

Examples of SMART Goals:

Research shows that students who define realistic academic and career goals for their semester abroad make bigger gains in intercultural understanding and effectiveness than students who don't set goals (Kitsantas, 2004). Before you begin your goal-setting you may also want to take a self-assessment of your preferred [culture-learning style](#) and/or [language-learning style](#). Consider the examples below to get your SMART action plan creativity started.

Typical Study Abroad Linguistic Goal: "I want to become fluent in Spanish."

Specific Linguistic Goal	Measurable, Attainable, Realistic & Time-Bound Target(s)
Develop a larger, more professional vocabulary.	I will keep a weekly list of new vocabulary words, particularly as related to science & engineering (or agriculture health, etc.). I will use 10 new words per week, at least twice
Improve pronunciation (So I am not mistaken for a tourist every time I open my mouth!).	Meet once per week with a host-country national for phonetic tutoring sessions. "Tune" my ears by listening to local music or news broadcasts every day for at least 15 minutes.
Be able to use the subjunctive/conditional verb form(s) accurately & without hesitation.	At least once per week, I will write out 10 sentences using subjunctive case & use two of them that very day with a host-country national.
Be able to tell a joke (or give a professional "elevator speech") convincingly in the host-country language.	Write out & practice at least one joke (or professional speech) per week with a host-country national.

Typical Study Abroad Linguistic Goal: "I will understand French culture through immersion."

Specific Culture Goal	Measurable, Attainable, Realistic & Time-Bound Target(s)
Learn to recognize non-verbal communication patterns in my new host culture.	Once per week, I will ask a local (or view an article/video) about a host-country gesture or behavior & attempt to observe that non-verbal item "in the wild" (and how locals respond to it) for one full day.
Understand culture-based values & behavior patterns in new host culture.	I will complete a Culture-Values Comparison Exercise* with at least two locals within the first month of arrival. Once per week, I will ask a local to translate a common proverb to me & explain what it expresses about the culture. I will read " A Climate Approach to Cultural Values " before I arrive in my host-country, and, once per week, write a short list of events where I have observed cultural values different than those at home.



<p>Understand a host-country definition of intercultural effectiveness that is related to my professional goals.</p>	<p>I will interview one host-country professional per month about job-specific intercultural effectiveness skills (beyond foreign language ability).</p> <p>I will play the "Recruitment Agency E-game" with a mixed group of US & host country students at least once.</p> <p>I will volunteer with immigrants at least 2 hours per month.</p> <p>Twice per month, I will read an article about minority populations or regional diversity in my host country.</p>
<p>Increase my ability to understand & respect non-US viewpoints</p>	<p>Once per month, I will identify an incident that caused culture-related misunderstanding & do a "D.A.E exercise" about it to share with my assigned intercultural coach or a knowledgeable host-country person.</p> <p>Twice per month, I will ask a local for his/her views on a controversial issue (such as climate change, GMO foods, foreign policy, etc.) & practice acceptance of aspects that don't agree with my view</p>

SMART Goals Worksheet

Please set yourself at least three specific culture-learning goals for study abroad, plus at least three specific linguistic goals if language acquisition is one of your primary reasons for study abroad. Then for each specific goal, list at least one related target “action plan” item which is measurable, attainable, realistic & time-bound for you to undertake while abroad in order to achieve that goal.

My SMART Goals for Study Abroad {ENTER NAME HERE}	
Specific Goal	Measurable, Attainable, Realistic & Time-Bound Target(s)
1	(a) (b) (c) (d)
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	

Note: You may also consider purchasing the book which inspired many of the above learning aids & activities: *Maximizing Study Abroad: A Student's Guide to Language and Culture Learning*, which can be ordered from the [University of Minnesota Bookstore](#), for \$12 plus shipping and handling.