to be able to factor participation in the courses into their schedules for the following year
- Develop the proposed study abroad program
  - Collaborate with the Study Abroad Office to develop an affordable, self-supporting budget, marketing materials, additional student application guidelines, itinerary details including travel and accommodation, meals, excursions, arrangements, and more
  - Program leaders may find the need to use on-site agencies, partner universities, and other support services to help make all in-country arrangements
- Market the program to prospective students with accurate and complete information
  - Announce the program in classes, share information with colleagues to share with their classes, discuss the program with advisees, and keep a running list of interested students
- Follow the Study Abroad Office's application procedure, which complies with Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and other higher education regulations
- Review student applications in coordination with the Study Abroad Office. Follow the steps of accepting and denying applicants
- Comply with Viterbo's policies on purchases and contracts
- Serve as onsite advisor for students (mental health issues, medications, sexual harassment, student conduct, cultural adjustment, crime, emergencies, etc.)
- Manage on-site finances and receipts according to [university travel](#) and accounting policies

### **STUDY ABROAD OFFICE RESPONSIBILITIES:**

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The Study Abroad Office assists program leaders with managing program specifics and with the overall coordination of the program, including but not limited to:

- Consult extensively with program leaders during the program development process
  - Work to develop a self-supporting budget, marketing materials (program flyers, inclusion of program on study abroad website, social media, study abroad fair, and informational meetings) additional student application guidelines, itinerary details including travel and accommodation, meals, excursions, and more
- Design, distribute, and collect all necessary forms from students (i.e. application forms, liability waiver, program payments, and health and safety information)
- Review student discipline records for all participants
- Assist leaders with students who have disability or conduct records
- Ensure the availability of funds, which will cover program expenses
- Coordinate with Viterbo offices to review and approve of program invoices, contracts, and payment with overseas vendors
- Assist program leaders in developing program safety assessments
- Register students with the Department of State's Smart Traveler Enrollment Program
- Monitor world events and U.S. State Department reports on program location safety
- Provide all students with a pre-departure orientation
- Provide program leaders with a pre-departure orientation
- Process expense reconciliation with the Business Office after the program has concluded

- Monitor and notify program leaders and students of any risks associated with host country
- Coordinate university response in the event of an emergency
- Provide overall guidance and help throughout the study abroad program process

## **STUDY ABROAD PROGRAM COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GOALS:**

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### Course Requirements:

- The academic rigor of the program course must meet Viterbo standards. Assessment of student performance should compare favorably with the assessment of a similar course offered at Viterbo.
- Formal classroom instruction is typically based on the same formula used for regular Viterbo classes: one credit per each 15 hours of formal instruction or 45 contact hours for a three-credit course.
  - Credit requirements can include guest lectures and documented, organized experiential activities that support the class work (e.g. excursions, field trips, museum visits, as well as organized language lab or computer lab activities).
  - Time traveling to and from experiential activities is not included in this calculation.
  - The concept of learning by osmosis (living abroad for a period of time) is not a sufficient basis for awarding credit.
  - Exceptions must be approved by the Dean and/or the Vice President for Academics.
- Specific educational objectives of the program should be clearly stated in the program proposal and literature, including how the course connects with Viterbo's mission and academic portfolio.
- A course need not but may be modeled after a course the faculty member normally teaches on campus. A variety of configurations are possible;
  - Restructuring of an existing course such that part of the contact hours are offered during the student's spring break or after the end of the normal semester in a cross cultural immersion experience.
  - Creation of a special topics course taught with part of the contact hours offered in an immersion experience after or during the regular semester.
  - A summer school offering (more cost prohibitive for students as students need to pay summer tuition rates on top of program travel fees).
- The program should combine academic learning with cross-cultural experience and be designed to make extensive use of the physical, human, and cultural resources of the host environment. Field trips, site visits, and other cultural activities integrated into the course material should provide an in-depth view of the host country in order to enhance the classroom experience.
- Programs will be evaluated regularly by participants, program administrators, instructors, and the Study Abroad Committee to determine the extent to which program objectives are being met.
- Given the amount of time and energy put into these programs and for the purpose of providing a consistent list of programs to our students, the Study Abroad Office encourages programs to run every other year. Some programs may be eligible to be offered every year, based on demand.

### Study Abroad Goals:

- Cultural Self Awareness
  - Students demonstrate an awareness of how their values differ from those of another race, ethnicity, gender, religion, age, cultural grouping
- Knowledge of Cultural Worldview Frameworks
  - Students articulate the underlying values and world view present in a culture outside of the one in which they have grown up

- Students integrate the historical, social, religious and economic roots of the culture being studied and illustrate how these shape current day issues/challenges facing a particular country/culture
- Empathy
  - Students evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of their own culture and society taking the perspective of someone from a different culture
- Verbal and Non-verbal Communication
  - Students show improvement in the use of a second language to meet their elemental needs (if applicable)
  - Students recognize and use appropriate non-verbal communication methods of the culture in which they have been immersed
- Curiosity
  - Students show an increase in the number of questions and interactions with individuals from the host country
- Openness
  - Students demonstrate an ability to withhold judgment of difference

### **STUDY ABROAD PROGRAM LOGISTICS TO CONSIDER:**

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#### *Program Providers*

Many faculty-led programs use universities or other provider organizations abroad to provide services ranging from language instruction to housing to tour coordination. Such organizations allow faculty leaders to focus on the academic components of their program while the provider organizes housing, classroom space, and any excursions or activities you may request. Working with such providers simplifies the program development process immensely. This often does come at a higher cost, and may require larger group sizes. The Study Abroad Office would serve as the liaison between faculty leader and provider organization to facilitate contracting and payment.

#### *Accommodations*

Program leaders should review the [Viterbo Travel Policy](#) to ensure all guidelines are followed and/or met. Accommodation in hostels or hotels is most convenient for faculty-led programs, with double-occupancy rooms being the norm. Accommodations vary widely among faculty-led programs, with certain types lending themselves more to certain program models.

The Study Abroad Office works with many provider organizations which are able to arrange housing or recommend a housing provider. Program leaders are not encouraged to make housing arrangements on their own.

#### *Meals*

Programs are not required to provide meals, though including a few group meals, such as a welcome and farewell dinner, can help build cohesiveness in your program. Making use of lodging that includes some or all meals can help reduce the overall cost of a program to students and ensures they are eating enough and at scheduled intervals (e.g. breakfast is included in the cost of many hotels outside the United States). If the program will not include some meals, the program leader should know how/where students will get their meals.

#### *Excursions*

Excursions and field trips are an integral part of a faculty-led program and a description of those you wish to organize should be detailed in the program proposal. Costs for excursions will need to be budgeted into the program, including research on transportation, lodging, and admissions costs related to excursions. Excursions should be relevant to the purpose of the program, and be realistic in terms of time, distance, and cost.

### *Airfare*

Program leaders give the Study Abroad office desired times and dates of travel and the Study Abroad Office will liaison with their travel agent to coordinate and purchase the group airfare. Administrative approval is needed for programs wishing to opt out of group airfare. Frequent flyer miles may not be used to purchase airfare or upgrades (for students or program leaders). Due to time constraints, all programs traveling during spring break will be required to purchase group airfare. To save costs, international flights are commonly scheduled to depart from the following locations: Minneapolis, MN, Rochester, MN, Madison, WI, or Chicago, IL. Transportation to and from the airport selected must be included as part of the program budget.

### *In-country expenditures*

It is the goal of the Study Abroad Office to pay as many invoices in advance of the program's start date as possible. This decreases the need for program leaders to carry unnecessary money in the form of a travel cash advance. The Study Abroad Office recommends using an international pre-paid debit or credit card to make in-country purchases. Tracking payments, exchange rates, international fees, etc. is much easier in this format. During the program, leaders must obtain all receipts/invoices for any payments they make. These receipts/invoices should be as complete as possible, and include the name of vendor, description of item/service provided, cost of item/service, date, and method of payment. A travel expense report will need to be completed upon completion of the program.

### *Permits and Visas*

Many countries now require visas for short-term stays, and some require special permits for field research or group activities. Any requirements of this nature should be investigated during the initial planning for the program and necessary costs for the program leaders and be built into the program budget.

### *Final Considerations*

In an effort to help maintain a diverse range of program options for students, the Study Abroad Office recommends program leaders keep the following in mind as they design their new program:

- Safety is the number one concern of the Study Abroad Office at Viterbo.
  - Traveling to countries on the State Department Travel Warning List is typically not permitted. Exceptions can be made with approval from the Vice President for Academics, the Executive Vice President for Student Success, and/or the President.
  - Traveling to countries on the Center for Disease Control website, with a level 3 warning is typically not permitted. Exceptions can be made with approval from the Vice President for Academics, the Executive Vice President for Student Success, and/or the President.

- Viterbo officials have the ability to cancel any program at any time due to safety concerns, even if the country destination is not on either of these lists.
- New programs should complement, rather than compete with, existing Viterbo programs.
- Less-traditional sites should be considered.
- Program costs should be kept as low as possible.
  - Students participating in a spring program with summer travel or a summer program, are not only paying an additional cost to study during the summer, they are also (in most cases) giving up some if not all potential summer income from full-time work.
- Financial aid is key to our students
  - In order for financial aid to be applied in the summer students must take a minimum of 6 credits. Ideally, summer programs should either offer the option of earning 6 credits during the program itself, or should be scheduled to fall within one summer session, so that students can take additional courses during the remaining summer session.
- Carefully consider your program curriculum.
  - Students are usually looking to fulfill major/minor/general education requirements in order to justify the additional expense of studying abroad.
- Post-program Debrief
  - It's important to continually analyze and review programs after they have been completed.
  - The Study Abroad Office will reach out to program leaders shortly after the program has completed to set up a debriefing meeting.
  - Student debrief is also a key step that is often overlooked. Resources about post-program debriefing can be retrieved from the Study Abroad Office.

### **STUDY ABROAD ALUMNI AND NON-STUDENT POLICY:**

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Viterbo sponsored study abroad programs are intended for current Viterbo students. Exceptions may be made in rare circumstances. All exceptions must be approved in writing from the Study Abroad Office, Dean, and Executive Vice President for Student Success.

Due to the immense curricular, coordination, and advising responsibilities program leaders have during their study abroad programs, family of program leaders may not participate in the program they are leading.