



RESEARCH CAPACITY STATEMENT

Michigan State University has long been a leader in education abroad. With almost a quarter of MSU undergraduates participating in education abroad on the country's largest catalog of programs, MSU's model of faculty involvement has an obvious record of success. Following the 2008 MSU Study Abroad Task Force Report, and pursuant to the mission of International Studies and Programs, the Office for Education Abroad (EA) is prepared to support research projects in international education and education abroad in the following ways:

- We encourage program leaders to consider a research project to reflect on what they have learned through their programming efforts. A variety of methods are supported including qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods, such as student surveys and external tools to measure intercultural or global competence. Language to this effect is encouraged in program development materials and the program leader guide. EA's approach is to give stakeholders easy access to information on what other MSU leaders are doing in this regard and to facilitate connection to university resources that can provide effective assistance.
- We organize symposia, brownbag lunches and workshops for program leaders on ideas and means to undertake research on their programs. The main objective of these initiatives are to highlight the activities of MSU program leaders as well as those at other institutions. Summaries of such discussions are made available to all program leaders.
- We have created a web showcase to feature research projects of this nature. The primary focus is to promote MSU projects and provide a centralized resource for MSU faculty and staff. This includes links to other resources, literature reviews, conference reports, etc.
- We invite program leaders to collaborate on conference panels, particularly on program models that illustrate MSU's strengths. We also seek collaboration with program leaders for publication opportunities. Areas of initial focus are community engagement, student research, program design, and adapting programming strategies to fit the strategic goals of units and colleges.

In addition, we assist faculty/staff who undertake research projects in the following ways:

Contextualization

Program leaders often have extensive expertise in their academic discipline but may not be aware of the body of literature in education abroad and the growing number of tools that are widely accepted in the field for student surveys, external measures of intercultural competence, etc. EA staff are prepared to assist program leaders to contextualize their project within what is happening across Michigan State. EA staff may also offer suggestions for other contacts or with a preliminary review of the literature.

Staffing

EA encourages requests for assistance and review potential staffing assignments, within the constraints of available resources. Projects supported are assigned to one main EA collaborator.

Communication support

EA is prepared to assist researchers in identifying appropriate venues for publishing or presenting their findings, outside of the academic discipline that is already the program leader's area of expertise.

Funding

EA proposes a co-funding grant for research projects. For substantial projects seeking external funding, we encourage requests to participate. We also propose a funding plan to encourage conference presentations with program leaders and/or students. This is consistent with ISP's goal to raise visibility of MSU's programming strengths. Funding amounts and approaches will be discussed with the ISP dean for the academic year's funding cycle. The intention is to co-fund projects, not to replicate efforts already underway in other areas of the university.

Themes

The following areas are of particular interest:

- Connecting education abroad to the department's research agenda
- How program design can maximize student learning
- Integrating cultural and linguistic learning in programs outside the humanities
- Student research on education abroad
- Community engagement in education abroad
- Underrepresented groups and destinations
- Education abroad for disabled students
- Education abroad and student development, particularly in global competencies

Selection

For competitive funding requests, EA typically forms a review committee with representatives from the Advisory Council on Education Abroad and the Office of the Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies.