

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Today's Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Education Abroad Pre-Planning Sheet

The Education Abroad Office offers over 300 programs in over 45 countries. That's a bewildering selection and it will be inefficient and pointless for you to go through each program to see which ones will likely appeal to you.

This worksheet 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. In addition, a study abroad advisor can more readily suggest suitable programs if you are able to discuss your reasons for and concerns about studying abroad.

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*Please rank the following statements (1=most important; 6=least important) according to the sentiment that you deem most important in planning for your study abroad term:*

- \_\_\_\_\_ **Academic Program** is the most important thing to me. I will only study abroad if I can take courses that will satisfy my degree program's graduation requirements.
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Cost** is the most important thing to me. I can study abroad only if the program is affordable or if I will end up paying no more or just a tad bit more than what I typically spend for a semester at UM-Flint.
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Location** is the most important thing to me. I am willing to consider whatever program is available as long as I can study in a particular country or city.
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Timing** is the most important thing to me. I can study abroad only during the \_\_\_\_\_ term so I won't disrupt my degree progress / extracurricular commitments / internship or job offer.
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Non-academic Opportunities** are the most important thing to me. I want a program that will have an internship option, volunteer activities, local projects, and other local activities.
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Total Experience** is the most important thing to me. I want a study abroad experience that will meet my expectations regarding other program participants, comfort-level, cultural immersion, academic and social interaction, accommodations, and other features of normal daily life.

***Your responses to the following statements will help you and/or the education abroad advisor narrow program options based on your personal circumstances.***

**1. Academic Issues.**

- Have you discussed studying abroad with your academic advisor at UM-Flint?
- How flexible are you with the courses you can take abroad?
- Do you know what courses you can / need / or want to take abroad?
- Have you examined the available courses offered at the study abroad program to which you intend to apply? Will the courses work for you?
- Do you meet your preferred program(s) eligibility requirements (GPA, foreign language, pre-requisites)?
- Are you aware that you will be receiving TRANSFER credits for courses taken via external programs and that you need to seek pre-approval for these courses to transfer?

**2. Cost Considerations:**

- Are you receiving federal financial aid?
- Are you a recipient of any particular scholarship(s)?
- Are you paying resident (in-state) or nonresident (out-of-state) tuition at UM-Flint?
- Do you plan to secure additional loans to finance your term abroad?
- If cost is your primary consideration, will you consider less expensive programs so you can study abroad?

**3. Timing Matters:**

- Are you fairly flexible and can study abroad anytime within the next 2 years, or can you only study abroad next semester/this summer/next academic year?
- What is your ideal program length (1-3 weeks, 4 weeks or more, a semester, an academic year)?

**4. Location Issues:**

- Where do you want to study? Where do you not want to study?
- Are you open to any location as long as you can meet other objectives?
- Are you willing to consider other locations that are similar to your first choice if they're cheaper or if the programs located there are more accommodating?
- How much traveling do you plan to do while overseas?
- Do you prefer a lively, cosmopolitan city with a vibrant social scene or to study in a city or town not unlike Flint?
- Are you planning to participate in a language program?
- Would you prefer to study in a city where English is not as widely spoken, or to study in an English-speaking country or in a country where English is spoken widely?

**5. Expectations:**

- What level of onsite support do you expect – a program in which you will have to fend for yourself mostly and receive very little support and guidance from an onsite staff, or one where an onsite staff closely monitors the program participants?
- How much interaction with other American students do you want - minimal contact or do a program where you will take classes with other students from the United States?
- To what extent do you wish to immerse yourself in the local culture, i.e. participate in local events and projects, do volunteer work, join student organizations, and other activities that will bring you in contact with the locals.

**6. At the end of your study abroad term,** list three objectives you will try your hardest to achieve. It can be something as lofty as "Do well enough in class that my professor will write a recommendation letter for me in the future" to something more personal like "I will take flamenco dance lessons in Seville."

a.

b.

c.

**7. What are your expectations of your study abroad experience? Check all that apply.**

- To be forewarned is to be forearmed. Sufficient pre-departure preparation will help ensure that I will have a successful study abroad experience.
- Que sera sera.* I prefer to go with the flow and deal with issues as they arise.
- Demanding. I will have to work just as hard, if not put forth more effort to maintain my GPA.
- Easy-peasy. The academic workload should be easier than UM-Flint's.
- Same 'ol, same 'ol. Things will be very similar to my current lifestyle.
- Culture shock city! I will have to get used to a totally different lifestyle.
- Budget-breaker – but hey, that's par for the course to get a great experience.
- Limited funds will not interfere with having a great experience abroad.
- It'll give me a leg up over the competition! My international experience will make me a sought-after job applicant.
- Big deal! Thousands of American students study abroad every year so why should studying abroad make me stand out?

**OTHER ISSUES TO BRING UP WITH THE EDUCATION ABROAD ADVISOR:**