**Guidelines for the UMass Dartmouth Faculty-led Study Abroad Proposal Process**

Kalbrener 3 March 2014

Leadership of faculty is fundamental to internationalization of the curriculum and the educational preparation of students for a changing world. Faculty are encouraged to consider introducing a course or course component abroad that will engage student curiosity in a new way and provide one means for student to fulfill the University Studies requirements.

UMass Dartmouth strives to provide a safe and stimulating learning environment for all students. To that end, all proposed courses abroad will be reviewed by the International Programs Office and members of International Advisory Council prior to final recommendation to the Provost.

***Getting Started***

The proposal process is initiated by giving notification of intent to submit a proposal, with a program description to the College Dean/Dept. Chair to sign-off, prior to submission to the IPO Director.  This endorsement of the College and Department confirms that the program idea in the proposed timeframe is a priority for the College, has the support of colleagues who will assist in promoting it to students, and potential financial resources are available to reduce the cost to students or cover any potential cost overrun. It also serves to recommend the faculty leader as having the necessary skills and demeanor to manage a variety of student personalities, deliver a range of student advising and support needs, coordinate of group travel arrangements, and contain an emergency situation if it should arise.

The target date for initiating a proposal is 12 months prior to operation.  Upon sign-off, the Faculty Leader schedules a meeting with the International Programs Office Director to discuss proposal development and assistance with budget development.

Full proposal development will be required prior to review: approved curriculum, daily itinerary, line item budget, identified second leader, communications plan, emergency plan, and recruitment plan.    If required by the Dean, the course content is submitted for review of the College curriculum committee during this time.   Program format may take any shape as long as contact hours for the course equate to those required for on-campus courses. Full courses can be offered in Summer or Winter terms. Semester courses can contain a component abroad – such as over Spring Break or Thanksgiving, or a pre-post component in January.

The International Advisory Council will review proposals with reference to established standards for NEASC accredited institutions and member institutions of the Forum on Education Abroad (see Standards below.) Faculty leaders and Dept. Chairs will be asked to present the proposal and respond to questions of the Committee. Faculty leaders will be expected to have considerable experience in the destination country and in the local language; absent that, the second leader MUST have such experience. The faculty member accepts responsibility for management of logistical and financial arrangements and is highly encouraged to partner with a reputable and experienced third party organization that will provide support for such activities, in addition to providing a broad network for backup in case of emergency (in some cases, when such an organization is contracted, a second university representative will not be required.)

***Planning Timeline***

Proposal Submission and Review by IPO and International Advisory Committee

* + Allow up to 30 days for review

Final Approval for study abroad programs in the following year

* Calls for Proposals are set to accommodate academic dept. calendars, and follow shortly the add/drop period. Proposals for new and revised programs can be accepted until:
  + Fall - February 5
  + Winter/Spring - April 1
  + Summer - October 10
* Repeat study abroad proposals can be accepted up to 90 days later.
* Allow a minimum 30 days for revision in collaboration with the International Programs Office prior to review by the IAC

Recruitment of students

* Should begin informally before the proposal is even submitted to ensure the proposed program has the interest of UMass Dartmouth students
* Classroom presentations, flyers, info sessions are suggested in the College
* Faculty leaders whose proposal has been approved by the Provost are invited to participate in the IPO’s information fair that semester
* The IPO will forward student applications as they are received and confirmed to be in good standing. The Faculty leader then reviews and communicates acceptance decision to the students in 7 days or less.

Student Applications/Payments

* IPO published application due dates are October 10 for Winter/Spring and March 10 for Summer/Fall. Semester courses with embedded components align with timelines for the semester itself, regardless of the actual dates of travel. In no case will exceptions for late applications be granted beyond 1 month prior to the last day of teaching, previous term.
* Full program payment is *due upon acceptance*, and in no case will extensions be granted beyond November 30 (Winter/Spring), April 30 (Summer/Fall), or 30 days prior to a mid-semester departure.

Logistical Arrangements/Payments

* The program budget resides in the IPO and is always set to break even. The budget includes a small contingency fund, the cost of promotional materials, the standard university overhead (TFA 8%), registration fees, all faculty leader costs and in some cases additional instruction or course development costs. The International Program Office has prepared a standard budget template and can assist with costing.
* Program budgets are tied to the College. In the final accounting, any overage will accrue to the College as a reserve that can provide a cushion against any emergency expenditures needed for any future study abroad programs.
* Students registering for faculty-led credit-bearing study abroad, like students in exchange or provider programs, will be billed a separate $250 participation fee.
* Standard UMass Dartmouth Travel and Purchasing procedures apply. There is a preference for paying major items such as accommodations via contract and purchase order. In some cases, a university credit card can be opened. Deposits should be incurred as late in the planning process as possible to allow for best estimate of number of paid students and faculty are urged to consult with the IPO on timeframes before incurring non-refundable charges.
* The faculty leader is responsible for handling the financial arrangements and any university credit cards will be held in their name and academic department. The International Programs Office will provide guidance and advice as needed.
* Utilization of a professional program organizer such as study abroad providers is highly encouraged. Benefits include: significant reduction in liability for the institution and the faculty leader, significant reduction in administrative/accounting tasks for the faculty leader before, during, and following execution of the program. Any program to be held in a US State Department designated “Travel Warning” country REQUIRES that a third party provider be engaged.

Pre-Departure Cultural Orientation

* A minimum of one session should be planned to discuss site-specific knowledge that will enable students to function effectively and with reasonable safety at the site. Plan to include academic and behavior expectations, contact information, emergency access (police, hospitals, etc.), societal differences, gender and diversity atmosphere, the physical demands students can expect.
* Note IPO also requires and provides each student to attend a general study abroad orientation training that covers general issues of U.S. State Department and Centers for Disease Control resources, health, safety, student conduct, and administrative procedures.

***Participants***

All participants must be registered for credit-bearing courses and must pay in full. (Non-credit university activities overseas are registered by a separate process; consult the IPO website for details.)

***Proposal Development***

The proposal will include a narrative, curriculum proposal, budget, course set-up form, brief profile description to go in the IPO searchable program database, and a signature coversheet. In the narrative portion, address these questions and the considerations below:

* Why this course, in this place, at this time?
* What is the expertise and experience of the faculty director at this site?
* How will the program structure utilize the in-country context to illustrate the learning objectives?
* Is there a host institution, third party provider, or other partner relationship – describe the relationship and services to be provided.
* What is the plan for intercultural interaction and how will processing of the experience be facilitated?
* If local population includes a minimal number of English-speakers, what is the expectation for students to get around on their own?
* Plan to prepare students for risks and for access to emergency services
* Will students be part of an existing course or how will they be recruited?

1) NEASC accreditation requirements include “systematic assessment, used to increase effectiveness and regularly communicated”; also “published learning goals” for programs. Quantitative assessment could include student surveys, student grade tracking, tracking of numbers registered. Qualitative measures might be reports of the faculty director and independent review.

2) To qualify for UMD's Univ. Studies curriculum 4C - Social World: Humanity and Society - relation of individual to the world and to others:

* Consider adding a required *compare and contrast* assignment to each study abroad program in addition to strict demonstration they've learned course material: What they've learned about the topic - what does that mean to them in their own lives/careers/community or country vs. what it means to people/community/country.  Give a presentation, make video or artwork, or write essay.

3) UMass Dartmouth is a member of the FORUM on Education Abroad, the organization that is recognized by the U.S. government as setting study abroad guidelines. Proposals will be reviewed in respect to these guidelines: *The FORUM on Education Abroad: The Standards of Good Practice for Education Abroad.* <http://www.forumea.org>

*1. Mission:* The organization, with respect to education abroad, has a formally-adopted mission statement for its overall operations and for its individual programs that is known to and accepted by its faculty and staff.

a. Mission and Commitment: The organization has mission statements appropriate for each program.

b. Assessment of Mission Achievement: The organization regularly analyzes the degree to which it is achieving its overall mission and its mission statements for each program, and utilizes these findings to assure continuous improvement.

*2. Student Learning and Development:* The organization has stated educational objectives that foster student learning and development; has an established process for regularly collecting and analyzing data to assess the degree to which it is accomplishing each; and utilizes these findings to monitor, maintain, support, and continuously improve student success.

a. Inter-Cultural Understanding: The organization fosters inter-cultural understanding.

b. Language and Communication: The organization encourages the development of language and/or inter-cultural communication skills.

c. Academic Growth: The program provides academic learning opportunities appropriate to the program’s mission.

d. Student Development: The program provides opportunities that encourage student development (e.g., leadership skills, service orientation, maturity, tolerance for ambiguity).

*3. Academic Framework:* The organization maintains clearly stated and publicly available policies on academic matters related to education abroad; regularly reviews them for relevance and

effectiveness; and implements appropriate changes as needed.

a. Academic Credit: The organization has clearly stated and publicly available policies on the awarding of academic credit.

b. Academic Coursework: The organization provides an academically challenging program of study.

c. Internships and Field Research: When offered for credit, internships and field opportunities have appropriate academic and field supervision.

d. On-Site Advising: The program advises students on academic matters in cooperation with home institution advising and regularly evaluates its success in doing so.

e. Academic Integration: The organization fosters the integration of student learning abroad with requirements and learning at the home institution and regularly evaluates its success in this area.

f. Academic Planning: The home institution encourages students to make education abroad decisions with reference to degree progress, in consultation with their academic adviser and has an ongoing process in place to measure its success and continuously improve in this area.

g. Career Planning: The home institution has a process in place to stay abreast of changes to academic and co-curricular offerings on programs abroad and provides program selection advising that takes into account students’ career goals and interests.

*4. Student Preparation for the Learning Environment Abroad:* The organization has processes in place to assess student needs, provides advising and orientation support to address these needs that is consistent with the program’s mission and regularly assesses the quality of this support, and utilizes its findings to continuously monitor, maintain, support, and improve its advising and orientation processes.

a. Pre- and Post-Departure Advising and Orientation: The program uses past experiences, student and staff evaluations, current research, and ongoing communication with students to assess students’ needs and provide appropriate orientation and advising support to meet these needs as they evolve throughout the term of education abroad and regularly evaluates the effectiveness of its orientation and advising support.

b. Returning Student Support: The organization and program staff have processes in place to assess their students’ re-entry needs, provide support for students returning from abroad that addresses these needs, and regularly evaluate the effectiveness of this support.

*5. Student Selection and Code of Conduct:* The organization maintains, and makes publicly accessible, its commitment to fair and appropriate policies regarding student selection and code of conduct.

a. Student Selection: The recruitment and selection processes are transparent and fair.

b. Code of Conduct: The organization makes explicit its student code of conduct and its disciplinary processes.

*6. Policies and Procedures:* The organization has in place policies and procedures that govern its

education abroad programs and practices and regularly reviews these policies to assure their

effectiveness and appropriateness.

a. Policies: The organization has adequate and published policies that govern its education abroad programs.

b. Personnel: The organization has defined policies with respect to personnel.

c. Advising: The organization is committed to and implements an advising model appropriate to students’ curricular, intellectual, and personal development.

d. Communications: The organization is committed to and practices open, accurate, and honest communications.

e. Marketing: The organization follows accepted ethical practices in marketing.

f. Affordability and Financial Assistance: The organization provides proactive assistance to students and families concerning the provision of internal and/or external financial aid.

g. Program Assessment: The organization has established, and regularly utilizes formal review and evaluation processes of its policies and procedures and applies the results to continuously improve them.

*7. Organizational and Program Resources:* The organization provides adequate financial and personnel resources to support its programs.

a. Academic Personnel: Program faculty members have the qualifications, knowledge, and appropriate level of engagement to support the curriculum and the learning environment of students inside and outside the classroom.

b. Administrative and Support Personnel: Program staff members have the qualifications, knowledge, and appropriate level of engagement to administer the program effectively and to assure the well-being of students.

c. Financial Resources: The organization devotes adequate financial resources to each program.

d. Learning and Academic Support Facilities: Each program has facilities adequate to realize program mission, recognizing that amenities might vary according to the host environment and culture.

e. Student Housing: Students are provided with or assisted in securing appropriate housing.

f. Assessment results are linked to the institution’s ongoing planning and resource allocation processes.

*8. Health, Safety, Security and Risk Management:* The organization assures continuous attention to the health, safety, and security of its students, faculty, and staff, from program development stages through program implementation, by way of established policies, procedures, student orientation, and faculty and staff training.

a. The organization considers health, safety, security and risk management in program development.

b. The organization focuses continuous attention on health issues for program students, faculty and staff.

c. The organization ensures continuous attention to the safety of students, faculty and staff at all locations, with particular attention to safety issues in more dangerous locations.

d. The organization maintains adequate insurance coverage and conducts regular risk-management review involving appropriate training and personnel.

e. The organization is knowledgeable about and complies with applicable laws and regulations.

f. Risk assessments are conducted as part of the development process for new programs to evaluate and mitigate potential risks prior to the commencement of the activity.

*9. Ethics and Integrity:* The organization educates its employees in and adheres to its own code of ethics and/or to the ethical principles of the Forum’s Code of Ethics for Education Abroad.

a. Operations: The organization operates its programs in accordance with ethical principles.

b. Student Life: The organization conducts its activities and advises students in an ethically responsible manner.

c. Intercultural Relations: The organization is considerate and respectful of the cultures and values of the countries in which it operates or sponsors programs and from which it draws students.

***Evaluation***

Students should be provided the same course evaluation surveys as on-campus courses that will be compiled by the Colleges. In addition, the International Programs Office collects surveys on each student’s pre/post study abroad experience as well as quality and effectiveness of the program onsite. Faculty leaders submit a written report at the conclusion of each program and actual costs are reconciled to the budget. Faculty-led programs are reviewed on an annual basis.