

Student Education Abroad Handbook 2025

Introduction & Background

College of the Canyons (COC), via the Office of International Services & Programs (ISP), offers Education Abroad programs. These programs include, but are not limited to, enrollment in courses abroad and other learning activities outside the participants' home country. It is very important that students know that **this document provides guidance in ISP's process for Education Abroad, and it does not guarantee acceptance into any programs, nor does it imply that any scholarship or other funds will be made available to students.**

ISP firmly believes in Education Abroad. In the fall of 2018, we began to build partnerships with universities to develop programs for COC students who wish to study outside of the United States. The primary function of Education Abroad programs is to provide students with international academic experiences that may or may not earn them college credit.

Program Types

Exchange Program

A program involving the reciprocal exchange of students, usually limited to **1 student per semester**, per mutual agreement details. Spaces for any given exchange program are limited, and the numbers may vary from term to term. Exchange programs may have a built-in scholarship, given that accepted students in this type of program will not be responsible for paying tuition at the host institution. However, **students are responsible for other fees** such as airfare, housing, health insurance, associated academic costs, etc. Credit transfer back to COC is possible but **not guaranteed**. To summarize, exchange programs entail the following:

- 1:1 student exchange with partner universities abroad
- Duration of stay abroad lasts one semester or less
- Tuition-free (subject to fees)
- Possible credit transfer back to COC

Partnership Program

An academic program that takes place outside of the United States, lasting **one semester or less**. Generally, **COC students will pay tuition/fees** for programs with partner institutions, with possible reduction of tuition/fees that will vary for each institution. Some partners offer scholarships that you apply for after you have been accepted to the program. **Students are responsible for other costs** such as airfare, housing, living expenses, health insurance, etc. Credit transfer back to COC is possible but **not guaranteed**. To summarize, partnership programs include the following:

- Functions similarly to an Exchange Program (see above), but without the built-in tuition reduction/waiver that is generally included with those programs
- Possible reduction of tuition/fees
- Duration of stay abroad lasts between 10 days and one semester (Winter/Summer Abroad programs are included here)
- Possible credit transfer

Transfer Abroad

Transfer to an institution outside of the United States **to complete a bachelor's degree**. Students apply directly to the university to be considered for admission and have the possibility of receiving **reduced tuition and/or scholarships** because of a partnership with COC. Some institutions participate in the U.S. Title IV program, allowing students the ability to use Federal student loans to finance their education abroad. However, grant-based and work-study programs are typically not eligible for use abroad. Students can choose from institutions that offer a **U.S. degree**, a **foreign degree** only, or a **degree with dual recognition** (meaning students earn a foreign degree that is also recognized by U.S. accrediting bodies). Options for transfer abroad include American universities abroad, foreign universities, or a hybrid of the two. To summarize, students who take part in transfer abroad programs:

- May complete their bachelor's degree outside the U.S.
- May transfer their COC credits to a partner institution, subject to the partner institution's discretion
- May work, subject to local rules & regulations

Application Process

Applying to a university abroad can be overwhelming. The process is described below in general terms, as it will differ from institution to institution. At your appointment with our Education Abroad Specialist, you will work on setting a schedule with deadlines for each step.

Academic Eligibility:

For education abroad Exchange and Partnership Programs, applicants must have a minimum of 2.75 cumulative GPA at the time of their application and be expected to remain in good standing before departure, among other requirements. Eligibility may be lost if their GPA falls and they are placed on academic probation, or a student conduct check reveals serious misconduct. If students lose eligibility, they will be subject to withdrawal from the program. The College will not refund any expenses incurred by the student.

Eligibility Requirements:

- At least 18 years of age
- Complete at least one year's worth of credit (30 credits) at College of the Canyons before travel
- Completed at least one semester as a full-time student before travel
- Making normal progress toward completion of an associate degree or credit-based transfer program
- Following a clear and well-defined academic plan
- In good academic standing
- Approved by ISP, and
- Accepted by the relevant partner institution

*Exceptions to any of these requirements can be made only with written permission from the Dean of ISP.

Application Steps:

1. Schedule a meeting with the ISP office to review application.
2. Create a budget and research funding options.
3. Meet with an academic advisor to complete a comprehensive education plan.
4. If selected, schedule an interview with ISP.
5. If recommended by ISP, complete application materials for the program at university abroad.

Application Materials:

- Essay of 500-1000 words. At the top, include name, student ID #, and COC email address. The essay must answer the following questions:
 - What program are you interested in?
 - Why are you interested in this program?
 - How will this experience impact your academic or career goals?
- Financial statement proving that the student has enough USD to cover the program's cost.
- Affidavit of Financial Support form that indicates who will cover the cost of the program.
- Copy of passport.

Academics

The ISP Office can assist the student in finding a program and identifying course options. **Please note that not all courses abroad are eligible for COC credit, which is especially true if the student takes courses that do not align with their academic program (major) at the College.** If COC does not offer a similar course or the course is upper division, there is a high probability that the class will not be eligible for COC credit. If students take classes that are not eligible for credit at COC, they are encouraged to seek credit at their transfer institutions. In consultation with an academic counselor, applicants should present a list of courses they wish to take abroad and complete a comprehensive education plan. This plan will better inform students if the classes they intend to take overseas have the potential to receive credit at COC. Students pursuing a program at an institution abroad without access to a U.S. transcript must have their courses translated academically by a credible company from the [National Association of Credential Evaluation Services \(NACES\)](#). Ensure that the translation includes the identification of upper-division courses.

Evidence of Work

Students interested in receiving credit for courses taken abroad **must bring back syllabi or course descriptions of some kind, as well as completed coursework after their term abroad.** Coursework can include exams, papers, and projects. These documents are vital in case there is a question about awarding COC credit for education abroad.

Navigating Academic Cultures

Academic cultures can be vastly different abroad than they are in the United States. One example is that the student may not receive a syllabus. Other differences can include formal vs. informal interactions, teaching methodologies & assignments, appropriate classroom attire, library etiquette, plagiarism, and grades. It is encouraged for students to research the academic culture of the country of their education abroad program.

Students' Responsibility

Education abroad can be a wonderful and enriching experience but can also have a major impact on students' well-being, health, and safety before and during the program. Students should:

- Consider their health and other personal circumstances when applying for or accepting a place in a program.
- Assume responsibility for all the necessary elements for their personal preparation for the program and participate fully in any info sessions and orientations.
- Be sensitive to local customs and cultural norms in the host country.
- Obey all laws of the host country, including all health department guidelines.
- Follow program policy while abroad and keep program staff at the host institution informed of whereabouts and well-being.
- Meet with a financial advisor if they qualify to receive Federal financial aid to cover program costs.

Each participant must review and execute the "Release and Waiver of Liability, Assumption of Risk and Indemnification Agreement" prior to participate in any of COC's education abroad programs specified herein.

Note that the College is not liable for any costs incurred in the process of seeking or applying for education abroad.

Canyons Promise Students

If students are enrolled in the Canyons Promise program, they cannot use the financial benefits for education abroad. The program provides incoming first-time college students for the fall semester the opportunity to attend College of the Canyons tuition-free for their first two years (fall & spring semesters only). Students can pause their participation in the program to participate in education abroad and can resume upon return to COC. Students are responsible for communicating directly with Canyons Promise program staff to complete the necessary steps needed to pause and restart their participation in the program.

Preparing to Travel

Passports

Students must have a passport that is valid for six months after the end of their Education Abroad program. If their passport expires within six months of their return to the U.S., they will need to apply for a new passport. Information on the passport application process can be found [here](#). Students should note that applications & renewals can take weeks and should plan accordingly.

Visas

Some programs require a student to have a visa. This requirement depends on program location and duration of stay. The ISP Office will help students identify whether they need a visa and may guide them through the process if necessary.

Planning in Times of Uncertainty

Review the U.S. State Department country profile pages and travel advisory pages for the program country. Students should consider enrolling in the U.S. State Department's [Smart Traveler program](#), which allows the U.S. Embassy to contact them quickly in case of emergency. Students should understand that host institutions, cities, or countries may institute travel restrictions at any time.

Students should book flights once there is a very high level of certainty that they will indeed attend the program. They need to consider purchasing travel insurance or a fully refundable ticket. Students must understand the airline's refund policy before buying a ticket.

Read and understand the host institution's refund policies if students withdraw from the program before or after the start date.

Please note students may need a local phone or a local SIM card to use some apps or make phone calls in some countries.

ISP Office Contact Information

Office location: Building X-6, Valencia Campus

Hours: Mon-Fri, 8am-4:30pm

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