Education Abroad

Portland State University
Education Abroad

The Portland State University Education Abroad Office, housed within the Office of International Affairs, offers a wide variety of international program opportunities around the world, ranging in duration from a few weeks to a full year.

Many students feel that their overseas experience is the highlight of their college years. Studying or interning in a foreign country helps students examine their assumptions about how the world functions, while providing priceless international experience, which many employers and graduate schools seek.

Education abroad opportunities are available for undergraduate, post-baccalaureate, and graduate students. Students may choose to enroll in programs abroad for a quarter, a semester, or an academic year, or partake in a short-term, faculty-led program. Students can also gain valuable work experience for credit through an international internship. Education Abroad advisors are happy to work with students to help them select the right program for their academic interests and future goals.
About Education Abroad

PSU offers several different kinds of international opportunities. If you are interested in a certain type of program, talk to an Education Abroad advisor about which programs fall into the category you prefer.

Types of Programs
- Quarter, semester or academic year-length study abroad programs. In many instances these programs allow you to go abroad and integrate into a local university. See pages 8–11 for more details.
- Short-term, faculty-led programs. These programs offer the opportunity to go abroad with a PSU faculty member and a group of fellow PSU students to complete a course or community project for credit. See pages 12–13 for more details.
- Internships. Work full-time and gain invaluable experience toward future career goals while earning ‘by arrangement’ academic credit. See pages 14–15 for more details.

Choosing a Program
PSU offers over 200 different programs in more than 80 countries around the world. Some of the programs are directly coordinated by Portland State, while others are offered through providers outside of PSU. In choosing an appropriate program, it is important to consider the following questions:

LOCATION
Where do you want to go? Why? Do you want to study in a developed or developing country? Do you want to be in a big city, small town, or rural area?

WHEN AND FOR HOW LONG?
In general, you should work with your academic advisor to plan for a study abroad experience. There is no set time to study abroad. Depending on academic goals and timeline, students can study abroad as early as their sophomore year. Post-baccalaureate and graduate students may also study abroad.

DO I WANT TO INTERN ABROAD?
Through the Oregon University System’s IE3 Global Internship Program, junior, senior, and graduate students can participate in an international internship abroad.

WHAT KIND OF LEARNING EXPERIENCE AM I LOOKING FOR?
Some programs allow you to study alongside foreign nationals, taking classes taught either in English or the host language, while other programs offer the opportunity to study and travel with a group of American students. Some programs have a specific focus, while others offer a variety of choices.

WHAT KIND OF LIVING ARRANGEMENTS ARE AVAILABLE?
Living arrangements can include dormitories, apartments, homestays, and independent arrangements. Some programs offer a choice, and others have only one type available. You can learn more regarding living arrangements on our website.

DO I HAVE TO KNOW A FOREIGN LANGUAGE?
You may be surprised to know that many education abroad programs do not require proficiency in a foreign language. Some programs are offered in countries where English is the official language. Other programs offer courses in English even though it’s not the host national language. However, if you are hoping to develop strong language skills, many study abroad programs can provide experiences that can help you to achieve that goal.

AM I ELIGIBLE?
Most programs require sophomore standing prior to departure. However, freshman-level students can apply to study abroad on Carpe Diem programs. Some programs ask for a more advanced academic standing. All programs have a minimum GPA requirement, which varies from program to program. In addition, there may be requirements such as foreign language proficiency and certain course prerequisites. Students are selected based on academic performance, maturity, and motivation.

How to Apply
The deadlines for most education abroad programs range from February to April for fall term and academic year programs. The deadline for winter/spring programs is typically in mid
to late October. Many programs have rolling admissions policies, so the earlier you submit your materials the better your chance of securing a space in the program. In general, it is a good idea to begin the application process at least six months before you intend to study abroad. Please check the Education Abroad website for the most current program deadlines. If you are planning on applying for scholarships, you’re strongly encouraged to submit an application early.

Credit
You are guaranteed academic credit on all PSU-approved programs. If you are hoping to fulfill degree requirements while abroad, you are strongly encouraged to speak with your departmental academic advisor to determine what programs and classes best fit into your degree program. Your PSU transcript will reflect the grades you earned overseas, which will be calculated into your overall PSU GPA. The credits you earn overseas are considered PSU credits, rather than transfer credits.

Cost
The cost of each education abroad program depends on length of stay, program site, living arrangements, and other factors. As each program is unique, it is important to check the Education Abroad website to determine the current program cost.

PROGRAM PAYMENT
In general, PSU charges the program fee of an overseas program to your existing PSU account. Once you’ve paid this fee, PSU issues payment to the program provider. The fees are charged at the beginning of the term you select to study overseas and should be paid according to PSU’s schedule of payment for each term.

FINANCIAL AID
If you are participating in a PSU-sponsored education abroad program, you may use your financial aid award toward the cost of the program.

OTHER FUNDING SOURCES FOR EDUCATION ABROAD
There are many options for assistance in funding an education abroad experience, including program provider scholarships, private scholarship programs and government-sponsored programs.

A comprehensive list of relevant scholarships can be found at pdx.edu/ed-abroad/scholarships-financial-aid.

Contact Us
Education Abroad
Office of International Affairs
Portland State University
East Hall
632 SW Hall Street, Room 101
Portland, OR 97207-0751
503-725-4094 tel
edabroad@pdx.edu
pdx.edu/ed-abroad
Top Reasons TO STUDY ABROAD

1. **Explore a new culture.**
   One of the main benefits of going abroad is to broaden your horizons and learn about other cultures. Studying and living in a new country can alter the way you view the world, help you to become more open-minded, and enable you to gain new perspective on everything from politics, to academics, to social issues, to everyday life. Studying abroad is a powerful and unique experience that cannot be obtained through mere traveling or touring.

2. **Sharpen your foreign language skills.**
   There is no better way to improve foreign language proficiency than by living in the language. The best professors in the world can’t compete with the experience of speaking a different language all day, every day, for an extended period of time.

3. **Network and make friends from around the world.**
   Meeting new people is one of the best ways to learn more about and enjoy life in a new country. The friends you make will help you immerse in the local culture, introduce you to their friends, and teach you about their country’s society and history. There is no better way to learn about another country than by living among and learning from the people who know it best. Best of all, making friends gives you a great reason to return to your host country to visit.

4. **Enhance your résumé or graduate school application**
   In an increasingly globalized and interconnected world, studying abroad can help you stand out as a candidate for employment or future studies. Such an experience demonstrates that you have motivation and initiative, and that you are interested in exploring and learning about cultures other than your own. Employers and graduate school admissions counselors consistently report that they look very favorably on undergraduate international experiences. This experience will give you a leg up on your future career goals, and it might even change your career direction altogether!

5. **Earn PSU credit while using the world as your classroom**
   If you participate in a PSU study abroad program, the credit will go on your transcript just as if you had taken the courses here in Portland. So, you are gaining new experiences, meeting new friends, improving your future prospects, and staying on track toward your degree at the same time!

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“MY STUDY ABROAD experience with CIEE in Thailand is the reason why I have been working full-time in Thailand for the past three years. My professional network in Thailand and in Southeast Asia is quite extensive now. I was really drawn to this study abroad program because of the amount of field work and the level of immersion I was able to achieve. During my time in Thailand, I was able to live with villagers in various communities in the countryside. The level of immersion was really surprising. I found my career pathway through participation in this study abroad program.”

Lukas Winfield
Liberal Studies major, studied for 4 months in Khon Kaen, Thailand
You CAN afford to study abroad!

Here’s how:

- Your financial aid award package—including loans, grants and scholarships—will apply to any of the study abroad programs we offer. Enrollment in a study abroad program approved for credit by PSU’s Education Abroad Office is considered enrollment at PSU for the purposes of financial aid.
- Special scholarships are available specifically for study abroad participants. Check the Education Abroad website for details. See pdx.edu/ed-abroad/scholarships-financial-aid.
- Some PSU departments offer grants and scholarships for their students. Check with a professor or major advisor to see if your department has funding for study abroad experiences.
- Each study abroad program is unique and costs vary depending on the location, length, living arrangements, etc., specific to each one. Compare programs to see if one of our many programs will fit your financial needs.

As you explore program expenses, you will want to consider all the costs of living in Portland along with the costs of your programs of interest, including: tuition, housing, utilities, transportation, insurance, food, entertainment, and other factors. This will enable you to accurately compare the cost of studying abroad with that of staying in Portland.

Studying abroad will require careful planning, creativity, perseverance and commitment, but the rewards will last a lifetime.
Imagine where you could be next term...

NOTE Programs are not described in full within this book. For detailed program descriptions, please go to pdx.edu/ed-abroad.
PSU students have many options when it comes to studying abroad. Depending on your individual situation, you may want to pursue a quarter, semester, or academic year-length study abroad program.

When selecting a program, you can choose from the following programs:

- **Fully integrated programs** at foreign universities allow students to take classes with local students and enroll in courses offered by the host university, providing a sophisticated understanding of the country and a total-immersion experience in a different education system.

- **Island programs** are organized specifically for American college students. They can provide opportunities that may not be available through the regular curriculum of a foreign institution. In many cases courses are taken only with other American students and the program may be housed at a study center rather than a university.

- **Hybrid programs** aim to combine the best features of programs that are fully integrated and those specifically organized for American students. These programs offer a combination of regular university courses and courses designed especially for program participants.

“I WOULD SUGGEST study abroad because it can really broaden one’s perspective and open them up to another culture. Some of the highlights of my time abroad are dressing up like a geisha, participating in the coming-of-age day celebration, and climbing Mt. Fuji. As a result of studying abroad, the one thing I know that I’ve learned about myself is that I want to continue studying Japanese and eventually find work in Japan.”

“**Stephanie Jones**
Japanese major, studied for one year in Osaka, Japan

“I CHOSE TWO completely different programs and split up my year abroad. My first program was in Beijing, China. The second program could not have been more opposite. I studied in Copenhagen, Denmark. I think it was extremely important to come back from my year abroad having lived in two cultures that were really, quite opposite one another. I would suggest everyone study abroad. Study somewhere you’ve dreamed of going. Study somewhere you’ve never thought of visiting at all. Study somewhere that scares you, or somewhere that feels like a second home. Just get out, experience it, and live it. This is your chance. There’s nothing that can stop you but yourself.”

“**Jason Hash**
International Studies major, studied for an academic year—four months in Beijing, China and four months in Copenhagen, Denmark.”
“SOME OF THE THINGS I learned while I was abroad were to complain less, buy less, learn more, be financially responsible, have a tougher skin, be more open-minded and more talkative, and be more independent. I would only suggest another student to consider studying abroad if they truly are interested in learning a different culture, or language. The program is not for everyone; but those who are willing to take the plunge and come to the country with an open mind and a willingness to learn, generally will appreciate the experience. I would definitely suggest it to language students since there’s nothing like being able to speak and ‘live’ the language on a daily basis.”

“THROUGH MY STUDY ABROAD experience, I have learned that the most important things to bring with you are optimism, a good attitude and a willingness to learn and be exposed to new experiences. In general, we always have to remember that we are in a different place, different culture, and there will be challenges because of that. In the Middle East, and especially as a woman, there are many challenges that a different culture presents. Cultural norms regarding relations between genders, dress, hygiene and food are all things that I was challenged by during my time abroad. I had to make adjustments in these areas, but in the end they were minor compared to the incredible benefits and rewards that I received from my time abroad.”

“OUTSIDE OF CLASS I was able to experience all that Australia had to offer me. Every weekend I was off on some sort of adventure from Aussie Rules Football, to snorkeling with manta rays, to the heart of the Outback. I fell head over heels in love with a culture, people, and country. I think the most surprising thing for me was how much I grew in such a short amount of time. I didn’t realize how much this experience was going to mean to me. Studying abroad was the best thing I could’ve done in my college career. It was the best experience I could’ve asked for and I wouldn’t trade it for the world. I learned so much about myself and what this world has to offer.”
STUDYING ABROAD ALLOWS you to tap into an entirely different wealth of knowledge not only in your new academic setting but also with every social encounter. It’s all about experiential learning and self-reflection. My coursework in South Africa was a lot more about experiential learning and trying to make sense of what was going on around me. Whereas in the international studies coursework at PSU I tried to contextualize the faraway places we were learning about, in Stellenbosch I was THERE. I was asked to really tune into my environment, to study the histories, the cultures, the languages of a place completely new to me, trying to be an objective observer while at the same time interacting with these differences on a daily basis and learning a lot about myself and my own context.

“IF YOU THINK you want to study abroad, just do it. It is worth every penny, every tear, and every obstacle that comes with it. You become who you are while abroad, and your whole worldview becomes enriched with more culture, life, and perspective. Having my classes taught in the language I was learning was an amazing tool to learning in a hands-on, proactive environment. The courses were really interesting and did a great job giving me an outsider’s perspective on American education, as well as world history. My Spanish improved dramatically. Learning a language in the natural environment was key in my progression with the language.”

Aldyn Brudie
International Development Studies and French majors, studied for five months in Stellenbosch, South Africa

Anthony Hernandez
Communications and Spanish majors, studied for one year in Seville, Spain
“WHENEVER THE TOPIC of studying abroad comes up, undoubtedly the word ‘invaluable’ is thrown around. There’s a reason for that. You are going to see places, meet people and learn things you simply could not otherwise. One of my favorite memories from my time in Argentina is when I went skydiving. That was probably one of the favorite things that I did while abroad, it was just a really fun day. The adrenaline rush you get from jumping out of an airplane and staring at the earth as it gets ever closer and closer is incredible. The time I spent abroad will always stand out as a period of growth and exploration that I wouldn’t be the same person without having.”

Erin Wellock
Criminology and Spanish majors, studied for three months in Rosario, Argentina

“I LOVE MY TIME SPENT in Quito, in Ecuador as a whole. Some of the highlights are when I swam in the Tiputini River which is also home to piranhas and caimans. I walked through the forest at night and saw green glowing fungi. I swung from a vine like Tarzan. I painted my face like a jungle warrior. I ate delicious foods and even had Fruit Loops for breakfast! I chewed on a plant that turned my tongue blue for the rest of the night. I have seen many things, heard, tasted, felt—my time in Ecuador has been a whirlwind of new sensations. I have met some really great people here and explored a lot of a culture so very different from my own.”

Molly Swanson
Spanish and Environmental Studies majors, studied for four months in Quito, Ecuador
More than half of all Portland State University students who study abroad participate in short-term faculty-led programs. On these programs, PSU faculty lead groups of students to a wide range of international locations to study topics relevant to the location and to faculty expertise. Programs range from one to eight weeks and offer affordable opportunities for PSU students to include an international experience in their degree programs.

These programs allow students to study course topics in an intensive, in-depth field experience, while transporting the PSU classroom to an international location. PSU offers more than 30 programs each year in various majors and locations at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. Programs include studying art in Italy, business in China, conflict resolution in Cyprus, sustainable development in Cuba and service learning in India. Specific courses and programs change from year to year, while some repeat annually. The most up-to-date list of programs can be found at pdx.edu/ed-abroad.

“STUDIES SHOW THAT even short international tours affect students’ world views and cultural competency. Local business executives on our advisory council felt so strongly about the importance of international experience that they urged us to require a field study in our MBA program. In addition to the MBA program, study tours are also required in two other graduate programs in the SBA. Few businesses are not global, and future business leaders need to be internationally competent.”

“TEACHING ABROAD OPENS the door to so many possibilities. In the case of my course, Spanish Culture and Civilization, the students were able to stand on castles and walk along medieval walls and across land where historical events took place. This experience has broadened their knowledge as well as their perspective of the world outside of the United States. The ‘in vivo’ setting has also allowed me to push my teaching skills to another level and to engage with my students more fully by responding and reacting to our setting. The opportunity to lead an international program is one that should never be passed.”

Scott Dawson
Dean, PSU School of Business

Laura Mulas
Adjunct faculty, World Languages & Literature, College of Liberal Arts & Sciences, taught a summer program in Salamanca, Spain
“I SEE THIS eye-opening experience as a call to action to the small group that visited the Netherlands from Portland State University. In the future, students from this course will be going on to different cities and towns throughout the United States. Our job is to spread the word on the possibilities of healthy communities and lifestyles as we have seen here in the Netherlands. We have seen that it can be done. Part of our call to action is challenging cultures to think differently. We came here to see what can be done with foresight, thought, and ingenuity in urban planning. The eyes are useless if the mind is blind. The takeaway message is that it is time to act.”

“I SPENT TWO WEEKS in a printmaking studio in the beautiful city of Guanajuato alongside my colleagues and PSU faculty. Together the group worked side by side to create unique and beautiful prints that reflected our experiences within the program as well as the new skills we obtained from constant workshop demos by local and visiting artists in Mexico. Through this experience, I realized that I love to not only learn but to also seek and present teaching opportunities. As a result, I plan on enrolling in the School of Education at PSU to receive my Masters of Education as well as my teaching license.”

Bianca Villalobos
Arts Practices major, studied on a summer program in Guanajuato, Mexico

Josh Capps
PSU graduate student getting a graduate certificate in transportation, studied on a summer program in Delft, Netherlands
The World IS YOUR OFFICE

Work abroad on one of over 100 PSU-approved internship opportunities through the IE3 International Internship Program. You will gain experience in your future profession while earning academic credit toward your degree.

In today’s increasingly interconnected global world, an international internship can offer the experience to be more competitive for either full-time employment or graduate school. Internships are a good fit for students who are ready to be independent, resourceful, creative, and proactive. Interns are expected to benefit personally from their experience, and also to make a contribution to the organization for which they work.

International internships are open to junior, senior, post-baccalaureate and graduate students. Good academic standing and current enrollment at PSU are also required. Some internships require second language competency while others are available in English-speaking countries or in English-speaking organizations.

Examples of Internship possibilities include:
- The Cheetah Conservation Fund in Namibia
- The Fulbright Commission in England
- Primary and Secondary schools in Brazil, China, Finland, or Mexico
- The Women’s Aide Organization in Malaysia

For a complete list of internship options visit the IE3 Global Internship section of our website.

“I WENT FROM MERELY having a deep knowledge of the mechanics of Spanish to being a confident everyday user of the language at a colloquial level. I was constantly hesitant to reply affirmatively when friends and family at home asked if I was “fluent” in Spanish. Now I feel comfortable with everyday expressions and possess much stronger listening comprehension. I even have a stronger ability to detect dialects of Peninsular Spanish—there are several—and the accents were so difficult to understand at first! One special day I’ll always remember was when the girls in one of the third grade classes sang a song for me. I walked into their classroom prior to this on the head teacher’s birthday. They sang her a common children’s song used to show appreciation for someone (like “For he’s a jolly good fellow”). On my last day of classes I walked into the room and they stood up and sang the same song for me. It showed me their appreciation in a touching way.”

Angie Leon Guerrero
Post-bac student Spanish & TESOL major, interned 6 months at the Ayalde School English Program in Spain’s Basque Country
“IF YOU ASPIRE a career in a major corporation these days, be prepared, or better said be anxious, to work and experience other countries... and there is no better way to show your aspiration to work in a global business world than studying abroad. It exposes you to different cultures and business perspectives. At the same time, a study abroad investment puts you in a more competitive position towards starting that career in a global minded company.”

“ONE OF THE main reasons I decided to pursue a college education was to expand my breadth of knowledge and life experiences. Choosing to take part in an internship abroad has been one of the most pivotal decisions I have made in fulfilling these goals. The career boost from my internship abroad has been invaluable, but the life experience I gained from immersing myself in another culture is immeasurable. There are things in life which can only be revealed by living in a far-away land. Are you interested in meeting wonderful people, exploring the world, and discovering the assumptions you have—or may not yet know you have—about life, all while positioning yourself for career success? An internship abroad may be just the thing for you, as it was for me.”

“I DECIDED TO do an internship in order to gain professional experience and see the animals that I work with in Portland in their natural environment in Africa. Finding out how comfortable and happy I was living in a remote area of Africa really surprised me. One of my most rewarding moments while abroad was the opportunity to make new friends from around the world that are as passionate about conservation as I am. One of my favorite memories of my time in Namibia is running six of the wild female cheetahs from the back of a truck.”

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Next Steps

- **Attend a peer advising drop-in session** at the Education Abroad Office in East Hall. Visit the Education Abroad website for current dates and times.
- **Visit [pdx.edu/ed-abroad](http://pdx.edu/ed-abroad)** to learn more about our programs. Research the programs and countries in which you are interested and narrow down where you would like to study.
- **Make an appointment** with an education abroad advisor; call 503-725-4094 or e-mail edabroad@pdx.edu.
- **Begin the application process.** Your Education Abroad advisor can assist you with the first steps in this process. Typically, students apply for an education abroad program at least six months before the program is scheduled to begin; be sure to consult our website and your advisor to confirm application deadlines.
- **Research the various funding options** available to you. Check into scholarships and consult with the Financial Aid office about your financial aid eligibility. Scholarship information can be found at [www.pdx.edu/ed-abroad/scholarships-financial-aid](http://www.pdx.edu/ed-abroad/scholarships-financial-aid)
- **Consult with your academic advisor** about how the education abroad experience will fit into your major.
- **Enroll in required prerequisite courses**, if applicable, for your program. Also, consider enrolling in INTL 471: Understanding the International Experience, taught at PSU most terms.
- **Meet international students** here at PSU, especially those from the country or region in which you are planning to study. Volunteer as a conversation partner with the Intensive English Language program at PSU, housed in University Center Building. Visit the website at [pdx.edu/esl/language-practice](http://pdx.edu/esl/language-practice) for more information. Remember, soon you’ll be an international student yourself.
From a Parent’s Perspective

"Jilli’s study abroad experience in France was a positive learning experience for our entire family. She was able to capture the ups and downs of life abroad in a blog that allowed all her friends and family back home to share in her experiences and observe her maturing independence over the year. The staff in Lyon, France were wonderful, helpful and accessible for the students getting their bearings in a foreign country. The opportunity to meet students from all over the world through the CIEF language program has allowed her to experience not only the French culture but other cultures from around the world. We have been able to reciprocate hospitality by having a French student that Jilli met through the program stay with us this summer. I wish that all students had the opportunity to study abroad."

Dan and Katie Bronson
Parents of PSU student Jilli Bronson