Study Abroad in the University System of Georgia

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www.usg.edu/oie
Why Study Abroad?

- to enhance academic program of study
- to learn things first-hand
- to improve foreign language skills
- to test limits
- to gain a competitive advantage in the job market
- to stay in school and graduate
Why Don’t More Students Study Abroad?

- Study abroad experiences are seen as “extra”
- Not an integral part of degree program coursework
- Lack of awareness
- Discouraged by some faculty
- Persistent misperceptions
Myths and Facts about Study Abroad

**Myth #1**
“I can’t speak a foreign language so I would be lost in another country.”

**Reality**
-Most University System of Georgia study abroad participants study abroad in English, regardless of the language of the host country.
**Myths and Facts about Study Abroad**

**Myth #2**
“My institution doesn’t offer any study abroad programs that fit within my major.”

**Reality**
- The University System of Georgia offers more than 300 study abroad programs in virtually every academic field and more than 50 countries.

- Students can go abroad with ISEP, which affords access to nearly 100 study sites in even more destinations.
Myths and Facts about Study Abroad

**Myth #3**

“I’d be behind because I wouldn’t get credit for my study abroad program courses and wouldn’t be able to graduate on time.”

**Reality**

- All approved USG study abroad programs offer credit which transfers back to the home campus.
- In some cases, students can enough credit while abroad to actually get ahead in credits toward their degree.
Myths and Facts about Study Abroad

**Myth #4**
“You have to have excellent grades in order to be eligible.”

**Reality**
Requirements for study abroad programs vary; some programs simply require that the participants be in good academic standing with their college or university, while other require a 2.5 GPA or higher.
Myths and Facts about Study Abroad

**Myth #5**
“You’re supposed to go abroad your junior year.”

**Reality**
-Several study abroad programs in the USG are designed for freshmen and sophomores and primarily offer courses in the core.
Myths and Facts about Study Abroad

**Myth #6**
“Studying abroad is not safe.”

**Reality**
- No USG study abroad program will take place in a country or region that carries a Department of State travel warning.
Myths and Facts about Study Abroad

**Myth #7**
“It’s too expensive.”

“There is no real money out there to help me study abroad—no one ever really gets a scholarship.”

**Reality**
- Study abroad for a semester may actually be *cheaper* than a semester spent on campus.
- In FY 2004 alone, the BOR of the USG provided $123,000 in direct aid to students and will provide $148,000 in FY05.
Myths and Facts about Study Abroad

Myth #8
“The HOPE scholarship won’t cover my tuition/fees if I study abroad.”

“Financial aid won’t apply to the cost of my program.”

Reality
- HOPE will cover tuition and fees if programs are credit-bearing and are approved by the home institution.

-Pell grants and other federal financial aid will cover tuition costs for overseas programs.
HOPE Scholarship Regulations

“A student enrolled in a matriculating status at a HOPE-eligible institution in Georgia may qualify for HOPE payment while participating in a Study Abroad program. Study Abroad programs or International-Intercultural Studies program are college credit-earning programs of study that include travel outside the United States. The student’s HOPE-eligible home institution must approve the Study Abroad program for credit toward the student’s degree program prior to the student’s departure.”

-Source: http://www.gsfc.org
Federal Student Aid Regulations

“A student in a study-abroad program is eligible for aid if the program is approved for academic credit for the student’s degree by the eligible home school at which the student is enrolled as a regular student. The home school must have a contractual agreement with the foreign school or a single written arrangement with a study-abroad organization to represent an agreement between the home school and one or more foreign schools.” HEA Sec. 484(o), 34 CFR 668.39.

-Source: http://www.ifap.ed.gov/
Show Me the Money

There is money available—students just need to know where to look and how to get it.
3 Main Types of Funding

1) Grants
2) Scholarships
3) Loans
Sources of Financial Assistance

- University or college
- Societies/organizations related to academic field of study
- Host-country organizations, institutes, businesses
- Host-country embassy
- Private scholarships or grants
Loans for Study Abroad

- In addition to student loans available through a bank or financial institution, there are loans available specifically for study abroad.
Finding the Money - Step 1

Investigate local options
- campus study abroad office
- college/department of academic major
- employer
- societies/organizations
- governmental agencies
**Step 2**

**Broaden the search**
- national organizations, associations
- Internet research: study abroad scholarship Web sites, databases
- resources in print
Step 3

Investigate overseas options
-embassies/consulates
-international societies/organizations
-scholarships offered by particular countries/regions
-scholarships offered by host institution
-program-specific scholarships
Things to Be Aware of

- Some “scholarships” are not scholarships at all.
- Students should not have to “register” using a credit card to search a database of scholarships.
Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia Funding Program

STARS (Students Abroad with Regents’ Support)

3 funding programs:
1) Work and study stipend
2) Program assistantship
3) Global ambassador travel grant
**STARS Work and Study Stipends**

- can earn up to $500 per semester to apply to the cost of their study abroad program
- perform on-campus tasks prior to going abroad
- may work for more than one semester
STARS Program Assistantships

- can earn up to $1000 by working as study abroad program assistants
- work overseas and assist study abroad program directors with program administration and related duties
STARS Global Ambassador Travel Grants

- can earn up to $1000 in reimbursement costs for their study abroad program
- perform a volunteer service-related activity while overseas
- can propose their own activity
Board of Regents ISEP Grant

- The Board of Regents will award students a $500 grant if they participate on an ISEP exchange program.
- Students will receive this grant automatically and don’t even need to apply for the grant.
- Other scholarships or grants can be used in addition to the ISEP grant.
ISEP

- ISEP (International Student Exchange Program) is the world’s largest and most extensive study abroad exchange program.

- Students pay the cost of their home campus tuition, fees, housing and meals and go abroad for a semester- or year-long program.
-Since students pay home-campus costs and not the cost of their overseas university, they are paying the equivalent of what they pay for a semester on campus.

-The only additional costs of an ISEP program are expenses related to airfare, visa/passport, and spending money.

-Students can apply their financial aid or HOPE scholarship to the cost of their program.

www.isep.org
Sample ISEP Costs

$5400 in-state tuition, fees, campus room and board (USG semester average)

- $500 BOR ISEP grant
- $1000 BOR work/study stipend
- $5000 Freeman-Asia Award
+ $1100
# of Regents’ Awards for Study Abroad
1997--2007
The Advantages of STARS

- Regents have sponsorship
- Institutions have ownership
- Institutions have flexibility and discretion about how funds are used
The Impact of STARS: Participating Institutions

- 3 of 4 research universities
- 9 of 13 regional & state universities
- 0 of 2 state colleges
- 8 of 15 two-year colleges

20 of 34 institutions are using STARS funding to support students going abroad
Percentage of STARS Awards by Category (FY03 & FY04)

- Work Stipends: 59%
- Travel Grants: 12%
- Assistantships: 25%
- ISEP Grants: 4%
What is the Board of Regents doing to promote study abroad?

- University System of Georgia Study Abroad Catalog
  www.usg.edu/oie/catalog
- Direct funding to campuses for new study abroad program development
- USG Study Abroad Committee and listserv
  www.usg.edu/oie/committees/sa
What is the Board of Regents doing to promote study abroad (cont.)?

- Study abroad fairs
- Study abroad program director workshops for developing/administering study abroad programs
- Faculty Development Seminars
- World Regional Councils (Africa, Americas, Asia, Europe, Middle East Consortium)
Why study abroad - the statistics

- Georgia’s annual exports of goods valued at $19.6 billion
- Those exports are responsible for an estimated 300,000 jobs
- 1,936 foreign-owned facilities in Georgia provide 114,684 jobs
- $25 billion direct foreign investment in Georgia
Persistence Toward Graduation - Test Sample of Three State Universities

Blue column includes 2000-2001 study abroad students from three universities who had graduated or were still enrolled in Spring 2003.
Red column represents average graduation rate at the three institutions.
Board of Regents’ Goals for International Education

- 1995 Strategic Plan: double the number of Georgia students abroad (from 1600 to 3200) by 2002

- 2002 Strategic Plan: double the number of Georgia students abroad (from 3200 to 6400) by 2007
By 2007, if the USG meets the goal, the number of students* who study abroad will equal:

- 4% of total undergraduate headcount
- 5% of full-time undergraduate headcount
- 25% of undergraduate degrees awarded

(*based on FY02 enrollments)
USG Study Abroad Participation 1997-2004

![Bar chart showing the number of students studying abroad from 1997-98 to 2003-04.](chart.png)

- **1996-97**: 1662
- **1997-98**: 1850
- **1998-99**: 2532
- **1999-00**: 2765
- **2000-01**: 3423
- **2001-02**: 3732
- **2002-03**: 3732
- **2003-04**: 4402
### Ways to study abroad:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Exchange programs</th>
<th>Overseas internships</th>
<th>Collaborative study centers</th>
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<td>Faculty-led programs</td>
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<td>Residential centers</td>
<td>Direct enrollment at foreign schools</td>
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Countries with USG Study Abroad Programs
National Statistics on Study Abroad Participation

- In 2002-2003, 174,629 U.S. students studied abroad. (USG: 3732 students or 2.1%)
- Top 10 destinations:
  - United Kingdom
  - Mexico
  - Spain
  - Germany
  - Italy
  - Ireland
  - France
  - China
  - Australia
  - Costa Rica
National Statistics on Participation by Race

Percentage of Study Abroad Participants by Year

- Caucasian
- Asian-American
- Hispanic-American
- African-American
- Multi-Racial
- Native American
- International*

Funding for International Students to Study Abroad
Loan Eligibility for International Students

Federal loans, and therefore state loans or scholarships, are generally not available to non-U.S. citizens.
Federal Financial Aid Requirements for International Students

- Students must be U.S. citizens or eligible non-citizens to receive aid from federal student aid programs.
- “U.S. citizens” include citizens of Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, and the Northern Mariana Islands. U.S. nationals include natives of American Samoa and Swain’s Island - these individuals may also receive federal funds.
Federal Aid Eligibility (cont.)

- Lawful Permanent Residents - non-citizens who are legally permitted to live and work in the United States permanently
- Refugees
- Persons granted asylum
- Conditional entrants
- Persons paroled into the U.S. for at least one year (must provide proof from the DHS that they are in the U.S. for reasons other than a temporary purpose and intend to become a citizen or permanent resident)
- Cuban-Haitian entrants

Loan Eligibility for International Students

- STARS money is available to international students who study abroad
- Private loans are available for all international students regardless of citizenship
Questions