

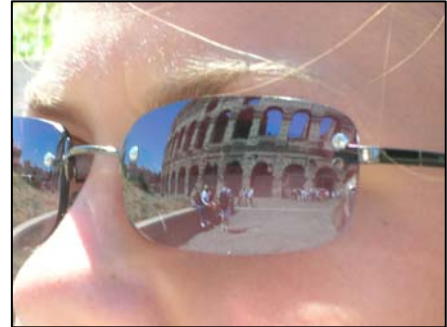


The University of Michigan
Office of International Programs
1712 Chemistry Building
Ann Arbor, MI 48109-1055

Telephone: (734) 764-4311
Fax: (734) 764-3229
www.lsa.umich.edu/oip
oip@umich.edu

Non-U-M Study Abroad: Getting Started

Not finding what you're looking for at OIP? To begin searching for a non-U-M program, you may wish to start by browsing the study abroad directories published by the Institute for International Education (IIE). You can use the printed editions (one for semester or year-long programs, and one for short-term summer programs) on the shelf in the OIP Office or browse the search engine at www.iiepassport.org. Copies of the IIE directories can also be found in the [Overseas Opportunities Office](#), along with a library of resources and a staff of knowledgeable peer advisors.



You may wish to consider the following factors when evaluating non-U-M study abroad programs:

Sponsoring Institution: It is generally easier to transfer credit when grade reports come from an accredited institution of higher learning (whether in the U.S. or abroad) rather than from an independent study abroad center.

- Whose program is it?
- Is it run by another American university or college? By a foreign university?
- Is the school an accredited institution of higher learning?
- Is it run by an independent study abroad provider? (such as CIEE or IES)
- The printed IIE directory contains an item in each entry called "Other Info," which tells you whether there is a U.S.-accredited sponsor for the program. (For some reason, this information is not included in the online version.)

Language of Instruction: If you hope to participate in a program that requires fluency in a foreign language, keep taking classes in the language even after you complete the U-M language requirement. Even if you have already achieved the level required for admission to the program, keeping your language active is crucial. It can make the difference in whether or not you're accepted; furthermore, the more progress you've made before the program begins, the easier your adjustment will be.

- Are classes conducted in English or in the language of the host country?
- What are the language requirements for applicants?

Duration of the program: If your U-M academic program is a very structured one, such as business or pre-health, consider carefully how a semester abroad would fit in. You may be able to fulfill enough requirements on the program that it would be feasible to go for a semester or even a

full year. If not, a summer program might be the way to go. Be sure to talk with both general and concentration advisors about your degree progress before you decide

- Is this a year-long program, or can students enroll for a single semester?
- If a summer program, how many weeks is it?

Credits: Students participating in non-U-M programs may receive transfer, not in-residence, credit. The U-M Admissions Office evaluates all transfer credit. For information on that process, see http://www.lsa.umich.edu/lsa/students/req_conversion/.

You should also keep the following in mind:

- How many out-of-residence credits do you already have? You can use up to 60 towards an LS&A degree.
- How many credits can a student expect to earn on the program?
- How would those credits be reported to the University of Michigan? That is, would you receive a transcript from the American college or university, the foreign university itself, or from the program center?
- Keep in mind that not all universities operate on the semester system and that the number of credits you earn may be adjusted when they transfer to the U-M. Admissions will determine the number of credits you receive.
- Even if U-M Admissions transfers your credits, you will still need advisor approval to use them for requirements. See a departmental advisor about approvals for concentration or minor credit, and a general advisor for approvals of distribution credit.
- Please address all questions about transferring credit to U-M Admissions.



Level of immersion in the host culture: Keep in mind that the less structured the program, the more independent you would need to be. There is quite a bit of variation in the amount of support & guidance offered by different programs, so be realistic about your needs and comfort level.

- In what language are the courses taught?
- Is there a Resident Director, or any staff who deal solely with this group of students?
- Would you enroll directly in classes at the foreign university, or is there a separate center for the program?
- Are there special classes at the center? If so, in what subjects, and who teaches them?
- If you enroll directly at the university, would you be taking separate classes specially designed for foreign students, or would your classmates be from the host country?
- Do students live with host families, in apartments, or in dormitories?

Living arrangements:

- How far is the housing from the university or program center?
- How much privacy/personal independence does the housing offer?

- Who would arrange the housing and could you switch if it were not satisfactory?
- Are meals included? Can the program accommodate students with special dietary needs (e.g. food allergies)?

Fees:

- What do the fees cover? (The cost of tuition, books, housing, meals, special excursions, and airfare may or may not be included.)
- It may be worth checking whether public universities in your home state have study abroad programs--they can be significantly cheaper for in-state residents.
- Direct enrollment in a foreign university might involve fewer fees, but the support of a well-run program can be invaluable, especially if they assist you with obtaining a student visa, finding housing, getting academic support, and arranging cultural activities.

Financial Aid:

- Does the program itself offer any scholarships for which you might qualify?
- If you qualify for federal financial aid, you may be able to apply some of it (loans) to a non-U-M program, but you need to check with the Office of Financial Aid ahead of time.
- If you qualify for Pell grants, you are eligible to apply for the Benjamin Gilman Scholarship (<http://www.iie.org//programs/gilman/index.html>). If not, there are some other options you can explore. See the OIP website under “Financial Information” for more on scholarships open to non-U-M study abroad students. <http://www.lsa.umich.edu/oip/scholarships.html#addscholar>



Eligibility requirements and number of participants: You need to determine whether the program is open to students from other universities, and whether it requires foreign language fluency, background in a specific subject, or a minimum GPA. Interpret the eligibility requirements as a predictor of the sort of students who participate in the program.

- If the program admits high school students, there will be high school students in the group.
- If the program sets no limit on the number of students admitted, it may be very large.
- If the required GPA is high, you should expect the classes to be academically rigorous.

Past participants:

- Is it possible to speak with a student who has recently participated in the program? Some programs can arrange this, and it’s always worth asking others about their experiences. Keep in mind, however, that the responses may be very subjective, since different people have different goals and expectations.