

Indiana University-Purdue University Fort Wayne

Study Abroad Checklist

Major Dates for Studying Abroad

Dates are important when...

- Being eligible to apply
- Programs may be competitive and not everyone who applies will be accepted.
- Receiving financial aid
- Setting up housing, often first-come first-serve
- Making travel arrangements, the earlier you buy the cheaper it may be
- Asking for letters of recommendation
- Obtaining a passport and visa on time
- Transferring back credits and grades in time for the next semester

These dates are approximate and not true for every program. Dates also vary from region to region as some universities operate on different semester programs. Please pay attention to program dates as you research and start to make your decisions.

- **Academic Year Program Dates: Around 8 months September–June**
 - Deadlines for applications: Feb 15–April 1
- **Fall Semester Dates: Around 4-5 months September–December**
 - Deadlines for Applications: Feb 1–March 1
- **Spring Semester Dates: Around 4-5 months January–May**
 - Deadline for Application: September 1
- **Summer Session Dates: Between 3 weeks and 2 months May–July**
 - Deadline for Application: February 1– March 1
- **Scholarship Application Dates–March 1**
- **FASFA Priority Deadline–March 1**



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Inside this issue:

Picking a program	2
Pre-departure	3-4
During the Program	5
Upon Return	6

See the following charts for a checklist to study abroad.



This is a comprehensive but not all encompassing list of major things to think about during your process, from picking a program to returning home.

Remember - This office and your program coordinators will

help you with the process and host a pre-departure orientation meeting. But, you are always welcome to stop by or make an appointment at any time to ask questions.

Study Abroad Checklist

Picking a program

1 Year Before	Description	Resources	✓
Start thinking about where and when you want to go	Decisions: Language, Type of program, Credits needed, Area of the world, Host University, Internship possibilities, cost, living situation: dorm or host family	IPFW Study Abroad Getting Started IU or Purdue Program Websites General Search engines like: StudyAbroad IIEPassport or GoAbroad	
	Research requirements of the program : classes, status, language ability, GPA	Read reviews and talk to previous participants.	
Talk with your Academic Advisor	Discuss classes needed, ability to transfer credits, timing of program, suggestions of where to go for career prospects	Use your BINGO sheet, myBlueprint, and Program course descriptions. Refer them to the advisor page .	
Talk with others	Seek out students and teachers who have already studied abroad, ask for their advice and decision-making process	Talk to the Global Mastodons or ask your program for previous participants	
Talk with your family	Emotional and Financial support is important	Direct them to our Parents page	
Apply for a passport	Allow at least 8 weeks for processing, cost \$130	State.gov Passport Page	

1 Semester Before	Description	Resources	✓
Compare Programs, then choose	Consider costs, credits, place, travel possibilities, time	Use our program comparing document	
Apply through the OIE Office	Fill out the IPFW Study Abroad Application	Meet with the IPFW study abroad advisor	
Apply for financial aid	Figure out how to cover the costs	Meet with the financial aid office to see how current scholarships apply.	
	Apply early for scholarships, grants, and loans, March 1st is a common deadline Don't forget to complete the FASFA by Feb 1	Research scholarships listed through the program website or our Scholarship Pintrest board	

At least 6 months before	Description	Resources	✓
Ask for letters of recommendation	You may need recommendation letters for your application and you need to give people at least 6 weeks notice	Advice on asking for a letter through emails or better, in person .	
Gather transcripts	Proof of status or requirements may be necessary	IPFW Office of the Registrar	
Apply for the program by due date	Apply directly for the program while also remain working with IPFW. Most common dates: Year/Fall: March; Spring: September, Summer: March	Find the information on a brochure/ website or contact the program coordinator	
Obtain a visa	Cost varies from \$40–\$150 depending on country , can take 3-6 weeks	Use the host country's embassy page—find more info hereook through the State Department's Country Specific Information to find information about your destination.	

Pre-departure

2-4 Months Before	Description	Resources	√
Finalize credit transfer	You must have classes tentatively approved before studying abroad, by both the department that awards the credit <i>and</i> your advisor.	bring course descriptions to see how credits will transfer and what requirements you still need to fill. Course Approval Form	
Optional: Apply for International Student ID Card (ISIC)	Provides discounts such as traveling, hostels, museums, and more.	STA website	
Begin researching places to travel	Some travel may take advanced planning like purchasing a Euro Rail pass	Use sites like lonelyplanet, Frommer's, Trip Advisor, Fodor's, etc. Purchase a book such as <i>Culture Shock!</i> about your host country for great information about travel, customs, and other great information; The 13 best online travel guides . Check out our Pinterest Page	
Prepare finances	Apply for a credit card that can be used worldwide, give someone access to your accounts in the states	About.com finance advise	
	Plan a budget that will give you enough money, and a little extra for the duration of your trip	Use the program brochure or information for idea of costs, talk with the coordinators and returning students	
Stay Safe	Register your trip through the US embassy through the Smart Traveler program	Check the Department of State Travel website for travel tips and information including travel warnings	
Purchase tickets	Budget \$1500-2,000. If you don't have the cash now, try STATravel Book Now pay later	Pinterest board for purchasing tickets tips	
2 -4 weeks before	Description	Resources	√
Learn about the country's language and culture	You will be more prepared and experience less culture shock if you know about your countries customs before you arrive. Knowing a little of the local language such as hello, excuse me, please, and thank you can go a long way	Database of cross-cultural information . Information on dress, style, gestures, etc. Advice and information on over 54 countries for essential etiquette while traveling Country Profiles , customs, culture, and etiquette	
Learn about culture shock	There will be points where it is hard to adjust to your new culture.	Read more about culture shock .	
Get a physical (recommended)	It is important to be in good health before you depart, make sure you have enough prescription medicine and contact lenses to last		
Notify your bank of what countries you will be traveling to	If there is suspicious/ uncommon activity, your bank may cancel your card	You can call your local bank and they will tell you who to contact.	
Attend the pre-departure meeting at the International Office	This is important because it is a reminder about regulations and advice for your trip	There are required IPFW pre-departure meetings Your program may also require you to travel to that university for a meeting (in Bloomington for example).	
Prepare how you will communicate	Research if you can use your cell phone abroad or decide if you will purchase a new one either here or once you arrive.	Studyabroad.com cell phone tips USA Today travel tips with phones	

1 week before	Description	Resources	✓
Make 3 copies of your documents such as credit card, passport, visa, and health insurance	Carry one copy with you in your carry-on, and leave one with your family, and one in your checked bags	You may make copies in the Office of International Education	
Pack for your trip	Research weather and the types of activities you will be doing. Are there any parts of the program where you will need to dress up? Will you be going to a beach? Will you be hiking a lot?	Studyabroad.com packing list: Journey Woman : Packing advice by country See more packing advice on our Pinterest Board Packing and planning .	
Bring a gift for your host family or local student that may help you	This is a great way to make a first impression. Common gifts may be something from your local city like your family's favorite food or wine, a T-shirt or hat from your university or favorite sports team, or a craft of someone you know	Goabrod.com tips for gift giving	
Research electrical adaptors needed	You may not be able to charge a laptop when you arrive. You may just want to purchase a few items like a hairdryer after you arrive	StayOnline.com International Standards Reference Sheet	
Convert dollars to local currency	Bring around \$100 in local currency. You will need money upon arrival for transportation and food	It is best to go to a local bank with enough time for them to convert some money. If you wait until you are at the airport or in the host country, you will be charged fees	

The night before	Description	Resources	✓
Get a good night's sleep	You may be traveling for a long time and experience anxiety before and upon arrival so it is important to sleep well the night before		
Pack a carry-on bag	This should include your copies of the documents, a change of clothes, basic toiletries, emergency contact information, any cash, credit cards, travelers checks and valuables. These items should not be packed in checked luggage.	Be sure you can easily carry it yourself. Don't forget about airport regulations like the height and weight restrictions or that liquids must be 3 oz. TSA Traveler information	
Plan on arriving at the airport at least 3 hours ahead of flight departure	If flights are delayed, be sure to notify the person who is waiting for you.		
Know how you will be traveling from the airport to your school or host family.	Know a company or bus/train line if someone is not picking you up.		



During the Program

Upon arrival	Description	Resources	J
Notify family at home that you arrived safely	They will be worried about you and waiting for your call, text, email.		
Attend orientation sessions	This is important because you will be learning about necessary aspects of the program, health and safety guidelines, regulations, getting around, and meeting other new classmates and coordinators.		
Be as safe as possible.	Your host country is probably not like Indiana, you cannot leave a bag or possessions unattended. Be careful in groups where pick-pockets may target.	StudyAbroad.com Safety Tips for Women More Safety Tips	
Connect with other new students	Creating a support group right away is important, they know what you're going through	Try Meetup.com to find events in your area.	
Embrace the differences	Try to assimilate to the new culture and be careful about not being too negative.	Read more about Diversity Abroad and Inclusion	
Stay in touch	Description	Resources	J
Download Skype	This is a great way to stay in touch and communicate with friends and family and FREE!A video is worth a thousand pictures, right?	skype.com	
Write a travel blog	Friends and family can see your pictures and read your thoughts on the trip. Diaries are great ways to remember your adventure	Wikihow How to write a Blog Blogs.com Top 10 Blogs IPFW Study Abroad Pintrest Board Travel Blogs	
1 month before the end of the program - Planning for your return	Description	Resources	J
Register for the next semester's classes	It is best to have an idea of how you will register online and what classes you are going to take before you depart	Pay attention to deadlines Fall–April Spring/Summer: October	
Be sure transcripts will be transferred back properly	If the next semester's classes are dependent on the classes you take abroad - you want to be sure the transcript will arrive in time for your advisor	You academic advisor and your study abroad advisor are here to help	
Bring cash to the airport with you.	You may need more local currency in the event of a layover		
Bring small gifts for your friends and family	Possible gifts: small souvenirs or your favorite treats		
Read about reverse culture shock	You have changed, and it is likely that others have changed while you were gone.	CIEE Brochure: Ready for re-entry	

Upon return

Within one- two days	Description	Resources	√
Notify your host family or close local friend that you arrived safely	Send a thank you card for their help in your experience	Try sending a picture as a postcard	
One week after return	Description	Resources	√
Reverse Culture shock Reentry may be difficult	You will have to re-evaluate and resettle into your old life. Your job, friends, and family may not understand the experiences you had	Columbia Study Abroad Coming home Quick Tips	
Meeting with other students	Description	Resources	√
Be a mentor to future study abroad students	You are one of the most valuable people to talk to, because you just lived it.	Be an Global Mastodon ambassador for our office and your program	
	Help at the IPFW programs and events	We will need help with study abroad fairs, informational sessions, or pre-departure meetings	
Seek out IPFW Exchange and International Students	You know what it is like to study in a foreign country or you may be craving a bit of foreign culture. These students would love to spend time with you.	Join the International Student Association, come to our Coffee Fridays, or English conversation hours.	
Make a photo album to share your pictures	You will want to talk about your trip, and your friends and family want to hear! The easiest way is to let them thumb through pictures while you talk.	This is one option to make a quick online book	
One month after	Description	Resources	√
Update your resume	Share the experiences with potential employers of how your trip strengthened your skills	IPFW How to market your International Experience Studyabroad.com tips to showcase your experience IPFW Study Abroad Pintrest Career Board	
Stay in touch with your new friends or family abroad	This is an important way to stay connected to your experience. Plus, you may get to go back one day!	Use skype, facebook, or other networking sites for easy communication. Send greeting cards or pictures of something you talked about while abroad.	
Follow up with your academic advisor and the Study Abroad advisor to ensure credit transfer.	You need to get credit for the work you completed abroad, this may make a difference on you graduating on time or meeting prerequisites for the next semester's courses.	Bring course descriptions, syllabi, and other course materials to help verify credit transfers.	