

Study Abroad Guide for Academic Advisors

Global Engagement Office (GEO)

A. What types of study abroad programs are available to students?

For our traditional semester abroad programs, students have 250+ College-approved options across 60+ countries. Students have even more options if they decide to pursue a summer abroad program. Although the Director of Global Engagement can help to guide students, they will need to take initiative when exploring programs that are going to fit their needs.

SEMESTER PROGRAMS

There are two types of semester programs available to students who wish to study abroad:

Exchange Programs* and *Direct/Direct-Enroll Programs

Exchange Programs:

- In an Exchange Program, our students exchange spots with international students whose institutions are a part of the exchange network called ISEP (short for International Student Exchange Program).
 - The student pays their regular Lake Forest College tuition, our standard room rate, and our meal plan (they are essentially paying for the spot for an incoming exchange student). In addition, there is an ISEP exchange fee that can vary from \$500-1,000 depending on the program location.
 - This additional fee includes their international health insurance as well as the ISEP administrative fee.
 - Because all exchange students are paying for a spot at their home institutions (tuition, housing, meals) and trading spots with another student, all students will receive some form of housing and meal benefits at their host institution.
 - For example: An LFC student studying on the exchange program at the University of Chester in England would have a dormitory room provided for them upon arrival as well as given a meal stipend to cover 19-21 meals per week for the whole semester (paid by the outgoing Chester student). The Chester student who arrives to LFC would have

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a standard room provided in one of our Res Halls as well as the LFC meal plan (paid for by our LFC student).

- Besides an annual membership fee to be a part of the ISEP exchange network, exchange programs do not cost the College money to have students participate on an exchange program so there are no College budgetary limitations.
- **Exchange Limitation:** We must maintain a balance of exchange students. For instance, if we send 15 of our students on exchange, the College needs to accept 15 incoming exchange students.
 - For this reason, there is a limit on how many students can participate on an exchange program per semester due to both limitations in available rooms on campus as well as course availability.

Direct/Direct-Enroll Program:

- For these programs, our students directly enroll into a study abroad program at a host university or study abroad academic center.
 - The student pays their regular Lake Forest College tuition, but other costs to the student can vary depending on the program. The billable cost (the amount that will be posted to the student's LFC account in addition to our tuition) can vary from \$2,500-\$8,000.
 - The variability is due to multiple factors, such as what is included in the program (meals, excursions, etc.) as well as the cost of living at the host location (housing is more expensive in Geneva than Chiang Mai).
 - These programs come with their own tuition cost, but instead of the student paying LFC tuition AND the program's tuition, the College covers the program tuition. These program tuition costs can vary from \$5,000-\$25,000.
- **Direct Limitation:** We can only send a limited number of students on Direct/Direct-Enroll programs - the number depends on GEO's budget that year and the demand by students. Also, we have caps on certain programs that have extreme high tuition cost, such as the Oxford Study Abroad Programme (OSAP), where we only approve 1-2 students per year to apply to the program due to the program's high tuition charge.
 - For example: We can send three students to the American College of Greece for the same cost as one student to OSAP.

With both Exchange and Direct/Direct-Enroll Programs, there are a variety of programs that offer internships, research opportunities, service learning; however, these opportunities are far more commonly found with Direct/Direct-Enroll programs.

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SUMMER PROGRAMS

Summer programs abroad are also available. There are both 'study abroad' and 'intern abroad' programs available for summer, and **most programs range from 3-8 weeks**. For most intern abroad programs, students have the option to earn academic credit for the internship.

- Summer programs are Direct/Direct-Enroll programs, and there are currently no exchange summer options.
- The program cost can vary from \$4,000 - \$8,000.
 - This cost covers tuition, housing, excursions, international health insurance, and on-site support staff.
 - Most summer programs do not include meals. The main exception being that if the housing is a homestay, which usually provides 10-15 meals per week.

NON-APPROVED PROGRAMS

Not all study abroad opportunities are College-approved. All approved partner programs are listed on our website.

- If a student is interested in a semester program that is not a College-approved program (e.g., Semester at Sea), then the student must withdraw from the College for the term they will be abroad and then re-apply to the College in order to return the following term. **Since they are withdrawn, they cannot register with the rest of their on-campus classmates** and often have trouble finding courses when they get re-admitted after the unapproved program has concluded.

B. How do I advise my students about study abroad?

As soon as a student expresses interest, the academic advisor should:

- explain any department limitations for courses abroad.
- determine whether the student needs any specific courses while abroad to stay on track to graduate.
- discuss whether there are certain semesters that work better for the student's academic progress (e.g., so they wouldn't miss any core courses).
- ask the student to think about what they want from a program in addition to academics (e.g., level of support offered, volunteer opportunities, internship, etc.).
- require the student to meet with the Director of Global Engagement to learn more about the program offerings and procedures.

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- reinforce that they read and respond to emails from the Director of Global Engagement and to ask questions in a timely manner.

Please keep in mind that **studying abroad satisfies the FFC Experiential Learning (FFC-EL) requirement (FFC-EL)**, provided the program is College-approved and has a duration of at least 3 weeks. Upon their return from abroad, students will submit their written reflection to the Director of Global Engagement, which is the final component needed to satisfy the FFC-EL requirement.

Courses:

Students are responsible for ensuring that they enroll in the appropriate credits/courses. To assist in this process, GEO and the Registrar's Office provide a **Credit Guide** and a **Course Approval Form** [[both linked on Faculty page of GEO website](#)] to help the students and advisors with planning.

Important for advisors and students to keep in mind:

- There are multiple different credit systems (Standard US, ECTS, UK, etc.). **For most programs, students need to take 5 courses to bring back a full 4.0 LF credits.** It is extremely important to reference the credit guide (available on [GEO faculty page](#) and sent to students during the process) when registering for courses abroad.
- With a few exceptions, programs tend to not offer the exact same courses every semester and many programs do not post the intended semester courses until a month or two before the semester starts.
- Students are encouraged to look at previous semester course lists for their program. If students have difficulty locating these lists, they should notify the Global Engagement Office.
- GEO is building a pre-approved course list for numerous programs that students and advisors can use when planning, but this project is still in the works.

The LFC Course Approval Form

This form (available on [GEO faculty page](#) and sent to students during the process) provides the Registrar's Office with information about how to classify the abroad courses what requirements they satisfy when transferred back to the College.

- Students are encouraged to list courses they are interested and include at least 3-5 backup courses, which might require completing multiple sheets of the LFC Course Form.

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- We require students and advisors to submit this form before students register so they know beforehand how these courses will count when transferred back to the College.
- Early planning and flexibility are keys to success.

Although GEO and the Registrar's Office are always willing to help students and advisors, please understand that our capacity is limited, especially when requests are made at the last minute. **Advance planning and early communication are appreciated.**

C. When are students able to study abroad?

SEMESTER PROGRAMS

For our traditional semester abroad programs, the earliest semester that students can study abroad is their 2nd semester of their sophomore year. Most students, however, study abroad in their junior or senior years.

- While students are eligible to apply to study abroad for their 2nd semester of their sophomore year, preference is given to juniors and seniors if the office is not able to approve all eligible applications due to the limitations listed earlier in the guide.
- For transfer students, students must be on campus at least one semester before their intended off-campus program.
- The latest semester that students can complete a semester abroad is their final semester prior to commencement.
 - If a student studies abroad during their final semester, their degree will be conferred at a later date. Most students who study abroad during their final spring will have their degree conferred the following summer, but there is a chance that their degree could be delayed until the following fall.
 - Conferral date depends on the specific program and how quickly the partner institution can send the student's transcript to Lake Forest College.

SUMMER PROGRAMS

For summer abroad programs, the earliest summer that students can study abroad is the summer following their first year. We allow this early abroad experience because summer programs can offer more support and structure than semester programs.

The latest summer that students can participate in a study abroad program is the summer following their senior spring.

- If a student has already satisfied their major/minor requirements, AAB approval is not needed for summer, but the student's graduation will be delayed.

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D. How many study abroad experiences are allowed?

Students are eligible to apply for two semesters abroad; however, one of two semesters must be an Exchange Program and approval for a 2nd semester abroad is dependent on the Global Engagement Office's resources.

There is no such limit on summer programs.

E. What are the application deadlines?

The College's semester study abroad application is due about one year in advance of the intended semester the student plans to go abroad. The summer application is more flexible and is due the spring directly before the intended summer.

Specifically, the deadlines for GEO Application (i.e., the College's internal application) are:

- Fall Deadline – Dec 1 of year prior
- Spring Deadline – April 1 of year prior
- Summer – March 1 of same year, but can be flexible

No late applications are accepted for semester programs, but we do accept late applications for summer programs on a case-by-case basis.

F. What is involved in the application process?

The application process begins with the College's internal application (i.e., the GEO Application) within [our study abroad portal](#). From the perspective of a faculty member or academic advisor, the GEO application requires two forms: (a) an advisor approval form and (b) a faculty reference form.

- In the application system, students select their academic advisor and choose a faculty member as a reference. They can choose the same person for both, which means a faculty member will need to complete these two distinct forms.

If the student's GEO application is approved:

The Global Engagement Office sends a 'GEO Decision Email' that details which program(s) from the student is approved for the next steps, as well as other important information for the student to keep in mind (passport, visa, etc.).

The programs themselves have their own independent application process and procedures that students must follow. GEO has no involvement in or access to these program-specific

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applications; however, GEO staff can act as a liaison between students and program staff if there are questions or issues with the program's application.

G. What must international students know about the study abroad process?

International students need to keep the following in mind:

- F-1 students = full-degree seeking international student (i.e., seeking LFC degree).
 - The Office of International Student Support (ISS) oversees F-1 international students.
 - These students should connect with ISS for visa-related questions (about their U.S. visa, not their study abroad visa) and should keep the following in mind:
 - Make sure their F-1 visa (and passport) will be valid for re-entry to the U.S.
 - U.S. citizens may not need visas for certain programs, but F-1 students may need one based on their country of citizenship, or vice-versa.
 - F-1 students can study “abroad” in their home country, but it must be on an exchange program.
- J-1 students = international exchange student (i.e., temporarily at LFC).
 - The Global Engagement Office oversees these J-1 international students.
 - These students should first connect with GEO with any questions about off-campus opportunities.

G. What should students know about the financial side of study abroad?

Students need to review both the [Financials page](#) on GEO's website, as well as Financial Aid's [information on Off-Campus Programs](#).

Financial Aid

Financial aid can apply for semester programs but not for summer programs. The Global Engagement Office cannot provide students with financial aid guidance but can provide an estimate of what students can expect to pay for their program(s) of interest.

- If students have questions about their aid, they need to connect with financial aid office (finaid@lakeforest.edu).

Study Abroad Scholarships

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The Global Engagement Office can provide guidance on applying to study abroad scholarships, but it is the *student's responsibility to research and complete the application process*.

- Program Scholarships: Most programs have their own scholarships, both for Semester & Summer programs.
- Other Scholarships: There are some external scholarships, such as the Gilman Scholarship, the Boren Scholarship, Freeman Asia Scholarship, and the Fund for Education Abroad; but please note that these scholarships are mostly only available for US citizens or US permanent residents.
- LFC Donor Scholarships: Thanks to some very generous donors, the College has multiple study abroad scholarships that it can award for semester programs.
 - Students do not have to apply for these scholarships.
 - Almost all internal scholarships have the requirement to be awarded to high financial need students.
 - Decisions of awards disbursement are made between the Office of Financial Aid & GEO.

Working abroad

Most students are not legally able to work abroad due to visa restrictions imposed by the host country. Even if they can work legally in host country, job opportunities are limited and not guaranteed.