



External Study Programs

Overview

External Study programs are semester or year-long academic studies away from Charlotte Latin School that provide students with an opportunity to experience learning in a new setting or environment outside the traditional four walls of a classroom. These programs offer the chance to dig deeper into specific interests, cultivate leadership skills, become more independent, and meet students from all over the world. Semester programs are often transformative experiences, but at the same time are not for everyone and as such require thoughtful planning in advance. The information below should serve as a guide to help students and families decide if a semester program is right for them, and lay out the steps to apply.

Intent to Apply

Students interested in applying to any External Study program must submit an [Intent to Apply form](#) to the Global Studies Office by January 1 of their 10th grade year. In order to ensure that students develop a critical base of skills in foundational and prerequisite courses, we do not support participation in External Study programs prior to 11th grade. Furthermore, it is strongly preferred that students who choose to participate in a semester-long External Study program do so during the Spring of 11th grade. The Head of Upper School and Upper School Deans will consider interested students, and any students approved for participation will be encouraged to apply directly to the External Study program of their choice. Students should not submit applications to External Study programs until approved by the Upper School Administration.

Because a semester or year away can alter the traditional sequence of courses before and after the experience, students must think ahead. As a part of the Intent to Apply process, students must meet with a group to include the Academic Dean and the student's academic mentor and college counselor. As part of this meeting, the group will construct a Graduation Requirements planning chart. On this document they will list the courses they have already taken at CLS, those they hope to take through the External Study program, as well as courses they hope to take upon return to CLS. This intentional process will allow the students to consider how the program fits within their course of study.

Charlotte Latin School permits up to a maximum of four students to attend an approved External Study program each year. The Head of Upper School and Academic Dean determine eligibility based on criteria that vary within each group of applicants, including fit as well as students' academic and extracurricular programs and interests.



Notifying the School

Once a student has been accepted into an External Study program and chosen to enroll, the student's parent/guardian must notify the Upper School Academic Dean via email no later than April 30.

Planning Coursework

External Study programs provide students an opportunity to explore a wide variety of interests away from CLS, but they can also affect a student's course of study. Depending on the semester in which a student participates, the sequence of coursework at CLS may require adjustment. Experience has indicated that a spring semester away allows both the student and the school greater flexibility in effecting a smooth departure and return to our school.

Each External Study program offers different academic opportunities, and while many of them strive to offer coursework comparable to that of their sending schools, Charlotte Latin will determine course credit on a case by case basis. Additionally, in some cases, summer work or online work may be appropriate before, during, or after a semester program to ensure continuity in a course of study. Students choosing to participate in a semester program will work closely with the Upper School Academic Dean and any other necessary faculty to plan courses and graduation requirements (see Intent to Apply section, above). The Head of Upper School will make the final determination on approved courses.

Selecting a Program

There are numerous domestic and international programs available to high school students, each addressing specific interests and areas of study. Based on their academic rigor and general alignment with our own academic programming, Charlotte Latin has reviewed and approved the following External Study programs for consideration.

[Alzar School](#)

This Idaho-based program emphasizes outdoor education as well as leadership and Spanish language development; for 4-6 weeks of this program students travel to Chile for classes, language immersion and cultural exploration.

[High Mountain Institute](#)

Students are challenged to embrace both rigorous academics and experiential learning in this Colorado-based program. This program, formerly known as the Rocky Mountain Semester, has a rigorous academic program, is wilderness-based and focuses on students' connections to the natural world, community and leadership skills. The program spends six weeks on campus and six weeks doing wilderness expeditions in Colorado and Utah.

CHARLOTTE LATIN GLOBAL STUDIES

[The Island School](#)

Based in the Bahamas, this program gives students hands-on opportunities to learn about ecological science. Students are asked to confront authentic challenges, engage with the people and environment of The Bahamas and apply knowledge learned to real-world problems. Students participate in daily exercise, SCUBA diving, and island exploration and learn leadership and teamwork skills. This curriculum is more experiential and island-based so it may require more intentional course planning before and after the program than others.

[The Mountain School](#)

This school in rural Vermont combines academics and farm work - when classes aren't in session, students and faculty work together to maintain the school's farm, including feeding animals, planting and harvesting.

[The Outdoor Academy](#)

At The Outdoor Academy, we expand beyond the four walls of a traditional high school. Hands-on, experiential academics with real-world applications let our students get their hands dirty and engage in learning that is truly meaningful. Here, your classes will always be small and personalized. Your teachers will get to know you both on campus and on the backpacking trail. And you will never spend your days just staring at a screen. Instead, your honors-level classes will prepare you not only for college, but for life.

[School for Ethics and Global Leadership \(SEGL\)](#)

Located in Washington, DC, this program uses current national and international events as case studies to introduce ethical and critical thinking, as well as develop leadership skills such as public speaking, debate, constructive activism, and an understanding of group dynamics. This school also runs a program in Johannesburg, South Africa and a summer semester in London, England.

[School Year Abroad \(SYA\)](#)

School Year Abroad offers a year-long study program in France, Italy, and Spain. In France and Spain, students take several classes in the local language; in Italy most classes are conducted in English. All students live in a homestay during their time abroad.