



A GUIDE TO STUDYING ABROAD: ACADEMIC MATTERS

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ACADEMIC CREDITS AND REQUIREMENTS

Pre-Departure Course Selection

Be sure to meet with your faculty advisor as well as your academic advisor prior to departure to discuss courses to take abroad and credit that can be awarded.

- To receive credit toward your major/minor or University Program requirements, written approval from a faculty advisor or department chair in each academic department is required (the Faculty Advisor Approval Form is available in your Application Portal to download). Faculty-led program participants do not need to submit this form.
- Without prior approval, you have no assurance that you will receive the course credit you want or need.
- Please be aware that faculty advisors reserve the right to review work completed abroad before final award of CMU credit. Therefore, be sure to keep all your work including course descriptions and/or syllabi.

If you have not yet signed a major or minor, it is recommended that you meet with an Academic Advisor to learn what courses will be required to fulfill a particular major or minor. Please be aware that Academic Advisors do not have the authority to approve course credit but do provide valuable guidance in course selection.

International Program Studies (IPS) Elective Credits

IPS credits are elective credits that count toward general graduation requirements. Three IPS credits taken during study abroad may fulfill the University Program IV-B requirement; talk to your study abroad advisor to discuss this. You may take some or all of your courses as IPS elective credits with permission of OGE-Study Abroad. Some faculty advisors may award IPS credit for major or minor electives. This is certainly permitted, and you must make sure that your faculty advisor completes the appropriate course substitution form.

Faculty-led Programs: certain faculty-led programs have been approved to fulfill the UP IV-B requirement. Please inquire with the faculty leader to learn if the program in which you intend to participate is approved.

Credit Load

In order to maintain full-time status, semester students must enroll in courses that, at a minimum, are the equivalent of 12 CMU undergraduate credits or, for graduate students, 9 CMU graduate credits. It is important to note that full-time status in some countries may be three courses (i.e. England, Australia and New Zealand). Talk to your study abroad advisor about maintaining full-time status.

Pre-graduation Audit

Students are encouraged to schedule a pre-graduation audit with the Registrar's Office to ensure progress toward graduation. An advisor will review your individual course of study, determine how study abroad courses fit into degree progress, and inform you of all remaining graduation requirements.

Registration for Study Abroad

OGE-Study Abroad will register all student for the term abroad. PLEASE DO NOT REGISTER YOURSELF.

- **FACULTY-LED PROGRAMS**: Students will be registered for the course led by the CMU faculty member.
- **ALL OTHER PROGRAMS**: Students will be registered for IPS credits (IPS 197 for undergraduates and IPS 597 for graduates) as a temporary registration during the term abroad.
- Upon receipt of the final transcript, IPS credits will be removed and the courses and credits approved by your faculty advisor will be posted.
- It is VERY IMPORTANT that you turn in your Faculty Advisor Approval form to OGE-Study Abroad prior to your departure.

Be sure to check that you have no outstanding charges on your CMU billing account. Some registrations have been held up because of overdue bills. You can check your account online or contact the One Central. **Please remember that your financial aid can only be disbursed if you are registered at CMU.**

Credit/No Credit Request

If you wish to take one or more courses as credit/no credit, please submit a credit/no credit request form to OGE-Study Abroad prior to your departure or no later than the designated deadline. This policy is strictly enforced. It is your responsibility to:

- Read CMU's credit/no credit policy in the [CMU Bulletin](#).
- Ensure that the course(s) for which you want to earn credit/no credit are offered at CMU with a credit/no credit option.

- Ensure that a course for which you receive credit/no credit will count toward your major or minor (if this is how you want the course to be counted).
- Ensure that you have not exceeded the maximum number of credits allowed by CMU as credit/no credit.

Contact your study abroad advisor to discuss course transfer if you need to earn a grade but the courses abroad are only offered as pass/fail or credit/no credit.

Transcripts from Host Institutions

Please ensure that you request that a copy of your transcript be sent to OGE-Study Abroad at the end of your term abroad. Once received, courses will be reviewed and those pre-approved for CMU credit will be added to the CMU transcript. **IMPORTANT NOTE: It could take several months to receive transcripts from your host institution. Graduating seniors should notify their study abroad advisors to discuss intended graduation date.**

Grades on CMU Transcript

Once study abroad transcripts are received from your host institution, courses will be posted on your CMU transcript with grades. **The grades will count in your CMU GPA.** Grades for faculty-led participants will be awarded by the faculty-leader; no action is required by the student.

Course Credit Approval Upon Return

For any course taken that was not pre-approved, the student must request course credit approval from a faculty advisor in the appropriate academic department. Students who want general elective credits may request International Program Studies (IPS) credits through their Study Abroad Advisor in OGE-Study Abroad.

University Program IV-B Credit

Students who participate in a CMU study abroad program may be able to fulfill their University Program IV-B requirement, Studies in Cultures Outside of the Anglo-American Tradition. Please see the [CMU Bulletin](#) for more information.

Adjusting to a Different Educational System

Many educational systems outside of the United States don't have quizzes and tests throughout the term and require just a final project or exam. The expectation in these educational systems is that you will work independently and manage your time reading the recommended materials and researching the topics discussed in class.

Here are some tips that can help you to have a successful academic experience abroad:

- Although it may not be specifically stated in the syllabus, attendance is important! Attend all classes.
- Read all required and suggested readings that your professor assigns. Don't wait until the end of the semester then cram.

Although it will seem like the course is easy without quizzes and test throughout the semester to keep you busy, be sure to manage your time wise to keep up with the coursework expected of you.