

# TIPS FOR RECRUITING STUDENTS

## Faculty-Led Study Abroad Programs Kansas State University

When developing a faculty-led study abroad program, the most critical stage in the process is marketing and student recruitment. If enrollment is low, the program will become too expensive for students with financial needs and the program may have to cancel. On the other hand, having more students than the program can accommodate will make the selection process competitive.

Recruiting students must be a joint effort among the Faculty Leader, the Study Abroad Office, and the academic departments and colleges. As a professor, you have a wide sphere of influence and can generate a lot of interest in your classes. Students' enthusiasm can spread among other students, working to your advantage. The Study Abroad Office talks with hundreds of students through information tables, classroom presentations, and individual student advising. Also, once the program has been approved, a program profile will be created in the Study Abroad Office online program search wizard.

To ensure sufficient numbers, it is wise to begin the recruitment process at least 9-12 months in advance of program departure; however, recruitment cannot begin until the program has been approved by the Study Abroad Office. For example, for a summer program it is ideal if the academic department, Faculty Leader, and the Study Abroad Program distribute recruiting materials as soon as classes begin in the fall (if not earlier). The Faculty Leader should plan to publicize the program during K-State's semi-annual Study Abroad Fair. The Faculty Leader should also inform other faculty and academic advisors in appropriate departments so that they can promote the faculty-led study abroad program in their classes and during advising sessions.

Although the Study Abroad Office is heavily involved in the student recruitment process, without strong academic department and faculty support, recruitment for even the best program can fail. Opting to participate in a faculty-led study abroad program is a major decision for most students, and they rely heavily on the advice and recommendations of the faculty members in their department.

In summary, the Faculty Leader should be prepared to:

- Recruit at the semi-annual Study Abroad Fair
- Host information sessions about the program
- Organize and attend classroom presentations to recruit students
- Identify and encourage individual students to apply for the program
- Collaborate with other faculty and academic advisors in advertising the program

The importance of academic department and faculty support for faculty-led study abroad program recruitment cannot be overemphasized.

## **Suggestions for Recruitment**

- Talk about the faculty-led study abroad course in your classes and advising sessions
- Ask other faculty to help promote the course in their classes
- Ask academic advisors to help promote the course in their advising sessions
- Host an information table at the semi-annual Study Abroad Fair
- Host an information table at the Union along with a student who participated in the trip last year (if possible), and a study abroad Peer Advisor. The best time to set-up a table is between 11:30am-1:30pm. It's a good idea to bring picture books, photos, brochures, sign-up forms (for more information), contact information, artifacts, etc.
- Network as much as possible
- Ask your academic department to advertise the faculty-led study abroad program on their webpage
- Host information meetings. Tip: providing food at information meetings is a bonus and is likely to attract more students
- Advertise to student organizations
- Advertise in Residence Halls – You can do this by sending 100 copies of promotional materials to the Housing and Dining Office, who will then approve and distribute the promotional materials in the Residence Halls.
- Chalk sidewalks across campus, especially near the Student Union
- Post flyers across campus
- Advertise on academic department and college listservs and/or newsletters
- Advertise through a Collegian article and/or ad
- Announce on K-State radio station
- Send student mailings
- Request academic departmental approval to have the program brochure attached to the course syllabi of all feeder classes
- Contact the Study Abroad Office for the assistance of an OIP Scholarship Student to assist with recruiting efforts

## **Marketing Materials**

As soon as the program proposal has been approved, Office of International Programs graphic design student worker will create a program brochure. Before publishing the brochure, the Faculty Services Coordinator will send the template to the Faculty Leader for his/her review. The Study Abroad Office is also able to design and order 16" x 20" posters for faculty-led study abroad programs. These posters are printed through K-State Printing Services and cost approximately \$12 each.

Faculty Leaders should distribute the program brochure throughout their department and display posters prominently campus-wide, particularly in buildings where related courses are held or where student traffic is high. The Study Abroad Office also will also provide program brochures to student walk-ins, advisees, etc. in the Study Abroad Office. If possible, the Faculty Leader should obtain academic departmental approval to have the program brochure attached to the course syllabi of all feeder classes. This is an excellent recruitment method! Don't forget to market your program on the web too.

## **Semi-annual Study Abroad Fair**

Every fall and spring semester the Study Abroad Office hosts the Study Abroad Fair. It is strongly recommend that the Faculty Leader and others involved with the program, particularly student alumni, promote the program at the fair by hosting a table. Space at the Fair is limited, so if you are interested in participating, please notify the Faculty Services Coordinator as soon as possible so space can be reserved for your program. The Study Abroad Fair is held in the Student Union Courtyard.

## **Information Sessions and Class Presentations**

Faculty Leaders should plan on holding at least two or three, one-hour Information Sessions to inform prospective students about their program. Two or three weeks before these sessions, the Faculty Leader, a Graduate Assistant, and/or students who participated in the program in past years should speak briefly to as many classes as possible to pique student interest. Two tips:

- Students love to hear students talk about how great a program is
- It is much more effective for the Faculty Leader to ask colleagues to donate five to ten minutes of class time for this presentation than it is for the Study Abroad Office to make the request

The class presentation usually consists of:

- A 10-minute pitch on the specific faculty-led study abroad program by the Faculty Leader. If possible, show a short video, Power Point, photos, etc.
- An invitation to attend the next Information Session

The Information Session should be scheduled at the best time for the students. The Faculty Leader should lead this session. It is also helpful to have students, who have participated in the program in past years, to present information and/or answer questions. The meeting agenda should include:

- A thorough description of the program, including the dates and itinerary
- An overview of academic objectives, including specific requirements the course will fulfill (i.e. academic major/minor, K-State 8, Honors, etc.)
- Description of application process and deadline
- Estimated program costs
- Availability of Financial Aid

## **Individual Student Meetings**

The best way to excite a student about your faculty-led study abroad program is to tell them exactly how the program will meet his or her specific academic goals and what cultural/fun activities will be included in the program. The Study Abroad Office suggests that Faculty Leaders compile a list of 10-20 students who he/she thinks would benefit from the program. E-mailing these students individually or en masse and/or scheduling a time for you to meet with them to discuss the program are the most effective way of filling your program. Study Abroad Advisors and Peer Advisors also will meet individually with student walk-ins interested in your program.