Why Study Abroad?

Last year, over 285,000 students from the United States studied abroad. Does that number surprise you? These students already know the benefits of study abroad. You may be wondering why you should study abroad. Here are some answers for you.....

Timing
This is the absolute best time in your life to study abroad! You'll never get a better opportunity than right now. If you've ever thought about studying overseas, do it while you're in college. If you miss this window of opportunity, it's almost impossible to do later in life. Traveling overseas is just not the same.

To broaden your horizons and gain a new perspective
Open your eyes! Life in the USA is pretty much the same day in, day out. Life overseas makes you see your everyday world in a whole new light. You don't even realize it, but our culture shapes the way we view the world and affects us every minute of the day. Differences in culture are more than just differences in language, food, clothing, and art. Cultural differences reflect deeply ingrained perceptions about the world and about one's way of life, and these perceptions are radically different from one culture to the next. Americans don't tend to venture outside the confines of their day-to-day lives. Students who study abroad return home with a broadened and less biased perspective toward other cultures. You'll be more sensitive to what is happening in the news from places around the world.

To gain a better perspective about yourself
Studying abroad encourages you to question who you are. What are you passionate about? What are your limits? How do you overcome obstacles you’ve never before encountered? How far can you push yourself? How independent are you? These questions are hard to answer until you are removed from your usual surroundings. By leaving your "comfort zone" of life in the USA, you'll get to know strengths you never before knew you had. After solving difficult problems on your own overseas, you'll find that almost nothing fazes you at home. Students who study abroad commonly report that their study abroad experience actually changed their life.

To gain a competitive edge after graduation
We live in a global world and potential employers are impressed when students have international experience. It shows that you're motivated, inquisitive, assertive, flexible, independent, and willing to try new things - all very appealing qualities in an employee. People who study abroad tend to be willing to take risks, to put themselves in unusual situations, and able to overcome fear of the unknown.

To learn things first-hand, for yourself
Let the world be your classroom! It's one thing to read about the culture of another country, but an entirely different thing to experience it for yourself. Things you had previously only read about in a book or learned about in a classroom will become your own personal experiences.

What Are Your Reasons? What Are Your Goals?
After considering these potential benefits, you must still ask yourself why you want to study abroad. Take some time to think about your reasons, for they will become your goals and your personal measures of success. You might want to learn about another culture, diversify your studies, or prepare for graduate school. Perhaps you want to learn a second
language, or perfect one you already know. Maybe you want to travel and meet new people. Visit the Study Abroad Office to discuss your goals with an experienced advisor who is there to help you. The Study Abroad Office will work with you to choose a program that best fits your personal, academic and professional goals—as well as your budget!

**Study Abroad Facts**

So you think you want to study abroad? Well here are the facts that can help you determine if it is really for you. How does housing work? What are the requirements? What are my options? Can I keep my financial aid? We answer these questions and more in the section below.

**Requirements:** Minimum GPA of 2.5. Some programs have a minimum of 3.0. Students should have completed two semesters by the time their program begins.

**Eligibility:** Students from all colleges can participate in study abroad programs with proper planning. Some majors have a preferred semester or year designated for students to go abroad. The earlier you start planning, the more options you will have!

**Credits:** Students will earn UH A course credit while studying abroad on approved fall and spring semester programs, which will be applied to their program of study. General electives, AUCs, and most program major/minor courses can be taken abroad. Students are responsible for ensuring that their credits transfer back as they wish (with the help of the Study Abroad Office).

**Financial Aid:** UH A Financial Aid & Grants are applied to all fall and spring approved study abroad programs. Scholarships are available as well. UH A Financial Aid is not available for summer programs but scholarships may be available.

**Planning:** To ensure that students find a program that fits their interests and program of study, they should begin planning about one year in advance by visiting the Study Abroad Office and speaking with their academic advisor. It’s never too early to start the planning process!

**Programs:** Students will experience the fullest cultural immersion by spending a semester or year in one of the dozens of countries available. UH A also offers a variety of summer, winter, and spring break programs that are run by our faculty for our students. Various summer options are also available through outside program providers.

**Housing:** As part of the study abroad experience, students will live in a campus dormitory or apartment with other students, or they can experience the local customs and culture by living with a host family.

**Language:** Studying abroad provides a great opportunity to develop or to advance skills in a foreign language. In addition, in a number of study abroad programs, English is the primary language of instruction.

**Travel:** Students have ample opportunity to travel in their host country and adjacent countries. Take advantage of the excursions and field trips that are often part of the program and paid for with your UH A tuition.

**Career:** A study abroad experience can give students a competitive edge when looking for employment in our expanding global world or can lead to graduate study opportunities. Studying abroad can enhance skills needed in the professional world, help students identify their career path, or lead to advanced graduate studies. Some students even decide to continue their international experience by going to volunteer, intern or work abroad after graduation.
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*Locations where University of Hartford students have studied.

With dozens of countries to choose from, there is a program for everyone! The Study Abroad Office will work with you to choose a program that best fits your personal, academic and professional goals... AND your budget!
Study Abroad Program Models

There are heaps of choices when it comes to how long you want to spend abroad and what kind of program you want.

**Semester/Year**

Study abroad for a semester or academic year in one of the dozens of countries available. You can study a wide range of subjects including language, humanities, business, science, engineering, music, theatre, social science, and art. You can take electives, general education requirements, major/minor courses, and AUCs. You can go abroad and take the classes you need and still graduate on time! All of your Financial Aid is available to take with you, and scholarships for study abroad are available. Earn UHA credit while abroad!

**Service Learning**

Service learning is a method of teaching, learning and reflecting that combines academic coursework with meaningful service. Students may choose to participate in service learning opportunities in Latin America, Europe, Asia, Africa and the Middle East. You can enroll in a full-semester credit bearing program organized by the International Partnership for Service Learning (IPSL) or the School for International Training (SIT). They offer wonderful hands-on opportunities for students to work with local communities and earn academic credit.

**Experiential Learning**

Experiential learning is the process of learning and making meaning from direct experience. Experiential learning and internship opportunities are available to students around the world, including close to home in Washington, D.C. For example, the Washington Semester Program at American University offers internship programs in several distinct areas: American politics, public law, justice, foreign policy, international business and trade, economic policy, journalism, environmental studies, the arts, education, and others. The program is comprised of seminars, field trips, and an internship to offer an inside look at the field of your choice. The School for International Training (SIT) also offers wonderful hands-on opportunities for students to work with local communities and earn academic credit, often in non-traditional destinations. Programs are available in Latin America, Africa, Asia, Australia and Europe. Dynamic programs such as these take you outside the classroom and facilitate learning in real world settings.

**University of Hartford Summer / Winter / Spring Break Programs**

Study abroad on a 2-3 week short-term course run by UHA faculty for UHA students. These programs change every summer and winter session depending on the lead professors’ areas of expertise. Please check out our website or ask the Study Abroad Office about upcoming courses for the year. Additionally, we offer a First-Year London Experience for UHA freshman in May each year.

**Summer / Winter Programs**

Study abroad with a program provider for 2-10 weeks. A wide variety of courses can be taken. The credits will return to UHA as transfer credits so you must work with Transfer Admissions. There is no UHA scholarship money available for these programs; however, loan money can be used (talk with the Financial Aid Office for more information).
Frequently Asked Questions

Q. Is there a specific GPA required for studying abroad?
A. You must have a cumulative GPA of 2.5 or better in order to be eligible to study abroad. Some programs require a 2.75, 3.0, or higher.

Q. Do I have to be a junior in order to study abroad?
A. No. While many students who go abroad do so during their junior year, there are many programs open to qualified sophomores and seniors. In fact, for some majors (such as business and education) it is preferred for students to go abroad during their sophomore year.

Q. When should I apply?
A. University Study Abroad Applications are due on October 15 for Spring Semester programs, and on March 15 for Fall Semester programs. After a student has been accepted by the International Center, the student is able to apply to the Program Provider. Program Provider application deadlines vary from program to program. Generally, for a semester program, one semester in advance, for a year program, one year in advance. In all cases, refer to the specific deadline for the program you are interested in.

Q. May I use financial aid for my study abroad program?
A. Yes. Most financial aid will transfer for semester and year-long programs approved by the University of Hartford. Check with the Study Abroad Office for specifics.

Q. Do I pay University of Hartford tuition in addition to the cost of the study abroad program?
A. No. For many approved semester and year-long programs students pay University of Hartford tuition OR the host university tuition if it is higher. Note: If the host program’s tuition is less than UHA’s tuition, you still must pay UHA’s tuition. However, you will never pay the tuition twice.

Q. How does room and board work?
A. Housing varies on every program from dormitories, to apartments, to host families. Whatever room and board choice you choose through your program provider is the amount that will be charged to your University of Hartford account. You will not be billed for UHA’s room and board when you are abroad.

Q. Do I pay the program provider or University of Hartford?
A. The only time that you will pay the program provider directly is for an application fee, an initial deposit, or for a room damage deposit. Thereafter, you will be billed by UHA for all program fees.

Q. Are there any special fees associated with study abroad?
A. Yes. All students receiving UHA credit must participate in an emergency insurance plan. The fee for a semester long student is $160. Please contact the Study Abroad Office for additional information.

Q. Do I have to withdraw from University of Hartford in order to study abroad?
A. For UHA approved fall and spring semester programs, you are registered as a UHA student. If you choose a program that is not approved you must apply for active status through the Registrar’s Office to maintain your UHA student status.

Q. Will the courses I take abroad count toward my degree program at the University of Hartford?
A. Yes. Courses taken at approved study abroad programs are considered UHA courses and both grades and credits are included on your UHA transcript and calculated into your GPA. All courses must still be approved by your academic advisor.
Q. May I take courses in English in countries where English is not the official language?
A. Yes. English language programs exist in non-English speaking countries. We highly recommend that you take at least one language course in the country you are considering studying in. This will add to your immersion experience profoundly. If you are looking to become fluent in a language, the best way to learn is by going there!

Q. Are the summer study abroad programs just like fall/spring programs only shorter? Are there advantages/disadvantages to summer and semester?
A. Summer programs range from 1-10 weeks, with most running 3 weeks. UHA summer programs are courses for our students designed and led by our professors. These are a wonderful way to get a glimpse into another culture. Numerous programs offer summer programs all over the world that students can go on. One main difference is UHA financial aid can not be used for summer programs, although private loans can. A disadvantage to a summer program is that the students do not have as much time to fully immerse themselves in the host culture.

Q. May I talk to a returned study abroad student?
A. Yes! Returned students are one of your best resources for information about all aspects of study abroad programs. Many have volunteered to share their experiences with students thinking about going abroad. Get in touch with our Study Abroad Alumni Network by calling our office (Tel. 860-768-5100).

Q. What is a University of Hartford "Administered Program?"
A. These are programs administered and supervised by UHA. UHA faculty are directly involved, and the courses receive UHA credit and grades like courses on campus. These are offered over winter, summer, and spring break sessions.

Q. What is a University of Hartford "Approved Program?"
A. These are semester and year-long programs sponsored by program providers that have been approved by UHA. Over 100 programs are approved for UHA student participation in Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America, the Middle East, Australia and the Pacific. Students receive UHA grades and credit toward their degree for courses taken through these programs. Students are able to apply all of their financial aid towards these programs. The UHA approved program list is available on our website www.hartford.edu/studyabroad.

Q. Why might potential employers value an employee who has studied abroad?
A. We live in a global world and potential employers are impressed when students have international experience. It shows that you are motivated, inquisitive, assertive, flexible, independent, and willing to try new things - all very appealing qualities in an employee. It also shows cross-cultural competence.

Q. Can I study abroad if I require accommodations for a physical, emotional, or psychological condition?
A. Students should consult with their physicians, psychologists and counselors extensively regarding study abroad plans. They should also self-disclose to the program providers about their circumstances. This will allow the program provider to appropriately assist the students. Students should also continue their prescribed medications while abroad, which may mean bringing a supply sufficient for the duration of their sojourn.

Q. How do I get started with my planning?
A. Contact the Study Abroad Office in GSU 327 to make an appointment: #(860) 768-5100. You can also visit our website: www.hartford.edu/studyabroad or email Meaghan Murphy, International Program Administrator: meamurphy@hartford.edu
Quick Facts

- You’re eligible to participate in study abroad after successful completion of your freshman year.
- Minimum overall GPA requirement of 2.5.
- Earn UHA credits while abroad.
- Enroll in coursework towards your degree requirements and graduate on time.
- Keep your financial aid (for semester- and year-long programs).
- Gain new experiences.
- Boost your resume.
- Meet new people from around the world.
- Come back to UHA more focused on your future career!

Get the Process Started

- Visit the Study Abroad Office when you arrive on campus during your freshman year.
- Attend one of our ‘Study Abroad 101’ Info Sessions—we’ll walk you through all the basics.
- Visit our Study Abroad Fair and learn about academic opportunities in over 35 countries!
- Start planning early—with the Study Abroad Office and your Academic Advisor.
- Consider participating in our ‘First-Year London Experience’—open only to Freshman!

For more information, please contact:

Meaghan Murphy
International Program Administrator
GSU 327
860-768-5100
meamurphy@hartford.edu
www.hartford.edu/studyabroad/
Words of Wisdom from Study Abroad Alumni

Don’t just think about studying abroad--apply! Ask anyone who went: I’m sure they’ll all say it was the most incredible time of their lives and would do it again in a heartbeat. There is no reason not to go abroad!

Choosing to study abroad was the best decision I’ve ever made!

The homestay portion of my trip was the most positive experience. I was treated like one of their own and I maintain a warm and loving relationship with my host family.

Don’t be afraid of studying abroad. It’s going to be wonderful!

The independence I was able to gain from traveling on my own and trying new things is priceless. Meeting people from so many other countries and knowing how they perceive things has really expanded my worldview.

Adapting and adjusting to the new environment takes some time but as a person you’ll gain a lot more by exposing yourself to different cultures. Whether you study abroad for a few weeks, one semester or a year, you will definitely have an experience you won’t forget!

No matter who you are, studying abroad can change your life. If you are even considering it, do it. You will not regret it. Study abroad and embrace every experience that comes your way. Enjoy every second and know that you are so lucky and privileged to have this opportunity. Don’t let a single moment pass you by!

Study abroad was absolutely the best thing I have ever done in my entire life!

Aside from visiting interesting places, you will gain life experiences that cannot be taught in books. The world has so much to offer, it is up to YOU to take advantage of it!

Go for it and study abroad! Putting yourself into a new (and maybe overwhelming situation) could benefit you in ways you could never imagine. It may even make you realize some abilities you have that you never knew you possessed.

I’ve really gained the skills of independence and self-reliance. I feel very comfortable with doing things on my own or for myself and no longer worry how others judge me.

The thought of leaving behind your comfortable life in the United States is scary, it really is, but once you get out into the world and see different walks of life, you’ll learn that you’re capable of so much. You can do it. All you need is that initial push.