

# UNIVERSITY HONORS PROGRAM

## Honors Study Abroad Reflection Paper Guidelines

This paper should be submitted after students have returned from their study abroad experience. It may be submitted in paper format to the UHP Office, 219 Clark Hall, Campus Box 8610, or emailed to [university\\_honors@ncsu.edu](mailto:university_honors@ncsu.edu).

Deadline: The reflection paper is due no later than the fifth day of class of the semester following the study abroad experience

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### Length:

The paper should be at least 2,000 words

### Considerations:

1. Plan in advance for this paper by keeping a journal, mementos, or correspondence.
2. If you do not keep a journal, spend some time brainstorming: review and take notes about specific events, striking conversations, sights, sounds, and even smells.
3. Try to sum up your experience in a sentence or two. Is there a word, phrase, or theme that encapsulates it?

### Analyze Your Experience:

1. Let broad, general questions be your starting point. Types of questions to ask yourself include (but are in no way limited to) the following
  - Was this experience what I expected? Why or why not?
  - What have I learned about myself and others?
  - How did my academic experience differ from what I expected?
  - How do different societies define concepts like “learning” or “knowledge”?
  - What would I have changed about the experience, if anything?
  - In what ways was this culture different from my own?
  - How is this culture similar to my own?
  - What, if anything, shocked me the most?
2. From these broad questions, more detailed questions may arise. For example, from exploring the cultural differences, you might then ask yourself
  - How have cultural differences made me more aware of my own culture, of its benefits, limitations, strengths, or biases?
  - In what ways might my own culture/society benefit by learning from others?
  - How do cultural differences allow others to view me differently from the way I view myself?
3. As you review your notes and remember your experiences, ask yourself the following:
  - How does my study abroad experience relate to my past academic experience?
  - How will this experience affect my future, whether in academic, social, career, or personal choices?