

Study Abroad Statement Writing Worksheet

FIRST – Identifying how you fit the Selection Criteria:

In selecting students to study abroad, the Off Campus Study Committee is looking for a number of qualities that we believe students must possess in order to have a successful experience away from Willamette and come back home again with much to offer the entire Willamette community. These qualities are measured based on your entire application. The committee is looking for:

- **Academic achievement at Willamette.** There is no specific grade point requirement though we prefer at least a "B" average. If your cumulative GPA is below a 3.0, however, your selection will be in jeopardy. Transcripts are evaluated for overall academic excellence. *[Summer programs REQUIRE a 2.0 cumulative GPA minimum.]*

**Tip: If your GPA is border line, add a statement about the issues which have affected your GPA and what steps you have taken to improve your grades.*

- **Qualities of character and social skills.** Life in a foreign culture demands patience, flexibility, good humor, good will, and an ability to tolerate uncertainty. We are looking for students who can roll with the punches, who are not brittle, and who can laugh at themselves and the hard times when they occur. Above all, we are looking for students who exhibit a high degree of responsibility, as well as sensitivity to others. Often the success of an off-campus program depends as much upon how students get along with each other as they do with their foreign hosts.

**Tip: Consider times when you've had to be very flexible or patient in the face of a challenging situation, a conflict with another person or had to deal with a lot of uncertainty.*

- **Motivation and curiosity.** Frequently your ability to get something out of an off-campus experience depends entirely upon what you put into it. We are looking for students who are genuinely curious about the world around them and have demonstrated initiative in acting upon this curiosity. Please note that if you desire to study in a country whose official language is not English, you are required to take language courses during your stay.

**Tip: In what ways have you taken initiative to get involved or try something new? Have you joined a new club or explored a new city? Did you get involved in an activity in high school that other students didn't, etc?*

- **Self-knowledge.** No matter where students go to study off-campus the primary journey is usually an internal one. Students should know explicitly why they desire to go.

**Tip: Think deeply about why you want to go abroad and express specific ways in which you hope to grow and change from the experience. Use the worksheet on the other side of this page to help you explore these ideas in detail.*

- **Advance preparation.** We are interested in students whose claimed desire to have "always wanted" to study abroad has actually resulted in their finding out something about the history, culture, and politics of the country in which they seek to study. You should know what other students have experienced too. Please note that most language programs require that a student have completed at least two years of college-level language prior to participating in a Willamette program and that students be enrolled in a language course the semester prior to the proposed study abroad experience.

SECOND – Brainstorm why you want to study abroad:

Why study abroad?	Why?	Why?

THIRD – Support your “whys” with the selection criteria.