

Study Tour Feasibility Considerations

Is your program marketable? Following are the key factors to consider when developing a successful Study Tour: location, academic content, fulfillment of course requirements, program length and timing.

1. **LOCATION.** The choice of destination is a key component. Is the location popular enough with students to interest them, and, more importantly, does the chosen site match the proposed academic content and learning objectives? Are there health & safety concerns related to the site, such as U.S. State Department travel warnings or advisories? Is the program geared towards a particular major/minor or can the location be used to fulfill a variety of academic requirements, thereby welcoming a greater number of students?
2. **TIME OF YEAR.** The timing of the travel is crucial to a program's success, as well. Does the tour run at an appropriate time for the maximum number of students to participate? Will there be competing interests during this time period? How will peak travel time affect the tour cost? Have national holidays in the host countries been researched to avoid travel delays? Will weather conditions be favorable to the group's objective during this time of year?
3. **DURATION.** What is the program's duration abroad and does its length match the intended audience? Traditional-age undergraduates may be able to take off for two weeks, but working graduate students may not. Also, how many places can feasibly be visited in 10 days or two weeks? Generally, the shorter the trip, the more affordable it will be. Please consult with CIP or with the Travel Manager for recommendations.
4. **COST.** The idea for your study tour may be fascinating but if the cost is excessive, it may not be economically viable for students. CIP works with faculty, the SJU Travel Manager, and also Tour Operators to develop budgets. Please see current tour listings for examples of typical pricing. Also, if a student takes a spring or fall semester study tour course, tuition is usually included in his/her regular load and only the travel fee is additional. However, for summer & winter session tours, tuition is paid in addition to the travel fee, thus making them "more expensive."
5. **AUDIENCE.** Although not always the case, when study tour programs fulfill major requirements and GEPs, they tend to appeal to a wider applicant pool. With students' schedules already so intense, they often ask our office staff, "How does this study tour course count?" Please keep in mind that offering a course with significant pre-requisites may also limit the number of students who apply.

Adapted from: The Guide to Successful Short-Term Programs Abroad, "Feasibility Studies," Chapter 7 by Allison Keith.