A presentation for the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning
Seattle University

International Study Tours

An Approximate Tutorial

China and the Experiences of the Albers School of Business

ALBERS
SCHOOL OF BUSINESS
AND ECONOMICS

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International Study Tours: A Step-by-Step Approach

1. **Establish courses that would benefit from international component.**

We include as a basis that "culture informs ecommerce and HR practice, so it's important to teach at least some cultural background as a component of the course

2. **Identify local partner/facilitator in country you plan to visit**

We've used past students and are currently contracting with a former student who has established her own travel business

3. **Identify activities**

Our approach is to visit businesses, interact with local MBA students to learn from their perspective, as well as including cultural visits to learn about host-country norms

4. **Prepare budget for major expenses to determine per head cost (keep buffer)**
    a. Calculate for 15, 20, 25, and 30 paying participants
5. **Prepare tentative itinerary (note that the departure dates are partly determined by flight availability on those days)**
    a. Departure dates
    b. Course specific visits
    c. Service component
    d. Cultural sites
    e. Free days
    f. Hosted Banquets
    g. Common meals (not too many)

Given changing demands and vagaries of transportation etc., we recommend this planning occurs well, well in advance of travel.

6. **Set up website with detailed information and costs**
7. **Put up brochures in prominent locations with website address listed.**
8. **Set up Information sessions to estimate interest – include alumni and guests**
9. **Make application forms available – set a relatively early deadline (note that even guests should submit an application)**
    a. General liability waiver
    b. Actual biographical information
    c. Passport information

    Note: Have an established/published policy on selection criteria for accepted participants
10. **Fee payment schedule**
    a. Set up a separate account to manage funds

b. Breakdown into 2 or 3 payments (made in favor of Seattle University)
    i. First payment should be enough to cover airfare plus miscellaneous initial expenses. To be submitted with application.

Be sure not to push date back to the point of losing seating availability on airlines

    ii. Second payment should be enough to cover hotel reservation costs and booking internal transportation (buses)
    iii. Third payment is for cash to be carried on trip
c. Make clear to participants that this is in ADDITION to tuition

11. Choose travel agent and keep track of ticket prices. Book as soon as possible.
    a. Use exact name as it appears in passport
    b. Let students specify their own frequent flier numbers and meal preferences
    c. Call airlines and make seat preferences known as soon as possible (you don't want a middle seat for a long-haul flight). Students should take responsibility for own seating (requires a confirmation number)

12. Determine visa requirements
    a. Most European countries do not require a visa of American citizens
    b. Most Asian countries do require a visa of American citizens
    c. International students almost always need a visa
        i. Check student status
        ii. Have student talk to International Student Advisor regarding I-20 and re-entry issues.
    d. Do not apply for visa too soon. Most have a limited shelf life.
    e. Apply for tourist visa when possible. If you specify the purpose of the visit to be "education", then a different visa is required. That is typically more complicated.

13. Get vaccinations if necessary (check CDC travel website)

14. Finalize hotels/dorms (double occupancy)

15. Finalize bus transportation (enough capacity for everyone plus 3-4 pieces of luggage each).

16. Schedule a pre-departure warm-up gathering for students and guests – this allows them to get a sense of potential roommates. Gives you a chance to identify possible conflicts.

17. Schedule pre-departure classes approximately 2-3 weeks before departure

18. Based on activities planned in itinerary
    a. Purchase gifts for hosts at various sites.
    b. Order T-shirts/mementos for students

19. Buy Supplemental Health Insurance – encourage students to do same.

20. Day of departure
    a. Pack light. Be sure to take some formal clothing
    b. Carry all necessary medications – especially prescriptions
    c. Be sure you have all the necessary teaching materials
    d. Carry the emergency contact and health information of the group. Leave a copy with department.

e. Be sure you have all your chargers for electrical items (be aware of voltage differences)
f. Make sure all tickets accounted for – hand over to students at airport
g. Have everyone reach airport approximately 4 hours in advance of flight

21. Post-Tour debriefing

a. Collect impressions
b. Collect assignments
c. Share photographs

22. Tips while in the country you are visiting

a. Don't over-schedule group activities – everyone needs time to themselves
b. Don't over-schedule group meals – everyone needs a break
c. Find out tipping procedures
d. Carry a moneybelt
e. Warn students about taking care of passport
f. When departing locations, always check group roster to make sure no one left behind
g. Expect a bit of tiredness and homesickness halfway through the trip – things will pick up again as the trip progresses.
h. Expect a couple of upset stomach cases.
i. Tell students to explore in groups
j. Try to schedule time with local students – an enriching experience for all.
k. Try to include a service component.
l. Be prepared for exponential growth in the number of luggage items as the trip progresses and students do more and more shopping.

Try to make established connections within the host country for any contingencies. For example, do you know the embassy telephone number? Should a medical emergency occur, what is the plan? What if someone is lost? Such contingency planning may come in handy.