

# **STUDY ABROAD PETITION PROCESS**

## **For Programs Not on the Approved Programs List**

### **SKIDMORE'S PHILOSOPHY AND POLICY ON APPROVED PROGRAMS**

Skidmore College's faculty and administration have worked together to develop a list of Approved Programs in which our students may participate. These programs have been reviewed and approved by the faculty at the departmental level, by the Office of International Programs at the administrative level, and by the Committee on Educational Policies and Planning on a college-wide level. The Approved Programs complement Skidmore's degree programs and meet the high standards of a Skidmore education. With this in mind, Skidmore's policy is that students who wish to study abroad must participate on one of these Approved Programs.

Skidmore does recognize that occasionally the academic needs of some students may not be met by these Approved Programs. Therefore, we have developed a petition process that allows students to apply for special permission to study on a program that is not included in the Approved Programs list.

Petitions must be approved by the Advisory Committee on International Study. Only petitions with clear and compelling academic objectives and rationales will be considered. Petitions are judged on the merit of the student's individual academic objectives and the manner in which the specific program helps the student reach those goals. With this in mind, the student must have the support and approval of the appropriate Skidmore academic department.

It is only through this petition process that students may study on a program other than those found on the Approved Programs list. By petitioning, the student is not guaranteed permission to study on his or her program of choice. Petitions that in any significant way duplicate or compete with our Skidmore or Approved Programs will not typically be approved.

### **DEADLINES**

Petitions must be submitted to the Office of International Programs no later than 30 days prior to the regular study abroad application deadlines, which are typically October 15 for the spring semester and March 15 for the fall. If the student's proposed program has a deadline prior to October 15 or March 15, he/she must submit his/her petition 30 days prior to the program application deadline. If the student does not do so, she/he may jeopardize her/his space on the proposed program. That means petitions must be submitted to OIP by:

**SEPTEMBER 15 for spring semester programs**  
**FEBRUARY 15 for fall and academic year programs**

Incomplete or late petitions will not be considered.

## PETITION GUIDELINES

- To be eligible to petition, students must meet Skidmore's general eligibility criteria for study abroad. Students must:
  1. have a GPA of 3.0;
  2. be in good social standing; and
  3. demonstrate the level of maturity and self-motivation needed to succeed abroad.
- To be eligible to petition, the student must demonstrate a clear and compelling reason for needing to participate in a program that is not on the Approved Programs list.
- Petitions will be approved on a one-time basis only subject to the following criteria:
  - The program provider should be a non-profit, academic organization.
  - The program must be of an academic level comparable to that found at Skidmore and be able to demonstrate the academic rigor of its course offerings.
  - Cultural immersion should be incorporated as much as possible while keeping in mind the educational goals of the overseas program. Cultural immersion includes class attendance with nationals, integrated housing in home stays or residence halls with nationals, community service projects, field work, and language study. The program should provide instruction at an accredited non-US university or language institute or in venues approved by Skidmore faculty.
  - Courses should be taught by predominantly non-US faculty.
  - The program's administrative structure must be sound and must sufficiently support our students before, during and after their time abroad. Priority should be given to programs where an on-site director is present.
  - The program should have in place a systematic approach to safety and health concerns.
- The student is responsible for working with the program provider to secure sufficient documentation to support his/her petition. The Office of International Programs will assist where possible; however, **it is ultimately the student's responsibility to prepare a thorough petition.**
- Application to the student's program of choice is the student's responsibility. The application process to that specific program is independent of the petition process. **If and when the student's petition is approved, the student must then apply to the program directly.**

## PETITION PROCESS

Submit the petition and supporting documents directly to the Office of International Programs as early as possible. The packet must include the following:

- \_\_\_\_\_ The **Study Abroad Petition Application.**
- \_\_\_\_\_ A copy of the student's **completed application to the proposed program.** Including letters of recommendation and an official copy of her/his transcript, along with any additional documentation or forms required by the program provider.
- \_\_\_\_\_ A **statement of purpose.** The statement should be no more than two typewritten pages and must address in a clear and compelling manner:
  - The student's academic reasons for applying to the proposed program, focusing on how the proposed program contributes to her/his educational goals;
  - Why programs on the existing Approved Programs list do not meet his/her needs;

- What special background and/or qualifications does the student have to be successful in the proposed program.

\_\_\_\_\_ A **letter of support from the student's faculty advisor** stating that the advisor supports the student's participation in the proposed program and that by participating in this program the student will still be able to fulfill the graduation requirements for the major.

\_\_\_\_\_ A "**Course Pre-approval Form**" on which the student has received approval from the academic advisor, the Chair of the major department (if he/she wishes to receive credit toward the major), and the Chair of any department for which the student wishes to receive credit toward all-college requirements.

\_\_\_\_\_ The following **documentation supporting the quality of the proposed program**:

- Brochures;
- Course descriptions and syllabi for the courses you will be taking abroad;
- Names and credentials of program faculty and administrators;
- Information about academic structure: instruction format, grading system, course credit system, location of classes (program center vs. foreign university campus), etc. Especially important is how the program will provide grades – university transcript or grade report. An official transcript with a course and grade translation is strongly preferred.
- Information about support services on site and in the States: housing, meals, planned co-curricular activities, orientation, staff in the States to support you before, during and after the program, etc.

The Director of International Programs will facilitate the presentation of the petition to the Advisory Committee on International Study (ACIS). ACIS will review all petitions and make a final determination within 30 days of the date the student submits the petition to OIP.

The student will be notified of the Committee's decision in writing within 30 days after submitting the petition.

## **POST-PETITION PROCESS**

### **Petition Approved**

\_\_\_\_\_ The student applies to the desired program directly. The Director of International Programs approves the program application only after the petition has been approved. At that time, the student will bring the program application to OIP for signature. Only then can the student send the application to the program provider.

\_\_\_\_\_ Students should make an appointment to meet with a Student Aid representative as needed. S/he will help you determine the student's aid package. Students do not meet with the Student Aid representative until the student's petition has been approved.

### **Petition Denied**

If the petition is denied, the student will **not** be eligible for transfer credit or financial aid for that program. At that point, the Office of International Programs will work with the student to find an Approved Program that fits the student's needs.