Study Abroad Recruitment Plan

Recruitment for study abroad programs must take a multi-faceted approach and be led by you, the faculty member/program director. You have built the program, but the students will not naturally gravitate towards it. It takes beating down classroom doors and developing relationships to fill your program with quality students.

ISSUES TO CONSIDER

- **Recruit Quality Students.** Students should, at minimum, submit quality applications and be in good academic and disciplinary standing at MSU in order to be eligible to study abroad. **The submission of an application should not be considered an automatic acceptance.** You should consider student applications carefully, recruit selectively, and not be afraid to reject students or require individual or group interviews prior to issuing acceptance.

- **Build Relationships.** Students want to earn your respect. They have immense admiration and respect for you and want to get to know you more, which is why they want to study abroad with you. Capitalize on that admiration and respect and build personal relationships with students that they both need for their future recommendations and research and want for their personal success.

CREATING YOUR RECRUITMENT PLAN

Take time to develop a plan for recruitment. Faculty and Directors who take the time to plan out a multi-faceted recruitment plan are the most successful.

- **Classes.** Speak to students in your classes about study abroad AND to those in the classes of your colleagues. Include your study abroad information in your own syllabuses for the classes you will teach in the semester leading up to the application deadline for your program. Ask for 5-10 minutes in colleagues’ classes to pitch your program. Think about inviting an Education Abroad Advisor to help when you have 10 minutes or more. Include the following points in your presentation:
  - **What:** What are the details on your program: class offered, itinerary highlights
  - **When:** Dates or Term
  - **Where:** Program Location
  - **Why:** How will the class count toward the degree for your audience? What are the benefits of study abroad for students in your field?
  - **How:** Provide the application deadline and URL as well as informing students of scholarship availability and the URL for more information on those.
    - murraystate.edu/studyabroadapplication AND murraystate.edu/studyabroad

Identify classes that are feeder classes for your study abroad course(s):

- **Colleagues.** Make sure your academic colleagues know about your program. If you cannot get into their classes, ask if they will take flyers to their classes for you. Ask colleagues to help plug your program in various venues that they are involved in, such as student clubs or a department-wide email listserv for your students. Colleagues who have taught abroad are likely to offer help, so seek them out for their advice and assistance. Also get in touch with your department’s Faculty Study
Abroad Ambassador for assistance in recruitment and awareness. For a list of faculty who have taught abroad recently and the list of Faculty Study Abroad Ambassadors, see the Study Abroad website at murraystate.edu/facultystaffabroad.

Identify faculty colleagues who may assist you:

- **Personal Contact.** Build on class visits with follow-up emails to students. Set up one-on-one office time with students who want more information. **Create a Communication Plan to use with those email addresses you’ve gathered – send group and individual emails to students to alert them of upcoming deadlines and/or interesting things you plan to do on the program.**

  **Example 1:** Looks like Patrick Stewart will be playing Othello next winter in London! Join me for the Theatre course abroad December 26 – January 9th and we’ll enjoy his performance together!

  **Example 2:** Don’t forget the Study Abroad application AND scholarship deadline is next Friday! Get your application in by 4:30 to be considered for the amazing Human Rights class in Paris-London this winter and be sure to get that scholarship app done by 4:30 as well so you can be considered for funding from MSU. **More than 80% of students who applied for study abroad scholarships received them last year!** Let me know if you still have questions you need answered before hitting submit!

Identify activities and deadlines you can highlight to create a Communication Plan for study abroad recruitment:

- **Application Follow-up.** As recruitment begins and applications are submitted, login occasionally to Horizons to keep track of your students. Follow-up with both those applications that are **Pending** (completed applications) and those that are **Incomplete**. Add the Pending students to social media outlets for the program for updates. **Encourage Incomplete applicants to complete their application and/or speak with you or the Study Abroad Office concerning any questions they have.**

- **Social Media.** Consider creating a Facebook Group for recruits OR to help recruit. Twitter is a fun way to get to students with short information on activities you may be planning. Ask the Study Abroad Office to highlight your program on their Facebook page as well with a fun photo or event.

- **Flyers.** Create a flyer that can be used as you speak to classes. The Study Abroad Office can print these for you so that you have enough for every interested student. Flyers will include more detailed information about what you are teaching, tentative itinerary highlights, how to apply, etc. **Flyer samples are on the Recruitment section of the Teach Abroad site** at murraystate.edu/facultystaffabroad.
BONUS: Once your flyer is designed, send it to Robyn Pizzo at rpizzo@murraystate.edu for review before posting. If you are not design-inclined, consult with Robyn for complete flyer design.

- **Posters.** Posters will have less information than the flyer. These are designed to hang around campus and catch student’s attention so they will have larger photos and less detailed program information. **Posters can be designed with Robyn Pizzo as well and printed in the Study Abroad Office.** Contact her directly at rpizzo@murraystate.edu to inquire.

- **Events.** Come to the planned Study Abroad Fairs that are organized by the Study Abroad Office. Summer program faculty should consider proposing a session during **International Education Week** that would help promote your program. Additionally, fun and interesting international events such as trivia or a curricular or topical forum can help to recruit students. You might consider events in the residential colleges, Curris Center, or other campus locations that your students frequent. You should avoid the overall general program information session as a recruitment tool unless you have a regularly planned student meeting that you can repurpose for study abroad recruitment. **Invite an Education Abroad Advisor to events and meetings you have so that s/he may assist with application and financial aid/scholarship information.**

Identify events within your department, related clubs, residential colleges, etc., that are currently planned or for which you could take the lead to plan for recruitment:

- **Public Displays.** There are multiple venues you can consider for public displays of information about your program.
  - **Library Computer Tags** can be designed to be placed on the computer monitors in the computer bay at Waterfield. These must be requested and have to be scheduled in advance in order to be placed on the computers at the desired time. Contact Robyn Pizzo at 2959 for details.
  - **Winslow/TRoom Table Tags** can be designed as a miniature version of your poster or flyer. These also have to be requested and scheduled in advance. Contact Robyn Pizzo at 2959 for details.
  - **Display Monitors in various campus buildings** are usually available to add announcements. Contact Department/College offices to determine what is accepted for their monitors and how long you may display your information.
  - **College Bulletin Boards** are available all across campus. Ask the Study Abroad Office where yours is x2277 or ask them to make sure your flyer/poster is there.

Remember that recruitment is ongoing. A multi-faceted approach that is targeted to the students who need your course(s) and continues for several months leading up to the application deadline is the key to recruitment success.