

Enrollment Thresholds Guidelines for Study Abroad Programs

Current thresholds for on-campus classes are as follows: 1000 and 2000-level courses must have at least 15 students enrolled; 3000, 4000, and 5000-level courses must have at least 12 students enrolled; graduate courses must have at least 5 students enrolled. Split-level (4000/6000) courses) must meet the threshold defined by the relation $(U + 2G) \geq 12$ (\geq means greater than or equal to), where U is the number of undergraduate and G is the number of graduate enrollees. For example, a course that enrolls 6 undergraduate and 3 graduate students yields $6 + 2(3) = 12$, which meets the requirement.

Most studies abroad classes are at the 3000-5000 level, where the minimum enrollment threshold is set at 12. This is problematic for studies abroad programs, especially the many UGA summer “niche” programs that reach full capacity with 20+ students and offer 2-3 courses. In the case of a course cancellation on campus, students have a broad array of options from which they may choose. Cancellation of a study abroad class on a program that offers credit for 2-3 classes to a limited number of students would inevitably lead to cancellation of the entire program. The planning by the student and parents that goes in to participating in a study abroad program is often non-transferable to an alternative even if available, e.g. obtaining a visa to travel can be a lengthy process, the vaccinations required for some locales require several months to administer, study abroad courses are not ‘fixed price’ like regular on-campus courses so more money may be required to switch, etc.

Some programs –in Music practice, for example– must necessarily offer one on one instruction and therefore will always be well under the prescribed threshold. It would be important in these cases to make sure that the programs do not over hire instructors and that the programs are organized so that individual instructors are expected to teach multiple classes for a set salary.

For studies abroad programs OIE recommends setting a minimum enrollment threshold for the program, as opposed to individual courses. The minimum threshold will vary from program to program and should be driven by the amount of students required to make the program itself financially viable.

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