

Study Abroad Policies for Sophomores

*These policies govern all study abroad during the academic year, and contain criteria against which all applications will be evaluated by the Committee on Leaves and Privileges. Students should refer to the document **Fundamentals of Study Abroad** on the JYA website at <http://jya.vassar.edu> for more complete information.*

1. Study abroad must tangibly enhance the student's academic program of study at Vassar. It is important for academic planning that the student acquaint him/herself with the academic calendar of the foreign university in question and that he/she, if possible, provide a list of proposed courses approved by the student's advisor for the Committee on Leaves and Privileges' consideration prior to leaving.
2. Students who wish to study away for one semester only and who do not prove specific academic need with sufficient strength may be required to study away for a-semester rather than b-semester. This policy applies only to study in those countries where a- and b-semester programs are equally valid: thus, for example, as some European and Latin American universities calendars do not begin until October, one-semester programs in Europe which require enrollment in university courses may provide sufficient justification for a b-semester leave. Once your JYA term has been approved it cannot be changed without approval from the Committee on Leaves and Privileges.
3. All conditions for provisional approvals for study away must be met by the end of the sophomore year or the leave will not be granted. Provisional approvals normally will not extend into the junior year. If necessary, individual cases must be reviewed by CLP. Note that students with a grade of INC on their academic record, on academic probation, or students who are under disciplinary censure are not allowed to go JYA. If the Committee on Leaves and Privileges has granted a student permission to go JYA and the student then falls into one of the above categories, JYA status will be revoked. The student does, however, have the option of reapplying for JYA provided all the requirements stated in the guidelines are met.
4. For all School for International Training programs or other programs which include an independent study or internship as integral to the program coursework, participants should consult with the major advisor to discuss a topic and pre-participation bibliography for the Independent Study Project. Credit for Independent Study Projects will be given in consultation with the appropriate department.
5. If you desire to extend your study abroad experience beyond your approved term you must apply to the Committee on Leaves and Privileges as soon as possible, by submitting an extended coursework proposal. In addition you must notify your advisor and obtain his/her approval. Financial Aid will not be available to students applying for an extended stay once Financial Aid deliberations have concluded.
6. For non-English speaking countries where Vassar does not offer formal language instruction or requires less than two years of language study before study abroad, participants attending programs in English are required to study the language of the host country while abroad. **If the student has had no language preparation prior to study abroad, language coursework at the introductory level must be intensive. Credit is not given for one semester of introductory language unless it is intensive.**

Where the college does offer language instruction, including SILP, students planning to study abroad must demonstrate sustained interest in language acquisition while at Vassar. *Approved study abroad participants who have satisfied the minimum language requirement are expected to continue taking at least one course in the language appropriate to their study abroad plans each semester prior to departure.* In addition, where the college requires a minimum of two years of college-level language study before study abroad, all coursework abroad must be taken in the language of the host country in order for the student to receive credit. This includes France, Italy, Germany, Spain, Spanish or French-speaking Latin America and the Caribbean, Francophone Africa, Russia, China and Japan, among others.

Scientific fieldwork programs taught in English, such as the School for Field Studies, are exempt from the on-site language requirement, though Vassar may require pre-participation language coursework in some cases.

7. One year of SILP language courses regularly offered at Vassar-- Hindi, Korean, Portuguese and Swedish--is most often required for study abroad in India, Korea, Brazil, Portugal and Sweden respectively. *Please note: as introductory SILP courses*

are full-year, students interested in study in these countries must begin language instruction in September of either the freshman or the sophomore year.

8. Approved and provisionally approved study abroad students may not register for courses at Vassar for the term(s) applied for, nor will they be assigned housing. Those who choose to withdraw from JYA status the semester prior to expected departure are required to do so before the beginning of registration in order to be assigned a draw number and housing for the following term.

9. All letter grades are recorded on the Vassar transcript for all programs. However non-Vassar post-matriculation transfer work, is not included in the Vassar grade-point average. These grades appear with an asterisk preceding the grade. Only grades of C or better will transfer for credit.

10. Double majors must have the support of the Department Chair and/or the major advisor of both major departments. Double major request forms are available in the Study Abroad Office.

11. Applying for JYA precludes applications for the Twelve College Exchange, the Historically Black College Exchange, Washington Semester programs or other academic leaves of absence during the same period.

12. ***If you do not have a passport you should start the application process right away.*** Recent changes in the requirements for re-entry into the US have caused delays in the processing times for issuing passports. You can check the State Department website at <http://www.state.gov> for expected wait times. If you have a passport, check the expiration date to make sure it is valid for six months beyond the date you expect to return. Passport applications can be made at the Passport Information Office in Poughkeepsie located in the County Office Building, 22 Market Street (486-2120), or at the Poughkeepsie Post Office, corner of Mansion and Market Streets (452-3421). The Arlington Post Office Branch does NOT provide this service. In other localities ask your local Post Office where passports can be obtained or check the State Department website at http://travel.state.gov/passport/passport_1738.html

Please note: All students attending a Vassar study abroad program, i.e., Vassar-Wesleyan in Madrid, Vassar-Wesleyan in Paris, ECCO Program in Bologna, and the Vassar Program in St. Petersburg must submit a photocopy of the picture page of their passport before leaving campus in May if you are studying abroad in the fall or for the entire academic year. Students studying abroad with these programs in the spring must submit the photocopy to the Study Abroad Office when you return to campus in the fall. We must have the photocopy in order to obtain airline tickets for you.

13. Most foreign countries require that students obtain the appropriate visa for studying in their country. In most cases, it is your responsibility to obtain the necessary visa. You must have a valid passport before you can begin the visa application process. The requirements for student visas vary from country to country so it is suggested that you **allow sufficient time for processing your visa application. This cannot be a last minute procedure.** Most foreign consular representatives are located in principal cities and, in many cases a student may be required to obtain a visa from the consular office in the area of his/her residence. A link to the Department of State Foreign Entry Requirements is on the menu of the JYA web site. Another web site, <http://www.embassy.org>, provides additional information.

14. Students who wish to cancel their plans to study abroad may return to campus up to the first day of classes each semester. Such a decision should be made with care, however, and will require consultation with one's family, the program Director, The Dean of Studies Office, the Office of International Programs and major advisor at Vassar. Late cancellations may entail difficulties in course registration, financial aid and, perhaps, housing, which the Office of International Programs, the Dean of Studies Office and the Office of Residential Life will do their best to alleviate. There is also no guarantee that the programs themselves will make full refunds, nor that credit will be awarded for partially completed coursework.

15. If you choose to transfer schools after completing a term or year of study abroad, any Vassar Scholarship that you received as part of your JYA financial aid package will revert to a loan and must be repaid to the college.