

## WABASH COLLEGE: A CAMPUS WITHOUT BORDERS

### Introduction to Off-Campus Study

“Our graduates will live in a world in which geographic and cultural boundaries do not restrict free and rapid flow of ideas and commerce.”

“The College is committed to ensuring that all its graduates are prepared to live and learn in cultures that are significantly different than those they find familiar. Consequently, Wabash will provide a meaningful experience in another culture for all students.”

“The College is committed to supporting students who wish to study off campus for an extended period. In order to minimize the impact of these extended off-campus opportunities on the residential experience, the traditional academic year programs will be supplemented by summer opportunities for off-campus study.”

Dean

Mauri Ditzler, March 20 2000

### OFF-CAMPUS STUDY & RETURN

Wabash College believes in the value of off-campus study. At least a quarter of our students spend a semester studying away from the residential environment in Crawfordsville. Key to the lasting value and overall quality of your off-campus experience will be how you re-integrate yourself into campus life. We think it's a vital part of your learning experience. Therefore, beginning with the process of program selection, through application, pre-departure preparations, and the actual period of study off-campus, you need to be considering how this particular program might ultimately affect you. You should be thinking about the best possible way to keep the experience alive, share what you have learned with faculty and students, and then let it help mold you into the global person you must be throughout your life. Will you make group presentations, participate more actively in class discussions, contribute a point of view not previously available to the group, lead residence hall discussions or debates, or even change your career path as a result of the experience? Above all, you must remain open to opportunities that appear, and take full advantage of them as you contemplate what is taking place in your life and how you will enable others to share in the experience upon your return. Most students need an outlet for their new-found knowledge and insights. They feel a need to continue “living out” their experience upon return. Wabash will help you to do this.

This document will guide you through the process of exploring the myriad off-campus opportunities available to you through Wabash and other sponsoring organizations. It provides you with information about how to explore the many programs available, how to approach academic advising, applications, approval of credit, financial aid, registration and payment of costs.

We live in a multicultural world of opportunities. When you graduate, your career could take you anywhere. Even in your own hometown, your work will bring you into contact with people from different cultural backgrounds. The job market is constantly changing and every young person today must prepare for a lifetime of changes. The person who can readily adapt to these varying conditions and differences of culture that surround us, will be the person who comes out on top. The resume listing an extended period of study in a foreign culture stands out in the crowd, and calls attention to a mature individual with the potential for above average leadership ability.

Off-Campus Study is not just for language and political science majors anymore. We all must prepare to live in a global society. Businessmen of today and tomorrow must think and function globally. Teachers must open the eyes and minds of succeeding generations to the reality of global interdependence. The pharmacist, the actor, and the computer scientist all must learn to live in a diverse environment, with a broad worldview. Study abroad is the single most effective experience students can have to broaden their international and intercultural awareness. Good programs are intensive educational experiences that combine academic excellence with cross-cultural learning.

One of the best investments that you can make in your future is to off-campus study. For a cost very comparable to that of a similar period on campus, a period of off-campus study will help you develop personal and professional attributes otherwise impossible. You will learn interpersonal, language, and thinking skills, which will lead you to a more productive life as a global citizen. Off-campus study will shape your life for years to come. Your selection of a specific program is an important decision -

worthy of considerable thought and research. Determine your selection criteria very carefully and look at a wide variety of programs before settling on one. No one type of program is best for everyone. The experience should form an integral part of your overall course of study.

### Plan early!

Your major and your chosen program of study might limit your window of opportunity. In this case, only a well-planned college career will allow you to study off-campus and graduate on time. The Office of International Students & Off-Campus Studies will assist each student in planning the best possible program of academic work in an appropriate location through the best organization possible. A great variety of opportunities exist.

You must identify your own reasons for studying off-campus. You should also have a clear idea of what you want to study. It is crucial that you discuss your interests with your academic adviser early in your career at Wabash so as to clarify the role that it will play in your overall academic program and at what point it might best take place. Then, explore all of the possibilities. Try to keep an open mind. You chose Wabash College for your education because we offer a program of study that meets your needs and the kind of environment conducive to developing your entire potential. In the same way, you must thoroughly research off-campus opportunities. Talk to professors, international students, friends and other students who have studied off-campus - everyone who will listen. Study the literature in the Office of International Students & Off-Campus Studies, attend presentations by returned students and by representatives of off-campus study organizations. Attend the Fair.

Much of the following is geared to study in another country. However, the process of program selection and approval are nearly identical for those who wish to study domestically in Newberry, Washington or Philadelphia.

**WHEN?** Wabash semester away students go during the fall or spring semester of their junior year. In addition, summer and faculty-led semester programs are options. Before going, students must determine how these studies will fit into their degree scheme at Wabash, examining how and when major and distribution requirements will be fulfilled. Students also must figure out what courses must have been completed in order to qualify for admission to a specific program. Many foreign universities and programs require students to have completed two full years of college and require much earlier specialization. If you study in a foreign language, your level of proficiency will help determine the optimal time when you should study off-campus as well as which program to choose. Students already relatively fluent in a foreign language, obviously have many more options.

**HOW LONG?** Requirements in the major/minor field often determine the length of time and the semester when students can be away. Financial considerations, as well as personal feelings about being away from family and friends may also influence this decision. Additionally, the Off-Campus Study Committee rarely approves students for a full academic year of study away. Thus, your decision must be very well thought-out and firmly grounded in sound academic reasoning.

**WHERE?** Most students select a country/location based on their academic needs & interests, their desire to become fluent in a foreign language or to learn about a particular area of the world. Of course, the more background and higher level of prior studies and foreign language proficiency, the greater access students will have to university-level foreign language study in the host country. Students without foreign language preparation often choose to study in the United Kingdom, Ireland, Canada, Australia or New Zealand. However, it is possible to study in many non-English speaking countries in which some university instruction is in English (Denmark, Italy, China, Belize, or Kenya) or in American administered "island" study abroad programs that operate in centers. The location within the country (urban center/capital city, smaller university town vs. a more rural area) is another factor to be weighed in the study site decision.

Wabash makes off-campus study accessible to every interested student. People have traveled to renowned centers of learning for centuries. It's nothing new. What is different today is the fact that a good education today virtually demands it and Wabash can help make it happen for you. We can even help you find ways to pay for some of your experience abroad. Please read everything very carefully and be sure to ask questions whenever you don't understand. Deadlines are very important in order to make all of the preparations necessary for travel and study in a foreign country. Passports, visas, inoculations and many other details cannot be arranged without careful planning.

### WHAT'S FIRST?

1. Meet with your academic advisor to plan the remainder of your college career.

You need to look at course prerequisites, distribution requirements, required courses that are only offered during certain semesters, and any other restrictions there may be in your field(s) of study. For example, what courses are you allowed/encouraged to take off-campus and which must be taken at Wabash?

So, begin the process of preparation to study off-campus by making an appointment with your academic advisor to plan out the remainder of your four-year career at Wabash. In doing so, make sure that you will have enough course credits and that all graduation requirements will be met in that plan. Identify a semester (or two) that “work” for your period of study off-campus.

Given the prerequisites for required or desired courses and the limited offering of those courses, (perhaps certain ones are only offered in the fall or every other year), move courses that you want to pursue off-campus into the fall or spring of your junior year.

Make certain that your departments will approve that you study these particular courses and that they will approve fulfilling those requirements off-campus. This is critical to the choice of a program that will keep you on track to graduate and assure that you will be able to utilize off-campus courses toward graduation requirements.

2. **Second**, define **for yourself** your academic & personal objectives. Prepare to look at programs of study by considering the implications of all of the following:

- Why do you want to study off-campus?
- What degree requirements do you need to satisfy through your study abroad?
- Does your academic department have policies or philosophies about it?
- What courses would you need to take?
- Do you want to study a particular subject in depth?
- Do you want to study another language? Would you be able to take “content” courses in that language, or just study the language?
- Are you interested in classroom study, or do you wish to gain practical experience by pursuing research or field study?
- Would you like to study abroad for a semester, a year or the summer?
- Where would you like to study?
- Do you want to study with other students from the United States, or would you rather have students of the host country as your classmates, as foreign students at U.S. universities do?
- Would you like to live with a host family, in a dormitory, apartment?
- Do you want a program that requires a lot of independence and personal initiative, or do you prefer one that handles most of the arrangements for you and lends more on-site support?
- How much money can you afford to spend? Do you need to retain financial aid eligibility while you are away?

**FOREIGN LANGUAGE STUDY:**

The more proficient a student is in a language, the easier it will be to adjust to living and studying in that country. You also will find that you have a much greater selection of programs and may be able to more fully integrate into a host country. Students who are considering study in a country whose language they have studied previously, are **strongly** recommended to continue these studies in the freshman and sophomore years at Wabash. Most approved programs, in which the language of instruction is not English and the language is widely taught in the U.S., will require a minimum of two years of college-level study before enrollment, with some work in literature. These language-based programs may offer intensive language study during an orientation period, followed by course work taught entirely in the foreign language. It also may be possible for students to enroll directly in regular courses at a university with which the sponsoring program is affiliated.

Where the host country language is **not widely taught in the U.S.**, and English is **not** the language of university instruction, proficiency is **not expected**. Normally, students will not be enrolled in the same university classes with host country students. These programs typically will offer intensive

language immersion classes for visiting students. Other courses, which may focus on the country's history, politics and culture will most likely be taught in English. Since most students in the classes are likely to be North Americans, you should carefully consider how well the program will provide you with other opportunities to assimilate into the host country culture with family home stays, accommodation in residence halls, volunteer/internship placements.

### TYPES OF STUDY ABROAD PROGRAMS

Choosing the type of program in which to participate is one of the most important aspects of planning your study abroad experience. Below is a brief description of several types of study abroad programs, on the basis of educational experience provided: language, theme, integrated classroom, field study and "island." Some programs may not fit clearly into one of the above categories, and some may fall into more than one. Use these program types to help you consider how a particular program will fit your academic goals.

#### Language

Among the College's top priorities for study abroad are programs that aim to accelerate your language learning. It is vitally important to choose a program at the appropriate level of study. The Modern Language Department will be happy to assist in selecting an appropriate program. By improving your language proficiency, inter-cultural skills and self-confidence, language programs can serve as an excellent bridge to advanced study in the future. In foreign language destinations, there are programs which allow you to directly enroll in a foreign university pursuing any available course of study just like the internationals which study at Wabash. These require significant fluency. At the other end of the spectrum, you will find programs which require very little language ability. Many study abroad opportunities are available to you through programs sponsored (administrated) by US institutions and they usually lie somewhere between the two extremes. Students with a high degree of fluency should give strong consideration to a program offering content courses in the target language.

#### Theme

Theme programs are focused on a specific discipline, subject, or geographic area of the world (area studies.) Examples include programs on English literature & theater, international business, or ecology. Area studies programs are designed for students who want to explore a country or region in some depth. Curricula normally include courses in language, history, the social sciences, and humanities. Some theme programs are taught entirely in the host-country language, others in English or a mixture of the two.

#### Field Study

Academic field study provides outside-the-classroom study, a different kind of cultural immersion. Field study often can be used for research toward a senior paper or as a pilot study toward a graduate thesis. Programs administered by the School for International Training (SIT) and the School for Field Studies are good examples of this type of program.

#### Integrated Classroom

Integrated classroom study allows you to study alongside students from the host-country. It is one of the most challenging and rewarding forms of study abroad. Integrated study offers the advantages of full cultural immersion and permits you to choose from a wide variety of courses in many different disciplines. Although a year is the preferred length of stay, some universities accept students for a semester. Advanced language skills are essential for programs in non-English speaking countries.

#### Non-Integrated Classroom "Island" Programs

There are numerous programs throughout the world which provide opportunities for students to study within a foreign cultural setting without prior fluency in the language of the country. Sometimes, beginning level study of the language is a requirement of the program. Contact with the foreign culture depends largely upon the participant as well as the structure and priorities of the program itself. Most courses are taught in English by instructors who have also traveled to the site or who have been employed locally. The program is usually housed in a location contracted by the sponsor separate from actual university facilities. Thus, these are often referred to as "island" programs. Individual student

motivation is critical to the success of the experience. These programs make it possible for students to study in countries such as China, Russia or Italy without previous language training.

Care must be exercised in the selection of a study abroad program, taking into consideration the quality, reputation, accreditation and appropriateness for each individual student. Programs not previously approved must be thoroughly reviewed and approved by the Director of International Students & Office-Campus Studies, and the Off-Campus Study Committee. Programs in non-English-speaking countries require the approval of the Chair of the Modern Foreign Language Department. This approval is not to be construed to be a guarantee of success, rather an indication that the program appears to be appropriate for this particular student at this time. Credit for any foreign language courses pursued abroad must also be approved by the appropriate language chair. Programs which are not affiliated with an accredited US institution of higher education and do not issue transcripts require special attention. On the other hand, good programs are committed to helping students develop realistic expectations and prepare them for a trouble-free adjustment and the very different student lifestyle and academic expectations of their overseas host institution.

### 3. Attend one Introduction to Off-Campus Study Class

Do not plan to attend a class until you have met with your academic advisor and completed step one. If you are still pondering step two, the Intro class will help you to clarify your purposes. Bring your questions and concerns.

## 4. The Application Process

### A. Off-Campus Study Committee

Wabash students must be approved by the Off-Campus Study Committee in order to be assured of receiving credit toward graduation and any Wabash financial support for the experience. The deadline for receipt of completed applications for study during the 2004-2005 academic year is Friday, February 6, 2004. This committee of faculty and staff will review all applications and make a decision soon after the deadline primarily based upon the academic merits of the application and of the program chosen.

This year, most parts of the application will be completed on-line through the new Off-Campus Studies web site. Besides basic demographic information, students are required to present a two-page essay detailing their reasons for choosing their program and two faculty recommendations. All of this will be done through the web. In addition, each proposed class must be approved by the appropriate departmental chair for courses in the major or minor, or by the Office of the Registrar in the case of all other classes, such as distribution credits or electives.

### B. Applying to your Program

Once you have decided upon a program, you need to report back to the Office of International Students and Off-Campus Studies and let us know your decision. The next process involves applying to the program sponsor or study abroad organization. This varies depending upon the program's own procedures, but generally involves an application form with fee (you pay), a current transcript, letters of recommendation, a language proficiency evaluation (where appropriate) and perhaps an essay. Programs and universities set their own deadlines for receipt of application materials. They probably will differ from Wabash's approval deadlines. Check deadlines carefully and allow sufficient time for forms and transcripts to be sent off to the organization. Students should not expect that Advisor Approval Forms required by sponsors will be completed and sent on the day they are due. Allow at least two working days for these forms to be completed and mailed.

Generally, students must meet the following criteria:

- Be in good academic and social standing.
- Participate in an approved program of study
- Present a Cumulative Grade Point Average appropriate for the chosen program.
- Meet other requirements (such as language) of the program required by the organization.

**Bring your completed application to your program to the Office of International Students & Off-Campus Studies for a final review, approval, photocopying, and mailing.**

#### COURSE APPROVAL FORM

This form was created over a period of time to serve students, faculty and administration as a vehicle to record all aspects of course credit approval. It is a worksheet on which the student, academic advisor, department chairs and Registrar develop a proposed list of classes for the chosen program and an appropriate match to equivalent courses or levels of study at Wabash. If you change programs, it is necessary to start with a fresh form. The signature of the department chair or Registrar to the right of the course listing signifies acceptance of that specific course for credit by Wabash College within that department. Students choosing non-English speaking countries will always want to consult with the chair of the Classics Department or of Modern Foreign Languages. All students must be enrolled in at **least four (4)** course credits while away. **Three to five semester** hours equal one course credit. This permits the student to remain a Wabash student and continue receiving financial aid. Your GPA will NOT change as a result of **studying abroad. Grades will NOT appear on your transcript and will NOT count in the calculation of your CGPA. The grade of "C-" is accepted for credit.** BUT, graduate schools and employers may require these results and then re-calculate your CGPA. When the transcript arrives from the study abroad program, the actual courses taken will be recorded. One more thing, transcripts do not arrive as quickly as we are accustomed to in the USA. Many are routinely delayed for a couple of months.

Students who do not receive approval because they do not meet the stated criteria may petition the committee to appeal a non-supportive decision personally or, at a later date, re-petition for consideration upon satisfying the conditions for approval.

Leave of Absence for Overseas Study. Wabash College does not recommend that students participate in an overseas study program without approval, and makes no commitment to accept transfer credits from students who study without approval. Acceptance of transfer credits is not guaranteed. Students who take a leave of absence will not be eligible for financial assistance from Wabash. When students return to Wabash, course descriptions and other relevant materials, written work and examination results will be subject to review to evaluate content, level of study and whether credit will be awarded.

#### 5. Financing your Off-Campus Study Experience

Before you apply for a program, be sure that you have considered all of the potential costs and planned your finances realistically. What does the comprehensive fee cover? What additional costs will you incur? What travel and excursion expenses are covered? How much financial aid will you receive? How will the cost of living in the host country compare to the United States? Figuring the Total Cost is an important first step in planning a budget for overseas study, living, and travel. You must determine which costs are covered by the program and university fees, and which are not. Usually, fees cover tuition, housing during academic sessions, and program-related activities such as home-stays and student and academic support services provided by the sponsors or overseas study office. Round-trip trans-Atlantic/Pacific airfare may NOT be included, and some program fees only cover out-bound flights. Other items such as meals, housing between terms, health care and insurance, textbooks and supplies, personal expenses, local transportation and vacation expenses may not be covered or only partially covered by program fees.

Program sponsors or host universities should be able to provide students with budget planner's guides and a reasonable estimate of all costs. The cost of living abroad depends on the country, of course. Big cities are generally far more expensive. All students, especially those on financial aid, should pay close attention to expenses resulting from personal travel, sightseeing and other cultural events. Students must be realistic about these expenses and have sufficient flexibility to cover additional or unexpected expenses, especially those that may result from currency fluctuations. It will be helpful to speak with students returning from overseas, who studied in the same city or country, concerning their expenses while there. Lists of such students are usually supplied upon request by the program sponsor. The Off-Campus Studies Office can supply names of previous students who have participated on given programs.

## Payment of Program Fees

Students who participate in an approved program through Wabash College will be billed by the program for billable costs that are NOT covered by your Wabash aid. Please forward all billing notices for your study abroad program to Cathy VanArsdall in the Business Office. The Business Office of Wabash will make arrangements to pay "aid covered" expenses directly to the sponsor, less any previously forwarded deposits.

## Financial Aid

Realizing that financial situations vary from student to student, this information is meant as a starting point in the search for financial aid for study abroad. Wabash recognizes the importance of offering the opportunity for an international educational experience to all students and has made a strong commitment to provide financial assistance to support qualified students on approved programs. With the exception of ESH, all forms of financial aid potentially are available to be applied towards paying for approved study. However, the amounts received for such programs may vary depending upon the cost of the program. Specifics for each student are calculated and based upon the cost of the program and the individual's need and merit. Determination of financial aid for off-campus study is the responsibility of the Office of Financial Aid.

## Budgeting while Abroad

Try to simplify your finances as much as possible. You should take your money in a combination of traveler's checks and an ATM card. Remember to record the numbers of the checks issued to you and keep the records separate from the actual checks. You could obtain a small amount of the local currency in cash to take with you for immediate use when you first arrive. Have a credit card for emergencies, travel, or larger purchases. Be sure to check the credit limit and expiration date before you leave. Do not plan on writing personal checks from your account in the States. They generally will take weeks to clear the bank and may not even be accepted in many places. Inform the bank that you are going to be abroad and make sure that your PIN will function where you are going.

## Planning Ahead

Planning a budget to live and study in another country is essential. To begin the process of figuring your personal study abroad budget, you will need to consult a few references. You should have at hand any information about housing and meal arrangements specific to your particular program, as well as cost estimates provided by your program sponsor. For your research, we suggest you contact your program sponsor and perhaps returning students. Both of these perspectives are important in giving you reliable guidelines for working out your own estimates. Despite years of experience, we have yet to devise a "fail-safe" budget for students. If you are prepared to be honest with yourself regarding your expectations and personal lifestyle, you will be able to estimate fairly accurately how much money you will need.

Decide on the minimum amounts on which you think you could manage. Estimate a second set of figures which are more generous on "flexible" items like meals, personal expenses, entertainment, and vacation travel. Depending on your resources, you may be fortunate enough to be able to afford the more generous projection; but, if you cannot, you will be able to go back and make selective adjustments based on close questioning of what you really need, what would be nice to have, and what you could do without. Your final budget will fall somewhere in between the two estimates. And, although you will be constantly reminded that the best way to manage is to make and stick to a budget, daily as well as monthly, we suggest that you give yourself a 5% leeway on the "flexible" items, just to be on the safe side.

## Start-Up and One-Time Costs

**Passport costs:** The cost of obtaining a United States passport for the first time is now \$65.00 (\$55.00 for renewal of an expired passport). Please remember to check the expiration date of your current passport to ensure that it does not expire while you are abroad.

**Luggage, Clothing, Etc.:** Some students choose to purchase a backpack to take with them for traveling during vacation periods or before or after the term of study. Also include a figure for what you will spend on new clothing to take with you. Remember, you'll want things that are easy to care for, comfortable

(especially shoes) and will wear well. It is wise to buy only things you feel you'll absolutely need - perhaps a good waterproof jacket with zip-out lining or hiking boots; when you return home, you'll probably want to put away (or even throw out!) the clothes you wore (out) while traveling and living overseas. Save your money to purchase things on your travels rather than to buy new clothes to take with you.

**Emergency Reserve:** It is a good idea to have some money set aside for emergencies. Whether it is your credit card or "cash reserve," try to have something to help out if you run into some kind of emergency.