

EDUCATION ABROAD

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Overview

VCU Education Abroad supports graduate students from every academic discipline in their pursuit of global experiential learning. Education abroad benefits students academically, professionally and personally; students become more engaged in their academic field of study and often show stronger performance upon returning to campus from their study abroad experiences. Skills gained through education abroad increase employment marketability upon graduation. Graduate students must obtain approval from their school or college and the VCU Graduate School to receive graduate credit for pursuing an international experience including courses, internship or research.

Getting started

Graduate students interested in education abroad must contact their school or college faculty adviser to discuss the feasibility of incorporating an international experience into their VCU degree. The VCU Education Abroad office provides students with information, advising and support through the process of applying to, preparing for, and returning from education abroad.

Credits

Graduate students must seek approval from their faculty adviser and the Graduate School prior to departure to determine how credit from abroad will transfer. In order to receive transferable graduate credit, students must enroll in graduate-level courses at host institutions that are recognized by their countries' ministry of education as graduate-degree-granting institutions. Students will need to complete the Request for (<https://graduate.vcu.edu/media/graduate-school/docs/pdf/SpecialActionFormWordDoc4-27-17Updated.doc>) Special Action Form (<https://graduate.vcu.edu/media/graduate-school/docs/pdf/SpecialActionFormWordDoc4-27-17Updated.doc>).

- Except for specific VCU short-term programs or independent study, most credit received through study abroad will appear on the students' transcripts as transfer credit.
- Once students are registered with Education Abroad, they will be registered in a STUA (study abroad) placeholder course until their foreign credits transfer back to VCU.
- Students must earn the equivalent of an A or B level grade on study abroad transfer credit (<https://bulletin.vcu.edu/academic-regs/grad-transfer-credit/>). Grade equivalencies are determined by VCU.
- Approved foreign transfer credits (<https://bulletin.vcu.edu/academic-regs/grad-transfer-credit/>) will be posted to students' VCU records when an official transcript has been received and processed by VCU.

Funding

VCU Education Abroad provides program options ranging in cost, including plentiful options comparable to the cost of studying at VCU.

- Financial aid (<http://bulletin.vcu.edu/graduate/study/financing-graduate-school/study-abroad/>) is available to students when they study abroad.
- Many scholarship opportunities (https://vcu.studioabroad.com/?FuseAction=Abroad.ViewLink&Parent_ID=0&Link_ID=33AAF1BF-5056-BA1F-733E14854E4A320B) are available to students through VCU and external organizations.
- The National Scholarship Office (<https://nso.vcu.edu/>) supports students applying for nationally-competitive scholarships such as the Fulbright, Boren Awards, and Critical Language Scholarship Program.

Program offerings

VCU short-term programs

Each year VCU offers a variety of short-term program options in which graduate students can obtain credit, which may occur during winter break, spring break and/or summer. Participants can earn VCU and/or transfer credit and study subjects from various academic disciplines. Each year new programs are created around the world.

VCU semester partnership direct-enroll and exchange

VCU offers diverse programming through direct-enroll agreements with foreign partner institutions in a variety of destinations across the globe. VCU also negotiates student exchange agreements arising out of specific interest in the university community. For exchange options, students pay the equivalent of full-time tuition and fees at VCU and enroll at the chosen host university.

External programs

Students seeking alternatives to VCU short-term programs, direct-enroll and exchanges may consider external programs. Students may elect to participate in a program offered by a third-party organization such as a foreign or domestic university or international education organization/provider. VCU Education Abroad can assist students in identifying and applying to external programs, maintaining their VCU status while away and securing financial aid when possible and appropriate. Note: All external programs must offer transferable credit and be pre-approved by VCU Education Abroad in order to be recognized by VCU.

Virtual programs

While there is no substitute for an in-country experience, virtual internships and classes offer a way to explore another culture, get specific experience not offered at VCU and gain invaluable intercultural, professional and academic skills. Virtual programs are accessible and affordable, allowing students to explore and engage globally from the comfort of their homes. Virtual internships and classes can be added to a student's existing on-campus or online course load at VCU. Most virtual programs are offered for undergraduate credit; please check with an Education Abroad adviser for current offerings for graduate students.