



Parents' Guide to Study Away

The Global Opportunities Program (GO) prepares students to study away by providing advice about available opportunities and the academic, financial and cultural issues involved. While your student is an excellent resource to discuss their study away program of choice, we understand parents have many questions for the GO Program. Below is a list of the most frequently asked questions by parents of study away students.

Health and Safety

We hold our students' health and safety in the highest regard. All programs provide detailed information about required immunizations as well as local health and safety conditions. Security is a priority in both the accommodations and classroom environments. Along with the thorough review of health and safety concerns conducted by the study away program, the students are informed of how they may ensure their health and safety while participating in the program.

Q: Will their health insurance cover them abroad?

A: Please check with your health insurance provider to learn of the extent of coverage abroad. Many study abroad program providers automatically enroll students into their insurance plan which covers them while abroad. If your student will not have health insurance in their time away and it is not included in their program, they must alert our office. We will enroll them in GeoBlue, which specializes in health insurance for students abroad. The fee is \$256 per semester.

Q: Will my student need to receive any immunizations?

A: Immunization requirements vary by country. Your student will be informed from their program what immunizations are necessary for their particular locations.

Academic

Q: Will the courses my student takes count for credit at SU?

A: Yes. While studying away is a personally and professionally rewarding experience, it is academically focused. We want to ensure that students graduate on time.

GO Long students complete a pre-approval process the semester before they depart to designate if the courses they take will count for major, minor, Central Curriculum credits or as an elective. Department Head approval is necessary for the courses to fulfill major/minor requirements. SU will transfer only the number of credits they earn (e.g. exactly the number of credits that appear on the transcript) in courses where a C- or higher is earned. Transfer credit will not affect a student's SU GPA.

Q: How do students register for the next semester at SU while they are studying away?

A: GO Long students will be e-mailed to remind them of the deadline and to give them information on registering. A copy of the course schedule is available on the Registrar's SharePoint/MySU site for them to access. All students need to have their advisor lift their registration hold and then register through WebSU before the deadline.

GO Short programs are Susquehanna courses taught by Susquehanna faculty/staff so the credit is built directly into the program.

Financial

Q: What is the financial impact of study away?

A: For all approved GO Long programs, SU charges SU tuition and students continue to have access to state and federal aid, as well as Susquehanna need-based and merit aid. Students are billed the program's room and board fees in place of SU room and board. These costs vary by program. The GO Program also has a list of study abroad scholarships available. An Estimated Expenses form will be distributed to the study away student the semester before departure with an itemized list of expenses for budget purposes. They will receive two copies: one which will be submitted to Student Financial Services and the other is for them to keep and share with parents. We recommend discussing this with your student to confirm program expenses.

Students participating in a GO Short programs and Go Your Own Way projects to complete the cross-cultural requirement are eligible for need-based aid, based on a completed FAFSA and Expected Family Contribution. Student Financial Services notifies students of these grant awards which are a percentage of the cost of whichever GO Short program they choose.

Q: How does billing work?

A: Students on approved GO Long programs are billed by Susquehanna University: SU's tuition, activity and health fees, the amount of housing charged by the study away program and board (where applicable, some programs do not have set costs for board and students pay as they go). Fees are billed to your Susquehanna student account on the regular SU billing schedule. Additional costs that are not billed by SU include airfare, students' personal expenses, textbooks and any additional program fees for special courses or supplies. Students are responsible for paying their application fee to the program, a deposit once they are accepted and a housing deposit (if applicable) to their program organizer. The program deposit will be credited to your Susquehanna student account at the time of SU billing. The housing deposit will be refunded by the program following its completion.

When a student is accepted to a GO Short program and confirms participation, a non-refundable deposit and the rest of the program fee is placed on the student's Susquehanna account at that time. If need-based aid has been awarded by Student Financial Services, it will appear as a credit on the account.

Housing

Q: Where will my student live while they study away?

A: Housing options vary widely; students may live with carefully screened host families, university residence halls or apartments or housing managed by their program provider. Students may live with other Americans, international students or students from the host country. The semester prior to departure, students will inform their program provider of their housing preferences.

Q: Where will my student live when they return to SU?

A: The semester prior to departure, students are informed of their options and how to communicate their preferences to SU's Office of Residence Life which assists students in securing housing for their return. Students living off-campus should be aware of their lease agreements. If the terms of a lease are for one year, students are responsible for arranging for someone to replace them. Students will not be able to find a replacement for their lease from a student living on-campus as the Office of Residence Life will NOT release students from on-campus housing mid-year for such an arrangement.

The GO House is an exciting new option in Residence Life, designed for students who are returning from study abroad or preparing to participate in a GO program.

General Questions

Q: My student has many obligations that do not allow them to be away for a full semester. What will count toward the requirement?

A: **The GO requirement is flexible so that it can accommodate students' needs.** Students may participate on a Susquehanna GO Short Program (two or more weeks, led by Susquehanna faculty/staff), a traditional semester study away program, an internship or volunteer work in a cross-cultural setting, or even an independent proposal may be approved to count toward the GO requirement. Students can design what they want to gain from this requirement. They should think about what will be the best experience for them academically, professionally and personally.

Q: My student has never been out of the country. What immigration documents do they need?

A: All students traveling abroad will require a passport. Their passport should be valid six months after their return date from study abroad. Visa requirements vary by country and length of stay, and students will be informed of the necessary documents by their program. We highly recommend that once a student has been accepted to a program, they should not delay in applying for or renewing their passport. Visas may be obtained no earlier than 90 days before departure; students should begin their application process as soon as possible.

Q: Are there GO program options in the United States and North America?

A: Yes, there is currently a GO Short program to Hawaii in the U.S. and additional domestic programs are in development. Several students have completed GO Your Own Way projects in the U.S. and there are limited GO Long options available that may count for some students.

Q: What kind of student support is available abroad?

A: All SU and SU partner programs provide an excellent level of student support, including staff on-site who are knowledgeable about the city and region they oversee. Students are required to participate in

orientation at SU prior to departure and while on-site. On-site orientation will give them a deep understanding of academic and cultural differences as well as practical and logistical concerns.

Q: Can I visit my GO Long student while they are abroad?

A: We suggest discussing with your student when their preference for a visit would be. For the most part, we recommend that family visits do not occur until the mid-way point of a student's experience. This allows your student to get adjusted in their new setting and they will be able to share with you places they've enjoyed, sites that are significant to them and introduce you to their new friends. Please note, some programs do not allow for overnight guests in students' accommodations. Visiting students on a GO Short program would not be possible.

Q: How can I communicate with my student while they are abroad?

A: We suggest establishing a plan for regular phone or e-mail contact. However, daily communication can delay the process for your student to adjust in their new culture. There are a variety of ways to stay in touch:

- Cell phones: Most students purchase pay-as-you-go cell phones while abroad. In many countries, there is no fee for incoming calls but outgoing international calls are typically expensive.
- Skype or Google Video Chat: Both programs support video chat. Skype allows users to make telephone calls over the Internet to other Skype users free of charge and to landlines and cell phones for a fee. Google's video chat is free of charge to Gmail users. See www.skype.com or www.gmail.com/videochat for more information.
- Mail: Your student will be informed of their mailing address and will be able to tell you where and how packages and mail should be sent.

Please note that Internet access varies by location, in many locations Internet access may not be as reliable as it is in the U.S. Some programs do not have free internet in the accommodations but it is available at either the university or the program's study center.

How to Stay Involved

Talk with your student:

Through the GO Program and their program organizer, your student has been provided with the necessary information regarding application procedures, applying for a passport and/or visa (if applicable), housing, course transfer, etc. Consult with your student about questions you have about the program.

Visit the GO Program website:

Our Web site provides further information about the programs.

<http://www.susqu.edu/academics/StudyAway.asp>

Ask questions:

While your student should be your first contact for information about their study away plans, if you have questions our office can assist you with, please contact us!

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