**STUDY ABROAD SELF ASSESSMENT**

**Participating in a study abroad program is the experience of a lifetime and selecting the most appropriate program for your needs is very important.**

It is important for you to choose an appropriate program to get the most out of your international experience. Programs have distinctive characteristics, like students, and it is important to find the right “match” between you and a program. Since there are a variety of program types, structures, locations, and requirements, it is worth the taking the time to find a program that meets your individual academic and personal needs. This “self-assessment” is meant to encourage you to reflect on your personal circumstances, assess your priorities, determine your academic and personal objectives, and identify your constraints so you can consider your study abroad options more critically. By taking the self-assessment seriously, you will ensure the best possible international experience.

**It’s about finding the program that works best for you!**

* Where do **you** want to go?
* What do **you** want to study?
* What kind of housing do **you** prefer?
* What is **your** budget, and which program is most cost effective for **you**?

**What to consider while looking**

 Academic program Costs

 Location Timing

 Extracurricular Activities Accommodation

 Level of Support

**I want to study abroad (Check all that apply)**

* To learn a new language To advance my foreign language skills
* To study something within my major To study something new

 To experience a new culture To travel

 To travel with friends To do an internship

 To engage in Service-Learning To meet new people

 To learn To have fun

 Because my major requires me to To get out of my comfort zone

 To make a difference So I am not left out

 To set myself apart To gain independence

 To mature as a person To make my résumé look better

 To be more competitive in the job market Other

If you checked “Other” list the reason\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

***The Number One Reason I want to Study Abroad is:*** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

***I am most excited to study abroad because:***

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***My biggest fear or concern with studying abroad is:***

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***My expectations for studying abroad are:***

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Language(s) I have studied or speak: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

***Speaking Skills Writing Skills Listening Skills***

O Non-Existent O Non-Existent O Non-Existent

O Beginner O Beginner O Beginner

O High-Beginner O High-Beginner O High-Beginner

O Low-Intermediate O Low-Intermediate O Low-Intermediate

O Intermediate O Intermediate O Intermediate

O High-Intermediate O High-Intermediate O High-Intermediate

O Awesome O Awesome O Awesome

**Questions to ask yourself…**

**Academic**

* What kind of classes do you **want** to take abroad?
* What kind of classes do you **need** to take abroad?

- For your major, minor, electives, general studies?

- Do you know how many of each you can take?

* Do you need to take classes in English? Or can you take classes in the host country’s language?
* Are you interested in learning a new language or improving upon existing language skills?
* Do you want to go to a school that’s well known in a particular field?
* Who do you want to take classes with - locals, international students, other Americans, Metro only students?

**Location**

* Would you prefer to live in a large city, medium city, town or village?
* What type of climate do you prefer?

- Hot or Cold Temperatures? Humid or Dry Environments? Mild or extreme weather?

* What kind of topography do you prefer?

- Mountains, plains, deserts, oceans, jungles, etc?

* What living environment do you prefer?

- Cosmopolitan? Suburban? Rural?

* Do you feel comfortable using public transportation?
* What kind of living situation are you looking for? (Remember – not all choices are available in every country, and each has advantages and disadvantages.) Choices include:

- Dorm/ Residence Hall? Home stay (living with a host family)? Apartment (either found on your own or with help from the University/program)?

* Do you want to be in a location that caters to American and International Students? Or someplace where there are not many international students?
* Do you want to become a “specialist” in one location (language and culture and history and current events) or do you want a comparative perspective of several different places and perspectives?

**Personal**

* Are your parents/spouse/children/friends supportive of your decision to study abroad?
* How long have you ever been away from “home” before, away from family and friends?
* Are you mentally prepared to deal with long distance relationships (with significant others, friends, and family) and the fact that these relationships may change, and/or things may be very different when you get back home?
* How much structure and support do you need from a program?
* Are you a self-starter, outgoing, and self-motivated, experienced in exploring new/different situations?
* Have your friends or family ever called you “high maintenance”? Do you have a high level of attention to conveniences, personal appearance, the newest fads or specific activities?
* Do you prefer functioning in a group with leaders and/or guides making decisions for you and being surrounded by others much like yourself?
* What type of leisure activities do you enjoy? What do you do with your “free-time”?
* What type of extracurricular and cultural activities do you want to engage in while abroad? (Examples: joining a sports team, taking an art class, doing community service, being involved in the Student’s Union, etc.)
* What are the hidden reasons why you want to study abroad? (Examples: helping to get a post-graduate job abroad, not letting your parents down, meeting people’s expectations, getting away from people/ a person at home, backpacking through Europe, etc.)
* Do you have any physical limitations, mental health issues, or learning disabilities that may affect your study abroad experience? Have you thought about what you’ll need to do/ what arrangements you’ll need to make before you leave? Are the accommodations you require available on your program?
* How might your race and ethnicity impact your study abroad experience? Will you be part of the majority or minority abroad, and how is this different from what you experience at home?
* How open do you want to be about your sexual orientation and/or gender identity while abroad?
* Are you prepared to live with fewer/none of our normal amenities (depending on where you study)? This includes: fast internet or any internet at all, cheap phone service, safe tap water, microwaves, your own bedroom, laundry facilities, etc.
* Have you ever traveled before? Outside the U.S.? If yes, how long and where?
* Are you ready to live in and be respectful of a culture that may be very different from the U.S.? This includes different views of social norms, gender relationships, privacy, personal space, hygiene, fashion, etc.

**Financial**

* What is the total cost of studying abroad – what does a program fee include?
* How much do you need for personal spending?
* Can you use financial aid?
* What scholarships or grants are available for your program?
* How can you start saving money now?

***Lastly*…** are you really ready to LIVE in a foreign country for 1 month – 1 year?

Have you thought about how to strike a balance between traveling and living in your host city? Have you thought about what challenges you’re going to face, and how you’ll overcome them? Are you ready for an experience that could change your life?!

Last Updated: Aug. 24, 2021