

The Role of the Advisor in Study Abroad

Study abroad students are required to meet with their faculty advisor prior to submitting the Puget Sound Application for study abroad. This handout describes the purpose of meeting with your advisor, and will help you get the most from your planning for a term abroad.

Which advisor do I meet with?

You need to meet with your primary advisor in the department of your major. If you have two or more majors, you need to meet with the advisor from each major department. If your assigned advisor is on sabbatical and you haven't been re-assigned to another department advisor, you should meet with the chair of your major department.

Additionally, it is a good idea to meet with the department chair in your minor department if you hope to earn minor credit abroad.

Additionally, if you plan to apply to a health profession graduate program following graduation from Puget Sound, you should meet first with the Health Professions Advisor (currently Joyce Tamashiro in the Biology Department).

What if I don't have an advisor in my major department yet?

It's best to find an advisor in your major department now and before you apply to go abroad, and then meet with that new advisor. If that's not possible, you should meet with the department chair in your major department and also your primary advisor.

What questions should I discuss with my advisor?

Write a list of your own questions before you meet with your advisor. These are the kinds of questions that might be helpful to discuss with your advisor:

1. From your experience, how might study abroad be useful to my long-term academic and vocational goals? Do you know of any study abroad programs that would be especially helpful to my career goals or as I prepare for graduate school?
2. Are there study abroad programs that are *preferred* by my major/minor department? Are there some programs that are *not* approved by my major/minor department to satisfy major/minor requirements?
3. Which major/minor requirements should be taken on campus? Can I transfer major/minor requirements from my selected study abroad program? If so, which requirements might be transferable? Is there a limit to the number of major/minor classes I can transfer from abroad?

4. Is there a preferred semester to study abroad in terms of completing my major/minor? Are there particular major/minor requirements taught only in fall semester at UPS, or spring semester at UPS, and which affect the timing of going abroad?
5. Which study abroad program(s) have been best for students in this department in previous semesters, and why?
6. Are their particular study abroad classes which have been approved for credit for previous students from this department? Are there particular *kinds* of classes that might be beneficial to take abroad? How can my course selection abroad add *depth* to the major/minor classes I take on campus? How can courses I take abroad add *breadth* to the major/minor classes I take on campus?
7. Is it better to take classes abroad that cannot be taken on campus, or is it better to take courses abroad that are similar to courses taught on campus? Why?
8. *Must* I earn specific major, core or other degree requirements abroad in order to graduate 'on time'? How many major/minor/core/degree requirements would I need to transfer from study abroad to graduate 'on time'? Will I be able to graduate 'on time' and also go abroad if I only earn elective credit while abroad? (Be sure your advisor knows which semester you hope to graduate. What you mean by 'graduating on time' needs to be clear for your advisor.)
9. What extra-curricular (non-classroom) experiences abroad should I take advantage of in order to add breadth and/or depth to my academic study at UPS?
10. From what you know of me both in and outside the classroom, am I good candidate to study abroad? (Some students have closer relationships with advisors than others. If your advisor understands your personal qualities and family, health, work or other non-academic issues in your life, your advisor may have helpful comments about whether or not you should take a semester or year abroad.)

NOTE:

Official transfer credit decisions will be made by the university's Transfer Evaluator (Kathleen Campbell) in the Registrar's Office, Jones 13. Faculty advisors can give you good academic and vocational advice, but final transfer credit determinations for any particular study abroad class will be provided in writing from the Transfer Evaluator after you submit your Study Abroad Course Evaluation Request form.

Some of the questions above can also be answered by the Transfer Credit Evaluator (Lindsay Secrist) in the Registrar's Office and by the Study Abroad Advisor (Carmen Eyssautier, Allyson Lindsley) and International Programs Director (Roy Robinson) in the International Programs Office. Your faculty/department advisor will have unique information, experience and expertise not available to these staff members.