



## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)



The decision to study abroad is an important one, and the Office for Study Abroad encourages students to spend time in preparing for this exciting living-learning international experience. Whether you are studying abroad for a week, a month, a semester or a whole year - the Office for Study Abroad will help prepare you and support your learning adventure. We encourage students to share information about their program with their family, as well as the helpful information found on our website.

### General Questions

#### **Why should I study abroad?**

Study abroad gives you a unique opportunity to add a global dimension to your education by gaining new perspectives on a variety of people, places and topics. Students should select a program that meets their academic and professional goals, but also one that feels like a good fit. We encourage students to select a program that they love and not just a program where their friends are going. Studying abroad is an amazing opportunity to meet new friends from both Maryville and around the world. In addition, most study abroad students rate their experience as one of the highlights of their college career and find that they undergo significant personal and intellectual growth during their time abroad.

#### **When can I study abroad?**

Students can participate in our faculty-led programs every summer. For semester-long programs, students must be at least a sophomore, but some programs require junior standing. Although many semester abroad students are juniors, students may also study abroad during the spring of their sophomore year or fall and/or spring of their senior year. Students interested in semester or year-long programs should contact the Office of Study Abroad at least 6 months in advance to begin the application process.

#### **What is the family's role in the planning process?**

Participation in Pre-Departure Orientation sessions are important to learn more about any study abroad program you choose. Students must attend but parents, and families are encouraged to attend these as well. Families can assist by understanding the process should be managed by the student. This will foster independence, and their feeling of ownership of the entire education abroad experience. Encourage your student to trust the local infrastructure of on-site coordinators and faculty leaders to help with the many challenges—small and large—which are part of any study abroad experience.

#### **Is there a foreign language requirement?**

Maryville's study abroad programs are all taught in English, even in non-English speaking countries.

#### **How comparable will the semester/year-long host institution be compared to Maryville?**

Most foreign institutions are quite different than their American counterparts in areas such as registration procedures, teaching and grading styles, accommodations, access to technology, and campus facilities. Oftentimes, these differences may seem “stricter” and/or less forgiving, but these differences do not indicate a lack of quality. Students should embrace these changes, learn from such differences, and resist the urge to make comparisons. Our partner institutions in *Florence and Oxford* are very familiar with hosting Maryville students and *are our preferred destinations* for semester and year-long study abroad.

## Financial Questions

### What will it cost to study abroad?

The cost for study abroad depends on the program. The costs for each program are listed every year and details what is and is not included. Most costs for our faculty-led summer programs are paid to Maryville university unless otherwise stipulated. Semester and year-long program costs differ by host institution.

Additional spending money can vary depending upon the country and city where a student is studying, and how much individual students spend on their own. Spending factors to consider can include weekend and other additional travel, shopping, or eating out and/or grocery shopping. These costs are typically not included in the program costs.

An estimate of total costs is provided for each program to assist students in planning.

### What if I must withdraw from the program?

In the event that a student must withdraw from their program, the student should contact the Office for Study Abroad immediately. A cancellation policy will apply, and tuition and fees may be retained depending on the program.

### Is there financial aid for study abroad?

Students participating in Maryville semester and yearlong programs may be eligible for Maryville, federal, and state financial aid. If a student receives financial aid, we suggest they consult a Financial Aid specialist by emailing [SSC@maryville.edu](mailto:SSC@maryville.edu) with “**Study Abroad**” in the subject line prior to going abroad.

Maryville heavily reduces summer study abroad tuition because no institutional scholarships are available for summer study abroad. However, you can use student and parent loans for our 6-credit hours programs. Since every student’s situation is unique, it is important to begin with contacting a Financial Aid specialist by emailing [SSC@maryville.edu](mailto:SSC@maryville.edu) with “**Study Abroad**” in the subject line.

Students enrolled in study abroad programs billed directly by Maryville may use their 529 savings plan in the same manner as usual (i.e., contact your plan administrator and request funds to be sent to Maryville). For programs that are not billed by Maryville, students should contact their 529 plan administrator. Students enrolled in a study abroad program that requires payment directly to the host institution or program provider may request their distribution to be sent directly to the host institution to cover qualifying educational expenses, depending on their plan administrator's guidance.

### How is banking handled abroad?

In most cases, you will find it most convenient to use credit and ATM cards. These cards will allow access to funds from a home account and make purchases abroad. MasterCard and Visa are the most commonly accepted credit cards. Before students leave home, it is advisable to check with their bank or credit card company about fees for withdrawals and purchases made abroad. Additionally, banks such as Bank of America have branches overseas that will not charge fees. It is recommended that students arrive in-country with some U.S. currency in case there are issues accessing funds in the first few days.

## Health and Safety Questions

### How safe is study abroad?

Our office works closely with our partner institutions to provide a safe and welcoming environment for all of our students. While no part of the world is crime-free (including the U.S.), we prepare students for

common safety issues during the orientation process at Maryville and our study abroad sites. We strive to make students aware of the resources which will prove helpful in the event of an emergency.

### **What happens if I become ill while abroad?**

Health insurance is provided to Maryville students studying abroad. Students should alert their program leader or the host institution director if they become ill so they can get immediate attention.

### **What should I do if I have health concerns before or while abroad?**

If you have a chronic physical or psychological condition that requires ongoing treatment, please consult with your physician about the prospect of studying abroad. If on medication, consult with the physician and insurance company regarding the type of care needed abroad, and the best way to continue consultations. Health and medical forms are required for all study abroad students to provide necessary approvals and information in case a health concern arises.

### **What should I do if I have difficulty adjusting while studying abroad?**

All students experience some degree of [culture shock](#) while they are overseas, although many are not able to immediately recognize it as such. Common symptoms include homesickness, stress, frustration, and loneliness. These kinds of feelings are very typical, and they usually subside with time and effort. Although adjustment to differences in language, accommodations, social norms, academics, and more can be frustrating and challenging, it is exactly this type of adaptation process that makes an education abroad experience such a rewarding educational and independence-building endeavor. Remember to expect these feelings and approach all situations with an open mind. This will help minimize the shock once upon arrival. The pre-departure orientation will also address culture shock to help students feel more at ease before and during the study abroad program.

It is also important to contact our office to discuss any last-minute questions/concerns before and while abroad. Knowing the details will help students feel more confident when they arrive in an unfamiliar place. That said, remember to embrace uncertainty and cultural differences. Most students are bound to encounter some type of unforeseen obstacle along the way and we will be here to provide support when needed.

## **Academic Questions**

### **What are the requirements for studying abroad?**

Maryville University requires that all students have *at least* a 2.5 GPA or above. However, some of our partner institutions require a higher GPA, so please consult each program's information on our site for requirements.

### **What kind of classes can I take abroad?**

Our summer, faculty-led programs offer a wide variety of coursework, but it is important to understand that the classes offered vary widely from one program to the next. Some programs are more focused on general education, while others offer only degree-specific classes. Semester and yearlong programs offer courses based on the host institution. It is important to speak with your academic advisor about how study abroad can count towards your academic and professional goals.

### **What are study abroad classes and grades like compared to those on campus?**

Our summer, faculty-led courses are taught “in the streets”. We want you to spend your summer program learning while experiencing the sights and sounds of your study abroad destination. This means you will be spending most of your class time traveling to different places at your site and learning from your faculty while you are actually touring your city or on excursions. Most summer assignments are done

before or after the actual time abroad, because we want you to experience as much as you can during your stay.

Semester and yearlong programs are more like studying on campus. You will be a student at your host institution and subject to their teaching and learning practices. However, grading procedures are not the same in all countries. In many programs, you will not have ongoing assessments, but rather will be assessed at the end of the semester (or year) in the form of a cumulative exam or paper.

All grades earned abroad are translated to equivalent grades at Maryville and the grades are calculated into the student's GPA.

### **Can students with disabilities study abroad?**

The Office for Study Abroad strives to accommodate every student. Please contact the Director for Study Abroad to discuss specific needs.

## **Advising and Support Questions**

### **How does the Office for Study Abroad help students prepare to go abroad?**

We require all study abroad students to attend Pre-Departure Orientation sessions prior to departure. At a Pre-Departure Orientation, we discuss topics such as travel preparations, health and safety, academic preparedness, and cultural adjustment. Students are expected to attend, and parents and families are encouraged to attend.

### **What support services will I have while abroad?**

On-site support services vary by program. Virtually all host institutions provide an orientation for newly arrived students. These orientation programs may vary in length, ranging from a few hours to a number of days, and are meant to provide you with an introduction to the institution, the culture, and the city in which they are located. Students will receive contact details for the appropriate contacts prior to departure or upon arrival at their international institution.

## **Additional Questions?**

### **Please contact the Office for Study Abroad:**

Alden W. Craddock, Ph.D.  
Director, Office for Study Abroad  
Maryville University  
270 Gander Hall  
St. Louis, MO 63141

P: 314.529.6687

F: 314.529.9384

E: [acraddock@maryville.edu](mailto:acraddock@maryville.edu)