Preparing for Off-Campus Study - Information Session Summary
Office of International Education 363-2269, oie@beloit.edu  Web: http://www.beloit.edu/oie

Between study abroad and domestic programs, about 45% of Beloit students spend a semester or academic year off-campus before they graduate. Beloit College would like the percentage to increase to 55%. Off-campus programs are integral to a Beloit College education.

What is off-campus study?
- off-campus study = learning in and outside the classroom, in U.S. programs and overseas
- enhances and gives context to the study that takes place on campus
- In the US and abroad
- is what YOU make of it

*Off-campus study requires initiative, flexibility, curiosity, patience, and an open mind. It also requires good planning and may change your life.*

How will studying off-campus enhance my education?
Beloit’s Learning Goals for Off-Campus Study:
- Gain new perspectives on your field(s) of study
- Develop intercultural competencies and communication skills (study abroad)
- Learn to engage with situations and questions that challenge your own assumptions and values
- Develop the ability to articulate your cultural experience
- Learn about and from the environments in which you live and study
- Develop the ability to apply theory to practice and practice to theory (domestic programs).

How do I decide?
First, establish your own learning goals
Example of one student’s learning goals in the early stages:
- improve my Spanish language,
- challenge myself,
- get hands-on experience in international public health for my Health and Society major,
- Visit Latin America -- I always have been fascinated by.

Then, refine your goals as your program choice comes into focus.
Examples of refined learning goals:
- I want to better understand health care delivery and learn medical Spanish by working in a Quito clinic and taking Spanish classes
- I want to explore the challenges and opportunities for positive urban social change in Chicago by taking courses and doing an internship
- I want to learn about the role of religion in daily Senegalese life by taking a course on Dakar in Transition with Senegalese students, studying Wolof, and living with a host family in Dakar

Things to consider in choosing a program (see handout sheet: Students Talk about Study Abroad)
- Fulfill major requirements? Minor? Gen Ed?
- Which semester? (e.g. requirements, timing, calendar, enrollment caps, opportunities when you return)
- Study with locals? With Americans? With other international students?
- Internships? Classroom? Fieldtrips?
- Host family? Dormitory? Apartment?
- Highly/loosely structured?
Study Abroad Program types

- “Island Programs” – Structured study programs, designed for US students, classes with other US students, often built around a theme, sometimes including a fieldwork component and home stay, and coordinated by a resident director. Examples include SIT, MSID, DIS, etc.
- Unstructured programs open doors at universities abroad to take classes with locals, with limited support from the institution’s international office. Examples include direct enrollment and some Beloit exchange programs.
- Hybrid programs combine the structure of a study center with the affiliation with a university, allowing US students to take a few courses designed for them while enrolling in other courses with locals, language ability permitting. Examples include CIEE, IES, and some Beloit Exchange programs.

What is possible? (see handout: Profiles of Off-Campus Study Students)

Enrollment policy

- The campus needs equal numbers of students in the fall and spring.
- Domestic programs: approximately 15 / year
- Academic year study: if needed for major studies at Beloit programs where available in host country
  - Most Beloit programs are exchange programs, which means we can bring students from those countries if we send Beloit students to the partner university

Nuts and bolts

- Students generally spend one semester off-campus.
- Financial aid applies, but off-campus study may cost more – financial aid package varies by the student. (note: Beloit aid applies to one non-Beloit program) Therefore, make sure you read the information about financial aid and how it applies to study abroad on the OIE website.
- Beloit College credit
- Grades on transcript, but not in GPA for study abroad. (Note: The exception to this is Cities in Transition courses in Senegal, China, Ecuador, and Russia, as well as courses on the Estonia/Morocco program which count as Beloit courses and affect GPA.)
- You will pay Beloit tuition as you would were you on campus.
- You will pay Beloit room and board on most Beloit programs and ISEP exchanges.
- For non-Beloit programs, you will pay room and board costs to the program provider (this may cause your Beloit scholarship to be cut by $1,100. See Financial Aid for details).

### Deadlines

- **November 1**: study abroad in following yr.
- **February 1**: study abroad in following year & domestic off-campus
- **September 15**: spring exchange programs (when space is available)

Apply a year before your program. This gives you time to prepare and increases your chances of acceptance.

### Your next steps

- Advising intake sheet: start with some general goals (bring this sheet to your OIE appointment along with unofficial transcript)
- Research
- Advising with your faculty advisor and in OIE
- Application session
- Select courses that will prepare you for your host country
- IDST 200: Developing Intercultural Competencies (pre-study abroad course)
- IDST 201: Reflection and Integration (course taken upon return to build on what you did abroad)

### Resources

- OIE website – program finder
- OIE resource room
  - study abroad evaluations
  - program information
- September Off-Campus Studies Fair
- faculty and students
- off-campus studies advisors (OIE)
Beloit College’s program of international education is intended to enable students to engage other cultures, be sensitive to commonalities and differences among and within cultures, have the ability to understand multiple perspectives, be knowledgeable about global forces, both human and physical, and contribute responsibly to humane and positive change.

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<tr>
<th>Study abroad learning goals:</th>
<th>Domestic program learning goals:</th>
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<tr>
<td>• gain new perspectives on your field(s) of study,</td>
<td>• Gain new perspectives on their fields of study,</td>
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<tr>
<td>• develop intercultural competencies and communication skills,</td>
<td>• Develop the ability to apply theory to practice and practice to theory,</td>
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<td>• learn to engage with situations and questions that challenge your own assumptions and values,</td>
<td>• Learn to engage with situations and questions that challenge their own assumptions and values,</td>
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<tr>
<td>• develop the ability to articulate your cultural experience,</td>
<td>• Develop the ability to articulate what they have learned,</td>
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<td>• learn about and from the environments in which you live and study.</td>
<td>• Learn about and from the environments in which they live and study.</td>
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Please fill this sheet out and bring it with you to your advising appointment.

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<tr>
<th>Name:</th>
<th>Box #:</th>
<th>Date of appt:</th>
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<th>Intended Major(s):</th>
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<th>Academic Advisor:</th>
<th>Year of Grad:</th>
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<tr>
<th>Have you attended an Info Session?</th>
<th>Yes ☐ No ☐</th>
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<td>If yes, what date?</td>
<td>GPA (approx):</td>
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<th>Do you receive Tuition Remission or Exchange?</th>
<th>Yes ☐ No ☐</th>
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<td>Do you receive a WAC scholarship?</td>
<td>Yes ☐ No ☐</td>
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<th>What semester(s) do you plan to study abroad?</th>
<th>Foreign language(s) spoken/studied:</th>
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Please list your specific goals for study abroad here:

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<th>Notes: (for office use only)</th>
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## Profiles of Off-Campus Study Students

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Major: MINORS</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Semester</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bogdan</strong></td>
<td>International Relations</td>
<td>International transfer student</td>
<td>Junior year and summer</td>
<td>CLS: Chinese</td>
<td>Senior year fall semester: study in China&lt;br&gt;Post-graduation: honors term, Johns Hopkins/Nanjing graduate certificate program, work in Shanghai</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Chip</strong></td>
<td>Biology, Minor: Health Care Studies</td>
<td>Varsity soccer</td>
<td>Junior year</td>
<td>Denmark for Medical Practice and Policy and Danish clinical methods</td>
<td>Post-graduation: honors term at Beloit, medical school</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Mika</strong></td>
<td>Dance and Theatre, Minor: Geology</td>
<td>Chelonia each year at Beloit College, Black Students United</td>
<td>Final senior semester: Ecuador for Geology, Spanish, teaching dance to children and dancing with a local professional company</td>
<td>Post-graduation: teaching and performing dance in Ecuador</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Matt</strong></td>
<td>History major, Minors: Political Science and Asian Studies</td>
<td>Varsity football</td>
<td>Junior year spring semester: Hong Kong for Asian history and politics</td>
<td>Summer: independent travel in Vietnam and Cambodia&lt;br&gt;Senior year: International Symposium presentation on applying the lessons of the Vietnam war to the war in Iraq</td>
<td>Post-graduation: law school</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Dave</strong></td>
<td>Physics and Russian</td>
<td>Non-traditional student</td>
<td>Junior year spring</td>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>Post-graduation: graduate school in physics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Phil</strong></td>
<td>International Relations</td>
<td>Venture grant: Peru, studying the impact of tourism on Andean villages and archaeological sites</td>
<td>Junior year fall semester: Thailand, impacts of development projects on local people&lt;br&gt;Junior year spring semester: internship in Washington with the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee.</td>
<td>Post-graduation: non-profit work in Thailand in social justice and agriculture</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Nat</strong></td>
<td>History, Minor: Museum Studies</td>
<td>Academic year: work in Beloit College museums</td>
<td>Summers: museum internships and independent research&lt;br&gt;Junior year: Mystic, CT: maritime history, science and environmental policy</td>
<td>Summer: archival research and interviews for senior thesis&lt;br&gt;Post-graduation: Fulbright Scholarship studying curating and interning with a maritime history museum in Sweden</td>
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| **Jill** - Major: International Relations  
Summer: internships related to peace and justice, conflict resolution  
Junior year fall: Ireland: peace and conflict resolution, independent research project  
Spring: vacation term, internship related to conflict resolution  
Senior year: international symposium presentation on research in Ireland, honors thesis  
Post-graduation: internship with the Quaker Mission to the U.N. |
| **Hannah** – Major: International Relations, Minor: European Studies  
Junior fall semester: study in Spain  
Spring: study in Hungary, continuing to do research on national identity started in Spain  
Senior year: senior thesis on the role of regional and national identity, comparing work from Spain and the conflict in Northern Ireland  
Post-graduation: intern in the Office of International Education, planning for graduate study |
| **Amy** - Majors: Political Science and Women’s and Gender Studies  
At Beloit: work on a political campaign, Rock County Rape Victim’s Advocate  
Junior fall semester: northern Brazil, studying social justice, research on grassroots organizing  
Junior spring semester: southern Brazil taking university course in Portuguese  
Post-graduation: ESL certificate program in Spain, teaching English in Spain, Fulbright in Brazil teaching English and studying grassroots organizing |
| **Karin** - Major: IDST  
Transfer student  
At Beloit: French, creative writing, anthropology  
Junior year spring semester: Senegal: French, Wolof, literature  
Summer: internship with Senegalese NGO working with sustainable agriculture  
Senior year: publications in *AbroadView*, International Symposium presentation on development questions  
Post-graduation: Peace Corps volunteer in West Africa and writing |
| **Dominique** - Major: Economics and Management  
International student  
Summer: internship with accounting firm  
Junior spring semester: Washington, DC: economics and finance courses, internship in accounting  
Post-graduation: accountant in a multi-national corporation |
Students Talk about Study Abroad

Direct Enrollment vs. Programs organized for American students
“It was great to be regular university student. I had lots of freedom. I spoke to people on other study abroad programs who complained that everything was structured for them and they were isolated in a group of American students. I’m glad I wasn’t.”

“I was left on my own. I was just a random student studying here for a semester. Other Beloit students I knew who were studying abroad had programs with organized activities. I wish I had.”

Choice of country
“Don’t just go to an English-speaking country because you’re supposed to study abroad and you can’t think of anywhere else to go. In some ways, going to a country where English is spoken is harder, because the subtleties of culture are harder to figure out and more important to be aware of.”

“I wish I’d gone somewhere that would have challenged me more.”

“I thought studying in two different countries was priceless. Comparing two cultures was a lesson in being flexible.”

“Studying in two different countries didn’t give me enough time to get to know either one. I wish I’d just studied in one.”

Program length
“Go for a year. You’ll learn more. You’ll be happier coming home.”

“It wasn’t until sometime after 4 months that I really began to pick up on some of the subtle, but important differences in culture and that I really began to feel that the time away had been worth it. I think anything less than five months and I would have been dissatisfied.”

“I was ready to come home after one semester. I missed Beloit College and my friends.”

Orientation
“There was no official orientation program to receive me, but I feel that this experience has helped me become a lot more independent. I am glad the program didn’t baby me and make me do an orientation.”

“I wish I’d had more of an orientation program as I felt a little lost.”

Organization.
“There was little organization, but in a way this was good, because I had to meet people and figure things out on my own.”

“They were really well-organized and told me everything I needed to do.”

Housing
“Living with a host family was a great experience. It gave me more of an opportunity to practice the language, to get to the local people, and to learn to be flexible. I am very glad to have had that experience.”

“A HUGE downfall is the residential halls provided by the University. Only international students live there.”
Coursework
“Coursework will be very different from Beloit. Being lecture-based, good note taking skills are required. There is little supervision – it is up to you to be responsible for your education.”

“The quality of the instruction was poor though other students might have had better experiences. However, you will learn an incredible amount if you are self-motivated and talk to your professors, observe what goes on around you at the university, and explore the academic resources available to you.”

Workload
“I had lots of free time. I had lots of free time even though I had to read lots of books because I had only 1 paper for each class and they were a lot shorter than what I do at Beloit. It was tough getting used to not having other assignments.”

from the same study abroad site: “I spent almost all my time in the library working and researching. I hardly had any time to do anything other than study.”

Meeting People
“I joined the choir, and it was a great idea. Some of the [student] groups can seem a little isolationist, like they already have all the people they need. Persistence and patience are key. I did not make friends easily, it took a LOT of work. Also, having interactions – even if it is just going to the same shop every day – is important to keeping loneliness at bay.”

“Grab opportunities. I wish I’d volunteered or joined a community group to be more involved.”

On Being an American Abroad
“The disdain with which I was often greeted as an American has opened my eyes to the insidiousness of bigotry and stereotypes. It has made me less judgmental, and more proud of my native country, China.”

“I am much more aware now of how people in other countries view the U.S. and I’m more critical of the American people and culture now.”

Not-for-credit activities.
“There was nothing to do and nobody told me about any activities.”

from the same study abroad site: “The University offers many extra-curricular activities. There was a ton going on. Plus, I joined a sports team and it was a great way to meet people.”

Language
“I definitely should have spent more time studying the language before I went.”

“Even though my program did not require it, I wish I’d tried to learn some of the language before I went so I could connect better with people.”

Preparation:
“Try to read and learn as much as possible about the history, culture, people of the country before arriving there. You’ll still have plenty to learn when you get there but will feel more comfortable from the beginning.”

“I think no preparation can get you totally prepared. You’ve just got to go and do it. Still, I should have read the newspapers more before I went.”

#1 recommendation from students: “Learn as much as you can before you go.”

Beloit College Office of International Education, 8/09