

PLANNING FOR EDUCATION ABROAD



A guide to selecting a program, academic credit, costs, scholarships, financial aid & application procedures



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INTRODUCTION

Q: WHY SHOULD I STUDY ABROAD?

A: Education abroad is an exciting experience that can greatly enhance your education, bring you valuable international perspectives, new skills, and fascinating new knowledge. Some of the many benefits include:

- Earning credits towards your degree program
- Developing language or improving your existing language abilities
- Preparing for a career in diverse & international work environments
- Gaining a new perspective in your field of study
- Exploring new places; experiencing a different culture

Q: WHO CAN STUDY ABROAD?

A: Education abroad is intended for any undergraduate student in any major. You can take coursework in your major or minor, or take elective credit courses while abroad. You will find many kinds of programs including some that offer internships or service learning experiences.

Q: HOW CAN I INTERNATIONALIZE MY DEGREE?

A: You may want to consider an academic direction here at Binghamton which has a highly international focus. You can major or minor in a language or one of the area studies programs, or follow international track in some majors. You will find that many departments offer courses with an intercultural or international focus. Look for courses that offer Languages Across the Curriculum (<http://lxc.binghamton.edu>) or consider the Global Studies Minor described in the next section. Education abroad can complement all of these opportunities.

Q: WHAT IS THE GLOBAL STUDIES MINOR?

A: The Global Studies Minor (GSM) brings an international focus to your degree and is compatible with any major. It is the best opportunity to make the most out of an education abroad experience.

PRE-DEPARTURE:
"Intro to Cross-
Cultural Experiences"
online course

WHILE ABROAD:
"Cross-Cultural
Immersion" online
course

UPON YOUR
RETURN:
Capstone course

The GSM fosters a self-critical perspective on the education abroad/intercultural experience; promotes reflective analysis so you may better understand your own cultural values and behaviors and the various ways these may be interpreted by members of other cultures; prompts you to connect your education abroad experience to your academic area of expertise; and encourages investigation into the ways scholarship has been used to achieve understandings of international, regional and global issues.

Remember, you MUST enroll in the GSM before you begin your education abroad experience. Please visit <http://globalstudies.binghamton.edu> or write us at globalstudies@binghamton.edu.

GETTING STARTED IN CHOOSING A PROGRAM

Q: WHERE CAN I STUDY ABROAD?

A: Binghamton offers nearly 50 active education abroad programs and new programs are continually being developed. In addition, schools in the SUNY system work together to facilitate participation in programs offered by any SUNY campus. Altogether, SUNY programs number almost 1,000 in some 50 countries. Students may also choose to study in a non-SUNY program. A full listing of programs offered through the SUNY campuses can be found at www.suny.edu/studyabroad.

Q: WHAT SHOULD I CONSIDER WHEN CHOOSING AN EDUCATION ABROAD PROGRAM?

A: There are a variety of things to consider when choosing a program. Selecting a program which best matches your interests and fits into your course of study at Binghamton University requires some investigation on your part. You should understand all the features of a program:

- Specific courses that will be available the term you plan to attend and course descriptions if needed for pre-approval of credits;
- Where the program takes place: campus, education abroad center
- If instruction is in a foreign language, the language levels at which instruction takes place and the language pre-requisites you need;
- Students who will be in classes with you: U.S. students; students from the country you are visiting, students from many countries;
- Housing arrangements: dorm, apartment, home stay, with other Americans, with host nationals;
- Full program costs and availability of scholarships;
- Admissions criteria to be certain you qualify;
- Number of students admitted, number of applicants accepted, and other questions to determine if admission is competitive.

Q: WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN EDUCATION ABROAD AND EXCHANGE?

A: The term exchange program indicates that a university has made an agreement with an international partner to exchange equal numbers of students in both directions with each student paying their home university's tuition and standard fees. For many of our programs, we send students as both exchange and education abroad. There is no practical difference in how education abroad and exchange students are treated at the foreign university: both are integrated fully into the university community. However, there is a cost difference: exchange students pay SUNY tuition and fees, while education abroad students are responsible for the foreign university tuition. Foreign university

tuition is paid by a combination of SUNY tuition and the tuition differential (see Costs section for more information).

Q: WHEN CAN I STUDY ABROAD? AND FOR HOW LONG?

A: You can study abroad any time after your first two semesters of college. Although junior year has been the traditional time, more and more students are electing to go during their sophomore or senior year. You should contact your academic advisor to discuss your academic planning and when education abroad would fit best in your schedule.

Q: DO I NEED TO KNOW A FOREIGN LANGUAGE TO STUDY ABROAD?

A: Not necessarily. Many students choose to study in English-speaking countries. Others may choose a program in a non-English-speaking country, but with coursework in English. When researching programs, make sure to note the language of instruction.

Q: I'M A TRANSFER STUDENT. CAN I STILL STUDY ABROAD?

A: Yes, but there are a couple of points to keep in mind:

- If you transferred a substantial number of credits, there may be limits to the amount of additional transfer credit recognized by Binghamton.
- You often will have a shorter period of time to plan for study abroad.
- You may have to find programs in which you can complete credits toward your major
- When you apply, you may need to provide official transcripts from your previous college(s) or you may need to obtain references from your former professors

Q: I'M AN INTERNATIONAL STUDENT. CAN I STUDY ABROAD?

A: Yes. We encourage all students to take advantage of international learning experiences, but here are some things to keep in mind:

- Depending on your country of origin and your country of study, you may have different/ additional visa requirements
- You should consult with your academic advisor/department as well as International Student and Scholar Services to ensure you understand all policies for studying abroad.

Q: WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN BINGHAMTON PROGRAMS AND OTHER SUNY OR NON-SUNY PROGRAMS?		
	BINGHAMTON PROGRAMS	OTHER SUNY PROGRAMS
Credits?	On Binghamton programs, you earn Binghamton credits. Grades earned abroad show on your official transcript & count in your GPA.	Credits earned on other SUNY programs are treated as SUNY transfer credit and show up on a SUNY transcript supplement, which is always issued with your official transcript. Grades earned abroad do not count in your official GPA. **
Financial aid?	Financial Aid is generally applicable to Binghamton Programs.	Financial Aid is generally applicable to other SUNY programs.
Billing?	You will be billed by Binghamton.	You will pay your SUNY tuition, university fee, academic record fee, and academic excellence fee to Binghamton. You will pay the program fee/tuition differential and insurance fees to the sponsoring campus (other SUNY).
Registration?	You are registered at Binghamton while abroad and you must confirm your enrollment through BU Brain.	You are registered at Binghamton while abroad and you must confirm your enrollment through BU Brain.

**Note: When applying to graduate schools (including law school and medical schools), these grades may be calculated into a grade point average that includes all undergraduate courses from all schools and programs you have attended.*

****SUNY Community College programs:** Special restrictions apply to the administration of the community college programs. The rules for non-SUNY programs apply.

NON-SUNY PROGRAMS

All credit is viewed as transfer credit. You should obtain pre-approval of credits from your college advising office before committing to a program.

Financial Aid is not guaranteed. Sponsoring universities must be Title IV institutions in order to use Federal Financial Aid.

All program expenses are paid directly to the sponsoring institution.

You are not registered at Binghamton while abroad. You are on a temporary "leave of absence".

CREDITS

Q: CAN I GET (MAJOR/MINOR/GEN ED) CREDITS WHILE ABROAD?

A: All credit recognition must be approved by the appropriate advising office/department. For Binghamton & other SUNY programs, you are guaranteed to receive credits toward graduation; however, IEGI is not able to approve credits to go towards your major, minor, or GenEd requirements. You should bring any course info available (course description/syllabus) to your advisor to be evaluated.

- For **Major/Minor Credits** - you must receive approval from your academic department
- For **GenEd Credits** - you must receive approval from your college academic advising office

For many programs, you will not know the exact courses you can enroll in until you arrive. To be safe, you should receive pre-approvals for more courses than you plan to enroll in so that you will have back-ups in case a course is full or cancelled while you are abroad. If necessary, you can go through the approval process once you are abroad and have registered for courses. You should contact your advisors to complete a course approval form and return it to the IEGI office (by email).

Q: CAN I TAKE A COURSE PASS/FAIL?

A: Students who study abroad on Binghamton sponsored programs may choose to take one class on a pass/fail basis, providing the class is not a course requirement for their major or minor, and providing they have not exceeded the limit allowed by Binghamton University. Non-Binghamton students are responsible for ascertaining that they are following the procedures established by their home universities. Students must notify IEGI of their intention to take a class on a pass/fail basis no later than the mid-point of the semester at the host university (not at Binghamton).

**For non-Binghamton programs, be careful about electing a pass/fail option for individual courses. Pass/fail courses may not count toward your major or minor. Consult your academic department for more information about specific policies.*

Q: I HAVEN'T DECLARED A MAJOR YET. CAN I STILL GO ABROAD?

A: Yes, but you should be aware that once you declare a major, your academic department may or may not recognize credits that were earned abroad because they were not pre-approved. If you are considering declaring a major, it is a good idea to speak to that department's advisor.

EDUCATION ABROAD COSTS

Q: HOW MUCH DOES IT COST TO STUDY ABROAD?

A: It depends. The cost of studying abroad varies from program to program and according to destination. Be sure to look at program details and cost sheets to determine the exact costs of the programs you are considering. Factors that influence cost:

- **Tuition:** Most education abroad programs have a set tuition. In SUNY this is your standard in-state or out-of-state tuition.
- **Instructional costs:** Within SUNY, a program sponsor may add instructional and administrative costs to the standard SUNY tuition. The additional charge is called a "tuition differential;" the amount varies greatly from program to program.
- **Costs of living:** Student-style cost of living varies greatly according to the location. In general, capital cities are noticeably more expensive than provincial areas. In many places the cost of living is greater than in the US; in other destinations the cost of living is less.
- **International airfare:** Destination will determine the price. Students should purchase changeable airline tickets even though they may be more expensive. Non-changeable tickets do not provide adequate protection for unforeseen circumstances. Be sure to read all of the provisions associated with any airline ticket purchase.
- **Totals:** Be sure to add up all the individual costs. A program with low tuition and fees in a site with a high cost of living may be more expensive than one with higher tuition and fees located where the cost of living is cheaper.

Costs of Program Administration:

- Administration expenses for program support are usually not supported by the university budget. Administrative fees may be listed separately.
- **Binghamton charges to students:** Binghamton incurs costs in supporting education abroad for all students and therefore has an IEGl administration fee for each participant which varies by program length.
- SUNY campuses coordinate the administrative support and cross-registration of students on SUNY-sponsored programs. To cover this administrative cost, Binghamton receives an inter-campus referral for Binghamton students attending other SUNY programs.

Q: ARE THERE EDUCATION ABROAD SCHOLARSHIPS?

A: **Yes.** There are several scholarships available, some based on merit only and others that consider merit and financial need. Most scholarships are highly competitive so applications should be prepared with attentiveness to the eligibility requirements and criteria for selection. Find more information about the specific requirements on our website or pick up a scholarship brochure from the resource area.

SAMPLE COST SHEET

Peru Service Learning Estimate of Costs for Undergraduate Students Summer 2018

	<u>In State</u>	<u>Out of State</u>
Paid to Binghamton University via Quikpay		
Program Cost	\$ 1,806.00	\$ 1,806.00
GeoBlue Insurance, 1 month	\$ 52.31	\$ 52.31
IEGI Administrative Fee	\$ 400.00	\$ 400.00
Paid to Binghamton University or your home SUNY Campus		
SUNY Tuition, 6 Credits	\$ 1,668.00	\$ 5,388.00
Binghamton University Fees	\$ 125.00	\$ 125.00
Other Student Costs		
Airfare Estimate	\$ 1,175.00	\$ 1,175.00
Personal Spending	\$ 300.00	\$ 300.00
Total Estimated Costs	\$ 5,526.31	\$ 9,246.31

All cost estimates are subject to change without notice.

APPLYING

Q: HOW DO I APPLY TO EDUCATION ABROAD?

A: For **Binghamton programs**, you can apply online through the IEI website. For **other SUNY** and **non-SUNY programs**, you should apply through the website of the sponsoring campus. Once you have been accepted, you should also go to the Binghamton IEI website and complete another SUNY/non-SUNY program application to inform us of the program you will be participating in.

Q: WHAT DO I NEED TO APPLY?

A: Most Binghamton and other SUNY programs education abroad programs use a standard application. Non-SUNY program sponsors use similar applications. Elements of an application:

- Application
- Study statement - a short essay in which you write about your purposes for studying abroad on a specific program
- 1-2 faculty recommendations
- Transcripts - many programs require a copy of your official transcript. You should check the application instructions and give ample time for the transcript to be sent from the registrar's office (it can take up to 2 weeks)
- A judicial review - for Binghamton students on Binghamton programs, a judicial review will automatically be completed. For

other SUNY programs, you may need to get a form completed from the Office of Student Conduct.

Some applications may have additional requirements. Make sure to read the instructions carefully to ensure a completed application by the deadline.

Q: WHEN IS THE DEADLINE TO APPLY?

A: Each education abroad program has its own application deadline. Usually, application deadlines are mid-semester during the semester before you plan to study abroad. (ex: If you plan on studying in the fall, most application deadlines will be March 1st. If you plan to study in the spring, most application deadlines will be October 1st). Be sure to check when applications are due for your programs of interest because late applications may not always be accepted.

Q: WHAT ARE THE MINIMUM ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS?

A: Each program has its own eligibility requirements. Most education abroad programs will have a minimum GPA requirement, which may range between 2.5 and 3.5. Some programs in non-English-speaking countries may have a language requirement. Other programs may require students to be at least juniors or seniors to participate. A vast majority of programs are open to all students, regardless of major. You should check the program description to see that you meet the eligibility requirements of the program before applying.

AFTER YOUR ACCEPTANCE

Q: I'VE BEEN ACCEPTED TO MY PROGRAM. NOW WHAT?

A: All arrangements for the program will be coordinated by the program sponsor. There will be a designated department or office that makes the arrangements, and a faculty director or program coordinator who is the primary contact person. The program sponsor will provide you with information about international transportation, costs and payments, housing arrangements, and other details.

For all Binghamton students (even students on other SUNY or non-SUNY programs), you will be contacted about completing your online pre- departure materials, which will contain all of the forms and information you'll need from Binghamton.



CHECKLIST

1

DO YOUR RESEARCH

- Attend a general or topical education abroad info session
- Come to Walk-in Advising to learn about programs, get practical tips, and understand the procedures at Binghamton
- Research options from IEGI resource center, Binghamton program brochure, IEGI website, and SUNY-wide database:
suny.edu/studyabroad

2

LEARN MORE

- Make an appointment with an Education Abroad Advisor in IEGI if you would like to discuss your plans for education abroad
- Ask specific questions about your program from the program sponsor (for non-Binghamton programs)
- Attend the fall or spring Education Abroad Fair to learn about Binghamton and SUNY programs

3

SEEK ADVISING

- Visit the advising office of your school to discuss your plans to study abroad to ensure satisfactory progress toward your degree
- Consult with the appropriate department if you want major or minor credit, or general education credit
- Consult with the Financial Aid Services office before you apply to understand how financial aid can be used

4

APPLY

- For Binghamton programs, apply online on the IEGI website
- For other SUNY and non-SUNY programs, applications may be downloadable or online - consult with program sponsor

5

NEXT STEPS

- Find out about the Global Studies Minor to see if it is right for you - remember you must enroll before you go abroad
- Keep track of scholarship deadlines and apply

6

ONCE YOU'RE ACCEPTED

- For Binghamton programs, plan to come to the pre-departure meeting, follow the instructions from your program advisor, and complete all pre-departure materials
- For other SUNY and non-SUNY programs, go to the IEGI website to fill out the other SUNY/non-SUNY application, complete your online pre-departure materials, follow the instructions of your sponsoring campus or program

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