

# Study Abroad Guide

2010-2011



## IMPORTANT STUDY ABROAD DATES

<b>Every Monday</b>	<b>General Study Abroad Information Meetings</b> starting September 28, at 4:00 Office for International Study
<b>Tuesday, September 22, 2009</b>	<b>Study Abroad Fair</b> , 12-3, Chapin Lawn
<b>Thursday, October 15, 2009</b>	<i>Study Abroad Credit Application</i> due for Spring 2010 study with PRESHCO, SITA, Puebla and JYA Hamburg
<b>Monday, February 1, 2010</b>	<i>JYA Applications</i> due for study on a Smith JYA program in Florence, Geneva, Hamburg or Paris in 2010-2011
<b>Monday, February 15, 2010</b>	<i>Study Abroad Credit Application</i> due for study on a program approved for Smith credit during 2010-2011 (single semester or full-year)
<b>Thursday, April 1, 2010</b>	Deadline for submitting Fall 2010 and Academic Year 2010-11 study abroad confirmation forms to Office for International Study
<b>Monday, November 1, 2010</b>	Deadline for submitting Spring 2010 study abroad confirmation forms to Office for International Study

## STUDY ABROAD CHECKLIST

1. Assess your own goals and needs
  - What do you want to learn?
  - What kind of classroom and teaching environment are you looking for?
  - What kind of living situation best suits you?
  - How long can you be away from Smith?
2. Learn about Smith study abroad policy
  - Attend a required **Study Abroad General Information Session** (every Monday at 4:00 p.m., Office for International Study)
  - Read this *Study Abroad Guide*
3. Explore program options
  - Attend the **Study Abroad Fair** on September 22, 12-3:00, Chapin Lawn
  - Review the list of *Study Abroad Programs Approved for Smith Credit*
  - Visit the Resource Room – read student evaluations, browse program materials, talk with student advisors
  - Talk to faculty, returned students and program representatives
4. Select a program (or two)
  - Determine program or university application deadlines, and obtain application materials
  - Submit applications to study abroad programs (two maximum) in advance of program application deadlines
5. Seek Smith approval for your study abroad plans
  - Submit the Smith College *Study Abroad Credit Application* or *JYA Application* (one for each program, two programs maximum) to Office for International Study, by the deadline
6. Apply for a passport; check expiration date if you already have a passport
7. Confirm your study abroad plans
  - Accept offer of admission from a study abroad program
  - Submit confirmation paperwork to Office for International Study
8. Attend required Pre-Departure Orientation session
9. Go Abroad!



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## **INTRODUCTION**

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More Smith students study abroad for a full year than students of any other baccalaureate institution in the United States. Nearly 50 percent of Smith students study abroad in Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America, and English-speaking countries around the world.

Study abroad provides a new perspective on your own country; it also provides you with a new view of yourself – of your capacity to adapt, to grow, to be open to new experiences --- and perhaps also of your own limitations, which you may want to learn to transcend. Inevitably, it changes your life.

## **STUDY ABROAD ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS**

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Students are expected to meet all the eligibility requirements listed in these guidelines, and to select a study abroad program from the broad offerings on the list of Study Abroad Programs Approved for Smith Credit. Students are eligible to study abroad once, for a maximum of two semesters abroad.

For academic credit earned in a term-time study abroad program to count toward the Smith degree, students must obtain advance approval from the Office for International Study and pay the Smith Comprehensive Fee each term they are abroad. Students must meet study abroad eligibility requirements set by Smith College in order to receive approval for study abroad AND also meet admission requirements set by their chosen study abroad program or host university and be accepted by the program or university.

For Smith study abroad approval, students must:

- Have a 3.0 overall grade point average, be in good academic standing and in good standing in student conduct matters at the time of application as well as when the program starts
- Declare a major; discuss self-designed majors with Dean Margaret Bruzelius (Class Deans Office)
- Demonstrate language proficiency for languages taught at Smith (see Language Proficiency Requirements, next page)
- Have no credit shortage when the program starts
- Meet transfer credit limit requirements: No more than 32 transfer credits when starting a year-long program, or 48 transfer credits when starting a semester-long program. Students attending a Smith JYA program do not have credit transfer limits.
- Not have previously studied abroad as a Smith student; students are eligible to study abroad once, for a maximum of two semesters.

Approval for study abroad is also dependent on the following Smith rules:

- “Candidates for a degree must complete at least 4 semesters of academic work, a minimum of 64 credits, in academic residence in Northampton; two of these must be completed during the junior or senior year.” (Smith College Bulletin)
- Students may not be away from the college on leave for more than one year. “A student who wishes to be away from the college for more than one year must withdraw.” (Smith College Bulletin)
- Students who take a full semester medical leave are not eligible to study abroad the following semester. Eligibility of students who take a short-term medical leave is determined on a case by case basis.
- Student accounts must be in good standing at the time of application and prior to the start of the term abroad.

In all instances, Smith College reserves the right to approve, retract or deny a student's participation in study abroad.

## Language Proficiency Requirements

Students must demonstrate proficiency in host country languages when that language is taught at Smith.

### **French, German, Italian, Spanish, and Russian:**

For programs where courses are taught in the host country language: Two or more years of college study or equivalent proficiency demonstrated by two semester courses at the 200 level (three for students applying to Paris), **or** one semester course at an advanced 200 level or 300 level (two for Paris). Students who enter Smith at the FRN 230 level or above are required to take three semesters of French prior to study in Paris, including one course at the FRN253 level or above in the spring of their sophomore year.

For programs with English-language curriculum: One year of college study of the language (or equivalent proficiency demonstrated by one semester course at an advanced 100 (intermediate) level or higher. (Exception: 1 year or intensive summer equivalent of Italian is strongly recommended, but not required, for ICCS in Rome.)

### **Arabic, Chinese, Hebrew, Japanese, Korean, or Portuguese:**

One year of college study or equivalent proficiency demonstrated by one semester course at an advanced 100 (intermediate) level or higher

Students are encouraged, but not required, to learn host country languages available at other colleges prior to studying abroad. Languages taught through Five College Center for Study of World Languages (<http://www.umass.edu/fclang/>) include Czech, Hindi, Hungarian, Modern Greek, Swahili, Thai, Twi, Vietnamese, Wolof. Swahili and Hindi have mentored programs. In addition, Polish is taught at UMass.

### **Ada Comstock Scholars and Transfer Students**

Ada Comstock Scholars and transfer students interested in study abroad should review *Study Abroad for Ada Comstock Scholars and Transfer Students* ([http://www.smith.edu/studyabroad/apply\\_eligibility.php](http://www.smith.edu/studyabroad/apply_eligibility.php)) and meet with the Dean of Ada Comstock Scholars or their Class Dean.

### **International Students**

International students on F-1 visas also need to consider US visa renewal requirements and Practical Training eligibility when planning study abroad. International students considering study abroad must contact the Office for International Students, x4943, [interstu@smith.edu](mailto:interstu@smith.edu).

## **CHOOSING THE RIGHT PROGRAM**

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To find the most suitable program, complete a successful application, and integrate your study abroad with your Smith experience, you need to start planning early in the fall of the academic year before the one in which you hope to study abroad, and fully investigate all available resources. Attend a General Information Session, come to the Study Abroad Fair in late September, and work your way methodically through the programs on the approved list to make sure that you have not overlooked any viable options in countries that you might not have initially considered. When researching programs, keep any special needs (medication, diet, accessibility, etc) that you may have in mind.

### **Consider Your Academic Needs**

There are many reasons to study abroad, but it is important that you examine honestly your own motives for pursuing study abroad. Consult your mentors, including your academic advisers, who can help you think through what you might hope to gain from the experience, before you waste energy on an idea that may not be suited to you. Do not confuse the benefits of *living* in a foreign culture with those of *studying* abroad and taking courses that can be integrated into your studies at Smith.

Smith emphasizes that study abroad is a serious academic endeavor, not a prolonged vacation and travel opportunity. If the latter is what you're after, go in the summer, or take some time off, or wait until after graduation. Travel and living abroad is always educational but not necessarily worthy of academic credit; that's why there is an approved list of academically challenging study abroad programs. In the right program, it is possible to combine academic work of the highest quality with a deepened understanding of everyday life

and culture in the host country. Smith expects you to find the best program for your own individual needs, and not to choose a program because a friend is also applying.

When asking returned students about their experiences, be sure to ask about academic culture, teaching methods and course options, not only about daily life and housing.

### **Adapting to a Foreign Culture**

Even if you have strong academic reasons for study abroad, you should be sure that you are mentally and physically prepared for an unfamiliar environment or culture. Anyone studying abroad should anticipate “culture shock,” a loss of emotional equilibrium when confronted with a set of unspoken rules for social interaction that are different from those of the US. Food and housing opportunities may be very different, and you’ll find that comforts and choices you took for granted at home won’t be found where you expect. The duration and intensity of study abroad make a loss of emotional equilibrium more common in study abroad than in ordinary travel, especially in countries that are culturally similar to the US. This loss of equilibrium is likely to exacerbate existing problems such as anxiety, depression, or eating disorders. Talk about your study abroad plans with your parents, counselors, and therapists, especially if you think that you may be susceptible to such stress. Although program administrators have experience in helping students through difficult patches, the facilities to deal with complex problems will be limited in many countries. Furthermore, problems that become exacerbated by the challenges of your new location can distract from your academic success and cultural integration abroad.

### **Teaching Methods**

You should carefully consider how the teaching and learning environment at the programs or universities you are looking at may differ from that at Smith, and whether they is suited to your own strengths. There is much variation in teaching methods, types of assignments, amount of supervision and direction from instructors, and forms of assessment.

Past students have noted that they were not fully prepared for the differences in academic expectations and structure abroad, especially when they enrolled in host-country classes taught at a university. A common academic difference between US liberal arts colleges and higher education in most of the world, which is based on a specialist education model, is the degree to which you are expected to organize your time as an independent scholar. While there are lots of variations from country to country and from university to university, many students observe that at universities abroad there is much less assigned reading than at Smith, and few if any written assignments given before the final exam or paper. You may find academic systems where you have far less class time than at Smith, where you are expected to create your own reading lists and work entirely on your own until a final exam, libraries with far more restrictions, and professors -- like everywhere, some brilliant lecturers and some not -- who aren’t concerned with you as an individual. It is key to realize that educational structure and pedagogy are part of the cultural differences study abroad students seek. Many students, but by no means all, find themselves newly empowered by the experience of taking charge of their own learning, and having the time to pursue interests deeply.

Programs where classes are offered expressly for the study abroad group are by definition less culturally integrated, but are likely to be taught in a way that is more similar to Smith. Such programs are often more structured than university based programs, also offering group excursions and events. Some programs offer a mix of both models, while other programs and universities use tutorial or field study models that may conform to neither your prior experience nor what has been described above.

### **Calendar Differences**

Academic calendars vary widely around the world. On the list of approved programs, you will find the Smith academic period for which study is approved. Differences that you may find in specific regions are outlined below.

- In some European countries university examinations for the fall semester are required in late January; in these cases attendance in the fall semester only will not be approved because the exams prevent return to Smith in time for the start of the spring semester.
- Until recently, the academic year in the U.K. and Ireland was broken into three terms (autumn, spring, and summer) running from late September through late June, with two long breaks at Christmas and

Easter. Some institutions, including Oxford and Cambridge, still use this system. Smith students may attend for the two terms of the “spring” and “summer” or for the full academic year, but may not attend for only the fall term.

- At universities in the southern hemisphere, the academic year is aligned with a calendar year. Semester I begins in February and Semester II in July. While students may choose either semester or both, some find it easier to integrate into the host university if they begin their study abroad experience in Semester I.

Calendar differences can affect your ability to work during the summer both before and after your time abroad. Students are responsible for their own costs during vacation breaks and university holidays, which may be longer than comparable breaks at Smith. “Fall start” programs can begin as early as July or as late as October, and the same variation can be found for spring start and end times. Some countries allow full-time students to work during vacation breaks, and others forbid it. Some students plan ahead to do internships during vacation breaks, and apply for PRAXIS internship funding to assist with their living expenses. It is important that all these factors be taken into account as you are choosing a study abroad program, and to think about the extra costs that school breaks abroad will present.

### **Physical Disabilities**

If you have a physical disability that could affect your participation, the Office for International Study would be pleased to help you identify viable study abroad options. Remember that the environment, facilities, and legal requirements vary greatly around the world. For example, it is often impossible to renovate historic buildings to provide unimpeded wheelchair access. However, programs and universities are generally eager to help a determined student meet her goals, and Smith has successfully sent abroad students who are deaf and/or hearing impaired, students under treatment for serious medical conditions, and students with mobility limitations. The office has also worked with visually impaired students to find options that met their needs and interests.

### **Learning Differences**

Some foreign universities and programs are able to make accommodations for documented learning disabilities, but the method of assessment of many university courses remains heavily weighted towards final examinations. Many programs and universities now ask applicants to voluntarily disclose any conditions that might affect their participation so that they can clarify the level of assistance can be offered in their location.

### **Seek Advice**

Read evaluations from past Smith students in the Office for International Study, talk to returned students, and consult with your major adviser, the study abroad adviser in your department, and the Office for International Study staff. Ask lots of questions. Many Smith faculty members are involved in study abroad programs, as listed below.

### **Smith Junior Year Abroad Programs**

Florence	Italian Department
Geneva	French Department and Government Department
Hamburg	German Department
Paris	French Department

### **Smith-affiliated consortium programs and certain Smith-approved programs**

AKP (in Kyoto, Japan)	Dennis Yasutomo, Gov, and Maki Hubbard, Japanese
PRESHCO (in Cordoba, Spain)	Nancy Stembach and Molly Falsetti-Yu, Spanish
PMCSF (in Puebla, Mexico)	Sylvia Berger, Spanish
SITA (in Madurai, South India)	Nalini Bhushan, Philosophy
ACC (Associated Colleges in China)	East Asian Languages Chinese faculty
ICCS (Classical Studies in Rome)	Classics Department
Programs in Russia	Russian Department
Programs in Brazil	Portuguese language faculty
School for Field Studies (various sites)	Environmental Science faculty

## Remaining at Smith

Remember that for very good reasons over half of all Smith students choose not to study abroad. Many Smith students decide that the course offerings at Smith make better sense in the context of their academic career, or that they want to be involved in student government, athletics, journalism, the performing arts, or outdoor activities. You may have to make some hard choices, but remember that there are many opportunities for an international experience, including summer and graduate study.

## STUDY ABROAD PROGRAMS

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Students are expected to select a study abroad program from the wide range of programs approved for Smith credit. “Approval” refers only to eligibility for academic credit, and is not a blanket endorsement of any program or university. Students need to investigate study abroad options carefully to determine which ones are appropriate for their academic and personal interests. Students who have a compelling academic reason to pursue study on a program that is not approved may petition; see Appendix C.

**Suspension of Program Approval---State Department Travel Warnings:** The U.S. Department of State issues periodic public announcements, travel advisories, and consular information sheets about countries around the world. When a Travel Warning is issued for a country or region, Smith’s approval for any program in that country or region will be suspended until the Travel Warning is lifted.

An exception exists for study in Israel and in Kenya. *The College continues to recommend against electing to study in countries where a Travel Warning is in force.* Students deciding to study in Israel or Kenya are required to sign additional waivers, available at the Office for International Study.

## EARNING ACADEMIC CREDIT

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### A Full Course Load

Smith students must take a full course load while abroad, as defined by Smith College (**not** as defined by the host program or university). Programs and universities use many different systems of measuring credit. On most programs it is the number of credits earned that is significant, not the number of courses, since varying amounts of credits or points are awarded for different courses. A full load is a combination of courses that will advance a student at the host institution one semester or year toward the degree with no shortage. Students who complete a full semester or year worth of courses at their host institutions will earn a full semester (16 credits) or year (32 credits) worth of credit towards their Smith degree. Do not be misled by the fact that at some institutions you are regarded as a full-time student even if you are taking a course load that is less than what is necessary to advance a semester toward a degree. For example, at Smith, a student enrolled in a minimum course program (12 credits) is considered a full-time student, but only a 16 credit load at Smith will advance a student one full semester toward the degree.

Students who begin their semester abroad with a credit surplus may, with permission, enroll in a course that will not transfer back to Smith (journalism, marketing, communications, etc) as part of their full load. The course name and grade will be shown on the Smith transcript, but no credit will be earned. Contact the Assistant Dean for International Study if you wish to consider this option.

Students who study at institutions on the trimester or quarter system must complete either three terms over a full academic year, or the two terms that run from January to June, since a single quarter or trimester is not of equivalent duration to a semester at Smith. The list of programs approved for Smith credit notes for which terms study is approved for each institution or program.

Smith’s *Study Abroad Credit Application* asks how many credits you expect to earn in the system of your host institution and to list courses you wish to take abroad. It is a good idea to list alternate courses and course descriptions when having your faculty adviser approve your *Study Abroad Credit Application* (mark them clearly as such, so we know you understand the full load of the host country system), in case any are ultimately not offered or do not fit your schedule. If you are confused by the credit system at your host institution, consult the Office for International Study.

### **Locating Course Information**

In order to consider granting approval for courses taken abroad, you must submit course descriptions with your *Study Abroad Credit Application*. Locating course descriptions can sometimes be a challenge. Be prepared to correspond with the program representative or university staff, and even past Smith students who have attended the program. If a course description is completely unavailable, provide any information you do have in writing.

### **Independent Study / Directed Research**

An independent study course may be undertaken abroad only when it is part of a set curriculum of the program (such as SIT Study Abroad, School for Field Studies, etc). Students who wish to receive credit towards their major for an independent study course must receive pre-approval through completion of the *Independent Study for Major Credit Application*, submitted with the *Study Abroad Credit Application*. Upon the student's return, the faculty member who approved the application will assess the written work for the independent study, and will notify the Office for International Study of the assessment. The amount of credit awarded will be based upon the Smith Special Studies credit criteria for the applicable department. Students can request the *Independent Study for Major Credit Application* from the Assistant Dean for International Study.

### **Internships**

Smith does not award credit for internships themselves (the experience derived from time spent at an internship placement). Academic course work related to an internship placement may be approved for credit. In order to request approval of an internship course, a syllabus must be attached to the *Study Abroad Credit Application*. Students who wish to participate in an internship in which the course work does not meet Smith's academic standards and criteria for credit, may do so as an overload with the program's permission.

### **Key Rules for Planning Your Courses Abroad (See Appendix B for details.)**

- Students are required to either study the local language or take courses taught in the local language of the host country *each* semester abroad. This requirement applies to countries where another local language is spoken in most households and everyday places despite the use of English in government and formal education. For example, students must study French in Quebec, Twi in Ghana, Hebrew in Israel, Hindi in Delhi, and Zulu or Afrikaans in South Africa. (Cape Town students should consult with the Office for International Study for alternative requirements; there are no other exceptions.)
- Credit is only transferable for liberal arts courses similar to those in Smith's curriculum. Courses with a professional focus such as accounting, business, marketing, communications, or journalism will not transfer unless you receive, in advance, the written approval of a Smith department chair. Credit is not transferred for distance-learning or web-taught courses.
- Students are expected to take courses abroad that correspond to their academic level (generally 300 level or third year courses). If a student is interested in taking an introductory level course she must consult with the Assistant Dean for International Study.
- Students may not take a reduced load. The number of courses in which you enroll each term must constitute the normal (not minimum) full-time load at that institution, and all the courses should be in areas for which Smith credit is transferable. (Students with an excess of Smith credits before studying abroad who wish to take a course that will not transfer must consult with and gain approval from the Assistant Dean for International Study.)
- Credit will not be awarded for a course taken abroad that duplicates the content of a course for which Smith credit has already been earned.
- All examinations must be taken if they are required of host-country students and open to visiting students; alternative forms of assessment are not acceptable when the form of assessment used for host-country students is available.
- No extra credit is awarded for a full load carried over a longer period than a regular Smith semester (for example, 2 terms of study at Oxford, or a pre-session followed by a semester of study in Latin America). A maximum of 16 credits per semester or 32 credits per year is awarded for a full load of courses abroad.

- Major or minor credit is dependent upon department approval and it is the student's responsibility to check with the department chair to determine whether the course will satisfy departmental requirements.

Use care in selecting your courses. Since the nature of the curriculum can be very different in foreign universities, it is possible to end up taking a course that is too easy or too difficult for you, either of which will endanger transfer of the credit. Pitfalls include enrolling in a course that covers a substantial amount of ground already covered at Smith; taking a course that requires experience in areas of the field with which you are unfamiliar; and assuming that a "third-year course" is at the same level as a course you would typically take as a junior at Smith. In England, for example, most undergraduates take three-year degrees and reach university with a more specialized grounding than most American college students.

### **Assessment**

Understand that most foreign English-speaking universities expect students to work more independently than is customary in American colleges, and base a high proportion of the grade on a final exam. British and Australian students, for example, routinely underplay the amount of studying they do, and are also more experienced than Americans at writing polished examination answers in the allocated time. American students who misunderstand the system risk performing disastrously in the exam, and failing the entire course as a result.

Past students have warned against being lulled into a false sense of confidence that the coursework is light, and that you are fulfilling expectations by understanding what is covered in class, and being familiar with the written work, concepts, and events referred to in lectures. While most students pass all of their courses abroad, and many do very well, Smith students have also sometimes been shocked to discover that they have performed very poorly on, or have even failed, final exams that are the first and only graded assessment for a class. Frequently, the final assessment standard assumes that students have been independently reading, analyzing, and making connections in material according to their own academic interests in the topic in ways that go BEYOND what is covered in lectures. Be sure to ask good questions of your lecturers and fellow students about the expectations of final exams and papers. But remember that locals may take their own system for granted, and may not know the US system and what you are expecting.

### **Academic Rules**

Smith students are bound by the rules and procedures of the study abroad program or host university, including those for registration, course load, dropping and adding courses, and exercising any satisfactory/unsatisfactory grading option.

### **Transcripts and Grades**

At the end of your program, you are responsible for ensuring that the study abroad program or host university sends an official transcript to the Office for International Study. The transferred credits will appear on your Smith transcript with the name of the issuing institution, course titles, grades, and credit equivalencies. The courses can be counted toward the distribution requirements for Latin Honors. Grades earned on a program approved for Smith credit will not be calculated into the GPA or calculations for GPA-based honors. Grades earned on a Smith JYA program will be calculated into the GPA.

## STUDY ABROAD CREDIT APPLICATION

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Students must seek Smith's approval to study abroad by submitting a *Study Abroad Credit Application* or a *Smith JYA Application* for each program (two maximum) they wish to attend. Students must also apply directly to the study abroad program or host university for admission, except in the case of study on a Smith JYA program. Since study abroad programs and host universities can be competitive, and program application deadlines vary, students may apply directly to the program or university before obtaining Smith's approval to study abroad.

*Study Abroad Credit Applications* are due on February 15, 2010, for study on a program approved for Smith credit during either semester of 2010-2011. Credit applications for Spring 2010 study on the SITA, Puebla and PRESCHO programs have a special October 15, 2009 deadline. Late applications are not accepted.

*Smith JYA Applications* are due February 1, 2010 for study abroad for the 2010-2011 academic year. Students applying to a Smith JYA program should complete only the *Smith JYA Application*. Applications for the Spring term in Hamburg are accepted until October 15, and will be considered on a rolling basis until the program fills. Applications for the Spring 2011 term in Geneva will be accepted until October 15, 2010. Early application for the spring semester in Geneva or Hamburg is encouraged.

The *Study Abroad Credit Application* and *JYA Application* are only available online and must be typed. Once you have completed the application, ask your major adviser and the department study abroad adviser to review it and approve your Plan of Study. You are expected to discuss your plans with both advisers before the application stage, and your application should be fully complete when you ask for your advisers' signatures. If you seek credit toward a second major or a minor for any of the courses listed in your Plan of Study you must also discuss your plans, submit your application for review to the appropriate advisers and obtain the corresponding signatures.

Students will not receive approval to earn credit for study abroad in any of the following situations:

1. An Incomplete Smith *Study Abroad Credit Application*.
2. Failure to submit all related forms required by the College after a student receives initial approval.
3. GPA falls below 3.0 at any time prior to the semester or year of study abroad, or any incomplete work for a prior semester.
4. An unresolved credit shortage.
5. Unpaid College bills. The College will not advance tuition funds to study abroad programs on behalf of a student when outstanding balances are owed to the College.
6. Any current or pending Judicial Board or Academic Honor Board sanctions or academic probation at the time of application as well as when the program starts.

## APPLICATION TO A PROGRAM OR UNIVERSITY

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Students must also apply for admission to their chosen study abroad programs or host universities. It is not necessary to receive Smith's approval before applying to a program or university. The Office for International Study does not stock program or university applications. Students should contact the study abroad program or university staff and check websites for application instructions, forms, and deadlines. Students must assemble and mail program applications; the Office for International Study does not mail applications on behalf of students.

Typical study abroad program applications include the following:

- a personal statement
- a Smith transcript
- one or more letters of recommendation from faculty, addressed to the program or university
- a physical examination (which Smith's Health Services can perform)
- an "institutional approval" or "study abroad adviser approval" form in which the Office for International Study approves your plans and certifies that you are in good standing at Smith. This form should **not** be completed by a faculty member; bring it to the Office for International Study.

Due to the competitive nature of study abroad programs and host universities, meeting admission requirements does not guarantee acceptance into a program. For this reason, students are encouraged to choose a back-up program. Mark clearly on your *Study Abroad Credit Applications* which study abroad program or host university is your first choice and which is your second choice.

### **GPA requirements**

Most programs and universities set a minimum GPA for admission. A typical requirement is a 3.0 GPA (B average), but some universities and departments require a 3.3 or even as high as 3.7. Some programs are flexible if a GPA is only slightly below the requirement, especially if it is higher in courses related to the field of study, or you have strong letters of recommendation from your advisers. Do not assume that programs are swayed by assumptions of Smith's high quality; the programs Smith approves are taking most of their students from colleges and universities that are comparable to Smith.

### **Language requirements**

Programs where students study and complete academic work in the host country language usually require two years of college-level instruction or the equivalent. There are also many strong programs in diverse locations that do not have language requirements, such as SIT in Ghana, DIS in Denmark, CET in Vietnam, SITA in India, and Central European University in Hungary. The approved list annotates with an "E" programs whose courses are offered in English. All students, regardless of field of study, are strongly encouraged to look into programs in Africa, Asia, and Central and Northern Europe, where there are many English language program options.

### **Application deadlines and fees**

Check program application deadlines carefully and apply early. Most programs accept students on a rolling basis, which means they may fill well in advance of the application deadline. Students are responsible for application fees.

### **Housing**

Many programs offer more than one housing option. Options may include home stay (living and eating with a local family), dormitory housing with a meal plan, or self-catered apartments. A separate housing application may have to be submitted after the program application. Smith advises students to choose the option that provides the closest contact with the host culture and distance from other U.S. students. Living exclusively with US students, especially other Smith students, is strongly discouraged. Although the home stay option may seem intimidating at first, many Smith students return saying that the home stay was one of the most valuable aspects of their entire experience. It is also important to remember that many host families do not fit the mold of "parents plus children" or expect you to be home for dinner every night.

Students may NOT elect housing independent of the choices offered by and billed through the study abroad program or host university for reasons of safety, liability, administrative consistency, and reliability. This rules out apartment options students pay for independently, whether facilitated by the program or not, unless this is the only housing possible on that particular study abroad program.

## **Costs**

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### **What Students Pay and What Smith Pays**

All students studying abroad on a program approved for Smith credit (including Ada Comstock Scholars) are billed the Smith Comprehensive Fee (tuition, room and board). Smith will pay the tuition, room and board charges assessed by the study abroad program or host university. Please read *The Guide to Home School Fees* (Appendix A) which details which costs Smith covers and which costs are the responsibility of the student. Students must inform their parents and any other party responsible for payment of college bills of the Home School Fee policy for study abroad.

Students studying on a Smith JYA program in Florence, Geneva, Hamburg and Paris are also charged the Smith Comprehensive Fee. For details, see <http://www.smith.edu/studyabroad/smithprgmcosts.php>.

### **Funds provided by Smith directly to students**

- Food Stipends – for students in “self-catered” apartments or flats who cook for themselves, or for students with partial meal plans, based on program recommendations
- Housing Stipends – for students who are billed directly for housing. Smith students are required to use program-provided housing when available, and may NOT elect independent housing when program-provided alternatives are available.
- Transportation Stipends – based on actual expenses for students who must use public transportation to get from their accommodations to their classes.

### **Stipend Distribution**

All stipends will be issued by direct deposit to the student’s US bank account. Direct deposit can easily be set up by visiting the Controller’s Office and completing the corresponding paper work.

### **Expenses not covered by Home School Fees**

**International travel:** Students are responsible for the cost of travel to and from the study abroad program site. Students receiving financial aid may include travel costs in their financial aid application.

**Personal expenses:** Students are responsible for the costs of books and personal expenses associated with study abroad, which can include damage deposits for housing, cookware and linens, camping supplies, gym fees, and internet access.

**Fees for single rooms or upgraded accommodations:** Any fees for accommodation upgrades from standard housing abroad will be passed on to students by Smith.

**School breaks abroad:** Just as in Northampton, room and food expenses during vacations and breaks abroad are the responsibility of the student. Breaks abroad may be longer than at Smith, and travel back home will cost more as well, so students must plan ahead for the cost of vacation housing or travel. Students studying in the Southern Hemisphere for a US academic year (Semester II followed by Semester I) must plan to support themselves for up to three months between terms.

**Health insurance:** Students studying abroad (except on a Smith JYA program) can elect the Smith Student Health Plan, which does provide international coverage, or waive it in favor of another policy, including any policy offered by the study abroad program. Students must ensure that any alternate plan will provide adequate coverage in both the US and abroad. Students on a Smith JYA program are required to enroll in the health insurance policy offered by Smith.

### **Planning and Budgeting**

Planning and budgeting are critical. Airfare is a large expense that must be paid well in advance, and students should have funds available to purchase their air tickets 3 - 4 months before the program begins.

Students should also plan for any advance payments and refundable deposits (damage, security, etc) when applying to a program, which can range from \$300 to \$500 and may be required at the time of enrollment. Smith will pay or reimburse students for deposits that represent early payments, but students are responsible for refundable deposits.

Students who receive food stipends must be sure they understand how that stipend will need to be used. Is there a meal plan? When is the meal plan billed? How many of your daily meals are covered in your meal plan? Some meal plans are billed at the end of the term, and students must use their stipends to cover these expenses. Calculate how much of your stipend will remain after that cost, and then budget accordingly.

Read program information closely to find out whether meals during orientation, organized excursions and housing during vacation breaks are included or additional costs. Many students, especially those studying in Europe, find that a higher cost of living greatly increases their personal expenses. Personal travel, gifts and souvenirs will also add to costs.

Few countries allow visiting students to work, so carefully research visa regulations to find out whether you can work a part time job while abroad. Students are advised to work only a few hours per week and to take advantage all the other opportunities available abroad.

## FINANCIAL AID

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Smith students studying abroad are eligible for financial aid on the same basis as when they are studying in Northampton, with a few exceptions (see below). For questions about Smith Financial Aid related to study abroad, please contact Student Financial Services. Program application fees, incidental expenses for passports and visas, and additional expenses for vacation periods are not covered by financial aid awards.

The Office for International Study awards partial funding for airfare expenses to students with high financial need studying in places other than the UK or Ireland, and on programs other than DIS, SITA, Puebla, PRESHCO and AKP. Students need not apply; all students who are eligible will receive an airfare stipend approximately 2 months before the start of the program.

Exceptions: The Trustees Grant for Northampton Residents cannot be used for study abroad. Tuition Exchange can be used only on Smith JYA programs, and not for study on an approved program. Students who are dependents of Smith faculty or staff may receive a 60% tuition waiver to study on a Smith JYA or consortium program. For approved programs, the tuition waiver is 40%.

### Funding for Study Abroad

Every year Smith students successfully apply for study abroad scholarships and fellowships. Please consult Student Financial Services to discuss how an award will affect your Smith financial aid package and your bill. See the Student Financial Services outside aid page for additional information (<http://www.smith.edu/finaid/outaid.php>). It remains the student's responsibility to notify Student Financial Services and the Office for International Study of any outside awards that she receives.

Smith students have successfully won the following undergraduate study abroad fellowships and scholarships:

- David L. Boren Undergraduate Scholarship for language study abroad
- Killam Fellowship for study at a Canadian University
- DAAD Undergraduate Fellowship for study in Germany
- Gilman International Scholarship
- Bridging Scholarships for Study in Japan
- Sally Whitcher Awards (\$500 travel grants)

Study abroad program providers including IFSA-Butler, SIT Study Abroad, IES, and CIEE have scholarships and funding for students attending their programs; please check with your study abroad program or host university for scholarship opportunities. There are also many foundations that provide funding to students for study abroad. See [http://www.smith.edu/studyabroad/money\\_funding.php](http://www.smith.edu/studyabroad/money_funding.php) for details and additional possibilities.

## PREPARING TO LEAVE SMITH

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The Office for International Study will notify students by mail regarding approval of their *Study Abroad Credit Application(s)* and/or *JYA Program Application(s)*. Once students have been approved by Smith to study abroad, they must complete the following steps. Paperwork varies for students attending a Smith JYA program.

### Office for International Study

Complete and submit the following forms:

- A copy of your program acceptance letter
- *Program Deposit Form* and proof of payment
- *Participation Agreement for Smith Study Abroad* (requires parent/guardian signature)
- *Release and Hold Harmless Agreement* (requires parent/guardian signature)
- *Request for Approved Off-Campus Study Leave form*

## **Study Abroad Program**

- Confirm enrollment in study abroad program or host university; complete required paperwork.
- Notify the program or university that Smith College will be paying your tuition and related expenses. Bills should be sent to the Office for International Study, not your home.
- Designate the Office for International Study as the place your transcript should be sent.
- Notify any program you do NOT intend to attend that you are withdrawing your application.

## **Other Smith business**

- Complete any financial aid paperwork: If you will be away from Smith during a semester in which financial aid forms must be completed and signed, find out from Student Financial Services what will need to be done while you are abroad, such as giving power of attorney to a parent.
- Submit a *Direct Deposit Authorization Form* to the Controller's Office
- Resolve any problems with your student account: Study abroad approval (and ability earn Smith credit for study abroad) will be rescinded if your student account is not in good standing.

## **Enrollment status at Smith and Housing**

Once you submit the Approved Off-Campus Study form, your status in Banner will formally change to “study abroad leave”, and your course registration for any term you will be away will be inactivated. Any housing assignments will also be cancelled at that point.

## **Pre-departure Orientation**

All students must attend the required Pre-Departure Orientation. Important information about study abroad will be presented, and will be followed by country meetings where returned students are available for questions. Each JYA program will also have a mandatory Orientation session.

## **Changing Plans**

If you wish to switch semesters within the same academic year, a new or revised and re-signed *Study Abroad Credit Application* must be submitted for approval. If you have already been accepted into a study abroad program or university, you must also contact the program, which may or may not allow you to defer enrollment.

If you decide not to study abroad in the upcoming academic year, you must notify the Office for International Study in writing. An email message stating your decision to remain at Smith and the term you had intended to be abroad is sufficient. Once you have decided to stay at Smith your decision is final; you will not be able to reactivate your approval to study abroad. You may apply again to study abroad the following academic year.

## **Senior honors work, graduate school and scholarships**

Study abroad can open up new avenues of research that lead to an independent study or honors project in the senior year. It may also strengthen applications for graduate schools and scholarships. You are strongly recommended to investigate all these possibilities *before* departure; without planning ahead you will find it very hard to make all the necessary arrangements and meet deadlines at the beginning of your senior year.

Students interested in the health professions should consult Kevin Shea, Chair, Board of Pre-health Advisers. Students considering graduate school in other fields should consult the staff at the Career Development Office.

The Fellowships website (<http://www.smith.edu/fellowships>) has detailed information on postgraduate scholarships and grants. Watch for announcements of informational meetings about fellowships in the year before you study abroad.

## **PREPARING TO GO ABROAD**

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### **Passport**

If you do not already have a passport, apply for one as soon as possible. If you have a passport, make sure that it is valid for at least six months beyond your intended return to the U.S. For information about applying for a US passport, see: [http://travel.state.gov/passport/passport\\_1738.html](http://travel.state.gov/passport/passport_1738.html)

### **Visas**

A visa is a stamp in a passport given by a foreign government allowing the passport holder to remain in the country for a specified period of time for a specific reason. In most cases, student visas are required for study abroad. Obtaining a student visa is the student's responsibility. As soon as you know in which country you will study, begin researching visa requirements. Obtaining a visa can be very complicated and take up to six months, so research visa requirements early. Usually, you must apply at the embassy or consulate of that country nearest to your home. Your study abroad program or host university will provide advice and documentation for your visa application, but in most cases, the responsibility for obtaining the visa remains with the student.

### **Airfare Bargains**

Student travel agencies such as STA Travel (<http://www.statravel.com/>) and Student Universe (<http://www.studentuniverse.com/>) provide discounted airfare to students. STA allows a change of return date for a low fee. If your program organizes a group flight, find out if you are required to use it.

### **International Student Identity Card**

The ISIC is an internationally recognized card for students that provides student discounts on airfare and entry fees to cultural attractions such as museums, and supplementary health and accident insurance. All Smith students are covered by a Five College supplemental insurance policy for emergency medical evacuation and repatriation of remains, but you may be interested in the supplemental health insurance available from ISIC. Cards can be purchased online. Some programs provide ISIC cards to their students; check before you buy one.

### **Health and Safety**

Your pre-departure medical needs will depend largely on the countries you intend to visit. To find out what is currently recommended or required, look into the information provided by your program, and that is available from the Centers for Disease Control (<http://www.cdc.gov>), and the World Health Organization (<http://www.who.int/ith/>). You may also find Travel Health Online (<http://www.tripprep.com>) useful. Some countries require vaccination or negative-HIV certificates. Most programs will require you to provide a medical report, consisting of a doctor's physical exam and additional information from you on your medical history and any disabilities for which you are requesting reasonable accommodations.

Smith College Health Services can assist you in completing health forms, give physical exams, and administer vaccinations. They can help you decide about preventive medications for malaria, altitude sickness, allergies, diarrhea, etc. Make an appointment with Health Services early to be sure you have adequate time to complete any immunizations and provide results of any required tests to visa authorities. Some vaccinations may be available only from a travel clinic. There is one at UMass, and Pioneer Valley Travel Clinic is located in Northampton.

Inform yourself about conditions in the country where you are planning to study. The U.S. State Department issues consular information sheets summarizing entry requirements and health and safety issues for every country at [http://travel.state.gov/travel/travel\\_1744.html](http://travel.state.gov/travel/travel_1744.html). If you have concerns, your study abroad program can explain their safety policies and procedures. Very occasionally, safety concerns will cause a program to suspend operations. In most cases, however, the decision to go or not go is yours.

### **Health Insurance**

Students must have sufficient health and accident insurance for the entire time they are away, including any personal travel abroad before or after the program, and coverage outside of their country of study. Students must also have insurance coverage in their home country, so that if they return to their home country before the end of the program for any reason, they will have medical insurance coverage.

Students going abroad can enroll in the Smith student health insurance plan offered by Gallagher Koster which covers students abroad and in the US. Students studying abroad (except on a Smith JYA program and international students) can waive the coverage (just as they are able to do when studying in Northampton) in favor of another policy, including any policy offered by the study abroad program, as long as it provides adequate coverage in both the US and abroad. Students should contact their insurance company to ensure that coverage will be provided abroad, and make sure that they understand the nature of the coverage, including how to submit claims and how to contact the insurer from outside the US. See the Health and Safety pages ([http://www.smith.edu/studyabroad/health\\_insurance.php](http://www.smith.edu/studyabroad/health_insurance.php)) for things to consider when looking for an insurance policy.

Students studying on a Smith JYA program in Florence, Geneva, Hamburg or Paris are required to enroll in the Smith College health insurance plan offered by Gallagher Koster. International students are also required to enroll in the Smith College health insurance plan offered by Gallagher Koster

### **Adjusting to a New Culture**

Whether you will be away for a semester or a year, in a culture similar to or very different from your own, you are likely to experience some adjustment difficulties. The excitement of your first few days can be followed by frustration as you realize that the assumptions and rules by which the host culture operates are quite different from those that you are used to in such matters as conformity and individualism, privacy, social structure, formality, gender roles, and punctuality, as well as in more obvious areas such as food and dress. A simple business or social contact can leave you feeling helpless or awkward. Such feelings show that you are coming to grips with a new culture. You will need to employ what you learn in classes about that culture to help you understand its implicit social rules. Explore and analyze the unfamiliar with an open mind, and avoid the temptation to retreat into the company of other Americans. And just as you would resent being regarded as representative of everything American, don't generalize too quickly about your host culture based on your early experiences in the country. As you adjust to this new culture, you will find that you see yourself and your own culture differently. Also be prepared for another difficult phase: returning to Smith and the U.S.

The following books provide insight into coping with the challenges of adjusting to another culture, and can be found in the Office for International Study.

- B. Hansel, *The Exchange Student Survival Kit*
- L. R. Kohls, *Survival Kit for Overseas Living*
- T. J. Lewis and R. E. Jungman (eds.), *On Being Foreign: Culture Shock in Short Fiction*
- R. M. Paige and others, *Maximizing Study Abroad: Students' Guide to Strategies for Language and Culture Learning and Use*
- K. Wagner and T. Magistrale, *Writing Across Culture: An Introduction to Study Abroad and the Writing Process*
- W. W. Hoffa, *Study Abroad: A Parent's Guide*

Your program or Smith professors may also suggest additional books, both fiction and non-fiction, that will help you understand the culture in which you will be living and studying. Many foreign newspapers and magazines are available on the Web and at Neilson Library.

## **ARRIVING ABROAD AND FINALIZING REGISTRATION**

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### **Address Abroad**

Please inform the Office for International Study of your residential address and local phone number, using the online form at <http://www.smith.edu/studyabroad/forstudents.php>.

### **Changing Courses**

You may find that some or all of the courses you had pre-approved change once you begin the semester. The Smith Office for International Study will work with you to ensure that the new courses you choose are approved for Smith credit. Use the course change form to seek approval for new courses. <http://www.smith.edu/studyabroad/forstudents.php>. Contact the Office for International Study with any questions.

## **Appendix A**

### **Guide to Home School Fees**

All students studying abroad on a program approved for Smith credit (including Ada Comstock Scholars) are billed the Smith Comprehensive Fee (tuition, room and board), and receive the same need-based financial aid as for on-campus study.

For information about the cost of Smith's JYA programs in Florence, Geneva, Hamburg and Paris, see the JYA programs cost page at <http://www.smith.edu/studyabroad/smithprgmcosts.php>.

#### **1. Application Fees**

Students are responsible for paying study abroad program or host university application fees.

#### **2. Program Deposits**

Smith College will pay, or reimburse, program deposits required to confirm a student's enrollment in a study abroad program.

Smith will pay program deposits only after the Office for International Study has received the *Participation Agreement for Smith Study Abroad* and *Release and Hold Harmless Agreement* signed by the student and her parent/guardian, a copy of the program acceptance letter, *Program Deposit Form* and proof of payment, and a completed *Request for Approved Off-Campus Study Leave*. These forms are included with study abroad approval letter sent directly to the student. In instances when students have not yet submitted these forms, we recommend that students pay their own program deposits, and then submit documentation of payment to the Office for International Study for reimbursement.

The time required for Smith College to issue a check is often longer than the time available for students to confirm their program enrollment. In instances when timing is critical for holding their place in a program, we recommend that students pay their own program deposits, and then submit documentation of payment to the Office for International Study for reimbursement.

DO NOT PAY program deposits for the following study abroad programs: Boston University, CIEE, College Year in Athens, DIS, Duke University, IES, IFSA/Butler, Hamilton College in Spain, SIT Study Abroad, or School for Field Studies. Through a special arrangement, these programs directly bill Smith College for program deposits.

#### **3. Housing Deposits**

Smith College will pay, or reimburse, non-refundable housing deposits that are an advance payment of housing fees. Housing deposits that convert to damage or security deposits once the student arrives to take up residence are the responsibility of the student (see Damage Deposits).

The time required for Smith College to issue a check is often longer than the time available for students to accept their housing offers. In these instances, we recommend that students pay their own housing deposits and then submit documentation of payment to the Office for International Study for reimbursement. When timing is not critical, please bring or send a copy of your housing deposit bill to the Office for International Study for payment.

#### **4. Damage and Security Deposits**

Students are responsible for paying all damage deposits, security deposits, and other refundable deposits.

#### **5. Passports, Visas, and Immunizations**

Students are responsible for obtaining their own passports and any necessary visas and immunizations, and are responsible for paying all associated fees.

#### **6. Airfare**

Students are responsible for arranging their own transportation to and from the study abroad location and are responsible for paying all associated costs. Students on financial aid may include these costs in their Smith financial aid application.

#### **7. Orientation Sessions**

Most study abroad programs and host universities provide an on-site orientation. In rare instances when there is an additional fee for a required orientation, Smith College will pay the cost. Check with the Office for International Study before assuming that the additional expense will be covered.

## **8. Pre-Sessions**

Students are expected to take a full course load of credits while studying abroad. When pre-sessions are required to complete a full course load for a semester, or when they are a required component of the study abroad program, Smith College will pay the pre-session cost. In all other instances, students who elect to attend pre-sessions do so at their own expense.

## **9. School Breaks**

As in Northampton, room and food expenses during vacations and breaks abroad are the responsibility of the student. Students should plan ahead for the cost of vacation housing or travel while abroad, which will mostly likely be higher than in the U.S. because of distance from home, and because vacation breaks abroad tend to be longer than Smith breaks.

## **10. Tuition Payments**

Smith College pays all tuition costs required for a full course load of credits (equivalent to one semester or one year of study at Smith College) for study abroad programs.

Most study abroad applications request the billing address for payment. If a signature is required for the billing section, please come to the Office for International Study. The address to enter in the billing section is as follows:

Smith College  
Office for International Study  
Neilson Neon Archway  
Northampton, MA 01063

In most cases, study abroad programs will send tuition bills directly to the Office for International Study. However, programs may send tuition bills directly to students from time to time for a variety of reasons. Invoices for program fees that are the responsibility of the student (e.g. refundable deposits, group airfare) may also itemize tuition on the bill. Some institutions will send a copy of the tuition bill to students regardless of who is responsible for paying the bill. If you receive a tuition bill, please bring or fax a copy to the Office for International Study (fax: 413-585-4982), and be sure you understand the portion for which you are responsible.

## **11. Food and Housing Stipends**

Stipends are issued to students to cover the cost of food and housing when these items are not otherwise provided by the study abroad program. Stipends are issued twice per year, at the beginning of each Smith College semester. Students who are studying abroad for a full year will receive stipends at the beginning of each semester. Stipends are issued by direct deposit. Students must set up direct deposit to a US bank account with the Controller's Office before leaving campus. While stipends are issued as promptly as possible, they may not be received by students until their study abroad programs begin. Students are expected to be able cover their living expenses for the first two weeks of their study abroad program, and must plan accordingly.

### **A. Food Stipends**

Smith College pays for board during term time either by paying the study abroad program or host university directly or by providing a food stipend to students. When three meals per day are provided by the study abroad program, students do not receive a food stipend. When fewer than three meals per day are provided by the study abroad program, students are issued a food stipend for the remaining meals.

Food stipends are intended to cover reasonable food costs for purchasing groceries and preparing meals; they are not intended for the purchase of meals in restaurants. Food stipends are based on program recommendations and research about the actual cost of purchasing groceries in the study abroad location.

Food stipends are intended to cover food expenses only during the time when classes are in session; they do not cover food costs during vacation periods or semester breaks. Just as when students are in Northampton, meeting food expenses during school breaks abroad is the responsibility of the student.

Food stipends are not adjusted once the semester is underway (see Currency Exchange Rates). Students must budget their food stipend to last the entire semester.

### **B. Housing Stipends**

Smith College pays for housing during term time either by paying the study abroad program or host university directly or by providing a housing stipend to students. If students receive a housing stipend, then they are responsible for paying the housing bill issued to them by their residence or program.

In instances when students are given a choice of residence hall room options, Smith College will cover only the cost of the standard housing option, not upgraded options. Students may elect higher cost options (e.g. an en-suite or single room when that represents an upgrade, or housing closer to campus that is available at a higher charge than the university residence halls), but the student will be responsible for paying any additional cost. Supplemental housing charges assessed by the program or university for optional housing upgrades will be billed directly to the student.

Students who are directly enrolled at their study abroad institution must submit documentation of their housing costs (e.g. a copy of the accommodation offer or housing bill) to the Office for International Study before they will be issued a housing stipend.

Housing stipends are based on the currency exchange rate at the time of issuance. If the actual cost of paying the housing bill is greater than the amount of the stipend, then the student should submit documentation of the payment and actual cost to the Office for International Study. Smith College will then issue a housing stipend adjustment for the difference.

Students who receive housing stipends are expected to pay their housing bill as soon as it is presented to them. When the option is available, students are expected to make one payment for the total housing bill for the semester abroad, and not to pay in installments.

## **12. Transit Stipends**

Students who are housed beyond walking distance from campus may request a transit stipend for commuting by public transportation to and from classes.

Transit stipend requests must be received within a month after the study abroad term begins, and must document the actual cost of public transportation to and from classes, the number of trips made per week, and the number of weeks that classes are in session. Email requests to Susan Pouliot, Budget Assistant ([spouliot@smith.edu](mailto:spouliot@smith.edu)).

## **13. Currency Exchange Rates**

Stipends are issued in dollars using the exchange rate at the time of issue. Food and transit stipends are not adjusted for any currency fluctuations during the semester. Housing stipends may be adjusted for currency fluctuations. In instances when the value of the US dollar is declining against foreign currencies, we recommend that students convert their stipends into local currency as soon as possible.

## **14. Books and Personal Expenses**

Students are responsible for the cost of books and other personal expenses associated with the program of study abroad.

## **15. Health Insurance**

Students are responsible for the cost of their health insurance. Students studying on program approved for Smith credit can elect the Smith Student Health Plan which does provide international coverage, or waive it in favor of another policy, including any policy offered by the study abroad program. Students electing an insurance policy through their study abroad program or host university will be billed directly by the program for that coverage. Smith will pay insurance fees only when the coverage is mandatory for participation in the program.

## **16. Amenities**

Smith College will not issue stipends for incidental items or amenities, including but not limited to internet access, phone connections, computer facilities, gym facilities and household items such as pots and pans, cleaning supplies, and toilet paper.

Smith College cannot guarantee that students studying abroad will have access to services or amenities equivalent to those provided at the Northampton campus. Different universities and programs provide differing levels of service and convenience, and offer unique benefits not available to students in Northampton. These differences are what make an experience in another country distinctive.

## **Appendix B**

### **Credit Transfer Guidelines**

Credit earned on a study abroad program approved for Smith credit will be transferred according to the following rules.

#### **Pre-approval of Program**

Credit toward the Smith degree will be accepted for satisfactory academic work done at a foreign university or on a study abroad program only if the student has been pre-approved to participate and the student paid the Smith Comprehensive Fee while abroad. Approval will not be given retroactively.

#### **Course Changes**

You may find that some or all of the courses for which you were pre-approved change once you begin the semester. The Smith College Office for International Study will work with you to help ensure that the new courses you choose may be approved for Smith credit. To seek approval for new courses, use the course change form ([http://www.smith.edu/studyabroad/forstudents\\_coursechange.php](http://www.smith.edu/studyabroad/forstudents_coursechange.php)). Contact the Office for International Study with any questions.

#### **Full Course Load**

Students must take a full course load, as defined by Smith College, to receive credit equivalent to a semester or a year at Smith. The minimum number of courses required by a program or university may not be sufficient to earn 16 credits per semester from Smith. Any questions about the number of credits or courses that constitute a full load should be directed to the Office for International Study.

#### **Total Credit Transfer Limit**

Students studying abroad on program approved for Smith credit normally earn 16 Smith credits for one semester, or 32 Smith credits for a full year, for successful completion of a full load of courses abroad. (Smith JYA programs may have a different total credit amount.) In exceptional cases, with written permission of the program director abroad and approval of the Class Dean and the Office for International Study, students taking courses in excess of a normal load may earn a maximum of 20 credits per a semester.

#### **Courses Ineligible for Smith Credit**

A course taken abroad that duplicates the content of one for which you have already received credit at Smith may not count for degree credit unless explicitly approved by the appropriate Smith department chair.

Pre-professional courses such as most communications, speech, business, management, marketing, media, nutrition, library science, law, some journalism courses, and some computer science courses normally will not receive credit at Smith. Distance learning and internet-delivered courses are ineligible for transfer credit.

Performance courses will be awarded credit equivalent to their value at Smith (two credits for DAN and one credit for ESS). A maximum of 24 music performance, 12 dance performance, and 4 ESS credits can be counted toward the Smith degree; courses taken abroad that bring the student's total performance credits above these limits will not receive credit. Group performance courses (choir, orchestra, etc.) will not receive credit.

#### **Language Requirement Abroad**

Smith requires that students either study the local language of the host country or take courses taught in the local language of the host country *each* semester abroad.

#### **Credit for Independent Study / Directed Research**

An independent study course may be undertaken abroad only when it is part of a set curriculum of the program (such as SIT Study Abroad, School for Field Studies, etc). Students who wish to receive credit towards their major for an independent study course must receive pre-approval through completion of the *Independent Study for Major Credit Application*, submitted with the *Study Abroad Credit Application*. Upon the student's return, the faculty member who approved the application will assess the written work for the independent study, and will notify the Office for International Study with the assessment. The amount of credit awarded will be based upon the Smith Special Studies credit criteria for the applicable department. Students can request the *Independent Study for Major Credit Application* from the Assistant Dean for International Study.

#### **Credit for Internships**

Smith does not grant credit for internships, but will consider granting credit for course work associated with an internship. Students who wish earn credit for internship course work on a program approved for Smith credit must attach a course description and syllabus to the *Study Abroad Credit Application*.

**Grades and Academic Standing**

Grades for work completed on the Smith JYA programs in Florence, Geneva, Hamburg, and Paris are factored into the Smith GPA and calculations for Latin Honors. Grades for work completed on study abroad programs approved for Smith credit are recorded on the Smith transcript, but are not factored into the GPA or Latin honors calculations.

Low grades, failing courses or taking courses abroad without approval can result in academic probation and/or failure to make satisfactory progress toward the degree upon return to Smith. Any credit shortage due to unsuccessful completion of courses abroad must be made up through summer school or by arrangement with the appropriate Class Dean.

**Latin Honors Distribution Requirement**

Courses taken abroad may be counted toward the distribution requirement for Latin Honors. The first semester of an introductory language does not count toward the foreign language distribution requirement unless it is followed by the second semester of that language.

**Academic rules abroad**

Smith students are bound by the rules and procedures of the study abroad program or host university, including those for registration, course load, dropping and adding courses, and exercising any satisfactory/unsatisfactory grading option.

**Rescinding Off-Campus Study Status**

Students on two-semester programs considering returning after one semester should see “Rescinding a Leave” on the Class Deans website (<http://www.smith.edu/classdeans/leave.php>). Students wishing to rescind their Study Abroad Leave should notify the Office for International Study and their Class Dean in writing. If a student rescinds her study abroad leave in order to register for classes in Northampton, that decision will be binding, and she will not be eligible to have off-campus study status reinstated.

Leave may be rescinded until the first day of classes each semester, however, the student is responsible for any non-refundable fees and deposits already paid to the study abroad program or host university on her behalf. The student is also responsible for contacting Housing to request a room.

A student who withdraws from her study abroad program or host university after the program has started is responsible for any non-refundable fees and withdrawal fees charged by the study abroad program, and may not return to Smith that semester, if classes have already begun at Smith.

**Student Evaluations of Study Abroad Programs**

All students are required to submit an evaluation of their study abroad program or host university to the Office for International Study at the conclusion of the program. Transcripts will not be forwarded to the registrar’s office for posting until the evaluation is received by the Office for International Study.

## **Appendix C**

### **Exceptions and Petitions**

Students are expected to meet all eligibility requirements listed in these guidelines, and to select study abroad options from among the broad offerings on the list of Study Abroad Programs Approved for Smith Credit. Students are eligible to study abroad once, for a maximum of two semesters abroad.

Exceptions to these rules are made only rarely, and only for exceptional reasons. Exceptions will be considered only in response to a written petition submitted with a *Study Abroad Credit Application* by the application deadline. Below are the areas most commonly asked about by students, and the procedures for petitioning for an exception.

#### **1. Not meeting 3.0 GPA requirement**

The College does not normally approve *Study Abroad Credit Applications* of students who do not have a 3.0 GPA at the time of application. Students who do not meet the 3.0 GPA requirement at the time of application, and who have a well developed academic plan for studying abroad that builds on previous coursework at Smith, may petition the Faculty Committee on Study Abroad for consideration of their *Study Abroad Credit Application*. In the past, students with a GPA that was slightly below 3.0 have successfully petitioned. To begin this process, schedule a meeting with a Dean in the Office for International Study at least one month in advance of the application deadline to discuss your academic record and proposal for study abroad, and to obtain petition instructions. Petitions should be submitted with completed *Study Abroad Credit Application* by the regular application deadline. Petitions will be evaluated by the Committee on Study Abroad.

#### **2. Programs Not on the Approved List**

Students are expected to select study abroad options from among the broad offerings approved by Smith College. Students who have a compelling academic reason to pursue study on a program not on the approved list may petition. Students wishing to petition must schedule a meeting with the Assistant Dean for International Study to discuss whether a petition for that program might be considered, and obtain a petition form. Students should also discuss their plans with faculty members in the appropriate department.

Petitions for programs beginning in fall 2010 are due November 1, 2009, and petitions for programs beginning spring 2011 are due February 15, 2010, with completed *Study Abroad Credit Applications*. Students must also submit a *Study Abroad Credit Application* for a program on the approved list, in the event that the petition is not approved.

Programs will be evaluated by the Committee on Study Abroad on the strength of the academic offerings and their match with the student's goals, consistency with Smith academic standards, and arrangements for housing, health, and support services, and other factors as relevant. Petitions are generally not approved for programs in countries where Smith JYA programs are located (France, Germany, Italy and Switzerland).

#### **3. Study Abroad in Two Locations**

Students are expected to study abroad in one location for one or two semesters. Approval is NOT normally granted for study in two locations for the following reasons:

- Maximum cultural adaptation takes time to develop; spending a full year abroad at a single location is what the College supports if the student has a full year to devote to study abroad.
- Adjusting to a new university and a new country is challenging; changing locations repeats these social and emotional hurdles, potentially at the expense of time spent capitalizing on initial adjustment and deepening cultural immersion on a year-long program.
- Research shows that a significant part of study abroad learning takes place after departure from the host country, as students reflect on and react to the impact of their experience. This strong after-effect can compromise the ability to fully participate in a second program, or conversely, the second program can prevent a student from fully realizing the fruits of the first program.

Only in truly exceptional circumstances does the Committee on Study Abroad give permission for study on two separate semester programs over the course of a year, or in two subsequent years. If you think you can make a strong case for the viability and academic value of two separate programs, be sure that your advisers understand and approve of your plans for both semesters. You are also strongly advised to discuss your plans in detail with a Dean in the Office for International Study.

Students with compelling academic reasons may request permission to study in two different locations by submitting a petition letter with a *Study Abroad Credit Application* for each program by February 15, 2010. Petitions for a second program will not be considered after this deadline.

## THE OFFICE FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDY

The Office for International Study is dedicated to encouraging you to connect your Smith education to the wider world. We urge you to explore the many opportunities for study abroad!

The Office for International Study advises students about term time study abroad that is undertaken for credit toward the Smith degree for a period equivalent to one or two Smith semesters. Our responsibilities include the following:

- advising students in the choice of a program
- approving students for study abroad participation
- serving as a contact and resource for students studying abroad, from departure to reentry
- monitoring the quality of programs and institutions to which the College sends students
- maintaining a library of programs, evaluations, and other resources
- organizing informational and discussion meetings

### Office Location and Hours

The Office for International Study is in the Neilson Neon Archway, off the outdoor passageway lit by the neon sculpture. The office is open from 9:00 to 5:00, Monday through Friday.

### Resource Room

Students are welcome to use the Resource Room any time the office is open. The Resource Room is often staffed by a student adviser. The resource room contains catalogs and brochures for most of the programs on the approved list, and a computer work station for accessing up-to-date program information. In addition, there are evaluations from past students, organized by program and by major, and lists of students currently studying abroad and those abroad last year.

### Advising

Students planning to study abroad must attend a General Study Abroad Information Session, held each Monday at 4:00 pm in the Resource Room. After attending a general info session, students may seek individual advising appointments with a Dean for International Study. Drop-in advising hours are Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursdays, from 2-4. Students may also call to schedule an appointment at another time.

### Staff

Margaret Zelljadt, Acting Associate Dean for International Study  
Leslie Hill, Associate Dean for International Study  
Lisa Chappell, Assistant Dean for International Study  
Ashley Krause, Administrative Coordinator  
Susan Pouliot, Budget Assistant

### Contact

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