

UM STUDY ABROAD PROCEDURES for USAC

Please read the following information carefully. We recommend bringing a copy of this document with you when you study abroad. Please feel free to contact the Study Abroad Office at 301-314-7746 or studyabr@deans.umd.edu if you have any questions.

USAC CHECKLIST

Before You Go Abroad

- Make sure you have a passport valid for at least 3-6 months after your planned return to the U.S.
- Select a Study Abroad Program, check with a Study Abroad Advisor about its suitability, and then complete the online ELF Application for Study Abroad. (See instructions at www.international.umd.edu/studyabroad/5410)
- Once your ELF Form has been approved, request via Testudo that your official University of Maryland transcript from the be sent to USAC in Reno, NV. (Address is on the USAC website and in the catalogue.)
- [Apply online](http://usac.unr.edu) for your USAC program (<http://usac.unr.edu>) and pay the \$300 deposit to USAC.
- After you are accepted, USAC will send you an acceptance packet. Be sure to check your USAC Student Gateway often for important updates to read and forms you must print and return directly to USAC, and information on visas and immunizations.
- Once accepted to your program, schedule an appointment with your Study Abroad Advisor to begin the Permission to Study Abroad (PSA) Form (and Financial Aid paperwork if necessary).
- Meet with academic advisors in your department and College in order to obtain all necessary signatures on the PSA. **Please note:** You will likely be required to complete a graduation audit before signatures can be obtained.
- Return completed Permission to Study Abroad Form by the paperwork deadline: **December 1 (for spring), April 15 (for summer) or May 10 (for fall/full year).**
- Bring financial aid budget, worksheet and PSA to the Financial Aid Office in the Lee Building by at least a month before the start of your program.
- Obtain all necessary approval for courses you hope to take during the semester after you *return to campus*. Make note of your directory ID and password, as well as email addresses of your academic advisors.
- Confirm primary email address in Testudo. If you will not have internet access while abroad, arrange for registration materials to be mailed to you or to a reliable contact in the U.S.
- Attend pre-departure orientation (in November for spring students or in April for summer and fall full year students).
- Pay all program bills and check that your student account is clear of charges.
- Cancel housing and dining contracts for the semester while you are abroad by the Residential Life deadline.
- If you have registered for classes on campus for the semester during which you plan to study abroad, drop the courses in writing by the end of the add/drop period.

While Abroad

- If your courses are different from those noted on your PSA, email your academic advisors in your major and College to confirm how your new courses will apply towards your degree. Forward their responses to your study abroad advisor.
- Confirm that all Study Abroad Transcripts will be sent to the Study Abroad Office in Holzapfel Hall.
- Register via Testudo for the semester after you study abroad.
- Complete your Maryland housing contract (if you are eligible to live on campus) by contract deadline.

After You Return

- About 6-8 weeks after you return, check Testudo to see if transfer credit has been posted. If you do not see your study abroad courses under Transfer Credit, contact the Study Abroad Office to confirm they received the transcript.
- [Evaluate your program](#) and share your story with us.
- Visit the [Study Abroad Website](#) and office to find out how you can stay involved.

Academics

In order to get credit for your overseas experience, you must turn in complete Permission to Study Abroad paperwork (#1-3 below) to the Study Abroad Office by

- December 1 for spring programs
- April 15 for summer programs
- May 1 for fall/ academic year programs

- 1) **ELF Application for Study Abroad** (<http://ares.umd.edu/Elf>) – to be completed online, sent and approved by your study abroad advisor before you apply to USAC. Please go to www.international.umd.edu/studyabroad/5410 for instructions on how to complete this form. You should submit a printout of your completed ELF form together with your PSA.
- 2) **Permission to Study Abroad Form (PSA)** – You should bring a list of possible courses, including two or three alternates, when you meet with your Study Abroad Advisor. **You must start the Permission to Study Abroad Form in the Study Abroad Office.**
 - a. For the meetings with academic advisors in your major and college, you should bring the course descriptions and, if possible, the syllabi for the courses you plan to take. If you are studying on a Partnership program (Ghana, Ireland, etc.), we encourage you to be flexible in your course choices, as offerings may change once you are abroad.
 - b. The study abroad advisor can provide the syllabi for most courses, although this is not always possible for Partnership programs.
 - c. In most cases, the credits for Internships, Field Study courses and Cuisine courses will not transfer back to Maryland. However, this is ultimately up to your College. If you are planning to study on a *language intensive* Specialty program, you should check with your academic department to make sure the credits can transfer for ALL courses within a Track.
 - d. Return the yellow form to the Study Abroad Office. Keep the white one with you.
 - e. Once the Study Abroad Office has received your paperwork, we will register you as a full-time Maryland Study Abroad Student.
- 3) **Waiver of Responsibility** – Complete and return this form to the Study Abroad Office at the same time as the PSA.

All other forms that should be returned directly to USAC are available on your Student Gateway. Please be sure to check this often so you do not miss important deadlines. The USAC Central Office strongly prefers that you return all forms together.

- a. UM students on *Partnership programs* (Ghana, Ireland, etc.) will directly enroll in and will receive an official transcript from the foreign host institution.
- b. UM students on *Specialty programs* (Spain, France, Italy, the Czech Republic, etc.) are enrolled through the University of Nevada, Reno, in most cases. You are required to fill out and return a short UNR application to USAC in order to receive credit for these programs.

We recognize that your courses may be different once you arrive in country. If this happens, you should contact your academic advisors in your major and college immediately so that he or she can help you determine how any new courses will apply to your Maryland degree. Please forward their responses to your study abroad advisor.

If you choose to register for any Maryland classes for the semester during which you plan to study abroad, you are responsible for canceling your registration before the end of the add/drop period. If you maintain your registration for courses at College Park, you will be charged for them and the Study Abroad Office will be unable to clear any outstanding debts from your bill.

Credit and Transcripts

Maryland students receive transfer credit for the courses successfully completed on USAC programs. The grades received will not affect your Maryland GPA, although you must earn a "C" or better in an approved class for the credits to transfer to Maryland. The University of Maryland will not transfer more than 18 credits from your study abroad semester to your Maryland transcript.

Your study abroad transcripts must be sent to the Study Abroad Office. Transcripts sent directly to the Registrar will not be evaluated, nor will transcripts sent to the Transfer Credit Center. The Study Abroad Office has sole responsibility for evaluating study abroad credit. Be sure to complete the Transcript Request form on the USAC Gateway and return it to USAC with your other forms, so that your transcripts will be sent to the Study Abroad Office at the University of Maryland.

Registration for the Semester After You Study Abroad

As long as you complete your paperwork with the Study Abroad Office, you will be eligible for pre-registration for the semester after your return to campus, provided you are in good academic and financial standing with the University. You will receive a registration email with

a registration date while overseas, and you will be able to register for classes online via www.testudo.umd.edu, as you would if you were on campus.

In order to ensure a smooth registration period, we recommend that you complete the following before leaving for your study abroad program.

- 1) **Select Your Courses:** Meet with your academic advisor and identify the courses you would like to take during your first semester back on campus.
- 2) **Get Approval for Restricted Courses:** Check the most recent Schedule of Classes and the Restricted Course List to determine whether or not you will be requesting a course requiring departmental authorization. If so, you must obtain a signed restricted course authorization form before you leave. We recommend that you take a copy of this form with you overseas.
- 3) **Make a note of your PIN number and all important email addresses:** You will need your PIN number in order to register via Testudo. We also suggest that you bring the email address of your academic advisor. You may need to contact him or her in order to lift any advising blocks that may be on your Testudo account.

If you will not have internet access while abroad, you must make arrangements for the University to send your registration materials to a parent or friend in the U.S. or to you overseas. You are responsible for successful completion of this process. The Study Abroad Office is not liable for any missing and/or incomplete registration information.

Finances

Billing

- Maryland students on USAC programs pay a \$300 deposit directly to USAC. If you apply online, you can pay with a credit card.
- Maryland students do NOT pay the \$800 deposit to USAC. Start your PSA paperwork and confirm with the Study Abroad Office that you will attend the program by USAC's deposit deadline.
- The University of Maryland charges your student account for the remainder of the program fee (published USAC program fee minus the \$300 deposit). You will pay USAC directly for any additional charges for housing, optional courses and tours, etc. Please contact Catherine Donohoe if you have questions about your bill.
- Please see the USAC website (<http://usac.unr.edu/usac/information.aspx?dispinfo=7#159>) for important information regarding [withdrawals and refunds](#). If you cancel your program participation after a certain date, there may be financial consequences.
- **You must check with the University of Maryland Bursar's Office to confirm that all bills are paid before leaving for study abroad.** Any outstanding debt to the University will block your registration when you return to campus.
- You are responsible for paying any outstanding bills to USAC for housing, optional courses, tours, etc. If you fail to pay these bills, a hold will be placed on your transcript.

Financial Aid

All federal, state and university financial aid can be applied toward USAC study abroad programs. You may also use the Terp Payment Plan or tuition remission to help pay for your USAC program fees.

In order to apply financial aid toward study abroad, you must return the following items to the Financial Aid Office in the Lee Building:

- 1) Financial Aid Worksheet (available at <http://www.financialaid.umd.edu/>)
- 2) Study Abroad Budget (completed by your Study Abroad Advisor when you start your PSA)
- 3) Copy of completed and signed Permission to Study Abroad Form

For information on the Terp Payment Plan, visit http://www.umd.edu/bursar/t_payMethods.html. If you have tuition remission, please inform your study abroad advisor, so s/he can send a memo to the tuition remission office. Tuition remission will be posted to your account after you are charged the program fee.

Financial aid is released approximately ten days before the start of your study abroad program. It will be applied to any balance on your account. If there is a positive balance, you will receive the funds in a check or via direct deposit. Please see the Study Abroad Frequently Asked Questions on the Financial Aid website for further information.

Your loan agency may require proof of full-time student status during your time abroad. As long as you have completed both your PSA and Waiver form, the Study Abroad Office will be able to confirm your status for you. Please contact us if such a letter is required.

Partial scholarships are available for students who demonstrate both financial need and academic merit. Interested students should complete the Maryland scholarship application, due September 15 for Spring semester, and February 15 for Summer, Fall and Academic Year programs. Decisions on the USAC – UM Scholarship will be made in late October for Spring scholarships, and in late April for summer and fall

Housing

Before You Go Abroad

You must remember to cancel any housing or dining contracts for the semester during which you plan to study abroad.

Resident Life publishes all relevant procedures and deadlines. You usually must cancel housing about one month before the end of the semester before you plan to study abroad. Please check your current housing contract for information on cancellation. You will need to note your reason for cancellation when completing the forms.

If you incur a cancellation charge, you can appeal to Resident or Dining Services directly. The Study Abroad Office can assist you only by proving your status as a study abroad student.

While you are Abroad and when you Return

Resident Life publishes all relevant procedures and deadlines. The Study Abroad Office will notify Resident Life of the return of all study abroad students.

While you are abroad, Resident Life will distribute an application for housing and a housing contract. If you are eligible for on-campus housing, you will be informed at that time. Study Abroad students will retain their housing priority number.

However, you are not guaranteed on-campus housing. **If you are returning to campus as a senior, you may not be eligible to live on-campus.**

The housing contracts are generally due in March (for fall returns) and April (for spring returns). Dates are subject to change. Contracts will be sent to your **permanent address**. You should advise your parents or guardians to complete the forms and return them on your behalf. If you do not return the contract to Resident Life by the deadline, they will assume that you are not returning to campus housing.

It is your ultimate responsibility as the student to stay updated on all Resident Life deadlines and submitting the appropriate paperwork on time. You can visit the Office of Resident Life's website for the most up-to-date information: <http://www.resnet.umd.edu/>.

If you are interested in living in the **Language House, International House, Commons, Courtyards** or other program housing, you must make all necessary arrangements before you leave. If you do not complete your application before departure, the Study Abroad Office cannot secure housing in any of these locations. There are links for study abroad students on both the **Commons** and **Courtyards** websites.

If you have questions regarding housing, please contact the Office of Resident Life directly.

Other Important Details

Email Account

If you complete all relevant paperwork, you will continue to have access to your UMD account. This account can be accessed at www.mail.umd.edu. We recommend that you also consider setting up a web-based email address, as the University system does not work well on all computers. **If you change your primary email address, you must officially change your information on Testudo and notify the Study Abroad Office.** If you do not, we are not responsible for any important messages that you might miss, including any emailed registration information.