

Faculty-Led Classrooms Abroad

As part of the Internationalization and Global Engagement (I&GE) Plan, Durham College is committed to creating opportunities for faculty, staff and students to gain global experience and apply and refine their skills internationally.

Faculty-led Classrooms Abroad (FLCAs) provide faculty with the opportunity to develop and deliver unique, innovative and experiential education abroad programs for students. These short-term opportunities are typically up to two weeks in duration with a theme and location that ties into existing program curricula.

A faculty-led experience involves a structured group learning activity under the supervision of a DC faculty member comprising of either credit course(s) or project(s) and assignment(s) centered on a portion of the learning taking place abroad, either physically or virtually.

What is a Faculty-led Classroom Abroad (FLCA)?

A FLCA is a short-term program led by a faculty member travelling, physically or virtually, with a group of students.

The FLCA can be:

- A standalone credit course (note: this requires development and approval from the Faculty of Interdisciplinary Studies)
- A component of a pre-existing course, for example an assignment worth 10-15%
- A field placement course (as part of or the full WIL experience)

In all cases, the FLCA can be developed to involve students from different fields (interdisciplinary) with approval from executive deans.

Overall objectives

1. To contribute to the overall internationalization goals of the college.
2. To help internationalize the curriculum and enhance student learning.
3. To strengthen existing international partnerships and explore new opportunities for international cooperation.

Benefits for students and faculty

- Gain a global perspective.
- Connect classroom learning to real-world experiences.
- Develop international education experience.
- Experience a different country and culture.
- Experience a unique group-learning environment.

Funding

Participating students are eligible for travel bursaries through the International Education Office. Faculty members are funded by the International Education Office, following the Business Travel policy and procedures. One faculty member is supported financially for up to 10 students.

That is, there is a faculty to student ratio of 1:10. If the proposing faculty member feels that the nature of the trip or the destination is complex and requests a lower faculty to student ratio, this will be considered by exception by the FLCA review committee. Costs for a second faculty member may be borne by the Faculty involved.

Designing a FLCA

To participate in a FLCA, interested faculty need to first take the Intercultural Awareness DC Connect Course (Module 1).

While designing a FLCA, the faculty member must demonstrate alignment between the proposed program and specific course learning outcomes.

FLCAs must include a partnership that supports the delivery of the FLCA. This can be through:

- Leveraging an existing partnership;
- Creating a new partnership; or
- Working with a third-party education/tour operator.

The role of the partner is critical. A partner is required to assist with providing a quality academic experience. The partner can also provide in-country logistical knowledge and awareness of the local culture and customs, which can both enhance the student experience and assist with addressing local risks. Examples of partners include educational institutions, non-governmental organizations, industry organizations, regional governments or departments and educational travel abroad agencies.

The design should include specific program, course and essential employability skills outcomes links and will align with core elements of the I&GE Plan and the Academic Plan. Faculty will receive FLCA design support from Durham College's Global Learning Facilitator.

NOTE: A FLCA proposal must have the support of an executive dean, by signature on the proposal form, to be considered for approval.

What is the role of the International Education Office?

The International Education Office will assist faculty at all stages of the program development, including:

- Support program development.
- Support promotion of opportunities to students.
- Provide and manage travel forms and waivers for students, if applicable.
- Issue travel bursaries for students, if applicable.
- Deliver mandatory pre-departure training, and provide in-country and re-entry support, covering topics such as health and safety, logistics and cross-cultural understanding.

How to apply

Faculty members are required to seek the approval of their executive dean to apply to lead a FLCA. Once initial approval has been granted, faculty are asked to submit a proposal to their dean. The dean will forward proposals to the International Education Office. At all stages of proposal design, the faculty member can seek support from the Global Learning Facilitator.

A review committee made up of the following individuals will review the proposals:

- Dean, International Education
- Global Learning Facilitator
- An executive dean from an academic school
- Director, International Education

Important dates

- Equal consideration deadline: February 1st (for travel the following academic year)
 - Submissions made after this deadline will be subject to funding availability
- FLCA information sessions will take place in the fall. Faculty members may also reach out to the Global Learning Facilitator at any time for an appointment.

Responsibilities of the faculty lead

Working closely with the International Education Office, as applicable, the faculty lead will:

Pre-Departure:

- Develop, coordinate and oversee the academic components of the program (i.e. teaching the coursework abroad and/or coordinating with the partners that will provide the instruction)
- Determine the academic deliverables and their credit value (i.e. the assignment, presentation, participation grades or even the full course)
- Consult with the International Education Office regarding potential risks and the logistical coordination of the program, including housing, excursions and onsite transportation
- Hold a suggested three academically-focused meetings with students prior to the departure to discuss the academic program, including content, desired learning outcomes, expectations and deliverables
- Participate in all pre-departure International Education Office meetings to cover logistical, risk management, and other operational aspects
- Assist with the marketing, advertising and recruitment of eligible students

While Away:

- Coordinate and attend all program-related activities to enhance the learning of student participants, including any field trips included in the academic content of the program
- Ensure the smooth operation of the program overseas
- Be the primary resource for student issues and the initial responder for logistical, risk management and other operational aspects

Upon Return:

- Provide the International Education Office with a brief program report during a debrief meeting
- Follow-up and grade all academic deliverables as relevant
- Coordinate a post-program engagement activity to promote the program and showcase learning to the DC community
- Within one week of return, provide the International Education Office with any additional questions to be included in the post-program evaluation survey
- Share the FLCA experience with the wider program, Faculty and/or college community

Evaluation

All proposals will be evaluated on the below criteria:

1. Faculty experience and/or knowledge of location: Proposal indicates faculty either has experience with this country/culture or has done sufficient research to justify the connection to the specific program and course learning outcomes, and to identify cultural nuances, travel risks, etc.
2. Faculty involvement in projects leading students: Proposal indicates prior faculty involvement in projects leading students to demonstrate faculty responsibility, organizational skills and ability to manage students out of country.
3. Link to program/course learning outcomes: Proposal connects specific program and course learning outcomes with the faculty-led classroom abroad. There is a clear and measurable link identifying how student learning is enhanced as a result of the program; how students will demonstrate specific elements of competency and how faculty will evaluate the learning.
4. On-site cultural and immersive experiences & activities: Proposal describes in detail the cultural activities and experiences involved and demonstrates how these experiences will enhance the global competency skills of students and faculty.
5. Link to Essential Employability Skills outcomes: Proposal describes the link between the faculty-led classroom abroad and specific Essential Employability Skills Outcomes (EESO) in a manner consistent with the learning outcomes identified. Faculty indicates how students will demonstrate their specific EESO(s) development and how this will be evaluated.
6. Collaboration with partner institutions: Proposal demonstrates how the partner will enhance academic learning for students and add value to the local cultural experience.
7. Post-travel sharing of FLCA experience: Proposal describes how faculty will ensure the FLCA is shared with the wider campus community to benefit other students/faculty and raise the profile of FLCA program.
8. Risk management: Proposal identifies specific risks and mitigation strategies to lower those risks.
9. Itinerary: Proposal clearly identifies the itinerary for the FLCA by day and activity.
10. Budget: Proposal clearly identifies the total cost of the program. Attention is paid to ensuring access for all students and value for money.