

Study Abroad Planning Guide



Why Study Abroad?

Add an International Dimension to Your Studies: Biology comes alive at the Great Barrier Reef or in the forests of Finland; American History takes on a whole new look in Europe, Asia, or Africa! Get a fresh perspective at your academic program or take courses you just can't get in Rochester.



Advance your Language Skills: What better way to learn a language than by immersing yourself in it every day? You'll get a new perspective on the world as you get acquainted with people and a culture you never thought you'd be part of.



Impress Future Employers: Studying abroad can give you the skills employers want, such as problem-solving, flexibility, maturity, confidence, independence, and the ability to interact and work well with others.

Challenge Yourself: Make new friends, try a new language, break out of your every day routine. Whatever your goals are, you'll be surprised at the changes you'll see in yourself.



Have an Adventure: Here's your chance to trek through the rainforest, trace the steps of the important figures in history, or ski the Swiss Alps. You'll make memories to last a lifetime as you see new places and experience cultures you've only read about.

Does MCC offer assistance with Study Abroad?

Yes! MCC's Career Center provides study abroad advising. After doing some preliminary research, make an appointment to meet with a career counselor to discuss your options and study abroad related questions.

STUDY ABROAD SITES

Africa
Bahamas
Canada
Cuba
Dominican Republic
Finland
Greece
Ireland
Japan
Mexico
Norway
Russia
Spain
Thailand
US Virgin Islands

Argentina
Belize
Chile
Cyprus
Ecuador
France
Hong Kong
Israel
Kenya
Morocco
Peru
Scotland
Sweden
Turkey
Venezuela

Australia
Brazil
China
Czech Republic
Egypt
Germany
Hungary
Italy
Korea
Netherlands
Portugal
Singapore
Switzerland
United Kingdom
Vietnam

Austria
Bulgaria
Costa Rica
Denmark
England
Ghana
India
Jamaica
Madagascar
New Zealand
Puerto Rico
South Africa
Tanzania
Uruguay



STUDY ABROAD SELF-ASSESSMENT

The following questions are designed to help you define your study abroad goals:

- Why do you want to participate in a study abroad program?
- Where are you interested in going to study? Why?
- When do you plan on going?
- How long would you like to stay (summer, semester, intersession, etc.)?
- How will study abroad fit into your MCC academic requirements or transfer college plans?
- Are you interested in furthering your knowledge about a specific foreign language?
- Are you proficient enough in a second language to take coursework taught in that language?
- What degree of cultural immersion are you ready or prepared for?
- Do you want to attend classes with students from the host country, or with other Americans?
- Have you discussed this with family members? Are they supportive?
- Have you thought about the cost/financial aid related to study abroad? Can you afford it?
- Will your credits transfer back to MCC and/or transfer to a 4 year college/university?
- How will you benefit from this study abroad experience?

RESEARCHING STUDY ABROAD PROGRAMS

There is truly a world of opportunities for studying abroad. Many institutions in the U.S. have their own study abroad programs which are open to students of other universities and colleges. To help the process of researching study abroad opportunities, many institutions and organizations have developed on-line search engines to allow students to explore the realm of study abroad options for programs with specific characteristics. Begin your research by exploring the following web sites:



SUNY Study International Programs: www.studyabroad.com/suny

College Consortium for International Studies: www.ccisabroad.org

MCC Study Abroad: www.monroecc.edu/depts/foreign/studyabroad.htm

When looking at specific study abroad programs pay careful attention to eligibility (GPA/# of credits), cost, application procedures and deadlines, foreign language requirements, and other pertinent information. ***Research should begin at least one year before the study abroad semester and application to the program is typically done during the semester before you plan to study abroad.***

STUDY ABROAD PROCEDURES

- Begin planning early.
 - Read through all the information on the college's web site that is sponsoring the study abroad program you are interested in.
 - Visit the Career Center and discuss your plans with a counselor or your faculty advisor.
 - Acquire and fill out all materials including: application, essay form, letters of recommendation, and an MCC transcript request form.
 - Meet with MCC Financial Aid Office to discuss financial aid issues.
 - Meet with MCC Admissions Office to discuss the transferability of credits back to MCC.
 - Consider meeting with a career counselor (Career Center) before sending in application materials and to discuss all final study abroad concerns.
 - Mail application and await your acceptance.



FINANCING STUDY ABROAD

The U.S. Department of Education has permitted schools to release federal aid for payment toward study abroad programs. The program you are choosing must be approved for credit by Monroe Community College and apply toward your academic degree. The federal law states that aid may cover all "reasonable" costs for a study abroad program, which can include: round-trip transportation, tuition/fees for the program, living costs, passport/visa fees, and health insurance.

For most students interested in participating in a study abroad program, a contract needs to be established between Monroe Community College and the host institution to receive financial aid to help cover the costs of the program. The consortium agreement is the document that establishes the contract between the two schools.

What steps should I take?

- Be enrolled in a degree program at MCC to receive federal and/or state aid.
- Be enrolled for 12 credits hours while you are receiving aid.
- Obtain approval from MCC that the credit earned abroad is transferable back and applicable to your MCC degree.
- Complete a FAFSA form (Free Application for Federal Student Aid): www.fafsa.ed.gov
- Obtain and complete a consortium agreement form from the Financial Aid Office.
- Research scholarship opportunities via the web:
International Service and Travel Center: www.istc.umn.edu (click on funding & scholarships)

TRANSFERABILITY OF CREDITS

Course equivalencies and credit/grade transfer for study abroad programs are all determined by MCC's Admissions Office. Any course you take must be pre-approved for transfer credit prior to the study abroad. It is your responsibility to obtain the necessary approval. Enough time should be allowed for obtaining approvals.

To receive transfer credit for study abroad, you must:

- Apply to an approved study abroad program
- Obtain a course approval for each study abroad course
- Not duplicate coursework already completed at MCC
- Receive a passing grade of C or better in each course
- Keep all coursework documentation (syllabi)
- Submit official transcripts to MCC's Admissions Office



PASSPORT/VISA INFORMATION

Citizens of the United States are required to have a valid U.S. Passport in order to enter a foreign country and to re-enter the U.S. Some countries require that your passport be valid at least six months beyond the dates of your trip. Please check with the embassy or consulate of the country in which you plan to study for their specific requirements.

In addition to a U.S. Passport, most countries require a visa for extended stay. In order to get a visa you must have a valid passport. If you already have a passport but it expires before the required dates of validity, you will need to apply for a new one. To check individual country requirements for visas you can connect to the Embassy website: www.embassy.org/embassies/

Applying for a passport:

If you already have a passport and if that passport was issued within the past 12 years, after your 18th birthday, you are eligible to apply by mail. If you do not meet these requirements, you must apply in person. If you have an old passport that has expired and it was issued before your 18th birthday, you must apply for a new passport in person as if it were your first. For additional information: travel.state.gov/passport_services.html



STUDY ABROAD RESOURCES

A successful study abroad experience requires careful planning. Students should begin this planning early in the process. The following resources may assist you in issues regarding travel, health and immigration.



- **Study Abroad Tips for Students** (travel.state.gov/studentinfo.html)
- **A Safe Trip Abroad** (travel.state.gov/asafetripabroad.html)
- **The United States Department of State** (www.state.gov/travel) issues travel warnings, public announcements, and consular information sheets that can help you identify possible safety and security issues for the countries you are considering for study abroad.
- **The Center for Disease Control and Prevention** (www.cdc.gov/travel/) provides health information on specific destinations. Issues of health and safety should always be considered when choosing a study abroad program.
- **OANDA, The Currency Site** (www.oanda.com) is the most advanced and comprehensive provider of currency and foreign exchange services on the Web.
- **International Student Identity Card** (www.isicus.com) is endorsed by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and is recognized worldwide as proof of student status. This card has you covered from A-Z with great savings and benefits in over 100 countries around the globe, something no other card can offer! The card also provides free travel insurance (for trips outside the U.S.), an emergency help line that can be used from anywhere in the world, and a full communications system called ISICConnect (for staying in touch with family and friends).
- **The World at Your Fingertips** (www.cie.uci.edu/world) is an online handbook designed to provide you with essential information to help you prepare for your experience abroad.
- **The Study Abroad Handbook** (www.studyabroad.com/handbook) covers the following topics: reasons for studying abroad, selecting the right study abroad program for you, pre-departure information, living abroad, reentry, and additional study abroad resources.
- **The ISTC Packing List** (www.istc.umn.edu/trav/trav_packinglist.html) is a general checklist of things to consider if you are going to be traveling in relatively warm climates. If you plan to work or study you will want to bring along additional materials appropriate to your activity. Always pack with a checklist!
- **USC Center for Global Education** (www.usc.edu/dept/education/globaled) promotes international education to foster cross-cultural awareness, cooperation and understanding.
- **Worldstudy.gov** helps undergraduate explore international study by presenting stories of successful students who have taken advantage of learning opportunities around the world. The site spotlights the National Security Education Program, a government program that provides money for U.S. students to add an international component to their education.
 - **Abroad View** (www.abroadviewmagazine.com) strives to offer in-depth content that focuses on international issues, personal travel experiences, and the global education we actually receive when we uproot from our comfortable lives for study, travel or work in new environments.
 - **Transitions Abroad** (www.transitionsabroad.com) provides practical information on educational travel abroad for learning travelers of all ages and interests.

