

# Making Study Abroad Experiences Experiential

Melanie McCallon Seib, Director of Education Abroad

Staci Stone, Co-coordinator of Experiential Learning,  
Assistant Dean of Humanities & Fine Arts

Murray State University

# Introductions

- Who are we
- Who are you:
  - Your interest:
    - Are you developing an education abroad program?
    - Are you trying to redesign an existing program?
    - Other?
  - Are you:
    - Faculty?
    - Administration?
  - Challenges you're facing on campus?

# Eight Principles

- National Society for Experiential Education's Eight Principles of Good Practice for All Experiential Learning Activities
  - [www.nsee.org/8-principles](http://www.nsee.org/8-principles)
- Principles underlying the pedagogy of experiential education

# Guidelines from the Forum on Education Abroad

- Standards of Good Practice for Education Abroad
  - [www.forumea.org/standards](http://www.forumea.org/standards)
- For “Volunteer, Internship Experience, and Work” (VIEW) programs abroad
  - [www.forumea.org/standards](http://www.forumea.org/standards)
- Best practices to inform the development of VIEW programs abroad and vetting of VIEW partners

# Intersections Between VIEW and NSEE's Eight Principles

1. **Intention:** The VIEW Guidelines as a whole address purposefulness.
2. **Preparedness and Planning:** VIEW emphasizes providing students with information so they are prepared.
3. **Authenticity:** VIEW recommends a safe workplace that is adequate and appropriate.
4. **Reflection:** The last bulleted point on internships mentions reflection; volunteer and service placements do not.

# Intersections

**5. Orientation and Training:** VIEW recommends an onsite orientation and training.

**6. Monitoring and Continuous Improvement:** VIEW emphasizes importance of staff to supervise students and the need for continuous communication among student, faculty, and partner.

**7. Assessment and Evaluation:** VIEW recommends evaluation of the partner.

**8. Acknowledgment:** VIEW's interest in "relationships of reciprocity and mutual benefit."

# Faculty Collaboration

- Program Approval
  - Intentionality
  - Standards
- Collaboration between Education Abroad administrators and Faculty
  - Training
    - Sample agenda

# Program Development & Course Design Workshop Agenda

- I. Why are you doing this to begin with? Why teach abroad?
- II. What is “culture?” What is “cultural learning?”
- III. Course Design
- IV. Meeting Course Objectives on Study Abroad
- V. Course Mechanics
- VI. Designing the Itinerary Around the Class
- VII. How to Manage the Program on the Ground



# Faculty Collaboration

- Program Approval
  - Intentionality
  - Standards
- Collaboration between Education Abroad administrators and Faculty
  - Training
  - Support
  - Learning Outcomes

# Case Study: China Health Services Program

A faculty member in health services took a group of students to China for a two week program embedded in a campus university course. In his post program debrief with the Education Abroad Office the faculty member asked that the acupuncture visit be removed from any future itineraries due to the level of discomfort of the faculty member and the students throughout the visit. This was in large part due to the partial nudity of the acupuncture client receiving treatment.

What went wrong?

# Case Study: Belize International Teaching Experience

A faculty member in education designed a 4-week experience working with the local school superintendent in Corozal, Belize, to place university students in Belizean schools during their student teaching semester. Twelve student teachers were placed in 4 local schools according to their specialty and spent the duration of the program discovering how to teach with limited resources, navigate communication with the head teachers who most often had a lower level of education than the student teachers, among other personal challenges finding food and assimilating into a developing country. Weekly reflections were required of the students.

What went right?



# Sample Itinerary

## **Day 1: Rome**

Arrive in Rome  
Trevi Fountain  
Pantheon  
Piazza Navona  
Spanish Steps

## **Day 2: Rome**

Sistine Chapel  
St. Peter's Basilica  
Colosseum  
Roman Forum

## **Day 3: Rome**

Free day

## **Day 4: Sorrento**

Guided tour of Vesuvius

## **Day 5: Pompeii**

Travel to Pompeii  
Guided tour of Pompeii  
Travel to Brindisi  
Night ferry to Patras

## **Day 6: Patras + Delphi**

Arrive in Patras  
Travel to Delphi

## **Day 7: Delphi + Athens**

Take a guided tour of Delphi  
Temple of Apollo  
Visit the Delphi Museum  
Travel to Athens  
Enjoy a Greek dinner

## **Day 8: Athens**

Olympic Stadium  
Visit the Acropolis  
Parthenon  
Temple of Athena Nike  
Walking tour of Athens  
Plaka district  
Temple of Olympian Zeus

# Design Workshop

- What's the purpose?
- What do you want students to learn?
- What experiences, activities, excursions will you embed into the program?
- How do activities and experiences reflect the academic field?
- How do you assess student learning?
- During the program, how will you track goals set for student learning?
- How do you talk to students about the program?
- What are the challenges?

# Quality Enhancement Plan & Study Abroad

- QEP on Experiential Education highlights study abroad
- Study abroad representative on QEP advisory board
- Study abroad student participant as student member on QEP advisory board
- QEP data includes study abroad numbers
- Mini grants and fellowships support study abroad
- Greater emphasis on the experientiality of study abroad programs

# Ongoing Debates in EA Programming

- Does the length of a program determine learning outcomes?
- How is program quality determined? By language? By destination?
- Are semester programs more valuable for students than faculty-led short-term experiences?
- Are all study abroad programs experiential?