

GUIDELINES

FOR

STUDY ABROAD

2009-2010

6/2009

Hamilton College strongly encourages students to study off-campus for one or two semesters. About 250 students, nearly all juniors, take advantage of our exciting off-campus study opportunities each year. Many study abroad. Study abroad opportunities fall into two main categories:

- Hamilton College study abroad programs in Beijing, Madrid and Paris, and India
CONTACT FOR BEIJING: Ms. Nitsa Weld, (315) 859-4326 in Buttrick, Lower Level.
CONTACT FOR MADRID, SPAIN AND PARIS, FRANCE: Ms. Gena Hasburgh, (315) 859-4201 in Christian Johnson 213
CONTACT FOR INDIA: Prof. Lisa Trivedi, (315) 859-4980 Kirner Johnson, or Mr. Jon Andrew (315) 859-4022, Elihu Root House 214
- Non-Hamilton programs (approximately 180 approved programs) in many different parts of the world.
CONTACTS FOR NON-HAMILTON STUDY ABROAD:
Prof. Carol Drogus (cdrogus@hamilton.edu), Associate Dean of Students for Off Campus Study
Ms. Karen Prentice-Duprey (kprentic@hamilton.edu), Staff Assistant, Dean of Students Office
Both in the Dean of Students Office, Elihu Root House, (315) 859-4022

GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR STUDY ABROAD

Study abroad is an enriching educational experience that is most beneficial when it is fully integrated in your overall academic experience. Therefore, the Dean of Student's Office and the Committee on Academic Standing follow certain principles in recommending and approving study abroad programs and applications:

Study abroad programs should reflect Hamilton's liberal arts curriculum.

- Internships and non-liberal arts courses (ie: business, journalism) will not receive credit.
- Students will not receive credit for language courses below the level of Hamilton's language requirement for the country.
- Programs must be equal in length to a Hamilton semester, including vacations. Year long programs must equal two semesters.
- Students must take final exams at times regularly scheduled by their host school.

Study abroad should be a serious academic experience complementing a student's Hamilton studies.

- Students should discuss with their advisors which courses to take and how these will fit with their concentration or minor.
- Students should only choose programs that offer options that complement their Hamilton program, if possible offering courses not available to them at Hamilton.

Since the principal educational advantages of study abroad are in-depth cross-cultural exposure and language learning, study abroad programs should maximize these benefits.

- Whenever possible, Hamilton approves programs that fully immerse students in the host country's educational system and culture. We do not approve "island" programs for American students only.
- We encourage students to choose programs that build on previous language study.
- Students must meet Hamilton's language proficiency requirement for countries whose language is taught at Hamilton.
- Study abroad programs must include courses that increase the student's proficiency in the language of the host country or, for more advanced speakers, are taught in that language. Those courses must equal at least one-fifth of the total course work presented for transfer credit.

To meet the above goals, study abroad is normally intended for the junior year, when students have established their foundation in the liberal arts, declared their concentrations and completed language requirements.

- Most study abroad programs are designed for juniors and are most effective for juniors, who will have already completed important requirements and foundational coursework for their concentrations, but will not yet be busy with senior theses, GRE and other testing, and preparing for graduate school or the job market.
- Hamilton's expectation is that students will normally reserve study abroad for their junior year.

ELIGIBILITY FOR STUDY ABROAD

The College considers the opportunity to transfer credit from study abroad a privilege, not a right. You must meet certain requirements to be eligible to receive credit for study abroad.

1. To obtain permission to study abroad, you must: a) earn a GPA of at least 82 calculated in the two consecutive semesters at Hamilton immediately preceding the last semester at Hamilton before leaving to study abroad; b) receive no final grades of F or FF in the semester immediately preceding your proposed period of study abroad.
2. Prior to study abroad you must complete the quantitative literacy requirement, physical education requirement, and writing requirement.
3. To study abroad in a non-English speaking country, you must pass a course or otherwise show proficiency in the country's language at:
 - The fourth-semester (140) level for French, German, Russian, Spanish;
 - The second semester (120) level for Italian, Chinese, and Japanese;
 - The second-semester (120) level for any language offered by the Hamilton Critical Languages program on a regular basis.
4. You must remain in good academic and social standing (not on academic or social probation) until the start date of your leave of absence from Hamilton.
5. Your leave to study abroad must normally occur in the first or second semester (or both) of your third (junior) year. However, you may apply to the Committee on Academic Standing to study abroad before that or in the first semester of your fourth (senior) year.

PLEASE NOTE that if you wish to attend a summer study abroad program in another country, you MUST STILL MEET CONDITIONS 1-3 in order to transfer credit.

PREPARATION

- Begin planning for study abroad early in your Hamilton career! A year or even two in advance is not too soon.
- Talk with your faculty advisor about your goals for study abroad, courses you must complete in you major before you study abroad, courses that might transfer from study abroad, and what you will need to take when you return.
- If you want to study in a non-English-speaking country, begin or continue language study to achieve the necessary level.

- Attend an informational meeting or make an appointment to discuss possibilities and plans with the Associate Dean for Off-Campus Study.
- Fill out a Study Abroad Planning Form and meet with the Associate Dean of Students.

PROGRAM SELECTION

- If you are considering a Hamilton program, you can obtain information directly from the Madrid and Paris office (Christian Johnson 213), the ACC/Beijing office (Buttrick Lower Level), or the New York State Colleges program in India (Elihu Root House 214).
- If you are interested in non-Hamilton options, begin by looking at the “Preferred Programs List” available from the Dean of Students Office or on-line. Over 180 programs worldwide, including programs that are sponsored by American schools, those that offer direct enrollment in foreign universities, and field-based programs are already on the approved list.
- Consult your advisor or the Associate Dean of Students for suggestions.
- Some programs also send representatives to campus—look for email announcements. You might also like to attend “Foreign Exposure” meetings with students recently returned from abroad.
- If you are unable to find an approved program that meets your needs, you should consult with your faculty advisor and the study abroad advisor. You may propose a program outside the Preferred Programs List and then submit a petition to the Committee on Academic Standing for approval to attend the program. More information about requirements for a petition is available in the Dean of Students Office.

APPLICATION

- Once your program is selected or approved (if it is not on the preferred list), complete and send the application as soon as possible. You need not wait for your leave of absence to be approved.
- Many programs use rolling admissions, so apply in advance of the deadlines.
- Request any needed transcripts from the Registrar’s Office. This MUST be done in writing, so hand in, mail, or fax (859-4632) your request form.
- Seek faculty recommendations and provide them the materials to complete those recommendations.
- In many cases you will need to submit a Program Approval form to the study abroad advisor (Associate Dean of Students for Off Campus Study) to complete and return to the program.
- If you need passport photos, these are offered once early in each semester on campus, or can be obtained in local stores.

DECLARING AN ACADEMIC LEAVE OF ABSENCE

- You must submit the completed “Declaration of Leave of Absence for Off Campus Study” form to the Dean of Students Office.
- Complete the form and obtain the signature of your academic advisor or the chair of your department of concentration, showing that you have fully discussed your study abroad plans with them.
- Submit your form to the Dean of Students Office by the following dates: **February 27, 2009 for F’09 or AY 09-10; October 9, 2009 for S10; and February 26, 2010 for F10 or AY10-11.**
- Apply even if you are uncertain about your study abroad plans. You may always cancel your leave of absence if you change your mind.

FINANCIAL AID

- If you receive financial aid, consult Diane Barrett (859-4395) about arrangements to cover costs of study abroad.
- Many sources of financial aid are applicable to study abroad, but each person's financial aid package is unique, and you must consult the financial aid office to be sure you understand your situation.
- Make sure that you and anyone providing financial support for you understand what is covered by your program. Depending on the program, you may be responsible for airfare, room, board, in-country travel, books, fees, etc. Make sure you know what you will pay and what will be covered by financial aid!

STUDY ABROAD FEE

- Be aware that Hamilton's **study abroad fee for 2009-10 is \$1800.00 per semester.**
- This fee covers Hamilton's administrative costs, lost tuition, and the expense of financial aid transfer to non-Hamilton programs.
- This fee does not apply to Hamilton College programs.

TRANSFER OF CREDITS

- Once you've successfully applied to a program and been granted a leave of absence, you must arrange for transfer of credits.
- Select a large number (more than you will actually take) of courses you might take.
- Fill out a Transfer Credit Petition for all courses you have selected.
- Take the petition and catalogue copy of the courses to everyone who must sign. Make sure your advisor and any necessary department chairs have signed.
- Turn in the form to the Office of the Registrar.
- Check with Kay Klossner in the Registrar's Office that you understand how many courses you must take to receive the full complement of Hamilton credits.
- More information is available at the pre-departure meeting, including what to do if you need to add courses not pre-approved once you are abroad.
- Remember that it's best to be cautious: you run a risk by not getting enough courses plus some extras for "insurance" pre-approved before you leave.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- Consider an appointment with the Career Center, particularly if you want an internship following your study abroad or will be a first-semester senior when you return.
- Consult the Health Center about immunizations, prescriptions, and other health concerns.
- Check the "Study Abroad Checklist" for a list of things to do on- and off-campus before you leave. It is available on-line and at the pre-departure meeting.

MANDATORY (!) PRE-DEPARTURE MEETING

- An informational pre-departure meeting will be held close to the end of each semester (November for fall; April for spring). You will be notified through campus mail of the date and time.
- You will receive information so you can plan ahead about transfer credit, housing and meal plan lotteries, registration, parking and other issues relevant to your return.
- **ATTENDANCE AT THIS MEETING IS MANDATORY!**