

Assisting Students Considering Study Abroad

As faculty advisors, you can have a great impact on inspiring students to study abroad and connecting them with the information and resources to integrate study abroad into their academic plans. Our students who return from studying abroad consistently tell us they had a life-changing experience that enhanced their academic and personal development. They see themselves and the world in new ways, with greater appreciation for international issues, cultures, and the role of the United States in a global community. Research on study abroad suggests a positive correlation between study abroad and improved academic performance, intercultural competence, increased ability to operate in diverse settings, and greater self-confidence and self-awareness.

This FAQ is a quick resource for you when working with your students interested in studying abroad. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the International Programs Office, or refer students to the office for additional help.

When Can Students Study Abroad/Away?

Freshman and sophomores are encouraged to study abroad/away for winter intersession, summer session, or other short-term programs immediately. If planning to study abroad for a full semester or year, students should consider doing so as early as the fall semester of their sophomore year. Typically, the earlier students study abroad, the more choice they have when it comes to selecting courses that will count towards their degree.

When Should Students Start Planning for Study Abroad/Away?

Now! It is best to start planning and researching programs as early as possible. This allows the student to save certain requirements for their study abroad semester or year. Some general education classes, electives, language, and courses with broader requirements may be easiest to satisfy abroad.

Which Majors Can Study Abroad?

Students can incorporate study abroad/away into any academic major with careful planning. They can take GEs, electives, language courses, and other courses abroad when major specific coursework is not possible. For example, education majors subject to block scheduling may choose to study abroad during their second semester of sophomore year. Summer or winter may also be an option for students where they have already fulfilled major class requirements, or they cannot take required courses abroad.

Where Can Students Study Abroad/Away?

SUNY Cortland offers over 50 programs; however, if our programs do not fit the student's personal, professional, or academic goals, they may participate in any program offered through the SUNY International Education Consortium. There are over 1,000 study abroad programs offered through the consortium worldwide.

What Types of Programs are there?

There are many types of program models available to students. Students may study abroad for a traditional semester or academic year or a short-term summer or winter intersession. Other opportunities include faculty-led group programs or courses that embed a study abroad experience such as a spring break trip or include study abroad as a culminating experience. International internship and volunteer opportunities are also great options.

Do Students Need to Speak Another Language?

Language immersion is a beneficial experience, but not a requirement for studying abroad. We encourage students to study languages, but there are many programs that offer courses taught in English, even if that is not the primary language of the country abroad.

What Courses Can Students Take Abroad?

Students should seek out programs and courses that will satisfy their degree requirements, whether they are major specific, GEs, language, electives or general liberal arts and sciences (LAS) classes. ALL classes taken abroad/away are approved for LAS credits.

Are Grades Earned Abroad Factored into the Student's GPA?

YES! Students need to be aware that credits earned abroad/away on any SUNY program are treated as institutional credit and grades WILL BE factored into the student's cumulative grade point average.

Can Transfer Students that come to Cortland with the Maximum Allowable Transfer Credits Study Abroad?

YES! Since credits earned abroad/away are treated as institutional credits, transfer students with the maximum amount of transfer credits can still study abroad/away on *any SUNY program*.

How Much Does it Cost to Study Abroad?

Costs vary by location, program, credits taken, and options chosen by students. Tuition paid to SUNY Cortland for a regular semester is applied to any SUNY study abroad program cost. Some programs are more expensive than a semester at SUNY Cortland and some programs are less expensive. There are a select number of Cortland programs that allow for student exchange, which greatly reduces the overall cost.

Financial aid may be available for students based on their eligibility for semester and summer programs. Be sure to direct your student to visit with their Financial Aid advisor to discuss eligibility. SUNY Cortland awards over \$100,000 in scholarships annually to SUNY Cortland students for study abroad/away. Information and applications are available online at cortland.edu/studyabroad. National scholarships are also available.

How Do I Assist My Advisees with the Course Approval Form?

Before students meet with their advisor, they must first work with the International Programs Office to determine course equivalencies. This entails searching the Course Equivalency Database or, if their desired course has not yet been approved, requesting approval through the International Programs Office and appropriate academic department. The student will list the overseas courses and their approved equivalents on the Overseas Course Approval Form and bring the form to their meeting with their academic advisor. The academic advisor will review the courses and determine which, if any, outstanding degree requirements the Cortland equivalent will fulfill or whether a course substitution will be needed upon the student's return. Advisors are encouraged to be flexible. Associate deans are available for support, and they will review and approve all course selections. Not all courses listed in the Course Equivalency Database will be offered at the overseas institution during the term the student intends to study, so we encourage students to list more courses on their Course Approval Form than they will need.

Faculty-Led Study Abroad/Away Courses: All programs led by a SUNY Cortland faculty member are considered faculty-led courses. They do not need to be evaluated for Cortland credit, because all students on a particular faculty-led program receive credit for the same course(s).

International Internships: Students and advisors should consult with the International Programs Office about the internship requirements abroad.

How Can I Support My Advisee While Abroad?

Occasionally a student will need to change their courses while abroad. They are instructed to communicate with the International Programs Office, their advisor, and their associate dean to assign and approve new equivalencies. Please be sure to copy the International Programs Office on any approval emails.

Academic planning for the semester after the student's semester abroad should take place at the advising session prior to the study abroad semester. Since the student will need to register for the next semester's classes while abroad, the student should contact you via email for their registration pin. Advisors are encouraged to stay connected while their advisee is abroad to follow their experience and transformation by email communication, reading student blogs, and/or journals.

How Can I Support and Encourage Students to Study Abroad/Away?

Start the conversation with students during the first advising session. Also, consider allowing 10 minutes of your class time for a return study abroad student to promote study abroad. Contact the International Programs Office to schedule a Peer Advisor (returned study abroad student participant) presentation.

Where Should I Direct the Student Next?

Advisors should refer students interested in studying abroad to the International Programs Office. All students are required to attend a 'Study Abroad 101' Information session to learn about the study abroad planning and application process. Sessions take place every Wednesday at 3 p.m. in Old Main 220 or remotely via Webex throughout the semester. More information is available on the International Programs website at cortland.edu/studyabroad

What Resources are Available for the Faculty Advisor?

The International Programs Office website offers a variety of resources on the Study Abroad website. Associate Deans and International Programs Office staff are also available to help.

International Programs Office
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