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OFFICE OF UNDERGRADUATE ACADEMIC ADVISING

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THE ACADEMIC ADVISOR NEWSLETTER

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UPCOMING IMPORTANT DATES

April 15-18 - Easter Break

April 21: In Service Day

April 29: Last Day of Spring Classes

May 2-5: Finals Week

THE WORLD IS A BOOK, AND THOSE WHO DO NOT TRAVEL READ ONLY A PAGE.

St. Augustine



Travel Opportunities at Messiah

by Shannon Rogers

Are your advisees interested in studying abroad or taking a May cross cultural course? I recently sat with Katie Rousopoulos, Director of the Agape Center for Local and Global Engagement, to discuss these educational experiences. Katie shared the following tips, deadlines, and general information that will be helpful during your one on one meetings with your advisees.

Off-Campus Experiences: Semester-Long & Cross-Cultural Courses

Semester Long:

Students are required to submit an application for pre-approval one year prior to their departure date. These dates do not change year to year, and they are Dec 1 for fall term of the following year and April 1 for the following spring term. For example, students need to apply for pre-approval by April 1, 2022 to be able to study off-campus spring term 2023 or Dec 1, 2022 to study fall term 2023. Academic advisors are required to sign off on a document called "Off-Campus Study Course Approval Form" for each student. This form indicates that the courses a student takes off-campus will return as (or the equivalent of specific Messiah approved courses on their transcript. When students register for EXPR 012, an automatic 18 credit hold will be placed on their accounts. This will be adjusted to the accurate course load once the Registrar's office receives their official transcript. A full credit load (12-18 credits) is necessary and students must be in good standing with a minimum of a 2.75 GPA to participate. Students may ask their advisor for a letter of recommendation.

The Exploration of Off-Campus Study course (EXPR 010) **is required** for students who are approved to participate in a Messiah University semester-long off-campus program. The only exception is for those who have not already completed levels of 202 Chinese or 206 Spanish, French, or German *at Messiah University*. Please assist your student to plan accordingly to include this one credit course within their 18 credit semester maximum course load - otherwise it will be counted as an overload credit. This course is designed to equip students with the skills and tools needed to effectively engage and develop while living and learning cross-culturally during their semester off-campus.

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With some exceptions, semester long experiences remain the same from year to year. Internship credit is available at certain sites. All international semester-long experiences fulfill the ELI requirement, in addition to the domestic Baltimore Urban Studies program.

Cross Cultural Experiences

Cross cultural courses are 3 week, 3-credit courses that run in May and are counted as part of the spring semester. Because of this, students should take a maximum of 15 credits during the traditional spring semester (Jan. – May). Due to Cross-Cultural courses being part of the overall spring semester load, there are additional course fees for students to pay.

Cross-Cultural courses are announced in mid-March, the year prior to the experience through a mass email and on Agapés website. That is, courses announced in March 2022 run in May 2023. Each faculty leader selects their own course roster, which often includes an interview with the students. Please note that these courses fill up very quickly and students are not guaranteed a position just because they've applied. As advisors, please help students to have a back-up plan to fulfill their ELI/CC third language credit. Your faculty colleague, **Fabrizio Cilento**, serves as the faculty fellow for off-campus programs and is a great place to start if you have questions specifically about cross-cultural courses and ELI off-campus.

To ensure that the student has the educational aptitude for a semester-long or cross cultural experience, students must have a minimum GPA of 2.75 and have completed at least one full semester at Messiah before they are eligible to apply.

Summary

Benefits of these types of experiences include greater independence, competency, self-reliance and maturity having navigated and integrated into a new and different culture. International travel is a bonus on the student's resume!

The Agapé Center is the primary hub for students and faculty who have questions about off-campus credit-bearing experiences. Their [website](#) is also a great resource for both students and faculty. Please note that they also offer advising to assist students in planning for their semester away.

Setting Goals for Study Abroad Can Help Enhance Learning Outcomes



Learning Outcomes

Academic

- Discipline-specific learning
- Knowledge of another country's culture
- Language proficiency
- Career-related knowledge

Skills

- Autonomy
- Confidence
- Critical thinking skills
- Tolerance for ambiguity
- Flexibility

Awareness

- Intercultural awareness
- Awareness of global issues
- New perspective of the U.S. and its role in the world

Advice

Academic

- Encourage the student to speak the host country's language whenever possible
- Encourage an internship or field experience while abroad

Skills

- Encourage the student to gain a new skill each week
- Ask the student how they will handle conflicts caused by different beliefs

Awareness

- Encourage the student to be aware of beliefs that are different in other cultures
- Encourage the student to read local newspapers about local and global conflicts

Source Malmgren, J. (2007, December 7). *Goal-setting for study abroad learning outcomes*. NACADA. <https://nacada.ksu.edu/Resources/Academic-Advising-Today/View-Articles/Goal-Setting-for-Study-Abroad-Learning-Outcomes.aspx>