

The Role of Global Teaching & Learning

Course taught off-campus must meet all the academic requirements of any college course. Learning outcomes come first, and your course is expected to integrate the location into the syllabus. Your aim should be to infuse every lesson with the culture, history, or significance of your location.

Consider the following as you begin to plan your program:

- How can the class be taught abroad differently than in a campus classroom?
- How is the course connected to the location? If it is not, will you sacrifice the course or the location?
- How can global learning enhance the goals of experiential education?

Experiential education infuses direct experience with learning; its aim is to increase knowledge, develop skills, clarify values, and develop students' capacity to contribute to their communities.

Facilitating Global Learning

CCSA Custom Global staff provides years of experience in developing, leading and assessing off-campus courses; both international and domestic. CCSA Custom Global programs are a shared responsibility and your primary task is to design and teach the best course possible. The CCSA Custom Global team's task is to provide the administrative support you need to teach the course you've designed.

From the years of expertise at your disposal, these proven practices are important to consider as you design your course.

- Being a faculty leader does not require complete understanding of the host culture. You should be willing to discover together with the students, willing to learn, prepared to give up your own stereotypes and discomfort, and be willing to admit when you don't know the answer. Searching for answers together can create a positive learning experience for all involved.
- Many, if not all, of your students will be visiting your program destination for the first time. Take advantage of their fresh perspective, and be aware that students will notice many aspects of the culture or location of which you are already aware. Students will be surprised by aspects of the culture that you very much take for granted; allow them to have authentic learning moments without offering too much. Do not spoon-feed to students what they can learn on their own.
- Never forget that cultures are not monolithic. The Ireland you visited 3 years ago may not be the Ireland you will visit this year with your students. Anticipate and welcome changes. Can you embrace cultural changes and incorporate them into your syllabus?



Students report wanting to learn more about culture *before* the start of the course.

- Include photos in your pre-departure Orientation PowerPoints and other materials you send to students before your program departs.
- Talk about the country and culture in your classroom using native pronunciation and vocabulary whenever possible.
- Provide required reading that will familiarize students with the program destination(s) in advance; travel guides, blogs, forums, and academic readings may be useful.

Designing a Course

Remember Your location IS your classroom.

Students seek global learning opportunities for a variety of reasons that include, but are not limited to:

- increase in student willingness to take courses outside of their major area of study,
- increased confidence with ambiguity and new experiences,
- increased interest in interdisciplinary studies,
- increased skills of inter-cultural communication,
- greater comparative understandings of social issues,
- a higher level understanding of social change, and
- a greater understanding of inequalities and differences both near and far.

Term of Course

CCSA Custom Global experiences may follow an alternate schedule that impacts your course design.

1. Standard. A summer or winter course normally for 3 credit hours conducted between May and August or **between** December **and** January, respectively.
2. Semester extended 3+. A semester course for 3 credit hours PLUS 3 credit hours in summer or winter that may be a continuation or extension of the semester as an optional 3-credit hour course.
3. Semester culmination. A **global learning** experience that follows a semester course for no extra credit but as an extension of the semester course. It may be optional or required for a specific course section so students know they will participate at the additional cost.
4. Bi-term courses may follow that same models.

Adapting an Existing Course

Do not expect to recycle an existing campus-taught course on another continent. A redesign is needed with the location in mind. Consider the hands-on activities that relate to your content and how you expand upon those with the resources available in your location.

The following are proven practices to adapt a current course to a new location:

- Alter or add to the current course objectives to reflect the location,
- Make sure your objectives clearly address the international nature of the course, and
- Ensure your course is connected so intricately with the location that the course and location could not be extricated from each other.

Designing a New Course

Consider designing a new course for your international location. This enables you to differentiate your course from other options, which in turn improves recruiting potential. These courses can be fully focused on the location. When designing a new course, your class assignments will likely differ from those expected in on-campus courses. The following may be useful points to consider as you plan your new course.

Designing Assignments around Program Activities

- Pre-Departure
 - Assign students to research specific sites/activities and present in-class or on-site, and
 - Guide students regarding the connections you hope them to draw.
- On-Site
 - Take a few minutes before each activity to remind students of why the activity matters,
 - Debrief at a site after an activity while it is still fresh in students' minds, and
 - Encourage written or photo-journaling so students can organize their thoughts more effectively after leaving a site.
- Post Program
 - The course need not end upon return. The final assignments may be better if you give your students a few weeks to complete.

Counting Program Activities in Your Course Assessment

Include any activities you plan to grade or assess in your syllabus. Make sure attendance in program activities is required and specified in the syllabus.

Graded activities might include, but are not limited to:

- Writing activities
 - Research about what students will see,
 - Reflections on what students saw, and
 - Comparative studies.
- Presentations
- Journaling and Reflection
- Demonstrating use of the language – even rudimentary usage shows cultural awareness
- Final project – may be due after return
- Explore Time - Consider assigning students to turn in a top 10 list of what they'll do in their explore time as an ungraded, or bonus, assignment. It will encourage them to think about how they will spend their time in your location.

Reflection writing is one of the single-most important teaching techniques in a global learning course. It is more effective when guided (i.e. through faculty directed questions) and embedded in course expectations.

A global learning course offers 24/7 learning opportunities, therefore “free time” downplays the academic focus of all activities. Not every minute needs to be crammed with official course activities, but effective courses build in the expectation that student will apply their learning to everything they do while in country. Hence the importance of including **opportunities for personal growth**, and **Improved cultural awareness** as learning goals.

Meeting Course Objectives

- How will you meet your objectives in a limited amount of time? Your on-site activities should all be content-based. Limit the amount of class time you spend on travel and safety information. Logistics should be covered at your pre-departure Orientation and at key points during the course when reminders and follow-up are needed.
- Plan readings strategically; leave students time to connect the readings to their experiences.
- Language barriers can prove time-consuming, so plan accordingly. Prepare students by recommending phrasebooks, giving pointers in pre-departure orientation, and use the local language whenever possible. Prepare yourself to get around in your program location, especially if it's your first time.
- Know where you're going academically and geographically—map out your course. Bring printed maps whenever possible; access via a smartphone may be available but expensive on-site.

Designing an Itinerary

First-time faculty report regrets over their lack of logistical research, and these proven practices improve courses.

- Research the sites you will visit and decide how they will be integrated into your syllabus. Don't add locations or activities without considering how they will reflect the content and how the content will reflect them.
- Search for global learning programs in your field, and see what others are doing with their courses.
- Communicate with faculty at other institutions who have taught similar courses or can shed light on your location.
 - Request itineraries, location information, related texts or assignments.
 - Ask for things and places to avoid.
 - Your colleagues may also help recruit from their students.
- Infuse traditional tourist sites with academic content.
 - How do your chosen texts relate to specific sites?
 - What assignments will you create based on site visits?
 - How can you make a traditional site connect to your course?

- **Example:** The London Bridge Tower is relevant to...
 - **History.** Effect on integration of classes,
 - **Economics.** Effect on trade and finance for regions previously separated,
 - **Health.** Through trade diseases were transported more easily with the bridge,
 - **Occupational Safety.** Conditions through the building of the bridge,
 - **Engineering.** Design of and choice of design, or
 - **Accounting.** Usage of trade and finance as reasoning for build, tracking of funding throughout build, ethical use of funds

- Incorporate some down-time for reflection and to recharge. You will need it too.
- Don't over pack your suitcase or your schedule. A learning goal may be for your students to feel confident enough to come back to the location on their own and see all those things you could not include in your course.

On-Site Program Management

Global teaching means teaching in a location and presents challenge and opportunities. Some things to consider.

- Students will need time to acclimate to the location. Can you provide activities or guidance that will introduce them to the location?
- Build a community of scholars learning together and looking out for each other.
- Model the behaviors that you want your students to follow.
 - Follow local customs as appropriate.
 - Research before departing, and share pertinent information with your students as early as possible.
 - Students willfully ignoring cultural norms may affect the learning outcomes of your course. Make them aware of those norms and make it clear to students that they are to be followed.
 - Do not interrupt guides; use them as the valuable resource they are.
- Make time to meet with guides, your co-leader, and other key players every day. Debrief at night and/or meet in the morning before departure.

Managing Your Itinerary

"The best laid plans... " can and do go awry. Is flexibility and adaptability in your toolkit?

- Anticipate delays and cancellations. Prepare Plan B for every location or activity, even if Plan B is an impromptu discussion with students on the bus. Don't be afraid to revisit and redesign on the fly as needed if a site or activity is not benefiting students in the way you had hoped.
- Give students clear expectations *in the syllabus* about participation in meals, site visits, and other activities.
- Communicate with all participants at regular intervals rather than telling a few about plans and expect everyone to get the information. Use meals as class or logistical meeting time, but don't surprise students with last minute changes to expectations.
- Debrief with your co-Program Leader and with students.

Ready to begin?

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