
General Contact Details

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Off -Campus Study & Exchanges

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Program contact person abroad

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MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR:

Skidmore's Office of Off-Campus Study & Exchanges has a lot to celebrate!

Nearly 60% of our 2018 graduates studied off campus either internationally or domestically. In addition, Skidmore is consistently ranked in the top 10 among the top 40 Baccalaureate Institutions for the number of students studying abroad for one semester. (Data compiled by the Institute for International Education). And, the foundation of all this success, students can choose from 118 programs in 45 countries, including 5 Skidmore programs and several domestic options.

Of course, all of these accomplishments are wonderful in themselves; but, more importantly, they illustrate our overarching commitment to offering a portfolio of off-campus opportunities that enhance our on-campus curriculum and support the College's founding principle of linking theoretical and applied learning. Our ultimate goal is to allow students to engage in a distinct culture and, in turn, to begin to question the assumptions they hold regarding themselves, their own culture, and the cultures of others. Certainly in today's global society, we all need to be able to confront cultural expectations and stereotypes in our daily personal and professional lives. By developing and supporting a wide variety of off-campus opportunities, OCSE hopes to advance the College's goals of producing engaged citizens who possess a high level of intercultural literacy.

Your student has received a Pre-Departure Handbook and additional information from their program provider. Look through it with your student to understand what she or he needs to do before they return. As well, we encourage families and guardians to keep abreast of information through our <http://www.skidmore.edu/ocse/parents.php>.

Your son or daughter is preparing for the experience of a lifetime - we wish him or her safe travels. For families, we wish peace of mind.

Cori Filson
Director of Off-Campus Study & Exchanges

Before your student leaves the U.S.

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If your student is studying outside of the U.S. or will be traveling internationally as part of his/her off-campus study program, there is quite a bit to do before departure. Aside from the different issues your student needs to consider (health, safety, finances), there are some very practical items needed to for international travel as well.

PASSPORTS

All students studying abroad must have a passport in order to study or travel outside of the U.S. In addition, students who need visas will need a passport before they can apply for a visa. If your student does not have a passport, they must apply for one immediately. **When a passport expires within 6 months from the end of the program, the passport must be renewed right away.**

Passport applications are available online at <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/passports.html/> and at most U.S. Post Offices, although the applications are processed through the U.S. Department of State. Please contact your local Post Office to see if it is a passport agent. The application process typically takes 4-6 weeks. Passport applications, instructions, and approximate processing times are available online at <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/passports/apply-renew-passport/how-to-apply.html>.

It is also important that a student applies for a passport right away, especially if he or she will need to

day to three months. **We cannot stress enough that the visa process varies from country to country** . Please check the consulate of the country your student will be studying in for detailed and accurate information. Please follow all instructions carefully and completely. The consulate can reject an application for a visa and there is not anything OCSE or your off-campus study program provider can do to help if this happens.

CREDITS AND GRADES

Skidmore students may participate in two types of programs – Skidmore Programs or Non-Skidmore Approved Programs. Each has a different process as far as credits and grades are concerned. Please read the section below that applies to the specific type of program your student will be participating on next semester.

If your student is a non-Skidmore student participating on a Skidmore program, he or she will receive a Skidmore College transcript at the end of the program. Please check with the home institution for details regarding transfer of credits and grades.

A note about transcripts: Many students find they need official transcripts from their overseas universities when they apply for post-graduate programs or any number of other things. Skidmore **cannot** provide official transcripts at the end of their program – a number of official, sealed transcripts from the host university. (They will be sent to an address in the U.S. after the program ends.) These documents may be difficult to get after your student departs his/her program

Non -Skidmore Approved Programs and Skidmore in London

Approved Programs are off-campus study programs that have been reviewed and approved by
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contact OCSE before dropping any courses to ensure you maintain the proper number of credits.

Withdrawal from an off-campus study program

No student should withdraw from a program without first consulting Off-Campus Study & Exchanges (ocse@skidmore.edu) and the program provider or coordinator of the program. If a student decides to withdraw from a program, they must submit a Change of Status form to OCSE, outlining the reason for the withdrawal and explaining the arrangements made with the onsite administration for finalizing the program participation.

OCSE will consult the onsite staff and/or the program provider before determining whether how the credit for the semester will appear on the student's record (no credit, L, W, or F). Please contact OCSE regarding the refund policy, if applicable. Should a student remain in the host city after they have withdrawn from the program, they will not have the privilege of program services and staff support.

If there is a personal or medical reason that forces your student to withdraw from a program, they **MUST** contact Off-Campus Study & Exchanges and Office of Academic Advising in advance.

ACADEMICS DIFFERENCES

Students should make themselves aware of the academic system of the off-campus study program before the start of the program. How does one go about registering for classes? Will there be someone on site to assist students in choosing classes appropriate to their background? What about the academic calendar? Is it similar to the Skidmore academic calendar (September to May)? Are there semesters or other types of terms? When are classes and how long do they last daily? Knowing what to expect can better prepare students to succeed in the new academic culture.

Learning how to adapt to a new academic system is one of the first challenges faced when beginning classes. Professor/student relationships are not always what they are at Skidmore and students should research what is expected of them early on. It may appear that degree-seeking students from the host country are not doing much work, and the time spent in class may be less than what one is used to. Your student should not be misled. There could be the expectation that students will conduct more independent research, and students may simply be used to studying during the day.

In parts of the world, it is rare for students to receive a grade of A. To receive the equivalent of an A, one would have to obtain superior knowledge of a subject matter.

Participants of the off-campus study program most likely has provided him/her with detailed information on academics; they should read this information thoroughly. The following are questions for them to consider before they arrive on site:

- x What is the academic calendar? Do all classes begin at the same time or do starting dates vary

disabled (but does not state the type of disability) and lists the accommodations s/he is entitled to receive for the semester. The student should share this Memo of Academic Accommodations with OCSE

(for Skidmore programs) or directly with their program provider (for Non-Skidmore Approved Programs) when requesting accommodations for their off campus study. Some Non-Skidmore Approved Programs a UmfYei YghgdYWZ]WXcW a YbhUh]cb`cZ h\Y`X]gUV]`]m]b`UXX]h]cb`hc`G_]Xa cfYd]A Ya c`cZ 5WUXYa]W Accommodations.

Of particular importance to the process is that your student receive course pre-approvals for the courses he/she plans to take so that he/she can stay on track for graduation. OCSE may also ask your student to submit a new application for the term he/she would like to extend as well as additional confirmation materials if approved.

PROGRAM COSTS & BILLING

Most programs require two deposits upon acceptance - a confirmation deposit to secure a spot in the program and a housing deposit. For Skidmore and non-Skidmore approved programs, a non-refundable confirmation deposit of \$500.00 is to be paid to Off-Campus Study & Exchanges, not to the provider.

Skidmore Programs

Students on a Skidmore Program will submit a \$500.00 non-refundable confirmation fee within two weeks after acceptance into their chosen Skidmore Program. \$400 of the deposit will be credited to your Skidmore College account and the remaining \$100 constitutes a processing fee.

Non - Skidmore Approved Programs

Students on an Approved Program will submit a \$500 non-refundable confirmation deposit to OCSE (not the program provider), payable to Skidmore College, within two weeks after receiving CAS approval for off-campus study. Of these monies, \$400 of the deposit will be credited to your Skidmore College account and the remaining \$100 constitutes a processing fee. Students are responsible for paying any refundable deposits and non-included fees directly on-site or to the program provider. Any housing deposits need to be sent directly to the provider, not to Off-Campus Study & Exchanges. The majority of the housing deposits are refundable to the student at the end of the program. Please check with the program provider for its policy.

The student should note on his/her acceptance paperwork to the provider that the deposit was paid directly to Skidmore, and Skidmore will arrange to pay the confirmation deposit to the program provider.

FINANCIAL AID

Skidmore students participating on Skidmore and non-Skidmore approved programs can typically use all of their financial aid toward the costs of their program. Students currently receiving financial aid should

EXPENSES WHILE TRAVELING

Money Management Overseas

One of the most frequently asked questions is how to manage money while traveling. Expenses can vary greatly upon program site and preferences. However, there are some general rules to keep in mind when your student is planning their expenses. We strongly encourage parents and guardians to discuss their concerns with the program director. In case of an emergency, matters will be handled in case of an emergency.

Foreign Currency

Obviously, your student will be dealing with foreign currency if he/she is studying outside of the U.S. The money will look different from U.S. money and it will take some time to get used to a new currency. Some countries deal mainly in coins and have coins worth almost \$10. Encourage your student to go slow when they first arrive so that they can get a handle on the value of their money overseas. It will take a few weeks to really figure out how the exchange rate works and what things are really worth.



Photo taken on the Great Wall in China (near Beijing).
Submitted by Emily Ferguson, 2014.
Emily studied in Beijing, China in fall 2012.

RESOURCES IN CASE OF AN EMERGENCY

Students and families should always know whom to contact in case of an emergency, medical or otherwise. Your first contact should be Off-Campus Study & Exchanges at Skidmore College or the program director of their program.

In addition to the program and OCSE support system, the U.S. Department of State offers important information in case of a global emergency. Country Specific Information and travel advisories are issued by the U.S. State Department to inform U.S. citizens of unsafe travel conditions due to terrorist threats, civil or political unrest, overt anti-American attitudes, or specific health hazards. You have direct access to these advisories at <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/traveladvisories/traveladvisories.html>. The Bureau of Consular Affairs, a branch of the State Department, is responsible for protecting the interests of U.S. citizens abroad. They can assist in locating travelers in case of emergencies back home. They can also help you find medical treatment, legal counsel, or financial assistance in emergency.

In addition to the legal concerns surrounding drug use, students must strongly consider the safety issues involved. Although students think they are not at risk and that they can handle themselves in any situation, this is just not the reality of studying overseas. Students

HEALTHY LIVING

Staying healthy is important to having a successful off-campus study experience. We strongly recommend that your student read all the information his or her program provides on health issues, and then read this information again. Also, look online for information about health issues in the parts of the world your student is going to visit. Visit the Centers for Disease Control at <http://www.cdc.gov/travel>. We suggest your student discusses health needs with his or her doctors to ensure they understand if there are any restrictions to their activities while abroad.

Please be aware that the stress of travel and adjusting to a new culture can exacerbate physical or emotional conditions that may be under control at home. Therefore, if your student has a physical or emotional condition it is important that they meet with the staff at SkiXa cFYDj<YU'h`7YbhYf`cf Counseling Services to discuss how studying off campus could affect their situation. Addressing health issues prior to studying off campus will help to identify those resources that will and will not be available at the program site.

If you need certain onsite accommodations during your off campus study program, please discuss your

If there are any **prescription medications** that your student needs to take while abroad, we recommend bringing enough medication to last the duration of your stay, if possible. Please consult your physician and/or insurance company immediately in regards to obtaining enough medication for the duration of your program. It can sometimes take weeks or months to get authorization from your insurance company to get prescriptions in advance.

When traveling internationally, prescriptions should be kept in **their original, labeled containers and pack them in your carry-on luggage, not in checked luggage. If possible bring enough medication for the duration of your stay. Take the actual written prescription or a letter from your doctor with the drug name (and generic name), dosage of the drug, and instructions for use if requested at Customs or if your student has an emergency and need additional medication.** (If you regularly take medicine with codeine, speak to your physician about using an alternative while abroad because codeine is considered a narcotic in many parts of the world.)
Students with a chronic medical condition will want to consider wearing a medical alert style bracelet. If you wear glasses or contacts, it is a good idea to get your eyes checked and your prescription updated. Take extra eyeglasses or contacts and contact solution in case you cannot purchase your regular brand abroad. Also, contraceptives may be in short supply or of poor quality in certain countries.

Immunizations

All of your immunizations should be up to date. Students who have not had the meningococcal vaccine should consider this vaccination. The program sponsor should tell your student about any needed vaccinations or medications particular to the program location. Other immunizations are rarely required for travel to most of Europe, Australia, or New Zealand. However, travelers to many developing countries may need immunization against yellow fever, typhoid, cholera, and other diseases including malaria and hepatitis. **Students should start their immunizations early.** Some cannot be given at the same time as others or may require a series of shots over several months. For information about immunizations specific to your destination contact your program provider or the Centers for Disease Control at <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel> or (800) 232-4636. Students will also want to contact Health Services to discuss health concerns in the host country, the pros and cons of receiving certain immunizations, and to plan the administration of any vaccinations you choose to receive. Please be aware that some vaccinations can be expensive (\$50 or more per shot) and may require a travel itinerary. This can be discussed with Health Services. No matter where your student is going, make sure their immunizations for tetanus, polio and measles, mumps, rubella, are up to date.

Pandemic Illnesses

Students with international or off-campus study experience. While symptoms may vary, students are advised to take extreme caution if they experience any symptoms reported to be associated with any current pandemic illnesses or outbreaks. Some countries have instituted monitoring techniques of travelers arriving from areas affected by a pandemic outbreak, which may delay travel. Please consult the embassy of the country or countries in the travel itinerary for information about entry screening procedures.

Students are encouraged to take the following precautions to stay healthy before and during their off-campus study:

- x Before you go, see a doctor.
- x Receive all required immunizations and discuss optional vaccines with your health care provider.
- x Travel only when you feel well
- x Follow basic health tips while you are abroad.
 - o Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after coughing or sneezing.
 - o Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve, not your hands.
 - o Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread this way.
 - o Clean your living area.
 - o Try to avoid close contact with sick people.

If your student becomes sick with symptoms of a pandemic illness while abroad, they should contact their onsite program staff as soon as possible to locate medical services. The onsite program staff can also contact a U.S. consular officer if necessary.

After students return to the U.S., they should:

- x Monitor their health for 10 days.
- x If they become ill with symptoms associated to a pandemic illness during this 10-day period, consult a health-care provider. ***Before visiting a health care setting, tell the provider the following: 1) symptoms, 2) travel location, and 3) if the student has had direct contact with a severely ill person or animal.***
- x Students should not travel while ill, unless they are seeking medical care. They should limit contact with others as much as possible to help prevent the spread of an infectious illness.

HEALTH INSURANCE

Health Insurance Information

Off-Campus Study & Exchanges provides all students studying on Skidmore Programs or Approved Programs outside the U.S. with international health insurance coverage through the On Call International. Plan information can be found [j b ' h \ Y](#)

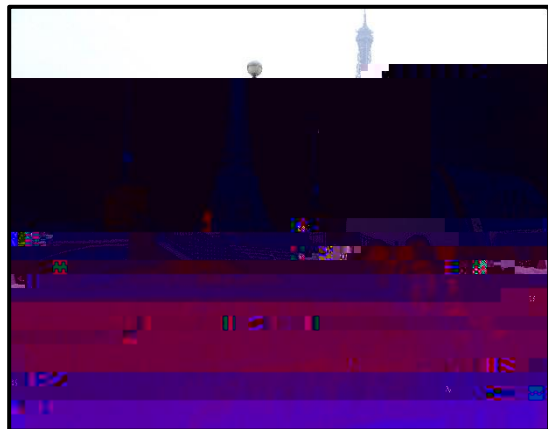
his/herself what will be sufficient insurance coverage.

make your own arrangements (transportation from the airport, housing, etc.) before the start of the program.

Independent Travel prior to the start of the p

luggage for his/her flights. You can find this out by contacting each airline directly. Also, students should realize that they may be carrying all of their luggage through subway and train stations.

Some items (excluding clothing) that have been r



think about what you hope your student will get out of your experience. We also recommend that you encourage your student to learn as much as they can about where they will be studying.

Even if your student is studying off-campus in the U.S., they will experience some level of cultural adjustment when studying in a new place. First and foremost, please know that culture shock is real and it is normal. Culture shock may present itself in different ways including physical and emotional symptoms. Students may become very tired four to eight weeks into a semester-long program physically, from trying to understand language, customs and a myriad of unfamiliar daily tasks, and emotionally, because as never really be one of the locals.

Advocates of study abroad describe the acclimatizing process as a roller coaster. At home, a student anticipates departure and is tremendously excited. Upon arrival to the destination, a student experiences first a small dip due to confusion and the newness of it all, but quickly enters a honeymoon program, emotions will crest and dip. Families should not be surprised if their student passes through stages in a different order or skips certain stages of adjustment altogether.

Encourage your student to use some proven techniques to help him or her through the culture shock phase and into the next stage of full participation and enjoyment. He or she should

- x Acknowledge that culture shock is normal and that "this too shall pass";
- x Write about concerns in a journal and sleep on them before calling home or acting on grievances;
- x Talk with other program participants and staff, and provide support for other students;
- x Keep busy and set some concrete goals;
- x Resist withdrawing from social situations or seeking out other Skidmore students;
- x Avoid being judgmental and look on the positive side of diversity and difference;
- x Take care to get enough sleep, eat right, and keep a sense of humor.

5Vcj Y U ž YbWci fU[Y mci f'ghi XYbh'c [Yh]bj c'j YX']b UWj]hYg h Uh \Y'cf'g \Y Yb'cmg UbX'XcbD' Yh h Ya succumb to the temptation to withdraw fYa Ya VYfz']Zg Ub UXj Ybh fY''6YZcfY'cb[ž mci f'ghi XYbh'k] find that he or she is enjoying their new life abroad and that there actually are things that are better abroad. Also, remind them not to take matters too seriously. In fact, it will be the most embarrassing moments that will make the best stories when they return home. In the end, students develop valuable cultural competence that will serve them very well in their future endeavors.

HOUSING

Students are required to use program arranged housing where available. Additionally, it is policy that Skidmore students are required to stay in a homestay if available. Students desiring an alternative to program housing or a homestay should consult with an OCSE Program Manager.

Living with a Host Family

COMMUNICATION

Calling the United States

Calling the U.S. from abroad can be expensive, but there are some inexpensive ways to keep in touch. We suggest that students consider the following options for calling the U.S. from abroad: (1) international calling cards, (2) internet-based phone service, and (3) cell phones.

Contact your phone company for information on how to get a calling card with international access. All major carriers offer international calling cards. Rates on U.S. calling cards can be less expensive than dialing direct. When traveling, AT&T USA Direct Service is one of the easiest ways to call directly to the U.S. via an English-speaking operator anywhere in the world. See <http://www.usa.att.com/traveler> for details. You can also find prepaid calling cards at many retailers in the US or abroad.

Internet-based phone and messaging services such as Skype or WhatsApp allow users to make phone or video calls for free or at low rates. If your student is bringing a smartphone or laptop, has access to the internet, and has a microphone or webcam, they may want to use a service like Skype. Skype can be downloaded <http://www.skype.com>.

Cell phones are accessible in most countries. They are a good way to ensure your student has access to a phone at all times and some programs may require students to have a cell phone. Cell phones are a good way for students to receive calls from family and friends. Most programs will provide detailed information about getting cell phones after students arrive onsite.

Suggestions:

- x Fix a pre-arranged time to speak.
- x ?YYd`U`W`YbXUf`cZmci f`gh XYbhd`dfc[fUa `cb`\UbX"DUfYbmg# i UfX]Ubg`gca Yhja Yg`k cffm unnecessarily when they do not hear from their student, only to find that s/he was on a scheduled excursion or traveling on break.

Internet Access

Although access to the internet has increased throughout the world, it is likely that your student will be studying in a location that does not have internet access to the extent that they are used to in the U.S. Some foreign universities may charge a fee to students for internet access and/or have limited hours when computers are available. Other students find that their best internet availability is at an Internet Café. Most students will use a variety of methods to stay in touch with family and friends in the U.S. either by email, phone, video chat, blogs, or social networking sites.

Suddenly your son or daughter is farther away than a quick call or a weekend visit. There are programs that can work from computers or smartphones that can drastically reduce or render free communication costs. Families are encouraged to check out Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) options. See, for example, Skype, <http://about.skype.com>.

Ethnic Background

Off-Campus Study can have a life-long impact on an individual. As with anything new, studying off campus evokes a change in the way your student will see his/herself, the world, and most importantly, his/her place in the world. Placing his/hergY`Z]b`U`X]ZZYfYbh`Wt`bhYI h`Zfca`k` \Uh]g`Íbcfa U`Í`]g`Ub`YmY` opening and enlightening experience.

If your student is studying off campus in search of your cultural roots, he/she may find that his/her expectations of acceptance and understanding from the host culture on the basis of having a shared ethnic background is not met. For example, a Vietnamese American should not assume that the Vietnamese will treat him/her Ug`ÍcbY`cZ`hY]f`ck b`Í`" Likewise, if your student is an African-American studying in South Africa, he/she should not expect your hosts to see him/her as an African. Granted, not all people of color will have the same experience abroad for they are as diverse as the countries they will visit. However, ethnicity may play a role in defining the expectations of the experience and is something to consider before departure.

If your student is of American of European descent, studying abroad may also be the first time he/she is labeled Ug`Ub`Í5a Yf]WbÍ`ž`cf`h`Y`Z]fgh`h`a Y`he/she become conscious of having an identity based upon nationality. This is a unique opportunity for Caucasian students in the United States to begin to understand, if even in a small way, the experiences of minority [fci dg]b`h`Y`I "G" =H`U`W`Ub`W`hc`k`U`_`]b`Ubch`Yf`g`g`c`Ygž`Ub`X`k`Y`Yb`W`ci` fU[Y`students to take advantage of this opportunity as much as possible.

Sexual Orientation and Identity

While some countries are known for their wide acceptance of homosexuality, the intolerance of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered and queer students (LGBTQ) may be extreme in other locations around the world. Please encourage your student to research and understand these cultural views before departing and also consider how he/she will address these challenges. In some countries, it may be XUb[Yfci g`hc`VY`Íci`h`Í

Returning to Skidmore College can be a huge adjustment from the life your student experienced studying off campus. For some students, returning home is more difficult than going abroad because they return to the U.S. as the same person when he or she left. Unsuspecting family and friends may be surprised.

The signs of re-entry adjustment are similar to what students went through in adapting to their new culture. Students may become critical of home and friends and their apparent disinterest in foreign

BUDGET WORKSHEET

PROGRAM COSTS

Application Fee: _____

Program confirmation deposit*: _____

Tuition: paid by Skidmore

Room: paid by Skidmore

Board: paid by Skidmore

OR

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program fee): _____

Fees for special program options: _____

Sub-total: _____

TRANSPORTATION

Round-trip airfare to the program site: _____
(be sure to include all stages of transport)

On-site transportation _____
(metro, bus, etc. E if not included in
dfcj]XYf]g' dfc[fUa 'ZYŁ

Sub-total: _____

TRAVEL

In-country weekend travel

Food: _____ 106.3792 reW* nBTq0.00000912 0 612 792 reW* nBT/F1 10.56 Tf1

Transportation (train, taxi, subway): _____

Accommodations: _____

Entrance Fees: _____

Travel over breaks and/or pre-post programs

USEFUL TRAVEL RESOURCES

Readings

Maximizing Study Abroad,

with a Level 3 (Reconsider Travel) Travel Advisory is not automatically approved and will require a petition to the International Study Risk Management Team (ISRMT).

OCSE also utilizes the Department of State Travel Advisories as a means for determining when to consider canceling a program or bringing students home from a program.

Monitoring

6 N L G P ~~Resident~~ Directors make every reasonable effort to keep abreast of local conditions and changes in local health and safety risks and to inform participants and OCSE

On-Site Care and Insurance

Each Skidmore Resident Director maintains lists of recommended health and mental health providers. All students studying internationally through Skidmore College have emergency medical, repatriation, and evacuation insurance. Skidmore Resident Directors establish an emergency phone tree to be activated in order to contact all participants quickly. OCSE has worked with each Skidmore Resident and Faculty Director to establish protocols to be used in the event of health emergency, serious accident, political crisis, natural disaster, crime, rape, or death of a participant. For security reasons, these documents are not available to the public.

Advice for Participants and their Families

OCSE has the following advice with students and their families:

- x Skidmore College strongly recommends that unless specific situations dictate otherwise, participants should designate their parents as their emergency contacts.
- x 3DUWLFLSDQWV DQG WKHLU HPHUJHQF\ FRQWDFWV VKRXOG N/DthTypePage