

First Steps to Study Abroad

Where Do You Want to Study Abroad? For some students, this is a no-brainer. They have always been interested in a particular country or culture, and know exactly where they want to study abroad. But, for many students, a particular destination is not clear, or many regions of the world interest them. If you are one of these students, exploring the possibilities for study abroad is a big part of the process!

Don't jump to a conclusion too soon about a destination. Review your reasons as to why you want to study abroad and what you hope to get out of the experience as you think about a destination. Consider factors such as type of program, cost, etc. before you make a final decision. Check out the possibilities, and weigh the information available to you.

The most popular destinations for study abroad are the United Kingdom, Italy, Spain and France. But fifth on the list is China, and other destinations in the top 25 that are receiving increasing numbers of American students for study abroad are: Germany, Japan, Argentina, South Africa, India, Greece, Israel, New Zealand, Brazil, Ecuador, the Netherlands, and Peru. Some less well known destinations are worth exploring, and they may stand out to a potential employer looking for someone who doesn't always follow the crowd.

Why do you want to go and what do you want from the experience? Are you planning to study abroad in France just because your roommate is studying abroad there? Perhaps you aren't really interested in French culture, but have always been fascinated with the culture of Japan, Italy, South Africa, Chile or India.

Since studying abroad often involves a significant amount of money and time, taking time to reflect upon what you hope to gain from the experience is an important first step. The following are some statements that are intended to help you hone in on your reasons for studying abroad and what you may hope to gain from the experience:

- I want to increase my cross-cultural communication skills
- I want to increase my language skills in a language (French, Spanish, Chinese, etc.)
- I want to travel as much as possible in a particular country or region and see specific sites (the Vatican, the Great Wall of China, Machu Picchu)
- I want to learn how to do business in a particular region of the world
- I want to do research overseas
- I want to explore the culture of a particular country and have inter-culture experiences such as learning about traditional Chinese medicine, the role of women in the Middle East, liberation theology in El Salvador, etc.
- I want to do an internship in another country to build my resume
- I want to meet people from other countries and have fun!
- I want to take particular courses that will build my resume
- I want to stretch myself and try to live in a culture that is very different from my own

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The Planning Process

- Academic Advisor
 - Class map/schedule (before and after study abroad)
 - Courses to be taken abroad
 - Sign course approval sheet and return to CIEGE
- Family
 - Finances
 - Determine which semester is best to go abroad
- Program Search
 - Provider, Exchange, or Direct enroll?
 - University size? City size?
 - Program Goals?
 - Language

The Application Process

- CIEGE
 - Otterbein.abroadoffice.net Profile
 - Program selection and Application
 - Course approval and Travel waiver submitted
- International University
 - Application (Proofread with CIEGE before actually submitting)
 - Visa (after receiving acceptance letter 5-7 weeks before departure)
 - Housing
 - Course selection

The Challenge of Studying Abroad.

A study abroad experience changes you. You come back to the United States a different person challenged by what you have experienced and learned, both in and out of class.

You learn about language, culture and customs of your host country and how the U.S. is viewed abroad.

Returning students say they are confident in their abilities and knowledge of the world, America, and themselves. Their values and goals are clarified, their leadership skills and confidence developed to help them make changes in their communities.