

Japan, here we come!

Published 7/17/2023 by [Maxine Britto](#)

Glen, tell us about the FLPA (Faculty Led Program Abroad) you are working on. Is it true that you are taking students to Japan?

I am, indeed! My [CUL286](#) (Cross-Cultural Communications) students in the Winter 2024 semester will get to visit Tokyo with me for two weeks during the February/March study week. While we are still finalizing the itinerary, we plan to tour both Japanese as well as Tokyo-based Canadian companies to compare, contrast and identify differences in their corporate cultures. (Here's hoping Benjamin Bloom isn't rolling over in his grave with this last statement.)

I truly like the idea of an FLPA (which I recently learned is different from a MILE, which is now an acronym reserved for *domestic* mobile learning experiences only). It takes the course beyond the concrete walls of academia and on to the streets of the real world. The student then lives and breathes the course content rather than solely intellectualizing it. In that sense, an FLPA makes a course more inclusive in terms of learning styles, as it meets the needs of students whose preferred way of learning is kinesthetic in approach.

What if I want to do something similar with students, where do I start?

Call my secretary, [Adrian Ciani](#) (who also happens to moonlight as a SELS professor), to set up an appointment with me. Let's talk. Kidding aside, if you believe an FLPA would be a good fit for a course you teach, first reach out to your Chair. If your Chair approves, they will then connect you to the right people to begin the formal proposal process. I got to work with two of the best in [Ina Agastra](#) (Manager of Global Engagement @ Seneca International) and [Maxine Britto](#) (Senior Academic Manager @ FOA).

What's been hardest about the process so far?

The proposal process is somewhat time-consuming but certainly not difficult. Expect a good amount of back and forth between you, Seneca International, the FOA academic manager and the local host institution. There will be emails aplenty, zoom calls here and there, templates to flesh out (the proposal form), rationalizations to articulate (why Japan and not Brazil?), and hard decisions to be made (which places to visit and which to leave out?).

And one more thing to keep in mind: all of the above has to be done very early relative to the

departure date, *nine months* prior to be exact.

(Please feel free to reach out if you need help with anything.)

What are you most looking forward to?

This will be a learning experience for me, too. I have visited Japan a number of times but that was many moons ago. I am excited to see the country again and the changes it has undergone. I am also excited to share this journey with my students and, in particular, to witness the incredulity in their eyes when they see how hard Japanese employees work, or when they discover how spiritual of an experience something as simple as drinking a cup of tea can be.

(Photo of Shibuya Crossing in downtown Tokyo)

Photo by [Timo Volz](#) on [Unsplash](#)

tags : international