

GUIDELINES FOR APPROVAL OF OFF-CAMPUS PROGRAMS INTERNATIONAL AND DOMESTIC OPTIONS

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

- As programs that have been developed and vetted by Skidmore faculty and administration and that are closely linked to our current curriculum and mission, Skidmore programs overseas are considered a priority. With that in mind, they will be treated as such throughout the approval process. Approved programs should complement, not compete with, our own Skidmore programs overseas. Approved programs located in the same geographical areas as Skidmore programs overseas should be considered only if there is a compelling academic reason to do so.
- Approved programs should enhance the Skidmore curriculum and complement the offerings on campus in specific disciplines; this includes options that might not be available on campus and, therefore, offer an enhanced curriculum for the student.
- An approved program should have educational objectives that complement and correspond to Skidmore's institutional and/or departmental objectives.
- Diversity in academic discipline, geographic distribution, and program model type should be considered when approving programs.
- Cultural engagement should be incorporated as much as possible while keeping in mind the educational goals of the overseas program. Cultural engagement includes class attendance with nationals, home stays, residence halls with nationals, community service projects, field work, internships, and language study. We should avoid "academic tourism." In some cases the academic value and other related attributes of the program may offset a weaker cultural engagement element (i.e. SFS field-based programs).
- Although financial considerations should not be the deciding factor when approving programs, the cost of the approved program should play a role in final approval.
- All programs should be financially accessible to all students. Additional costs that are not covered by the program fee should not prohibit some students from participating.
- While student demand may be considered in approving program, it is only one of several considerations. We must be careful not to be reactive to student desires and instead place a strong emphasis on curricular enhancement.
- Not every guideline/criterion need be present for a program to be approved. However, the greater the number of criteria, the stronger the program.

GENERAL CRITERIA

1. The approved program provides instruction at a locally-accredited university or at an educational institution that meets Skidmore's standards. Credits and grades must be provided on a university transcript or on a grade report from an organization that partners with an international or US accredited institution.
2. The program provides a curriculum that complements or enhances Skidmore's on-campus course offerings with an appropriate level of academic rigor for the discipline and student cohort.
3. Courses will usually be taught by predominantly local faculty.
4. The approved program's administrative structure must be sound and must sufficiently support our students before, during and after their time abroad. This includes ready access to program staff that are well-versed in the issues of international/intercultural education and are able to provide needed resources and assistance in all situations. Priority will be given to programs where an on-site director is present.
5. The approved program should have in place a systematic, well-established approach to emergency response and safety and health concerns.
6. When possible housing should be provided through integrated accommodations such as homestays or residence halls.

7. All new approved programs should be granted provisional status before final approval is given. This allows a program to be evaluated through actual participation.

PROPOSAL REVIEW

1. New proposals are reviewed and endorsed by an academic department/program and the Office of Off-Campus Programs & Exchanges. Proposals are then reviewed by ACOP and reported to CEPP.
2. Responsibility for vetting the academic integrity of the approved program rests with the department/program. OCSE will support this effort by documenting the program's academic integrity and will serve as the liaison between the program provider and the department/program.
3. Responsibility for investigating and documenting the administrative integrity of the approved program rests with OCSE.
4. Proposals should outline specific curriculum matches that would allow students to satisfy major/minor requirements.
5. Proposals submitted to ACOP should include a completed "Approved Program Approval Form" and signatures from the department chair/program director and the director of OCSE.
6. Programs that have been approved through student petition and are now being considered for addition to the standard Approved Programs list, do not have to go through the full vetting process. Since the sponsoring department has approved the program previously (for the petitioning student), ACOP simply needs an email from the chair/program director indicating s/he wants to add the program to the standard AP list. OCSE will complete the "Approved Program Approval Form" using the information provided on the student petition. OCSE will check to be sure there have been no major changes to the program since the student petitioned; OCSE will update the information on the form as needed. The completed form and the chair/director email will be submitted to ACOP for final review.
7. Programs that are already on the standard AP list for one or more departments can be added to a new departmental list without additional ACOP review. The chair/director of the discipline adding the program needs to provide an email approving the addition. This program addition will be reported to ACOP without additional review by the committee.