

## **Saint Joseph's University Semester Abroad Policy**

Please be advised that starting with the fall 2003 semester, the following policy will be in effect for Saint Joseph's University students who wish to study abroad and receive credit toward their Saint Joseph's degree. Under this policy, students will remain registered at SJU and pay SJU full-time, day tuition plus a \$100 Continuing Registration Fee for each semester they will be studying abroad.

Students will be considered enrolled at Saint Joseph's University while abroad and will be allowed to receive his/her entire financial aid package. Saint Joseph's University will then pay the overseas program for the tuition portion of the program. Students will be responsible for all non-tuition fees associated with the program they will be attending. Please note that for some Saint Joseph's University affiliated programs, students may be required to pay other fees to Saint Joseph's University first and Saint Joseph's University will then forward these fees to the program sponsor.

Students must receive proper approval for their proposed program of study. Upon successful completion of an approved foreign program of study, credit will be granted towards graduation for all appropriate courses taken on SJU approved programs.

### **APPLICATION PROCESS**

Students must apply through and receive approval from the Center for International Programs (CIP) in order to study abroad. The on-line application cycle for the fall term typically opens in January and closes in mid-February or on March 1<sup>st</sup> (depending on the program). The on-line application cycle for the spring term typically opens in late-August and closes in mid-September or on October 1st (again, depending on the program).

In the event of a larger than anticipated applicant pool, the Center for International Programs may not be able to approve all study abroad applications. Complete applications from eligible students will be approved on a *first come, first serve* basis. **For this reason, early applications are strongly advised.**

Approved students will be asked to submit a \$300 non-refundable confirmation deposit to the CIP office within 10 days of receiving their approval notice. If the student goes abroad, the deposit will be credited towards their SJU tuition expenses (which will include the aforementioned Continuing Registration Fee). The deposit will only be refunded in the event that a student is not accepted into their study abroad program or by the foreign institution to which they are applying.

Students who apply by the deadline but are not approved due to space will be placed on a waitlist. In the case of withdraws, priority will then be given to Saint Joseph's University students, students with no prior study abroad experience and students with exceptional, academic circumstances that may prevent them from studying abroad in a future semester. Some examples include (but are not limited to) class standing and major.

All other students not approved for the semester of their choice will be given priority for the following semester. Deferred applications will be approved pending an academic and disciplinary check during the following semester.

It is important to remember that many of our approved programs have their own deadlines and application processes that students must also follow. In addition, some programs are more competitive than others.

Although we will advise Saint Joseph's University students on making an appropriate program selection and assist them through the application process, our approval does not guarantee admission into a particular study abroad program or foreign institution. Students are responsible for understanding and meeting the regulations, requirements and deadlines specific to the program of their choice.

### **PETITIONING TO PARTICIPATE ON A NON-APPROVED PROGRAM**

Saint Joseph's University students who wish to attend a university or study abroad program that is not currently affiliated with or approved by SJU and therefore not recognized for academic credit must petition the Center for International Programs through the on-line application system. Please note that this is only an option for students who have specific **academic** needs that cannot be met on any of the current Saint Joseph's approved programs. Petitions for programs that are largely duplicate to, or are in enrollment competition with, existing Saint Joseph's programs, reciprocal university exchanges, or recognized affiliated programs in the same city or country are not normally approved.

As part of the application process, students will be asked to request a recommendation from their Academic Advisor. Therefore, before preparing a petition, the student should consult with their advisor to discuss their specific interest in study abroad and how the experience will fit into their academic program. This is also a good time to discuss possible course selection and planning. It is also suggested that the student discuss a "backup plan" with their Academic Advisor (and the Study Abroad Advisor) in the event the petition is not approved.

A committee reviews completed petitions and makes a recommendation to the CIP to either approve or reject the petition on a *first come, first serve* basis. Petitions are judged on the merit of the student's academic objectives in relation to specific study abroad opportunities for which they are seeking approval, and petition students are expected to have superior grades and sound academic preparation.

If the student's petition is approved, Saint Joseph's University will administer their study abroad program in the same way as an approved program and the aforementioned billing procedures will apply.

### **ACADEMIC AND DISCIPLINARY STANDING**

Students who apply to study abroad programs must be in good academic and disciplinary standing with Saint Joseph's University and have a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.5 (though some programs will require a higher GPA for admission). Students will be asked to sign a waiver (through their on-line application) allowing the Center for International Programs to check academic and disciplinary standing with the appropriate offices. Any current or pending discipline issue will be taken into account in evaluating a student's application to study abroad. Students must maintain good standing up through departure and for the duration of the study abroad program. If a student loses academic or disciplinary standing after being approved, the student will have their approval revoked and they will be responsible for any non-recoverable financial commitment that Saint Joseph's University has made on the student's behalf. While it is ultimately the student's responsibility to immediately inform the Center for International Programs of any change regarding their academic and disciplinary standing, the CIP will also receive periodic notifications from the Office of Community Standards.

## **FINANCIAL STANDING**

Students must also be in good financial standing with the University and cannot have any unresolved holds on their University account at the time of application and prior to the start of their semester abroad. The University Bursar's office will check financial standing at the time of application to confirm that the student's account is in good standing.

## **LENGTH OF STAY**

Students can apply for an academic semester (fall or spring) or a full year abroad. Only in special circumstances (and with prior approval from the CIP, the Vice President/Associate Provost and the student's Academic Associate Dean) will a student be permitted to spend a third semester abroad. Students interested in studying abroad for more than one year should make an appointment with the Study Abroad Advisor prior to any planning and before beginning an application.

## **SENIOR APPROVAL**

Students who wish to study abroad during the fall or spring semester of their senior year must discuss their plans with their Academic Advisor, notify the Registrar's office, and obtain the approval of the Associate Dean for their College.

## **PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS**

Students are required to maintain full time enrollment, attend class regularly and comply with all program regulations and individual course requirements in any program they choose. Students who leave the program before it is officially over will not receive credit for their work.

## **SJU PRE-DEPARTURE REQUIREMENTS**

Per the first paragraph of the policy, all students will remain registered at Saint Joseph's University during their semester abroad. The Center for International Programs will register each student in the Nest using a generic study abroad placeholder. (*NOTE: This does NOT replace actual course registration for the individual study abroad program or foreign university.*) However, the CIP office will not be able to register a student who has a financial hold on their account. It is the student's responsibility to communicate with Hawk Central about having the hold removed prior to the registration period or upon notification from the CIP office. Students must have their holds resolved and be successfully registered for study abroad by **December 1<sup>st</sup>** (for spring semester study abroad) and **May 1<sup>st</sup>** (for fall semester study abroad).

Additionally, as a condition of their study abroad approval, students must have all pre-departure materials in their CIP on-line account completed by the abovementioned deadlines.

The University reserves the right to withdraw approval for any student who does not meet these pre-departure requirements by the December 1<sup>st</sup> or May 1<sup>st</sup> deadline. In these cases, the student would be financially responsible for any costs made on their behalf to the study abroad program provider or foreign university.

## **CREDIT TOWARD GRADUATION**

Credit will be given towards graduation for all appropriate courses taken on SJU programs or approved programs abroad. Students must, however, get approval for their proposed program from their major academic advisor.

## **GRADES AND CREDITS EARNED ABROAD**

All grades earned during a semester or year abroad are reported on the Saint Joseph's University transcript and count toward the student's overall GPA. All courses, including internships for credit, must be taken on an A-F basis; pass/fail is not an option.

Before study abroad course credits and grades are posted to a student's transcript, they must complete a brief exit interview with a CIP staff member so that the CIP can collect information about the student's experience and their program. The CIP will contact each student to schedule this meeting once we have received the student's transcript. An exit interview cannot be scheduled unless the CIP is in possession of an official study abroad transcript.

## **FEES AND FINANCIAL AID**

Students are considered to be enrolled at Saint Joseph's University while abroad, and will therefore pay Saint Joseph's full-time, undergraduate day tuition fees. Saint Joseph's University will then pay the program provider or overseas institution for the tuition portion of the study abroad program.

In most cases, students will be responsible for paying room and board fees directly to their program. However, Saint Joseph's University has specific arrangements with some of our approved programs to include the program's room and board costs on the Saint Joseph's invoice. Please see specific program descriptions available on the Center for International Programs website to determine how your room and board costs will be billed.

All forms of financial aid can be applied to Saint Joseph's approved semester abroad programs. This includes Saint Joseph's grants, loans, scholarships, and state and federal awards, such as Pell Grants and Guaranteed Student Loans. A financial aid package for a student participating on a Saint Joseph's approved program will be based on the specific costs of the program in which the student will be studying. The following expenses will be included when calculating a student's financial need: tuition and fees, room and board, books, airfare for round-trip ticket and miscellaneous expenses such as local transportation, police registration fees, immunizations and any health insurance required by the host country. **Students may not use any of their financial aid towards a petition program that is not approved by the committee.**

## **SAINT JOSEPH' S UNIVERSITY FAMILY TUITION BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS INTERESTED IN STUDYING ABROAD**

Students who are receiving SJU family tuition benefits will be able to use these tuition scholarships toward their study abroad experiences. Family Tuition Benefit is available only for courses taken as part of a bachelors or masters degree program. Travel and expenses (other than tuition) for overseas programs, study abroad or other credit work at locations away from the main campus are not covered by the Family Tuition Benefits program.

## **SCHOLARSHIPS THROUGH FACHEX AND THE TUITION EXCHANGE PROGRAM**

Students who are the children of employees at other colleges/universities who are receiving scholarships through FACHEX and the Tuition Exchange Program may use these awards toward any approved study abroad program through Saint Joseph's University. For more information about FACHEX and the Tuition Exchange Program, please contact the Financial Assistance Office at 610-660-1555.

## **UNIVERSITY REFUND POLICY**

Students who choose to withdraw from the study abroad program must immediately notify the Center for International Programs through the on-line application portal. Only that portion of the student's tuition and fees, which have not been committed on their behalf to the University and/or any third party at the time of cancellation, will be refunded to the student. If the student withdraws from the program *before* paying tuition and fees, the University will bill the student for commitments made on their behalf to the University and/or any third party. The student will be financially responsible for any such costs incurred, per the terms of the Semester Abroad Academic and Disciplinary Waiver in the on-line application.