

Study Abroad & the Pre-Professional Student

Studying in another country is a wonderful way of experiencing the world, becoming independent, and being a global citizen. You may not have many opportunities in life to live in another country for an extended period and to immerse yourself in a different language and culture.

Besides all the benefits to you, studying abroad looks good on your résumé. It shows professional schools you are adaptable, willing to get outside your comfort zone, and ready to take on new challenges. You may also be able to set up a shadowing or internship experience with a professional in your chosen field while you are abroad. This kind of opportunity can be a truly enlightening part of your experience.

Fitting Everything In

It can be difficult to fit in all your coursework, your prerequisite courses, and study abroad. To some extent, it depends on your major and the prerequisite courses you need. With advance planning, you should be able to make study abroad fit within your academic goals. You may also need to prioritize some of your educational plans. For example, if you intend to be a biomedical engineering and Spanish double major with a minor in chemistry, take pre-medicine courses, and study abroad, as well as complete the requirements for the honors college...well, you might need to drop one or two of those to make everything fit. It may also require some summer coursework. The important thing is to plan ahead. Mention your desire to study abroad early while working with your Academic Advisor to see how to make it work with your overall academic plan.

You should not plan on taking prerequisite classes while abroad. Not all professional schools will accept these credits.

Timing Your Program

The timing and duration of your study abroad experience often depends on what career field you are planning to enter. Typically students study abroad during their junior year; however, many off-campus programs are open to second year students. If your professional field requires a number of year-long sequence courses such as organic chemistry, it might be difficult to fit this in without summer school. First semester senior year may also be an option, but for some fields it can delay your professional school interviews. You should discuss the timing of study abroad with both your academic advisor and a pre-professional advisor.

Study Abroad Timing Considerations

Study Abroad Timing	Pros & Cons
Sophomore year	Pros: Generally fits in easily Cons: May interfere with year-long science sequences
Summer after sophomore year	Pros: Generally easy to fit in Cons: May need to work to make money for application process which is typically at end of junior year or for aptitude test prep class during junior year
Fall Junior Year	Pros: Allows for application preparation when you return in the spring Cons: May interfere with year-long science sequences
Spring/Summer Junior Year	Pros: Fits best with some majors Cons: Will need extra money for travel while abroad and will return home needing extra money for the application process <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When applying during the summer, you may have a missing semester of grades as it can take time to receive transcripts from international programs • Need to plan for aptitude test (don't plan to study for your aptitude test abroad—your focus should be on that experience) • Plan ahead for application. Be organized. Plan for gathering letters. • Consider designating someone to watch your mail/email.
Fall Senior Year	Pros: Often you are closer to being done with your major so it can be an easier time to go Cons: This is typically prime interview season for professional schools and most are not allowing skype interviews

Other Considerations

Financial Impact

Part of determining the timing of off campus study should include planning for the impending expense of the application process.

Students should meet with the Purdue Study Abroad to learn about scholarship opportunities for study abroad programs. Purdue has made it a priority for students to study abroad and has money available to assist many students.

However, study abroad will require additional funds beyond what you pay to be a student at Purdue because you will most likely want to travel on day or weekend trips while there. Also, there may be added costs for housing, meals, souvenirs, bus or train fare, etc.

Your application to professional programs may cost you \$1,000-\$3,000 or more depending on the number of applications you submit and the distance you must travel for interviews. Working out the financing and timing of both study abroad and professional school applications should be part of your planning.

Types of Programs

Purdue has over 300 programs in more than 50 countries! You need to do your homework and learn as much about the programs as possible. There are several programs that cater to pre-professional students. Purdue Study Abroad can help you find the best program for you. Their office, located in Young Hall Room 105, welcomes walk-in appointments Monday – Friday, 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. Check with your academic advisor as well, some colleges provide additional study abroad opportunities.

Purdue Study Abroad Application Deadlines

Check the Purdue Study Abroad website for specific program application deadlines.

- February 1st - summer internships & select summer programs
- March 1st - most summer, fall, & academic year programs
- September 15th - spring semester programs

More Information

[Purdue Study Abroad](https://www.purdue.edu/IPPU/SA/) <https://www.purdue.edu/IPPU/SA/>