

# GLOBAL LEARNING

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global.vcu.edu/abroad (<http://global.vcu.edu/abroad/>)

## Overview

VCU encourages students from every academic discipline to pursue part of their university education in an international setting by studying abroad. 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 help increase employment marketability upon graduation. Learn more about how Education Abroad experiences fulfill REAL (<http://bulletin.vcu.edu/undergraduate/undergraduate-study/real/>) initiative requirements.

## Getting started

Students may study abroad for various lengths of time including summer, winter session, spring break, a semester or a full academic year as part of their degree program. VCU's program offerings range from independent to more supportive. The VCU Education Abroad office provides students with information, advising and support through the process of applying, preparing for and returning from education abroad.

Students who would like to learn more are encouraged to complete Rams Abroad 101 (<https://vcu.studioabroad.com/?FuseAction=Programs.ViewProgramAngular&id=11155>), a self-paced, informational video series on study abroad options and processes. Students may schedule advising with an Education Abroad adviser to receive support in selecting a program, getting courses approved, accessing financial aid and scholarships and preparing to go abroad.

## Eligibility

Participants must be in good standing with the university (<https://bulletin.vcu.edu/academic-regs/ugrad/continuance/>) in order to apply for and participate in education abroad programs. Additionally, students are typically required to have completed two semesters at VCU prior to studying abroad. Please note that individual program requirements may vary.

## Credits

Except for specific VCU short-term programs offered for VCU credit, all credit received through study abroad will appear on the students' transcripts as transfer credit (<https://bulletin.vcu.edu/undergraduate/undergraduate-study/admission-university/additional-sources-of-credit/>).

- Students must earn the equivalent of a C, at minimum, for credit to be awarded.
- Grades are not calculated into the VCU GPA, unless a student is attempting to graduate with I (<https://bulletin.vcu.edu/academic-regs/ugrad/ugrad-graduation-app/>)audatory honors (<https://bulletin.vcu.edu/academic-regs/ugrad/ugrad-graduation-app/>).
- Students who participate in approved programs abroad are exempt from the 25 percent rule (<https://bulletin.vcu.edu/academic-regs/ugrad/ugrad-degree-regs/>), including the requirement that at least

30 of the last 45 credits are taken at VCU. Although students may be allowed to study abroad during their final year, they should communicate with the Education Abroad office and their academic department to determine whether that is advisable.

- Students must complete the Education Abroad course approval process ([https://vcu.studioabroad.com/?FuseAction=Abroad.ViewLink&Parent\\_ID=324C7870-5056-BA1F-73413AB6255E54F0&Link\\_ID=32A93CA5-5056-BA1F-7375575C7DE013A6](https://vcu.studioabroad.com/?FuseAction=Abroad.ViewLink&Parent_ID=324C7870-5056-BA1F-73413AB6255E54F0&Link_ID=32A93CA5-5056-BA1F-7375575C7DE013A6)) to determine how study abroad credits will transfer back to VCU. In conjunction with the Education Abroad adviser, students are encouraged to work with their academic adviser on these course approvals.
- Once students are registered with Education Abroad, they will be registered in a STUA (study abroad) placeholder until their foreign credits transfer back to VCU.
- Major advising sheets ([https://vcu.studioabroad.com/?FuseAction=Abroad.ViewLink&Parent\\_ID=324C7870-5056-BA1F-73413AB6255E54F0&Link\\_ID=32B86134-5056-BA1F-7306BDCBCA01E37C](https://vcu.studioabroad.com/?FuseAction=Abroad.ViewLink&Parent_ID=324C7870-5056-BA1F-73413AB6255E54F0&Link_ID=32B86134-5056-BA1F-7306BDCBCA01E37C)) provide program recommendations for many undergraduate majors at VCU.

## Funding

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

- Financial aid (<https://bulletin.vcu.edu/undergraduate/undergraduate-study/financial-aid/>) 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](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 Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship, Boren Awards and Critical Language Scholarship Program.

## Program offerings

### VCU short-term study abroad

Each year VCU offers a variety of short-term program options which may occur during winter break, spring break and/or summer. Both faculty-led and direct-enroll (International Summer Institute) options are available. Participants can earn VCU and/or transfer credit and study subjects from various academic disciplines. New programs are created around the world annually.

### VCU semester partnership direct-enroll and exchange options

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 approved 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.