GRCC Study Away Proposal Process

- Standards and Decision-making Overview
- Eligibility and Guidelines
- Submission and Approval
Study Away Proposal Process

The Study Away Proposal process features several documents with corresponding deadlines. This document will guide you through the completion of those documents.

The proposal process and decision making is the responsibility of the Study Away Review Team. The work of the team is administered through the Department of Experiential Learning. The team is made up of campus stakeholders with expertise in specific areas (teaching and curriculum development, risk management, experiential learning, student affairs and conduct, etc.). The team meets several times throughout the year focused on the review and improvement of the proposal submission/review processes as well as to make a recommendation on approving up to (5) study away experiences per/year.

Additionally, Study Away practices and procedures are governed by the (9) Standards of Good Practice overseen by the Forum on Education Abroad. The Forum on Education Abroad is a 501(c) (3) non-profit organization. As an institutional membership association, it’s committed to improving education abroad. The Forum was established in 2001 and currently has over 800 institutional members. The Forum is recognized by the U.S. Department of Justice and the Federal Trade Commission as the Standards Development Organization (SDO) for the field of education abroad. Standards are designed to improve practices in education abroad so that our students’ educational experiences are as rich and meaningful as possible.

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Study Away Proposal Review: Guiding Principles

The Study Away Review Team uses the following principles in making their final recommendation:
1. Students are provided with a curricular experience that is either part of a program or general education requirement.
2. Students are provided with a variety of travel destinations (both domestic and international).
3. Students are provided with experiences that are properly vetted to ensure overall safety.
4. Students are provided with a variety of course options across different disciplines.
5. Students are provided with options from both School Workforce Development and School of Arts and Sciences.
Eligibility and Guidelines

Study Away trips are organized and facilitated by (2) GRCC faculty with support and planning provided by travel agencies that specialize in educational group travel. Overall support is provided by the Department of Experiential Learning including student application management, marketing, student consultation, and risk management.

The College has specific eligibility and standards for creating and facilitating a study away experience to ensure overall safety, affordability, and educational quality.

General Faculty Leader Eligibility (primary coordinator of the experience and teaches the course)
- The faculty member is full-time
- Is in good standing with the College (does not have an active professional improvement plan)
- Has received training/professional development through the College on leading study away experiences
- Meets the educational qualifications to teach the course for the study away experience
- Has previous travel experience, ideally to those destinations being traveled to.
- Can provide financial oversight, student consultation and overall risk management.
- Must effectively collaborate with the Department of Experiential Learning including:
  - Attend required meetings throughout the year
  - Be responsive to email
  - Meet deadlines
  - Actively market your trip
- Be knowledgeable of the following, but not limited to:
  - Understanding of the following policies: Clery, College Sponsored Student Travel, Employee Reimbursement, Purchasing, Sexual Misconduct, Student Code of Conduct, and Travel
  - Understanding of purchasing procedures and practices
  - Understanding of maintaining awareness around the overall safety of the travel destinations
  - Understanding of collecting of GRCC Travel and Risk Forms from students
  - Understanding of responding to incidents while traveling
  - Understanding the Emergency and Communication Plan

General Support Person Eligibility
- The support person is a full-time faculty member
- Is in good standing with the College (does not have an active professional improvement plan)
- Has received training/professional development through the College on supporting study away experiences
- Has previous travel experience
- The Support Person must be actively committed to the entire duration of the trip (pre, during and after) until the final class period
- Must effectively collaborate with the Department of Experiential Learning including
  - Attend required meetings throughout the year
  - Be responsive to email
  - Meet deadlines
  - Actively market your trip
- Ability to assist the Faculty Leader in financial oversight, provide student consultation and assist in mitigating risk when needed to support the faculty leader.
- The Support Person will be knowledgeable of the following, but not limited to:
  - Understanding of GRCC Policies as it relates to travel
  - Understanding of Purchasing Procedures and Practices
  - Understanding of maintaining awareness around the overall safety of the travel destinations (travel warnings)
  - Understanding of collecting of GRCC Travel and Risk Forms from students
  - Understanding of responding to incidents while traveling
  - Understanding the Emergency and Communication Plan
General Curricular Standards

- The course being proposed for the study away experience is either part of a program and/or meets a general education requirement.
- All instruction and travel are required to be within the confines of the official semester start and end dates.
- Contact Hours must be appropriately distributed before, during, and after the trip.
- The course has an updated Course Document.
- The syllabus being used is in the approved College template and clearly states the policies and procedures related to evaluation, awarding of credit, grade appeals, and academic integrity.
- The proposal clearly explains the curricular benefit of teaching the course in the desired location(s) while meeting course outcomes.

General Travel Standards

- Trips traveling to any destination that has a US Travel Warning will not be approved.
- The Faculty Leader and Support Person must be committed to the entire duration of the trip (pre, during and after) until the final class period.
- Family members of the Faculty Leader or Support Person are not permitted to travel as part of the trip.
- Students wishing to extend their travel beyond the expectations of the course are to seek approval from the Department of Experiential Learning.
1. The Faculty Leader will submit the completed Study Away Pre-Proposal Form to the Director of Experiential Learning by December 1st with all required signatures from a Department Head and/or Program Director as well as from the Associate Dean’s and Dean. This form is located at www.grcc.edu/studyaway. Administrators will review the information within the Pre-Proposal Form and ask clarifying questions as needed.

**Signature Sequence:**
1. Department Head/Program Director of where the Faculty Leader teaches
2. Department/Program where the course is housed (example: Language & Thought for HU 219)
3. Associate Dean of Operations of the School of where the Faculty Leader teaches
4. Associate Dean for Faculty Evaluation and Hiring of the School of where the Faculty Leader teaches
5. Associate Dean of Operations of the School of where the course is housed
6. Associate Dean for Faculty Evaluation and Hiring of the School of where course is housed
7. Dean the School where the course is housed

2. All Pre-Proposal forms will then be shared with and reviewed by the Study Away Review Team. Faculty will have an opportunity to receive feedback from the team.

3. Upon approval, the Faculty Leader and Support Person will begin the development of the full proposal to ensure it meets the review criteria and is submitted by March 1st. This form is located at www.grcc.edu/studyaway.
   a. The full proposal includes the following documents:
      - Study Away Full Proposal
      - Curriculum Vitae (if first time submitting)
      - Third-Party Provider Estimate
      - Course Document (from the GRCC Curriculum Database)
      - Syllabus (must be in the new standard syllabus template)
   b. The full proposal and supporting documents are emailed to the Director of Experiential Learning at mschavey@grcc.edu by March 1st.

4. The Study Away Review Team will have approximately two weeks to review all full proposals and supporting documents.
   a. Faculty will have an option of providing a face-to-face presentation of video presentation. Additional instructions will be provided to assist faculty in creating a 5-minute overview presentation.
Step 1. An initial review is done by the Director of Experiential Learning who reviews all proposals to ensure required documents have been submitted while meeting eligibility and guidelines (see pages 3 and 4). Proposals not meeting the requirements of Step 1 will not move forward to Step two.

Step 2. Guided by the Standards of Good Practice governed by the Forum on Education Abroad, members of the Study Away Review Team will use the below criteria to review each Study Away Full Proposal. Criteria are aligned to the questions in the Study Away Full Proposal and scored using 0, 1, 2 point values and are grouped within (3) categories: Student Learning and Development & Academic Framework, Organizational and Program Resources, and Health, Safety, Security, and Risk Management. Using the criteria as well as the “Contributing Factors” team members will have a final review meeting (early April) and make their recommendations to the Dean of Instructional Support.

Step 3, all recommendations will move forward for consideration of approval to the Dean of Instructional Support.

Additional Contributing Factors Include:
- Alignment to Study Away Guiding Principles (see page two).
- A new experience that has never been offered.
- It describes how the proposal/trip is different, if it is a repeated proposal/trip.
- Likelihood of the trip recruiting enough students.
- Direct impact on student’s careers and professional practice.
- The number of trips going to the same county.
- The number of trips being offered in the same discipline.
- Is the trip/course available to all students.
- If the proposal is seeking grant support.
- Successful facilitation of previous trips.
  - effective collaboration through the Department of Experiential Learning prior, during and after the travel experience
  - student survey responses
Study Away Full Proposal: Criteria & Scoring

Each question from the proposal is scored using the following point value:

- 0 = did not meet expectation
- 1 = needs clarification
- 2 = meets expectation

1. Describes that the proposal is either a new proposal and/or being led by a new faculty member (page 1)
2. Contact hours are scheduled before, during and after the trip and within the confines of the official start and end dates of the semester (page 1, Course Schedule)
3. Describes the effective use of contact hours before, during and after the trip (page 2, Q1)
4. Describes the unique ways students will experience the language, culture, history, art, religion, economics and geography (page 2, Q1a)
5. The course description is matches the description from the Catalog (page 3, Q2)
6. The Faculty Leader and Support Person are qualified for their roles and appropriately trained to support the educational goals of the study away experience including orienting students as well as pre- and post-trip instruction (page 3, Q3)
7. Describes knowledge of the proposed country and culture (including previous in-country experience & language ability) (page 3, Q3a)
8. Describes how the Faculty Leader and Support Person have collaborated together to enhance the student experience (page 3, Q3b)
9. Describes their experience in recruiting students and/or conducted orientations and/or managed a budget (page 3, Q3c)
10. All learning activities included as part of this study away experience are aligned to the CLOs with appropriate assessment methods (page 4)
11. Itinerary activities are effectively planned throughout the duration of the experience (page 4)
12. Describes how free time has been built into the trip for students’ reflection and exploration (page 4)
13. Describes a method for conducting a general risk assessment (page 4, Q6)
14. Describes potential health (physical and mental), safety, and security risks (site specific and/or political) that students may face and a plan to address these issues (page 4, Q6a)
15. Describes any safety concerns that may require additional assistance/support (page 4, Q6b)
16. Describes an understanding of local laws (customs and norms) and regulations (page, 6, Q5)
17. Describes a plan of identifying and supporting students having difficulty adjusting to culture differences (page 7, Q6)
18. Describes a plan of action over the following 12-months to ensure the following: effectively market/recruit, solidify third party contracts, monitor student payments and orient students (page 7, Q7)
19. Describes how the operating budget ensures safe, clean, hospitable housing; activities that support the trip’s educational goals; and responsible health, safety, and security measures (page 8, Q8)
20. Describes appropriate level of in-country support including use of interpreters and guides, available health insurance options, well-vetted travel/lodging locations and emergency/crisis supports (page 8, Q8a)
21. Describes a plan of in-country communication (page 8, Q8b)
22. Describes measures in place to accommodate students of varying needs and abilities (page 8, Q8c)
23. Describes strategies used to make the trip cost-effective, yet safe (page 8, Q8d)
24. Describes a cost breakdown of what is covered in the price of the trip (airfare, ground transportation, meals, lodging, and miscellaneous expenses (page 9)
25. Describes the overall expenses students will be expected to pay (page 9)
26. The estimate from the Third-Party provider(s) and expenses are in alignment (page 9)
Approval Process

Upon approval, the Faculty Leader and Support Person will meet with the Director of Experiential Learning to review implementation expectations. Faculty will sign the Study Away and Support Person Agreement as well as attend 2-4 meetings during the Summer.

Study Away Proposals not approved will be provided feedback for future consideration and may be reconsidered should a faculty member decide to withdraw their approved proposal.

Support

Faculty may contact Hillery Haney, Study Away Faculty Coordinator, at any time.
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