

## **Guidelines for Study Abroad for International Studies Majors**

Immersive learning in a ‘foreign’ academic and cultural environment is integral to the International Studies major. This document provides guidelines for students, academic advisors, and the Office of International Education as they seek study abroad programs that best fit students’ academic needs.

Sit down with a faculty academic advisor in International Studies to discuss your learning objectives and hear their recommendations before choosing either a location or a program. Generally, students expecting to major in IS should declare the major and work with an assigned concentration advisor (or the coordinator, currently Dr. Carapico) to plan their study abroad experience.

US citizens and international citizens whose secondary education was in the United States should plan to spend at least a semester abroad. International students should consult with their faculty advisors about whether to expand their Richmond experience to include study in a ‘third’ country.

Students facing special and compelling circumstances may submit a written petition to the IS Advisory Committee requesting an alternative to the full-semester requirement, such as two consecutive summers. The faculty makes decisions on a case-by-case basis.

Consult the list of recommended programs for each concentration on the IS website <http://internationalstudies.richmond.edu/major/index.html> (click the + beside the concentration). Students in the Development and Change concentration should spend time in post-colonial or perhaps post-communist settings (i.e., outside of ‘Western’ countries). Specialists in Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America, and the Middle East normally study in those respective regions.

IS majors are encouraged to enroll in programs that place them in classrooms with citizens of the host country or region (not only peers from American universities). When possible, content courses taught in a language other than English are especially encouraged. Programs designed for Americans studying abroad may not be optimal for the International Studies major, unless the program is intensive language learning.

Courses taken abroad for transfer credit *need not* correspond to courses offered at the University of Richmond. Rather, study abroad is an opportunity to explore new perspectives and special topics. We especially encourage coursework in program-relevant subjects in the modern histories, politics, cultures, economics, societies, arts, and/or ecologies of the host country or region. Bear in mind that courses taken abroad will be approved for elective credit towards the IS major only if they complement the IS concentration. Again, the IS faculty advisor can guide course selection and provide useful parameters.

The Registrar’s Office provides a course approval form for transfer credits. Students must take this form to the chair of each relevant department (i.e. Geography, Economics) for departmental approval and then to the Coordinator of International Studies to apply specific courses to satisfy the requirements of concentrations within the IS major. (This cannot be done by email.) Pre-approval is advised; occasionally, post-approval is necessary.