

STUDY ABROAD HANDBOOK

Office of Learning Abroad
and International Academic Programs

ERES TAVOR DE
DONDE HABLAN DIOS
Y SE AJUSTAN LA
P.J. RIGOBERTO COR
MISIONE

OS,
EGUNDOS
DOS
G.S.





WHY SHOULD I STUDY ABROAD?

Deciding to study abroad, stepping out of your comfort zone, and immersing yourself in another culture can be an exciting and challenging experience. Students who choose to enrich their academic experience by participating in a semester abroad will have to learn to adapt to social, cultural, and even linguistic differences during their time abroad.

Benefits of international experiences include increased adaptability, self-confidence and self-awareness, and greater cultural understanding and appreciation. A lot of preparation goes into a successful study abroad experience. Students need to be prepared to actively work with the Office of Learning Abroad and take responsibility for the planning and logistics of their study abroad experience.

In compiling this student handbook, Gannon University's Office of Learning Abroad and International Academic Programs aims not only to inform you of your Possibilities Abroad but also to prepare you for the journey on which you are about to embark. Here you will find helpful information regarding applying for your passport and student visa (if necessary), billing specifics, financial aid transferability, insurance requirements and much more. Students considering participating in one of Gannon's semester exchange

programs are strongly encouraged to engage in open and frequent communication with both their academic advisor and the Office of Learning Abroad.

While this handbook includes lots of helpful information, you are encouraged and expected to research your chosen program, host country and what you can expect while you are abroad, keeping in mind that no amount of research will ever fully prepare you for your experience—you need to live it!

If you are planning on spending an entire semester abroad, it is recommended that you speak with your academic advisor as soon as possible. While we strive to make semesters abroad possible for all majors, it is the student's responsibility to inform their advisor of their intent to study abroad long-term and to make any necessary adjustments to their program matrix.

WHERE CAN I STUDY ABROAD?

Gannon University's commitment to globalization is evident in the ever-expanding selection of international opportunities offered. Gannon currently offers semester exchange opportunities to twelve partner universities in ten countries. Included is some general information about each partner university. Additional information, including links to partner websites, course descriptions, etc., can be found on the Learning Abroad website (gannon.edu/learningabroad).

American University of Rome

The American University of Rome is situated on Janiculum Hill and is home to around 500 students representing 40 different countries. Students are able to take a variety of courses in subjects ranging from Classics to Astrology, Mathematics to Latin and everything in between, as well as courses that have been pre-approved to satisfy their Liberal Studies Core requirements. Programs of study at AUR are open to students from all three Colleges at Gannon.

Australian Catholic University

Students who study at Australian Catholic University can choose from one of three campuses: Brisbane, Sydney, or Melbourne. Courses are offered in the faculties of Arts and Sciences, Business, Education,

Health Science, and Theology and Philosophy. Programs of study at Australian Catholic University are open to students from all three Colleges at Gannon.

Catholic University of Lille

Catholic University of Lille is a multidisciplinary institution that combines 5 faculties and 18 schools, institutes, and grandes ecoles. The university is located in Lille, France, just an hour outside of Paris. Students can choose to study from any of the Institutes at the Catholic University of Lille, which include Arts, Humanities, Education, Social Work, Theology; Law, Economics, Management, Business; Health and Social Care; or Sciences and Technologies. Students should



choose courses from no more than one institute, due to conflicting course offerings and academic calendars. Because of the wide variety of programs offered, Catholic University of Lille is open to students from all three Colleges at Gannon.

Hochschule Esslingen University of Applied Sciences
Hochschule Esslingen University of Applied Sciences is located in Esslingen, Germany, in the Stuttgart region in southern Germany. Hochschule Esslingen programs of study are intended primarily for students in the College of Engineering and Business, and their programs are restricted to those two subjects. Gannon University also offers an opportunity for students to participate in Double Degree Programs in Software Engineering and International Industrial Management with Hochschule Esslingen.

Hochschule Osnabrück University of Applied Sciences
Hochschule Osnabrück University of Applied Sciences is located in Osnabrück, in northwest Germany, home to around 273,000 inhabitants and boasting a history dating back to the late eighth century. As a university of Applied Sciences, the programs of study at Hochschule Osnabrück are intended for students in the College of Engineering and Business.

Mary Immaculate College
Located in the town of Limerick, Ireland, Mary Immaculate College offers degrees in Education and Theatre. Students are able to take a number of courses that will satisfy Gannon University requirements, including many that will satisfy the Liberal Studies Core requirements. Mary Immaculate's academic programs are open to students of all majors and are an especially good fit for Education and Theatre and Performing Arts majors.



Osnabrück University
Founded in 1974 and located in northwest Germany, Osnabrück University offers courses in Humanities, Social Sciences, Science, Law, and Business Administration/Economics and is home to around 14,000 students. Courses available to international exchange students are offered in English. Programs at Osnabrück University are open to students from all three Colleges at Gannon.

Perrotis College, American Farm School
The Perrotis College of Agriculture, Environment & Life Sciences is a branch of the American Farm School and offers students an opportunity to spend a semester abroad on their campus in Thessaloniki, Greece. Students are able to take courses in the fields of Agricultural and Environmental Science, Food Science and Technology, and Agro-Business & Food Business Management. The programs offered at Perrotis College are best suited for Environmental Science and/or Engineering students.

Pontificia Universidad Católica de Valparaíso
PUCV is located in downtown Valparaíso, Chile. Undergraduate degrees are offered in more than 50 subjects, including architecture, design, industrial engineering, business, law and Spanish. Courses of Study at PUCV are open to students of all majors, though proficiency in Spanish or previous Spanish instruction is necessary.

St. Edmund Hall, University of Oxford
A college of the University of Oxford in England, St. Edmund Hall is the last remaining medieval hall at the University. Students may attend lectures in a number of subjects, including Chemistry, Economics, English, History, Mathematics, Philosophy, Psychology, and many other options. However, students are not able to choose specific courses as they do at Gannon. Students are only able to request subjects, which may not be granted based on available seats in those subjects. For that reason, programs of study at St. Edmund Hall are recommended to students in the Honors Program with lots of flexibility in their schedules.

Universidad Loyola Andalusia
With campuses in the cities of Seville and Córdoba, Spain, Loyola University Andalusia offers nine bachelor's degree options. Students may choose from courses in the School of Economics and Business Sciences, the School of Political and Legal Science, the School of Social Sciences and Humanities, or the Superior School of Engineering. Courses are taught in Spanish and English. Those students wishing to complete a minor in Spanish will be able to enroll in the Spanish language and content courses. The programs of study at Loyola University Andalusia are best suited for students in the College of Humanities, Education, and Social Science or the College of Engineering and Business.

University of Canterbury
Founded in 1873 and located in Christchurch, New Zealand, The University of Canterbury provides students the opportunity to learn at a world-class university, but also to participate in service-learning and scientific field study experiences. Students who choose to study at the University of Canterbury will be able to focus more on major requirements as opposed to Liberal Studies Core requirements, with courses ranging from Accounting to Criminal Justice, Health Sciences to Information Systems, Social Work to Chemistry, and beyond. Due to differences in academic calendars, students can only study at UC during the spring semester.

SUMMER PROGRAMS OFFERED BY PARTNER UNIVERSITIES

Summer programs, during which students earn academic credit, are also offered by five of our partner universities. A wide variety of courses are offered on the campuses of:

- American University of Rome (Italy)
- Australian Catholic University
- Catholic University of Lille (France)
- Pontificia Universidad Católica de Valparaíso (Chile)
- Hochschule Osnabrück University of Applied Sciences (Germany)

The programs offered in Italy and Chile have two separate summer sessions. You can choose to study for one month (one session) or two months (back-to-back sessions).

AFFILIATE PROGRAMS

Gannon University students may go abroad for a semester, summer session, or to participate in an international credit-bearing internship through one of the University's affiliate partners.

While Gannon University scholarships and financial aid may not be applied, students' state and federal financial aid and loans may be used in conjunction with these programs. Students can find the list of affiliate partners on the Learning Abroad website.

Students who participate in study abroad programs through partner universities or approved affiliates

and who meet the scholarship GPA requirement are eligible to apply for scholarship monies from the Office of Learning Abroad.



SCHOLARSHIPS

Gannon University is committed to providing students with learning opportunities that will ensure global awareness and cultural competency. In order to encourage students to study abroad, the university awards scholarships to eligible undergraduate students based on merit and/or need.

Students who meet the minimum GPA requirement of 3.0 are eligible to apply for a Learning Abroad Scholarship to help offset the cost of their semester and/or summer study abroad program. The amount awarded is dependent on the applicant pool, available

funding, and the duration of the intended program, with a maximum scholarship of \$1500 available.

Students who have applied for and been accepted to a partner university or affiliate partner will receive a scholarship application and detailed instructions

directly from the Director of Learning Abroad and International Academic Programs.

If a student is awarded a Learning Abroad Scholarship, they will receive their scholarship as a credit on their tuition bill. Half of the scholarship will be immediately awarded, and half of the scholarship will be seen as “pending aid.” As part of the scholarship requirements,

GETTING STARTED

How to Apply to Learning Abroad Programs

The process to apply for Learning Abroad opportunities is quite simple. Follow these steps to make all of your study abroad dreams come true.

1. Speak with your advisor about the feasibility of studying abroad and when it best fits into your schedule. This process should begin at least one academic year in advance of your intended semester abroad. Students are recommended to indicate any interest in study abroad to their academic advisor during their first year to provide flexibility in courses. Some majors are restricted in their program locations and the semester in which students may study abroad, so it is important to gather that information from your academic advisor as early as possible.
2. Ensure you know which courses you need to take at our partner university to fit a semester abroad into your schedule. You can work with your academic advisor and program chair/director to make appropriate substitutions from partner universities’ courses.
3. If the student’s program of study offers flexibility in study abroad locations, students should visit the Learning Abroad website to review the available partner universities. Links are provided to course offerings, and some courses have already been pre-approved to transfer back to Gannon. This information may be useful in choosing a program.
4. Schedule an appointment with the Director of Learning Abroad and International Academic Programs to ask questions, learn more about the process, and register your intent to study abroad.
5. The semester prior to your intended semester abroad, the Director of Learning Abroad and International Academic Programs will reach out and ask you to confirm your intent to study abroad.
6. Upon receiving the appropriate materials from partner universities, the Director of Learning Abroad and International Academic Programs will nominate students to their intended partner universities and will work with students to initiate the application process.
7. Students will follow the appropriate application process for their chosen partner university. It will be the responsibility of the students to fill out all required application materials and meet all partner university deadlines.
8. Once students have set their schedule with their chosen partner university, they should fill out the Off-Campus Course Request form to prepare for their study abroad courses to transfer back to Gannon. If students are taking pre-approved Liberal Studies Core courses, as listed on the Learning Abroad page on the portal, the form should still be submitted to the Dean’s Office, though signatures are not required. The Off-Campus Course Request form can be found on the Learning Abroad page on the portal or can be obtained from the Dean’s Office.
9. After students have received their acceptances from their chosen partner university, the Director of Learning Abroad and International Academic Programs will contact students with the necessary Gannon paperwork to be submitted before their semester abroad, and will provide students with the Learning Abroad Scholarship application.

students will be expected to share their experiences abroad via various social media channels, blogs, emails, vlogs, etc. Once students have gotten into the habit of regularly sharing their life overseas (and will continue to do so throughout the rest of their experience), the second half of the scholarship will be released from “pending” status and credited to the student’s account.



WHAT ARE MY DEADLINES?

Students who plan on participating in Gannon University’s Learning Abroad programs will need to inform the Director of Learning Abroad **at least one academic year prior to their intended semester studying abroad.**

This enables the Office of Learning Abroad and the student to ensure that students not only have room in their schedule for a semester abroad, but also that the appropriate courses are available at one of Gannon University’s partner institutions.

Please note that this two-semester deadline is an internal deadline; students should be aware of any external deadlines that host programs or universities might require.

Specific Study Abroad Application Information for Partner Universities

1. **American University of Rome**
 - (no application required)
 - Student is nominated for study abroad by Director of Learning Abroad via an email to the AUR Registrar
 - Student receives email from AUR with myAUR login information and registration instructions
 - Student registers for classes on specified date
 - Course selection is approved by Director of Learning Abroad
 - Students will receive letter from AUR for visa application
 - Director of Learning Abroad will provide information and documentation for visa application process and meet with students to discuss process
 - Students will mail their passport and visa application to Italian Consulate
2. **Australian Catholic University**
 - (application to ACU is required)
 - Student is nominated for study abroad by Director of Learning Abroad via an email to the ACU study abroad office
 - Student receives email notification from ACU with instructions on how to complete application
 - Upon completion of application, student will receive an Offer to Study Abroad at ACU
 - Student must accept the offer to study abroad and pay for Australian government-mandated insurance
3. **Mary Immaculate College**
 - (application to MIC is required)
 - Student is nominated for study abroad by the Director of Learning Abroad via an email to the MIC International Office
 - Student must fill out the appropriate study abroad application and submit to the International Office
 - Student will be contacted by MIC with further instructions.
4. **Hochschule Esslingen**
 - (application to HE is required)
 - Student is nominated for study abroad by the Director of Learning Abroad via an email to the HE International Office
 - Student will receive email from HE International Office with application instructions, due dates, and a list of courses offered in English
 - Once application is received HE International Office will follow up directly with student
5. **Catholic University of Lille**
 - (application to UCL is required)
 - Student is nominated for study abroad by the Director of Learning Abroad via an email to UCL International Office
 - Student will receive email from UCL International Office with instructions for application and required documents
 - Once application is completed, student will receive an email from the International Office with confirmation of receipt of application



- UCL International Office will send a letter of acceptance to Gannon's Office of Learning Abroad
- Student will be contacted by their chosen school within UCL if any other supporting documents are needed

6. University of Loyola Andalusia

- (application to ULA is required)
- Student is nominated for study abroad by the Director of Learning Abroad via an email to the ULA International Office
- Student will receive an email from ULA with application instructions

WHAT DO I NEED?

Students interested in participating in a semester or summer abroad will need to be in possession of a valid passport in order to participate in their program of choice.

A student's passport must be valid for six months past the date of the program; if not, students must renew their passport prior to applying to their study abroad program.

If you do not have a passport, you should apply for one immediately.

How to apply for a U.S. Passport

1. Applications for U.S. Passports may be obtained from the U.S. Department of State website (travel.state.gov) or from the Office of Learning Abroad.
2. Some passports must be applied for in person; others can be done online. To find out if you need to apply for your passport in person, please refer to the Department of State website
3. Applications can be submitted in person at the Erie General Mail Facility, located at 2108 E. 38th Street, Erie, PA 16515. An appointment is needed.
 - Students who are not applying for a passport in Erie can reference the Department of State website to locate the post office nearest them with passport services.
4. Students should keep in mind that the average processing time for a passport can be anywhere from 4-6 weeks and should incorporate extra time into their application process.

- Once application is completed, student will receive information regarding housing, student visa, and classes

7. University of Canterbury

- (application to UC is required)
- Student is nominated for study abroad by the Director of Learning Abroad via an email to the UC International Office
- Student receives email from the UC International Office with instructions on how to apply for study abroad and international student housing, registering for classes, etc.

5. Once the passport arrives, it should be signed immediately. Without the holder's signature, the passport is not an official form of identification.
6. Students should protect their passport, as it is a valuable form of identification. Whilst traveling, the student should carry a copy of their passport with them at all times in case of theft or loss of passport.

Applying for a Student Visa

1. Some international destinations require that all visiting students obtain a student visa prior to arriving.
2. Students participating in a semester exchange at one of Gannon's partner universities will be provided information on their student visa requirements from their chosen partner university, along with instructions on how to apply for a student visa.
3. Students planning on traveling during their time abroad should also look into the requirements of countries they plan to visit, as some countries require tourist visas even just for a visit.



I'VE APPLIED...WHAT NEXT?

Working with Financial Aid

Students who have questions about their financial aid packages, or about applying for additional loans, etc. to cover study abroad costs should reach out to the Financial Aid Office to schedule a meeting with one of the University's Financial Aid professionals. The Director of Learning Abroad and International Academic Programs will work with Financial Aid to make sure Learning Abroad Scholarships are applied to students' accounts.

Course Approval

If students are taking courses other than the pre-approved Liberal Studies Core courses found on the Learning Abroad page on the portal (my.gannon.edu) they should work with their academic advisor and program director/



chair to approve the courses to be taken overseas. To ensure the seamless transfer of credits from the partner university to Gannon, students should fill out the Off-Campus Course Request Form, also available on the Learning Abroad page on the portal.

Credit Transfer

Credits taken while studying abroad are treated as transfer credits. The grades earned during a study abroad experience do not affect your GPA—your grade does not transfer in; only the number of credits you take overseas transfer in.

Courses cannot be taken as Pass/Fail while studying abroad, and students must earn a C average in the courses taken overseas to earn credit for the course.

PAYMENT OF TUITION AND FEES

Semester Exchange Programs

In accordance with Memorandums of Understanding signed with our partner institutions, Gannon University students can study for a semester at one of our partner universities without incurring any costs other than their typical Gannon tuition. Students will be billed for tuition by Gannon University, and all University scholarships and financial aid will apply to the cost of the semester.

Housing

Students participating in an approved study abroad experience are required to live in partner university-affiliated housing. This housing may take the form of residence halls, student apartments, university-rented apartments within walking distance of campus, or on occasion, homestays. Specifics for each partner university can be found on the respective university's website, which can be found on the Learning Abroad website.



Students will either be billed for their international university housing via Gannon or will be responsible for paying the costs themselves directly to the partner university or accommodation provider (i.e. when the student is participating in a homestay). This information will be provided to students by the Office of Learning Abroad and International Academic Programs.

Affiliate Programs

When students participate in programs conducted through Gannon University affiliates, but not partner universities, they can expect to pay all costs (tuition, housing, etc.) directly to the coordinating company through which they are studying.

While state and federal financial aid and loans can be applied to these experiences, Gannon University scholarships and financial aid cannot be used to offset the costs of programs. Learning Abroad scholarships are available through the Office of Learning Abroad.

WORKING WITH THE OFFICE OF RESIDENCE LIFE TO ARRANGE HOUSING FOR RETURN SEMESTER

For students planning on living on campus after a semester abroad, it is necessary to engage in open communication with the Office of Residence Life before they leave campus. Students will need to complete in the following process to ensure their return to campus housing. Steps will vary dependent upon the semester the student studies abroad.

Students Studying Abroad in the Fall

- Students who have specific room and roommate preferences will need to go through the Fall Housing Process (to take place the preceding spring) and pay housing for the fall semester if they want their place to remain open for when they return to campus.
- Students who have no housing preference and are willing to be placed at random by the Office of Residence Life need to contact the ORL in October or November to find out what housing is available.
- Students will then be instructed to complete an online housing application for spring semester only, and pay the housing deposit of \$100.
- Students can expect to hear back from the ORL once their living arrangements have been assigned.

Students Studying Abroad in the Spring

- All students should participate in the regular online Fall Housing Process.
- Students who have specific room and roommate preferences will need to collaborate with roommates who are currently on campus to pick rooms.
- Students who have no housing preference and are willing to be placed at random should contact the Office of Residence Life.
- If students choose random placement through the ORL, they will be notified of their housing choices at the conclusion of the housing process.
- Students who are picking specific rooms will be informed of their housing assignments 1-2 weeks after the beginning of the housing process.

WHAT ROLE DO PARENTS PLAY IN THE STUDY ABROAD EXPERIENCE?

One of the greatest benefits of studying abroad is that the entire process, from pre-departure to a student's return home, is a transformational learning experience.

Students gain self-confidence and independence, learn to advocate for themselves, develop resiliency, and increase self-responsibility. It is for this reason that the information on study abroad is provided directly to the students and meetings are held with the students who are studying abroad. It is the responsibility of the students to communicate that information to their parents.

The most important thing that parents can do for their students during this process is to encourage and support students in taking ownership of their study abroad experience. While it's oftentimes a parent's first reaction to move

roadblocks and solve problems their student faces, it is ultimately the student's responsibility to communicate with the Office of Learning Abroad or their host university and overcome these obstacles—after all, they're the ones who will be traveling overseas and will have to problem solve on their own when they're far from home!

If you have questions about the study abroad experience, please ask your student—they have been provided the information via email or during a meeting by either Gannon or the partner university. If they can't

answer your question, please encourage them to reach out to the Office of Learning Abroad.



BEFORE YOU LEAVE

Pre-Departure Orientation

All students are required to attend a pre-departure orientation presented by the Director of Learning Abroad and International Academic Programs. Topics covered will include students' safety abroad, Emergency Contingency Procedures, cultural information regarding the student's destination, review of the GU Student Code of Conduct, and other pertinent travel tips and information. Students will also have the opportunity to ask questions and express any concerns they might have.

HEALTH/SAFETY

Purchasing Insurance

All travelers must have appropriate health insurance. All participants in international programs are required to purchase international medical and worldwide assistance insurance, which includes short-term medical insurance, travel assistance, evacuation, and expatriation. This insurance can be obtained through many online companies including HTH, Travel Guard or Travmed Abroad. Options to purchase trip interruption and cancellation insurance and lost baggage insurance are also available through these companies and are highly recommended.

Please note that some countries/universities/programs require specific insurance coverage, which will be communicated to the students by the partner university.

Students should also register for the university-sponsored insurance provided through ACE Travel App, the information about which will be provided to students during their study abroad preparations.

Immunizations

Some destinations require that students receive immunizations prior to departure. Students should research their study abroad destination and take all necessary precautions prior to travel. Specific country-related information and immunization guidelines can be found at wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel.

Prescription Drugs

If students are currently taking prescription drugs, they need to speak with their doctor and verify that their prescription is legal in the country to which they are traveling. Any students traveling with prescription

Adherence to the Gannon University Student Code of Conduct

Gannon University students who travel abroad are representatives of both the University and the United States of America. Any behavior contradictory to the standards set forth in the Gannon University Student Code of Conduct can be grounds for dismissal from the student's chosen program. For reference, please see section 7.11 "University Regulations" of the Student Handbook.

Students are also beholden to the rules and regulations of their chosen partner university or affiliate provider.

drugs need to take enough for the duration of their stay with them. **Prescription drugs cannot be sent internationally by mail.**

Students are strongly encouraged to carry a copy of their prescription, should the student or their luggage be searched during customs. Students should also keep all prescription drugs in their original, labeled containers to avoid confusion.

When packing, you should pack the prescription drugs you'll need immediately in your carry-on luggage in case of lost luggage.

Alcohol

All participants are required to adhere to host country's laws and customs regarding alcohol consumption. Excessive use of alcohol and/or abuse may result in immediate termination from the program as well as disciplinary actions upon return to the home campus. The University is not responsible for situations which may involve criminal charges due to poor decisions following excessive consumption of alcohol.

While less common in the United States, drugging does happen around the world. In order to prevent yourself from falling victim to this, students are encouraged to buy their own drinks, never leave their drinks unattended, and most importantly, not to accept drinks



from strangers. The most important step in preventing this type of incident is to always be aware of your surroundings and to not drink so much as to lose ability to control yourself and any situation in which you might find yourself. That being said, students should not go out alone at night, and are encouraged to employ the buddy system when visiting bars or night clubs. Under no circumstances should students go home with a stranger.

THINGS TO REMEMBER

Safety Abroad

Please keep in mind that while you are abroad, you are a representative not only of Gannon University, but also the United States of America. That being said, however, you must also remember that you are under the jurisdiction of the laws of the country in which you are studying or visiting and you are expected to act in accordance with those laws. Should you participate in any illegal activity while abroad, neither Gannon University nor the United States will be able to provide you with assistance. While the United States has embassies and consulates in foreign countries, the assistance they can provide is very limited. It is strongly recommended that students do some general research into the countries they plan to visit while abroad.

The U.S. Department of State website is a useful tool for pre-departure research. Students are encouraged to consult the Department of State's "Country Specific Information" pages, found at travel.state.gov. In addition to researching foreign laws, the Office of

WHAT TO PACK

When packing for a semester overseas, students should first do some research on the climate of their study abroad destination.

Students are encouraged to bring versatile pieces of clothing for everyday wear (jeans, sweaters, sweatshirts, etc.) as well as nicer clothing for in-class presentations. Rain jackets and umbrellas will always come in handy, especially while traveling. Please note that in some cultures, wearing athleisurewear and flip flops may attract unwanted attention, as they are not often worn in public.

Drugs

Under no circumstances should any drugs be used, with the exception of prescription drugs or over-the-counter medication. Copies of prescriptions for medication should be carried at all times. Consequences for drug use are very severe in many countries. Should students encounter any legal issues while overseas due to negligence or drug use, please note that the University (and the US government) will NOT be able to intercede. Students are held to the laws of the country in which they are studying, and as such, will also need to face the consequences as handed out by local government.

Learning Abroad also recommends that students monitor the Department of State website for travel warnings and advisories that may impact their travel itinerary.

Students should also register their international travels with the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP). Enrollment in this program will provide students with automatic updates as to the current situation in the country (ies) to which they will be traveling. Embassies and consulates will also be able to provide better assistance in the event of a lost or stolen passport while traveling. In addition, should there be some type of emergency occurring while you are abroad, your registration with STEP will ensure the embassy/consulate's ability to contact you and your family members. Students can register for STEP here at the State Department Website: travel.state.gov.

Gannon University does provide emergency evacuation services for all students if necessary.

Most airlines will allow students two checked suitcases when traveling overseas—and while that seems like a lot, for four months, that can be a bit tight! Don't waste precious space on school supplies—you can (and will!) find that in your new city. Make sure to pack articles of clothing that will serve multiple purposes so you can fit more into your suitcases.



CULTURE SHOCK

Adjusting to a new culture can be an exciting and overwhelming experience. At first, you will most likely be excited to explore a new culture and country, only to then become frustrated by the differences a few weeks later.

This sensation can often lead to bouts of homesickness and a desire to terminate study in the program. These feelings are natural. Dealing with these difficulties will enable you to test your limits and grow, both personally and mentally. With a little patience and an open

mind, you will soon find that you adapt to your new surroundings.

The following diagram illustrates the stages students might experience while abroad.

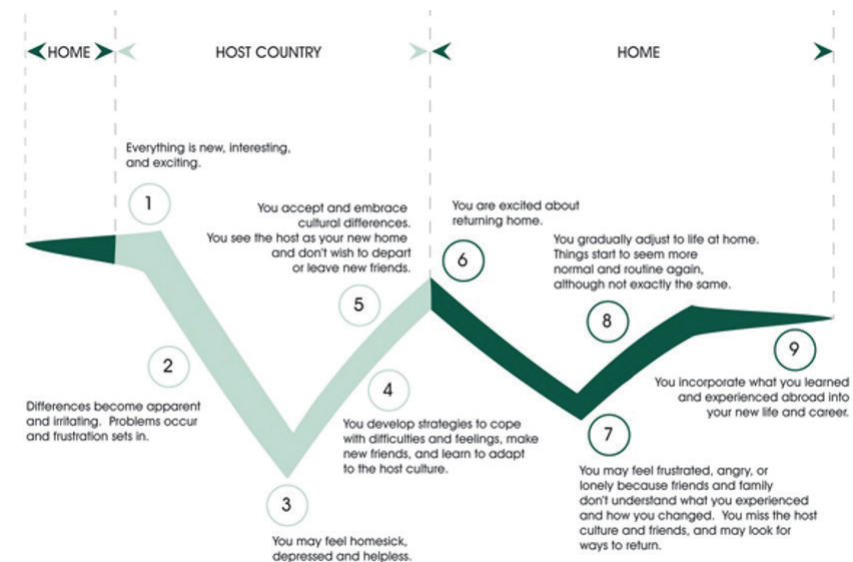


Image taken from www.globalexperiences.com

Culture shock doesn't end once you return home—that's when reverse culture shock can set in. Sometimes you adapt so well to your new surroundings that you might experience some difficulty returning

home after your experience abroad. Be patient with your friends and family who don't understand what you're feeling, as well as with yourself, as you adjust back to "normal."

BUDGETING

One of the most frequent (and most difficult to answer) questions is how much students should budget for their semester abroad. The reason this question is so difficult to answer is because not only does the cost of living vary per city, but so do students' spending habits.

Students are encouraged to make a list of all of the expenses they'll have during their semester abroad, including (but not limited to) groceries, public transportation, museum entrance fees, shopping, weekend travel, etc.

International universities do not offer meal plans to

exchange students, so students will need to budget for groceries, which can be far less expensive overseas than they are in the United States. Using your kitchen to prepare meals will help you save money, but you're also encouraged to try the local cuisine by occasionally going out for dinner! Depending on their study abroad destination, students can expect to spend \$300-\$400 per month on food (and even higher if you plan on eating out a lot).

One of the most exciting parts of studying abroad is traveling on the weekends. In order to get an idea of

how much to save for weekend travel, it's important to plan ahead: pick 2-3 "big trips" that you want to take and research plane/train ticket prices, hotel/hostel prices, and the cost of living to create a budget for each trip.

INDEPENDENT WEEKEND TRAVEL

Studying abroad affords you the opportunity to travel to different cities or countries on the weekend, which most students frequently do.

Students who wish to partake in independent weekend travel are responsible for planning their own travel (unless they participate in a university-sponsored travel experience through a partner university).

While planning weekend travel, students are encouraged to refer to the U.S. Department of State Travel Warnings (travel.state.gov) to check for any travel warnings for U.S. citizens.

CURRENCY ABROAD

In most countries, students will not be able to open bank accounts, so using ATM cards and credit cards is the easiest mode of obtaining money and making purchases.

Students will also be able to exchange American money into the local currency in most countries, but using ATMs and credit cards prevents students from needing to carry around large quantities of cash. Before traveling, students should be sure to contact their bank and credit card companies to inform them as to their travel dates and which countries they plan on visiting. Students should also be aware of currency conversion fees and foreign transaction fees that their bank and credit card companies might charge.



CELL PHONE COMMUNICATION

It's likely you'll want to keep in touch with friends and family during your semester abroad, and using a cell phone is the easiest (and quickest) way to do that.

While U.S. cell phone companies offer international plans, the cost over the course of your semester abroad can run into the thousands of dollars. Instead of paying

Many partner universities offer "field trips" and travel opportunities through their International Office, which are great opportunities to travel for less, and also an opportunity to travel to exciting places without having to do any of the planning!

Helpful resources and guides for students looking to plan weekend travel include Lonely Planet, Rome2Rio, Student Universe, Visit a City, and more. Make sure to take your student ID with you—many museums and points of interest offer student discounts.

Most importantly, make a budget for your travels and stick to it.

Students might want to consider adding a parent or a legal guardian as a co-signer on the account. Should any problems arise while the student is abroad, the second person on the account would be able to handle any issue in person. If you have a credit card with a chip in it, please know that the practices overseas regarding these cards differ from those in the US. While using a credit card with a chip, you will be asked to provide a pin number (much like we do with debit cards here in the U.S.). Please contact the issuer of your credit card to establish a pin for your chip credit card if you plan to use it overseas.

for an international plan on your U.S. cell phone, use WhatsApp or iMessage to communicate with loved ones back home. Your university will offer wireless

internet on campus, your accommodations will have wireless internet, and many international cities offer wireless internet throughout the city.

If you want to have cell phone capabilities at all times, you can also look into getting a local phone number, which is far less expensive than using an international

FOOD AND DIETARY RESTRICTIONS

Do not let food allergies or dietary restrictions discourage you from studying abroad.

If you have food allergies or dietary restrictions, you should write down this information and keep a copy of it on you at all times. A helpful tip is to keep a notecard with your allergies/dietary restrictions translated into the language of your host country so you can easily communicate your needs despite any language barriers. This will come in use while dining out at restaurants or even looking at package ingredients in the grocery store.



data/calling plan from the US. Your partner university's International Office can provide suggestions and methods for obtaining a local number upon your arrival.



"Taking advantage of this opportunity to study in Melbourne has been one of the best decisions I have made. I have met people from all over the world who are on exchange as well as Melbourne locals. This experience is very different but very rewarding. Studying abroad is an experience that provides a new perspective on society, while strengthening your life skills, channeling your inner exploratory ways, and challenging you to step outside your comfort zone for the most fulfillment."

*Ariana Aliasso, Physician Assistant
Australian Catholic University*

FOR MORE INFORMATION



CALL | 1-800-GANNON-U



EMAIL | studyabroad@gannon.edu



ONLINE | gannon.edu/learningabroad

LET'S GET SOCIAL



[/gannonuabroad](https://www.facebook.com/gannonuabroad)



[@GannonUAbroad](https://twitter.com/GannonUAbroad)



[@GannonUAbroad](https://www.instagram.com/GannonUAbroad)

