

# Short Term Policies and Procedures - Graduate Programs

Updated: September 2023

Students applying for short-term programs are asked to sign the Student Waiver and Release Agreement stating that they have read, understood, and will abide by the policies contained in this document.

## Academic Matters

1. A student is required to attend all classes and scheduled excursions and events.
2. A student is obliged to follow the directions of the program director (either faculty or staff). Traveling with a group of people requires organization and coordination. Schedules for site visits, movement at airports and train stations, and other areas concerning travel arrangements will often necessitate a certain regimentation that the program director must impose.

## Financial Matters

1. Students will be billed by the University of St. Thomas for the cost of the program plus the Off-Campus Study Fee. Students who cancel after the following dates forfeit the Off-Campus Study Fee:
  - December 1 for January Term and Spring programs
  - May 1 for Summer programs
2. A student's account in the Business Office must be current or receive special clearance prior to participating in an off-campus study program.
3. Students are subject to the cancellation policy of their program sponsor.

## FERPA and Off-Campus Study

The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) of 1974, as amended, affords students the right to authorize the release of education information to third parties. The Office of Study Abroad requests that students authorize the release of education information to third parties by signing the Application Consent as part of their study abroad application.

## ACADEMIC INFORMATION

### Requirements for Short-term Programs

Students with a minimum GPA of 2.0 and who are in good disciplinary standing are eligible to study off-campus.

Additional eligibility requirements may differ for each program. Specific course requirements are listed with program information on individual program descriptions.

### Course Credit

Short-term programs usually carry three (3) graduate credits unless indicated otherwise by the program. Students approved to study off-campus are guaranteed elective credit for their course work abroad in which they receive a passing grade (D- or better).

Certain courses have been approved to meet St. Thomas graduate program requirements. If you wish to use any short-term program not pre-approved to fulfill specific requirements, it is your responsibility to obtain the approval signature of the appropriate department chair or program director. Students should use a Course Approval Record form, available from the Office of Study Abroad. Keep in mind that appropriate academic committees have reviewed courses.

### Grading

St. Thomas policies state that all courses must be assigned a letter grade by their faculty director. If your professor is not from St. Thomas, it is the student's responsibility to inform their director that he/she requires a letter grade before departure.

## **Auditing Courses**

Students may not audit short-term programs.

## **REGISTRATION**

The appropriate graduate school registrar will register students for all January and Summer Term programs. Students cannot register or drop their study abroad program through Murphy Online.

You will not be registered if:

- your St. Thomas student account is not current (paid to date)
- you have a health hold or other type of hold on your record
- you have applied for a course for which you have not fulfilled the prerequisites or sought departmental permission, if required.

For spring/fall embedded programs, students register for the regular semester course via Murphy Online.

### **Non-degree students**

Non-degree students (interested participants who are not students or who are enrolled at another institution) may apply for a short-term program on a space-available basis with the permission of the faculty director, the graduate program, and the Office of Study Abroad. Please notify the Office of Study Abroad immediately if you are not a degree-seeking student at the University of St. Thomas.

### **Program Evaluation**

Students are required to complete an evaluation form for their off-campus study experience, available at the end of the program.

### **Transcript Notation**

All students who are approved by the Office of Study Abroad to study off-campus will have a notation on their transcript including the program name and country(ies) in which their coursework was completed.

### **Need for Academic or Physical Accommodation Abroad**

Students in need of academic accommodation must have formally registered with the Disability Resources in order to request accommodation abroad. Note the following process for making such requests when studying off-campus:

1. Student has St. Thomas Disability Resources formally document the need for accommodation (students must present documentation of their disability to Disability Resources before the office can verify need for accommodation off-campus).
2. Student requests that the director Disability Resources submit a letter to the Office of Study Abroad and respective graduate program outlining the specific accommodation(s) requested.
3. If the student is participating in a non-St. Thomas-sponsored program, the Office of Study Abroad forwards the request on to the program or institution abroad.
4. Student should follow-up with the off-campus program, making sure to talk directly with the program director once on-site, and follow any further procedural instructions as advised.

## **ENROLLMENT INFORMATION**

### **Application Dates**

Individual program deadlines will vary. See the application for priority deadlines.

### **How to Apply**

Contact your graduate program or visit the Office of Study Abroad website for course-specific application procedures.

Note that the application is considered binding and all cancellations must be submitted in writing to the Office of Study Abroad. The date that such notification is received is considered the cancellation date.

### **Deposit**

A deposit is a required application component for all St. Thomas sponsored programs. Applications without deposits will not be considered. The deposit is to be made to the University of St. Thomas and is to be submitted in person, or online, to the Business Office. If you are not accepted into a program, a deposit refund will be credited to your student account.

### **Once Accepted**

Students will receive notification of their status (accepted, wait-listed, denied) via their St. Thomas email account, and will receive final paperwork the semester before departure.

### **Wait-listed Students**

If a program reaches its maximum enrollment, students may be placed on a wait-list. If no cancellations occur, students will be contacted and deposit refunded. There will be no monetary refund for the required passport/ID photos.

### **Confirmation of Program Status**

St. Thomas reserves the right to cancel a program due to low enrollment. Decisions as to whether programs with low enrollment will be offered will be made no less than two weeks before the final application deadline.

### **Accompanying Persons**

Participants' families members and friends are not allowed to accompany students on short-term programs.

## **FINANCIAL MATTERS**

### **Comprehensive Program Fee**

Costs listed are approximate and are based on a minimum number of students per program. Every effort is made to operate the program at the stated price. However, with fewer than the minimum number of participants, costs may be increased or the program cancelled. All program sponsors, including the University of St. Thomas, reserve the right to adjust fees due to dollar devaluation, fuel surcharges, and general inflation.

The program fee may include airport transfers, transportation to most program activities, visas (where required for U.S. citizens), meals as indicated, planned excursions, administrative costs, and lodging (primarily in triple rooms in hotels, pensions, university dorms, or family homes, where indicated). Roommate assignments are of the same gender.

### **Off-Campus Study Fee**

For short-term off-campus programs, an off-campus study fee is charged, guaranteeing the posting of credit, keeping a student's records up-to-date, and allowing St. Thomas to make program payment and to bill the student's account. The Off-Campus Study fee will be forfeited for any student who cancels or returns early from his/her program after their account is billed for study abroad.

### **Cancellation Fees and Refunds**

Cancellation fees will vary by program. Please check with the graduate program or the Office of Study Abroad for program-specific cancellation policies and fees.

### **Trip Cancellation Insurance**

Trip cancellation insurance provides financial protection for specified causes of cancellation. We strongly recommend that students purchase trip cancellation insurance. One resource is <http://www.insuremytrip.com/cfar.html>.

## **Financial Aid for Graduate Students**

Most St. Thomas financial aid programs are awarded on a semester basis. Additional student loan funding may be considered for students seeking financial resources to finance a short-term program.

Financial aid applicants must complete all necessary requirements well in advance of their departure. Students studying off-campus follow the same financial aid application process as students who stay on the St. Thomas campus. All financial aid applicants must:

1. File the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA);
2. Respond promptly to any requests for missing information or documents needed;
3. Accept the Financial Aid (i.e. loans) via Murphy Online; and
4. Complete student loan master promissory notes and entrance counseling, if required.

### **January Term**

You are expected to have sufficient funds to cover all deposits and personal expenses associated with your short-term program. Your St. Thomas student account must be current or you will not be registered for the program. The program fee remaining after you have paid the deposit will be charged to your student account after November 1 and will be on your December billing statement with payment due in January.

Important: If you are accepted into a program but are not approved for any additional funding, you may have to forfeit your deposit if you decide to withdraw from the program. Be sure you understand the program's cancellation policy.

Students seeking financial aid to participate in a January Term are encouraged to follow these steps:

1. If you have not already done so, complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) for the applicable aid year by December 1.
2. Schedule an appointment with a graduate financial aid counselor as soon as you decide to attend. Have the following information available for your appointment:
  - A) The name of the program and number of credits for which you will be enrolled for January Term
  - B) A list of program costs and an estimate of the expenses you will incur that are not included in the program fee.
3. During the appointment, you and the counselor will discuss the cost of the program and any student loan options available to you.
4. The financial aid office will monitor your enrollment throughout January Term to ensure you remain enrolled in the number of credits upon which your funding was determined. Any financial aid received may be reduced, returned, or cancelled if you enroll differently than initially reported, or withdraw from a course and receive a refund.

### **Summer Term**

You are expected to have sufficient funds to cover all deposits and personal expenses associated with your summer study abroad program. Your St. Thomas student account must be current or you will not be registered for the program. The program fee remaining after you have paid your deposit will be charged to your student account after April 1 and will be on your May billing statement with payment due in June.

Important: If you are accepted into a program but are not approved for any additional funding, you may have to forfeit your deposit if you decide to withdraw from the program. Be sure you understand the program's cancellation policy.

Students seeking financial aid to participate in a Summer Term program are encouraged to follow these steps:

1. If you have not already done so, complete Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) for the applicable aid year by May 1.
2. Submit the St. Thomas Summer Financial Aid Application (available on graduate financial aid website after April 1).
3. Schedule an appointment with a graduate financial aid counselor as soon as you decide to attend. Have the following items available for your appointment:

- A) The name of the program and number of credits for which you will be enrolled for Summer Term;
  - B) A list of program costs and an estimate of the expenses you will incur that are not included in the program fee.
4. During the appointment, you and the counselor will discuss the cost of the program and any student loan options available to you.
  5. The financial aid office will monitor your enrollment throughout Summer Term to ensure you remain enrolled in the number of credits upon which your funding was determined. Any financial aid received may be reduced, returned, or cancelled if you enroll differently than initially reported, or withdraw from a course and receive a refund.

### **Spring/Fall Embedded Programs**

St. Thomas students who enroll in a course that includes an optional or required short-term program during a break are strongly advised to meet with their financial aid counselor before making any deposit or commitment to the program to discuss if additional funding may be available.

## **HEALTH INFORMATION**

### **Cultural Insurance Services International (CISI)**

Students participating on international short-term programs through St. Thomas will receive coverage through CISI while they are overseas. Your CISI insurance will include: comprehensive accident/sickness, medical evacuation, repatriation, 24-7-365 worldwide assistance, a comprehensive security evacuation plan, and trip cancellation. Prior to departure you will receive complete information on your insurance plan, access to the CISI portal, and your insurance card. Please print this card to carry it on you during your time overseas, and contact CISI in the event of an emergency. To learn more about CISI visit [www.culturalinsurance.com](http://www.culturalinsurance.com).

It is also recommended you consider purchasing Cancellation / Interruption for Any Reason (CFAR / IFAR) insurance. Purchasing this or other additional insurance is an optional, out-of-pocket expense, but it can provide extra insurance coverage for your financial commitments to this program. One option available is the Worldwide Trip Protector Plans with travel insurance underwritten by the United States Fire Insurance Company, rated A (Excellent) by A.M. Best 2019. These plans are available via the [CISI website](#).

### **Domestic Health Insurance**

Students must keep their domestic health insurance in force at all times while abroad.

### **Recommended and Required Immunizations**

Students are advised to determine whether any immunizations are required of their host country early in the process of preparing to study abroad. Typically, it is developing countries that are most likely to require proof of immunization. Information on illnesses and immunizations such as malaria, yellow fever, and cholera may be easily obtained by visiting the Center for Disease Control's web site at [www.cdc.gov/travel](http://www.cdc.gov/travel).

### **Tetanus**

All students are advised to ensure that their tetanus immunization is current (within past 10 years) before going abroad. Tetanus immunizations are available to St. Thomas students for a small fee at St. Thomas Health Services. As per Minnesota state law, a hold is usually placed on the record of any student who does not have record on file of a tetanus vaccine within the past 10 years.

St. Thomas makes the following recommendations to all students studying abroad:

### **Hepatitis A and Hepatitis B**

St. Thomas advises students to be immunized for Hepatitis A & B before going abroad.

Hepatitis A is a virus spread through contaminated food and the vaccination is recommended for all travelers. The Hepatitis A series consists of 2 shots, six months apart. The vaccine is quite effective and usually will give up to 80% immunity after one injection, but the second shot is necessary for complete immunity.

Hepatitis B is a virus spread through body fluids such as saliva and blood and can lead to significant liver failure. The only protection at this time is the immunization. The Hepatitis B shot is a 3-part series in intervals of shots one and six months following the first one.

## **Meningitis**

It is recommended that all students also be immunized for meningitis. Meningococcal infections usually have severe consequences and may be fatal. The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices of the Center for Disease Control encourages college students in close-quartered housing situations or residence halls to consider the immunization. The meningitis vaccine is available on campus for a fee. Students are also encouraged to inquire at their own clinic and with their private insurance to determine whether the cost of the vaccine is covered.

## **Flu**

It is recommended that students receive an annual flu vaccine.

## **COVID-19**

It is recommended that all students receive a COVID-19 vaccine.

## **Reporting Requirements**

Minnesota Statutes Section 5.41 requires that certain health and safety incidents that result from participation in a study abroad program be reported to the Minnesota Secretary of State. Specifically, St. Thomas must report on:

1. Deaths of program participants that occurred during program participation as a result of program participation; and
2. Accidents and illnesses that occurred during program participation as a result of participation that required hospitalization.

Currently, the law does not require that we share any personally identifiable information, nor any specific medical information. St. Thomas is required to report to the State of Minnesota annually for all St. Thomas students who study abroad. If you are on an affiliate program, your program provider must report incidents to St. Thomas.

## **St. Thomas Travel Clinic**

[St. Thomas Health Service](#) is an on campus certified travel clinic. Schedule a travel clinic appointment at least 6 weeks prior to departure with Health Services or your doctor. During the travel appointment, the health-care provider will determine what is needed based on health history, destination, and planned activities. Consult the Center for Disease Control [website](#) for additional information.

## **Passports**

Students are responsible for obtaining a passport on their own and applying in sufficient time so as to not jeopardize their ability to travel as planned. Information is available at [passports.state.gov](https://passports.state.gov). The Office of Study Abroad cannot issue, or ensure issuance, of a passport.

## **Visas**

If a program destination requires a visa, the program provider will provide information to students upon acceptance. The ability to issue a visa rests solely with the host country. St. Thomas and the Office of Study Abroad staff cannot provide legal advice or ensure issuance of a visa. Students are responsible for obtaining a visa and applying in sufficient time so as to not jeopardize their ability to travel as planned. International students often have requirements differing from those for U.S. students and may require a visa when U.S. students do not. International students must notify the Office of International Students & Scholars immediately upon acceptance to a study abroad program to learn about requirements for studying abroad.

## **Other Resources**

If want to know more about your destination(s), check out the following web sites:

- Travel advisories or warnings: [travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/alertswarnings.html](https://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/alertswarnings.html)
- Centers for Disease Control: [www.cdc.gov/travel/](https://www.cdc.gov/travel/)
- Lonely Planet: [www.lonelyplanet.com](https://www.lonelyplanet.com)