

Study Abroad Field Schools at Langara College

Study abroad field schools are educational opportunities that are independent of the core curriculum of any program and take place beyond the provincial jurisdictional boundaries.

Basic Operating Principles

Langara College encourages and supports study abroad field schools as rich, educational opportunities for our students and our faculty. Study abroad field school development and delivery will reflect the following operating principles:

Fairness – All study abroad field schools will go through same vetting process; faculty members will be compensated as they would any course of that credit value; study abroad field school financial and logistical support will be managed the same way for all study abroad field schools.

Quality – All study abroad field schools will meet the academic standards for in-class delivery. All proposed study abroad field schools will go through the usual Education Council approval process as new programs; and existing study abroad field schools will be subject to review by their academic department/s and will participate in program review on a regular basis.

Faculty members proposing to teach a study abroad field school in a certain subject area will meet the same qualifications for teaching that would be required to teach that subject in the classroom. Where the subject matter is interdisciplinary or overlapping, several departments may be asked to review the qualifications of the faculty member(s).

Cost – We will continue to determine costing for the programs as we always have. As in the past, study abroad field schools will operate on cost recovery basis: all costs (except for faculty salary) associated with the study abroad field school must be included in the student cost. The same number of field schools that were in the section budget when they reported to International Education remain in the budget now that they report to the Academic Deans. There has been no reduction in the section budget for the study abroad field schools nor is there any intention to reduce that section budget in the near future.

Safety – In collaboration with staff in the Risk Management area, faculty members will be expected to create, revise and maintain a plan that will ensure the safety of students and faculty and minimize risk to the College.

Support – It takes a team to create a good, successful study abroad field school. Faculty members who are interested in developing study abroad field schools should consult with their Dean, Division Chair, and Department Chair.

Process for Approval

There will be a limited number of study abroad field school sections each year. They will be administered by the Academic Deans.

Faculty members interested in proposing a study abroad field school will submit a proposal, on the template provided, to the Office of the Academic Deans.

The Deans will strike a committee made up of members from academic leadership, finance, risk management, subject experts, and student/s once a year to review these study abroad field schools and recommend to the Dean which proposals should be developed.

As necessary, successful study abroad field school proposals will go to Education Council as new programs.

Study abroad field schools will be encouraged to collect student feedback which can be used to both improve and promote the study abroad field school in subsequent years.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Can you tell me the difference between Study Abroad Field schools, Field Schools and Field Trips?

A: *Study abroad field school: Study abroad field schools are educational opportunities that are independent of the core curriculum of any program and take place beyond the provincial jurisdictional boundaries.*

Field School: Any off campus trip that involves a student cohort staying overnight somewhere within the province of BC or where classes are held off campus for an extended period of time.

Field Trip: Any off campus trip that does not involve an overnight stay.

This proposal is meant to establish policy and processes for study abroad field schools that do not represent a core part of the curriculum. We intend to create similar infrastructure for field schools and field trips.

Q: Will there be departmental rotation of the field schools?

A: We heard a lot about fairness in our discussions with faculty members so we are proposing a merit system where the best study abroad proposals are chosen from all the departments. We can revisit this practice in the future.

Q: Will study abroad field schools be temporary sections assigned to the specific department(s) offering that year's study abroad field schools (which may change each year depending on which opportunity is funded)?

A: No, sections will stay in a central, study abroad account and not move to any department. They will be administered by the Dean(s) of the Faculty of the discipline(s) appropriate for the study abroad field school.

Q: Will even long-time, well-functioning, existing study abroad field school programs go through the approval process?

A: Yes. All study abroad field schools will submit a proposal every year. As well, study abroad field schools are to be reviewed just as all academic programs are to be reviewed.

Q: Are you suggesting an alternative system for reviewing the qualifications of faculty than the system used currently?

A: No, study abroad field schools belong in the discipline offerings like any other courses and so are subject to the same quality assurance mechanism as in-class courses.

Q: It should not be the faculty member's responsibility to create a risk management plan; the college should develop and provide the template which the individual program can adapt.

A: We will do this. We have lots of expertise and good work has already been done on a planning guide for domestic field schools that can be adapted. We hope to gather suggestions on drafts for such a template.

Q: What exactly would it cost the students if the model becomes self-funded/cost recovery except for faculty salary?

A: The study abroad field schools have always been funded this way. We are not proposing a different funding model. Expenses of the trip have always been

incorporated into the cost of the trip for the students. We are recommending the continuation of this practice.

There will be a limited number of sections each year for study abroad field schools and once they have been chosen that will be it. The number of sections will reflect not only institutional financial considerations but also institutional capacity to support the study abroad programs.

Q: Will faculty be paid at their step level, or will there be a fixed figure paid to all who lead a Study Abroad Field School program?

A: Faculty will be paid as if the study abroad field school is an in-class course or courses.

Q: Just to clarify, as some of us have been told that the sections would have to come from department allocated sections: the sections will *not* come from the department allocated sections. Also, how many sections will be set aside each year?

A: Sections will remain in a central, study abroad field school pool. Currently the number is eight (8) and there are eight (8) in the ongoing budget, but that may change to reflect financial realities.

Q: Also, I take it that proposals may come from two faculty members who have decided to work together, and if they wish to work together again, they will submit a new proposal the next year. I guess what I'm getting at is that if proposals are taken each year, instructors who wish to change partners or who wish to do a new or slightly different study abroad field school with someone else, will simply submit a new proposal with that new partner.

A: Yes.

Q: What will be the deadline for proposals? How much lead time will we have to advertise? The more time we have to advertise, the greater chance of success.

A: We will provide a timeline of deadlines that will be available online. The process is meant to help support the success of study abroad programs.

Q: Study abroad field schools usually taken place in May/June, with a couple of exceptions. One advantage of this timing is that students may be registered full-time in Summer semester in order to qualify for loans if the study abroad field school begins early enough in May. However, is it possible we could start offering programs at other times in the year?

A: Sure. Include it in the proposal.

Q: How will viability be determined?

A: A list of criteria follows this FAQ section. Deans will be available to help you formulate your ideas and proposal.

Q: If a study abroad field school doesn't attract enough students one year, will it be dropped for future consideration?

A: No. The interested faculty members will need to resubmit the next year, but this will not preclude your proposal from being reconsidered the following year.

Q: What does department "support" mean exactly?

A: First, academic departments will not be required to give up any sections to run study abroad field schools that have been chosen. Like any new course or program going to EdCo for approval, signature of the Chair on the proposal will be deemed support of the department.

Q: Knowledge of the area: What exactly does this mean?

A: Ideally the faculty member has been there before. If another language is spoken, it would be great if the faculty member can speak that language. Ideally the faculty member studies that country and can provide social and cultural context for the students and not simply tourist information. At this time there are no funds available to support investigative travel to research possible study abroad field school destinations.

Q: Just to clarify: do we need to consult with college legal experts about a risk management plan in the planning stages *before* we submit a proposal?

A: Yes, but we will help you with this. A template will be provided that will make this easier than it sounds.

Glossary of Terms

Study Abroad Field School: Study abroad field schools are educational opportunities that are independent of the core curriculum of any program and take place beyond the provincial jurisdictional boundaries.

Field School: Any off campus trip that involves a student cohort staying overnight somewhere within the province of BC or where classes are held off campus for an extended period of time.

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Criteria for Evaluating Study Abroad Field Schools

There are three categories of criteria for study abroad field schools: academic value, risk management, and financial sustainability.

Academic Rationale

- Clear learning outcomes that can be met in the time frame and place suggested
- Faculty member is qualified to conduct the field schools
- Proposed field school fits with the academic priorities of the institution
- Assessment is appropriate for the discipline and level of the course
- Supplemental material is appropriate for the discipline and level of the course
- Department support
- Division support
- Impact on other academic offerings

Risk Management

- Travel to this country is not restricted or discouraged by the Canadian government
- Proposal demonstrates risk management assessment

Financial

- Marketing strategy
- Clear demand/interest for this field school
- Cost is reasonable for students
- Proposal demonstrates fiscal responsibility

Timeline

For all field schools proposals for **Summer 2020 through Spring 2021**.

- Proposals submitted electronically to Jane Li (janeli@langara.ca) in the Academic Deans office by **5PM Monday June 3, 2019**.
- Committee meets in late June.
- Decisions for study abroad field schools made by July 15, 2019.
- When necessary, successful proposals go to Education Council in September.
- Marketing can begin as soon as Education Council approval is received. If no Education Council approval is required, marketing can begin as soon as the study abroad field school is approved.
- Registration begins for field schools occurs at the same time as registration for regular courses for that semester.
- Deposit deadlines for students will likely be earlier than the registration dates to ensure there are sufficient applicants for the field school to occur.