



Proposal to Southern Virginia University for 2024 Late Summer Term Study Abroad Program

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At the request of the Provost of Southern Virginia University, James Lambert, the following documents have been prepared for consideration of a Study Abroad program designed for and under the direction of the Southern Virginia University (SVU) Board of Trustees and its administration. This proposal and, with the approval of SVU, will be operated with the assistance of the School of International Studies (SIS), a division of the Elements of Life Institute, a 501(c)(3) educational charity non-profit corporation. Dann W Hone, managing director of SIS, will be the agent with the operations and development of this program in association with SVU.

Proposed Courses for SVU Near East Study Abroad Programs

- Benefit to Students. University studies show that students that have university level foreign study experiences have better opportunities for:
 - faster employment placement,
 - higher employment salaries,
 - admission to advanced graduate studies, and
 - improvements in LDS mission—post mission preparation and maturity
- Benefits for the University
 - Opportunities for faculty professional development through participation on these programs
 - Increased Accreditation with Development of New Curriculums (inter-disciplinary studies)
 - Increased Student Enrollments
 - Increase in Financial Support

Expectations of SVU for Operation of Study Abroad Programs

- Possible need for more faculty and administration to handle continued offerings; providing faculty funding, training, and travel.
- Development of curriculum and travel programs associated with major/minor requirements approved by university academic departments.
- Obtaining travel insurance and assessing all risk factors.
- Accreditation of travel study programs with appropriate admission processes in place.
- Fund raising campaign for study abroad programs and the home campus that includes pursuit of grants, scholarships, and endowments.
- Promotional commitment to establish adequate student and faculty enrollments.

Suggested Correlated Curriculum for the Study Abroad Programs

Each student will be registered for the following courses (9 certified educational unit hours of course work that includes pre travel orientation).

- A. **RELIGIOUS STUDIES CORE (2 CERTIFIED HOURS)** Your studies begin with the examination of the Bible from the Pentateuch (the first five books of the Bible or Torah in Hebrew) and proceeds through the relevant texts, ending with the life and ministry of Jesus Christ and the first century Christian church. As part of the course, comparative inquiries of indigenous religions (Judaism, Samaritanism, Eastern Orthodox and traditional Christianity, Islam, the *Mowhidoon* (Druze Faith), the Baha'i Faith, and others) which have their origins and foundations in the region will be investigated. This course includes extensive Field Study experiences as well as classroom and lecture series.

- B. NEAR EASTERN STUDIES CORE (7 CERTIFIED HOURS)** The Near East core curriculum provides students with a blend of historical and contemporary studies of the geography, people, languages (Hebrew and Arabic), politics and current events of the region with emphasis on the post-biblical history, culture and current affairs of the indigenous peoples and their neighbors. With this concurrent contemporary study, the ancient core focuses its instruction on biblical and extra-biblical history dating from the beginnings of man to the modern world. These disciplines (ancient and contemporary studies) merge through field experiences and out-of-class activities. All students are required to register for the two sections of the ancient and the contemporary core courses (ANES 200 and CNES 200), as well as the Orientation Course and the Field Study Course (NES 100 and NES 101 respectively). The purpose of the multi-dimensional curriculum is to introduce the students to history, sociology, current affairs, politics, geography, archaeology, and literature of the ancient and modern Near East. Class sessions, field study, and personal research will focus on each of these subject areas.

The basic core class descriptions are as follows (these may be adapted to SVU courses currently existing):

1. NEAR EASTERN STUDIES PRE-DEPARTURE ORIENTATION COURSE (NES 100 – 2 CERTIFIED HOURS)

The orientation course is designed to prepare participants in the program for the serious studies they will be engaged in while studying and traveling in the Near East. The course is taught online as an independent study or home study course that is composed of eight lessons with an open-book quiz associated with each, and a proctored final exam. The topics include a general introduction to Near Eastern Studies and the rules and policies of the Southern Virginia University Near East Study Abroad; backgrounds in the use of sources pertinent to the regional studies; physical geography and its impact on the historical development of the region; introduction to the history and archaeology of the Levant; two chapters on the major religions of the region; and two chapters on the contemporary studies and foundation of the current conflicts in the region. The course material provides the necessary vocabulary and foundational information each student will need to gain the most out of their travel and study in the Holy Land. Recorded and live Zoom seminars will be included as part of these studies. Please refer to a separate folder, "SVU Study Abroad Orientation Course", for more information with an outline of each chapter(needs updating). Students must pass this course before departure to participate on the program which in 2024 will be offered in the early Summer Term before departure for the late Summer term SVU Study Abroad.

2. ANCIENT NEAR EASTERN STUDIES (ANES 200 – 3 CERTIFIED HOURS)

Instruction includes ancient Near East regional studies, with particular emphasis in the region of the Levant (Israel/Palestine, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, and Egypt) and its biblical, historical, geographical, archaeological backgrounds. The classes combine historical studies with field trip preparations. These instructions provide the students with archaeological, cultural, and practical information essential for the optimum experience in the field.

3. CONTEMPORARY NEAR EAST STUDY CORE (CNES 200 – 2 CERTIFIED HOURS)

The modern or contemporary core curriculum is designed to introduce the students to the peoples, cultures, and problems of the modern Near East with special emphasis in the region of the Levant and the foundations of the Arab-Israeli Conflict. This is accomplished through a series of separate guest lecturers, forums, instructors, field study trips and out-of-class activities that, to the degree that is possible, correlate with topics in the ancient core and scriptural studies. The instructors and guest lecturers come from the local community or from prominent international positions germane to the studies.

4. FIELD STUDIES CORE (NES 101 – 2 CERTIFIED HOURS)

This class has a clear ancient history and historical geography emphasis. One or more class periods each week will be devoted to field study trip preparations and archaeological studies coupled with the historical setting of the scriptures being studied in religious instruction that same week. This weekly class day serves as the key correlation facilitator for historical, contemporary, and field studies. Field study trips should be

considered by students as equal to any classroom experience in instruction and treatment. The value of a study abroad experience is the concept of the extended classroom. Students are graded on their attendance, participation, completion of assignments and exams pertaining to field study, and attention given to faculty on the field study trips. The SVU Study Abroad Handbook clearly defines the expectations required of students on field study trips. (See Southern Virginia University Study Abroad Handbook under topic "Field Study Trips" and "Travel Regulations".) The current 45-day SVU Study Abroad includes travel throughout all the regions of Israel/Palestinian Authority and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. (Future programs may include additional countries). The majority of field study trips are conducted by SVU approved faculty/instructors/guides. Additional travel costs (which students are expected to personally pay) may be associated with optional field study trips that are outside the planned core curriculum.

5. FORUM ASSEMBLIES (SUPPLEMENTAL TO CURRICULUM – REQUIRED)

SVU Study Abroad regularly hosts distinguished guests who speak to students about a topic of current interest. Attendance at these outstanding lectures is mandatory and is an important part of the SVU Summer Study Abroad experience. Information from these assemblies may be part of exams in the required core curriculum courses.

6. EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES (NON-CREDIT)

In addition to the required field study trips, a host of optional hikes, walks, and activities that enhance the students' knowledge and personal growth will be suggested or made available. For safety reasons, no student is permitted to travel alone, but must be in groups of two or three. Some activities the students may have opportunities to participate in include work experiences on a kibbutz, archaeological digs, folk dancing, choir performances, fishing boat experiences on the Sea of Galilee, sporting activities, camel treks, hikes following various historical pathways, visits to mosques and synagogues, concerts and museum visits, community service, swimming, and snorkeling (Red Sea, Dead Sea, Mediterranean Sea, Sea of Galilee, Jordan River), etc. While in Jerusalem and the Galilee, students will also be expected to plan time for their own travel in small groups, returning to field study sites or to religious and historical sites not included in the full groups' activities, etc. For safety reasons, all outside-the-core-curriculum field studies must be pre-approved by the Resident Director of the Study Abroad program.

SVU courses that may be adapted to proposed study abroad offerings (Course outlines for proposed study abroad curriculums are available for adaptation):

- HUM 175R Topics in Humanities (3) [Topics in the humanities, including many Travel Study programs.]
- HUM 275R, 375R, 385R Topics in Humanities (3)
- HUM 399 Internship/Practicum in Humanities (3)
- *HIS 275R Topics in History (3).
- HIS 346 History of the Holocaust (3)
- HIS 353 Early Christianities (3)
- *HIS 355R Topics in Asian History (Var.)
- *HIS 375R Topics in History (Var.)
- *HIS 385R Directed Study in History (Var.)
- HIS 475R Advanced Topics in History (3)
- *PHI 275R Topics in Philosophy (3)
- *PHI 355R Topics in Ancient Philosophy (3)
- CLS 375R Topics in Classical Studies (3)
- LIB 175R, 275R, 375R Topics in Liberal Arts (3)
- *Many of the courses in the Religious Studies Concentration

*These courses are of special adaptability with the Comparative Religion and Old-New Testament studies, History and Philosophy (ancient and modern) studies on the study abroad; however, the courses offered on the study abroad are unique, as well, and may need to be acceptable as new classes offered exclusively on the study abroad programs. This was the pattern BYU found to best describe and suit the studies and information offered on the program. Each Department then reviewed the materials and allowed course substitution for their distinctive majors, minors, and general education requirements.

After reviewing these foregoing proposals, please then go to the following documents in the Dropbox folder, "SVU Proposal":

- "2024 SVU Summer Term Study Abroad-Proposed Budget"
- "Proposed SVU Study Abroad Program Handbook"
- "Faculty Selection, Training and Expectations Recommendations"
- "Proposed Itinerary & Daily Schedule"
- "Possible Promotional Activities & Fund-Raising Projects"