

Section: Student Life Policies
Policy Name: AUC Study Abroad Policy
Policy Manager/ Responsible University Officer: Dean of Students
Responsible University Office: Dean of Students
Supervisory Cabinet Officer: Vice President for Student Life
Origination Date: Dec 2020
Revisions:

I. SCOPE OF POLICY

- A. The American University in Cairo's (AUC's) Study Abroad policy provides a set of definitive principles that governs the approval, management, and monitoring of student mobility and study abroad activity.
- B. This policy serves to ensure that all principles surrounding international student mobility and study abroad at AUC are: (1) properly made, continuously reviewed, promulgated, upheld, and revised as necessary in compliance with AUC's by-laws, applicable laws and regulations, and best practices in and the exigencies of the dynamic global higher education environment; (2) compliant with the US Department of Education's Title IV requirements for certification.

II. DEFINITIONS

As used in this Policy on Policies, the following terms shall have the meanings indicated.

- 1. "Study Abroad" is our umbrella term for all forms of semester (Fall, Spring, or Summer) or year-long non-degree, for-credit programs.
- 2. "Exchange" refers to a type of study abroad program whereby a student pays the tuition of the home institution and is nominated by the home institution. All non-tuition fees are payable to the Host Institution and may be paid directly by the student or by the home institution, depending on the terms of the agreement.

3. “Partner-sponsored study abroad” as distinct from “exchange” refers to a type of Study Abroad program whereby the student is nominated by AUC or an institution with which AUC has an agreement, but who does not qualify for an exchange, usually because of the limited number of exchange slots and the ranking of the student in comparison to the students who were offered exchanges. Partner-sponsored study abroad students pay the tuition of the Host Institution rather than the Home Institution. As with exchange students, AUC views “Partner-sponsored study abroad students” as vetted by the Home Institution, and thus AUC requires less supporting documentation in the application process than in 4, below.
4. “Self-funded non-degree students” are both students from AUC who apply on their own without sponsorship from the International Programs Office (IPO), or those who apply to AUC outside of any agreement AUC has with partners. These students are required to submit more supporting documentation in their application than students who are nominated by a partner Host Institution.
5. “Responsible University Officer” is the principal University officer responsible for sponsoring, implementing, enforcing and answering inquiries about this policy. The Responsible University Officer is responsible for monitoring the effectiveness of and ensuring compliance with this policy.
6. “Policy Manager” means both the individual University Cabinet member, director, unit head, or other person who manages or directs the responsible University office. In this case the Policy Manager and the Responsible University Officer are the same.
7. The following categories of students are not covered by this policy:
 - a. Degree-seeking international students
 - b. Students wishing to study on a non-credit basis, such as auditors
 - c. Outgoing self-funded non-degree students who do not apply through the IPO (however the IPO will offer assistance to them if they reach out from the Host Institution).

III. POLICY STATEMENT

The University will conduct all international student study abroad activities at AUC in accordance with the standards outlined in this Policy.

II IV. POLICY STANDARDS AND PROCEDURES

A. General Standards

1. The University will publish this policy online at <https://www.aucegypt.edu/about/university-policies> and link it to AUC's Administrative Policy Manual.

B. Outgoing Study Abroad Students

1. Undergraduate Student Eligibility

- a. To be eligible to participate in AUC's study abroad program, an AUC undergraduate student must meet the following criteria
 - i. For exchange programs, have a GPA of 3.2 or higher.
 - ii. For partner-nominated study abroad, have the GPA required by the host institution, but above GPA 2.0
 - iii. Have completed the first year.
 - iv. Not be in the student's final semester at AUC
 - v. Have declared a major
 - vi. Have completed the following courses, worth 9 credits:
 - i. Freshman Writing (RHET 1010)
 - ii. Research Writing (RHET 1020)
 - iii. Freshman Seminar (CORE 1010)
 - vii. Students who are on disciplinary probation (been found to have committed conduct or academic integrity violations in the semester of applying for study abroad) are not eligible to apply. If they have already applied, their acceptances will be rescinded. If they have been nominated as exchange students, the partner institutions will be notified of their withdrawal for unspecified reasons.
 - viii. Program-specific requirements, as indicated by the host institution

2. Graduate Student Eligibility

- a. To be eligible to participate in AUC's study abroad program, an AUC graduate student must meet the following criteria
 - i. Have a GPA of 3.2 or higher. Note: For students in their first semester who do not yet have a GPA, we

- accept applications and will review academic performance once the first semester has ended.
- ii. Have completed all remedial English courses, if applicable
- iii. If traveling on exchange, be registered for at least nine credits. Note that students may not register in either the thesis or what are considered “capstone” courses by the Host Institution.
- iv. Be a full-time student
- v. Students who are on disciplinary probation (been found to have committed conduct or academic integrity violations in the semester of applying for study abroad) are not eligible to apply. If they have already applied, their acceptances will be rescinded. If they have been nominated as exchange students, the partner institutions will be notified of their withdrawal for unspecified reasons.
- vi. Ideally be in the third semester of a four-semester master’s program of courses when studying abroad
- vii. Program-specific requirements, as indicated by the host institution

3. Program Acceptance Process

- a. AUC is committed to equal opportunity and equitable access to all its programs, including study abroad
- b. AUC uses multiple channels to reach all students prior to opening the application cycle so that students are aware of the opportunity to apply for study abroad. These channels include the AUC Portal, AUC Connect, and the Dean of Students.
- c. The International Programs Office (IPO) posts advising sessions in which students may learn more about host universities, their course offerings, their campuses, and whether AUC has an exchange agreement with them.
- d. Once students apply, their applications are screened to meet the eligibility criteria including a check for disciplinary violations.
- e. Successful applicants are then invited to an interview with IPO staff and a member from the academic school to which the student belongs. The interview panel uses a scoring rubric to rank students according to fixed criteria.

- f. Students are then placed in exchange slots paying AUC tuition, or given the choice to do partner-nominated study abroad, paying host institution tuition, as part of the study abroad program.
 - g. Students are always free to apply to other institutions not advertised by the IPO. In this case, the IPO uses the information from the Registrar to track them abroad and make sure they understand that the IPO will support them in case of emergencies.
4. Registration for Courses at AUC to “Hold One’s Place”
- a. Undergraduate students must register for a minimum of 12-credit placeholder courses at AUC for the semester in which they plan to be abroad. Most students register for 15-18 credit hours depending on their major.
 - b. Graduate students must register for at least 9 credits, which is considered full-time for a graduate student.
 - c. During the week of add/drop, the IPO will drop any AUC student from placeholder courses once that student has informed the IPO of safe arrival and matriculation at the Host Institution.
 - d. Students who have prior holds on their accounts that prevent them from registering for the placeholder courses are responsible for clearing those holds in order to register.
 - e. Students on exchange programs do not take a leave of absence but students on a study-abroad program do.
5. Course Approval at AUC for Courses to be Taken at the Host Institution
- a. All AUC students must follow the Transfer Guidelines, starting with the online Transfer Course Equivalency (TCE) Tool. Students fill out the form on the TCE and then review their selected courses with their department advisor. Students then meet with the Transfer Credit Advisor in the Registrar’s office. The department advisor must approve the final selection of courses. The Transfer Guidelines explain which courses require detailed syllabi for transfer credit and which courses are not transferable.
 - b. For undergraduate students, exchange programs between AUC and Host Institutions cover the equivalent of 15 credit units, meaning that AUC students may enroll in up

to 15 credit units at the Host Institution at no additional cost beyond the AUC full-time tuition.

- c. For graduate students, some exchange programs between AUC and Host Institutions allow enrollment in up to 9 credit units. Others allow up to enrollment in courses equalling 12 credits. Graduate students in exchange programs who wish to take 12 credits at the Host Institution will need to pay the AUC graduate tuition for 12 credits.
- d. Students are advised to pre-approve more courses than only those that they intend to take abroad in case they need to substitute one of the extra pre-approved courses for one of the ones they had planned to take.

6. Tuition and Fees

- a. Students participating in exchange programs with partner institutions are considered full time students at AUC. They pay their full tuition to AUC, in accordance with our signed agreements with partner institutions. Other fees related to AUC campus operations, such as library fees, student union fees, local insurance, and fees to use the athletics facilities are not charged to the student.
- b. Exchange students are aware that non-tuition costs, such as accommodations, transportation, and meal plans are the responsibility of the student. In cases where AUC students are on full scholarship and in need of financial support to cover non-tuition costs, students are referred to the scholarship office, where there are some options for financial support for students on scholarship who wish to study abroad. [See here.](#)
- c. Students participating in direct-enroll study abroad programs take a leave of absence and pay tuition and other fees to their Host Institution.

7. Medical Insurance

- a. AUC students enrolled abroad are required to have health insurance from the Host Institution unless they show proof that they have the equivalent or superior insurance. The AUC medical insurance does not cover students while outside the medical network, which is Egypt-local, and therefore all students traveling abroad must show proof of

other/additional insurance covering them abroad, before traveling.

- b. Some countries (e.g. France, Switzerland, Australia) require that students purchase local health insurance. AUC students are responsible for meeting the insurance requirements of the host institutions while enrolled at those institutions.

8. Mandatory Pre-departure Orientation

- a. AUC understands that academic and cultural norms and expectations may differ from one university and one culture to another.
- b. In order to best ensure that AUC students will have a successful semester or year abroad, AUC conducts a mandatory pre-departure orientation for all its students who are traveling abroad in the following semester. The orientation is 3-4 hours in length, and AUC students who have returned from studying abroad as well as international students currently studying at AUC are invited to participate and share their experiences and perspectives.
- c. Some of the areas covered by the orientation include:
 - i. Academic expectations, attendance, and integrity
 - ii. Housing options, meal plans, how to purchase books and supplies
 - iii. Insurance
 - iv. Clothing
 - v. Banking
 - vi. Visas, Immigration requirements
 - vii. Safety and security
 - viii. Medical and psychological well-being
 - ix. Travel within the international country or region
 - x. Do's and don'ts in a foreign country
 - xi. How to send transcripts back to AUC

9. Study Abroad Program Withdrawal

- a. Should a student decide to withdraw from a study abroad program after the add/drop period at AUC has finished (end of the first week of the semester) and the student has been dropped from his/her enrolled courses at AUC, the student should immediately notify the IPO by email.

- b. The IPO will inform the Registrar of the student's withdrawal from the host institution.
- c. AUC is not responsible for indirect costs paid directly by the student, including, but not limited to, passport and visa fees, vaccinations, insurance, housing, meals, and transportation costs.
- d. Students are subject to the withdrawal deadlines and policies established by the Office of the Registrar and Student Accounting. For more information see [AUC Registrar and Student Accounting](#).

10. Study Abroad Program Dismissal

- a. Should a host institution inform us that one of our students attending at the host institution is posing a harm to himself/herself, others, or to the reputation of AUC, AUC has the right to withdraw the student from the AUC study abroad program and is not liable for any costs incurred to the student for the student's involuntary withdrawal.

11. Study Abroad Program Cancellation, Freeze, or Student Repatriation due to Events beyond the Control of the Student

- a. The safety of AUC students at all times is of critical importance. The University reserves the right to cancel any study abroad program in a location that is considered unsafe. The IPO regularly reviews information provided by the Egyptian Government and U.S. Department of State and monitors other sources, such as announcements from the Overseas Security Advisory Council (OSAC), for information about the countries where AUC students are or will be studying.
- b. Should a program cancellation become necessary for safety reasons, an emergency, or for reasons beyond the University's control, after students have arrived overseas, every effort will be made to refund recoverable costs to the participants. Additionally, AUC will make every effort to help students complete the academic work from the program and, depending on the circumstances, possibly earn the intended academic credit from the program. Whether or not this is possible depends largely on the particular program, the circumstances of the academic

work of the program, and the length of time remaining in the program after the official cancellation date.

- c. Unrecoverable program expenses including, but not limited to, passport and visa fees, vaccinations, housing fees, or airline costs, paid for directly by the student cannot be refunded.
- d. Because full refunds are often not possible, students should consider purchasing trip cancellation insurance that can be obtained through many travel agents or insurance companies. When researching policies, it is important to carefully weigh the cost of the insurance against the value of travel expenses. Policies vary on what triggers trip cancellation, so students should check with travel insurance providers for more details.
- e. The Scholarship and Financial Aid office will review program cancellations on a case-by-case basis for students who are receiving financial aid.

12. Code of Student Conduct

- a. AUC students who participate in a study abroad program are enrolled at AUC and are subject to the provisions of the Code of Student Conduct to the same extent they would be if studying on campus. Any student who engages in conduct that violates the Code of Student Conduct will be subject to review and sanctions. This will be done in consultation with the Office of Student Development and Community Relations (SDCR) and if appropriate, the Office of Institutional Equity.

13. Laws of the Host Country

- a. All AUC students are guests in the host country, and, as such, are subject to all laws pertaining to that country. AUC students should know that violations of local laws in a foreign country could result in deportation or detainment by law enforcement officials in the foreign country. AUC cannot assist the student if legal counsel is needed in a foreign counsel. All AUC students are strongly advised, once in the host country, to identify the nearest branch of the embassy or consulate of their citizenship and contact that branch should legal counsel be required.

C. In-coming International Students

1. AUC accepts international students as non-degree students both from partners and non-partners. (See II. 3 and 4, above). Partners nominate students either as “exchange students” or “partner-nominated study abroad” students. For students from non-partner institutions who wish to apply independently, AUC may accept them although the application process may include the need for additional supporting documents.
2. All students who wish to study at AUC must complete the normal application process, meeting AUC entry requirements, including English proficiency. This is for both students nominated by a partner or for students who apply independently.
3. Some AUC partnership agreements will include language to waive the English language proficiency if the university’s sole language of instruction is English.
4. International students must obtain all required approvals from the Home Institution. Students coming outside of partnerships will need additional letters of recommendation from their Home Institution.
5. Each student accepted by AUC will be expected to participate at AUC at the same level of competency as any other student enrolled at AUC.
6. AUC will make the final decision as to the acceptance of each student in each case, according to its admission policies governing students.
7. AUC retains the right to approve or reject any recommendation based on whether the candidate’s qualifications meet admission requirements at the Host Institution.
8. AUC notifies the student in writing of acceptance or rejection to AUC.
9. Each student accepted by AUC will be expected to have the same privileges and enjoy the same access to campus facilities as any other student enrolled at the Host Institution.
10. AUC will provide orientation for the incoming students. The students will be guided through the process of obtaining an ID number, physical ID card, and email.
11. AUC will initiate the process of obtaining residency for incoming international students.
12. AUC will endeavor to ensure that students are admitted to courses regarded as essential. AUC will provide academic and other advisory services for incoming students within the

constraints of capacity, the actual provision of those courses in that semester, and the possibility that classes are canceled. In those cases, AUC will make every effort to accommodate them in alternative courses in the fields of study they wish to pursue.

13. AUC agrees to make every effort to make a place available for the study abroad student in its student residence halls during the normal semester on the understanding that the student or a sponsor will pay for all accommodation costs. If no accommodation is available, the Host Institution will assist the student in finding accommodation off campus; however, the student bears the ultimate responsibility for locating and leasing such off-campus housing.
14. AUC will inform the Home Institution of health insurance and immunization requirements and availability. Students attending AUC will be required to either purchase AUC's student health insurance for the period of their study at AUC or demonstrate that they are covered by their own individual health insurance purchased at their own expense. That insurance must be of equivalent or superior coverage to that provided by the AUC policy. Each student must provide proof of such insurance to AUC. The student will be responsible for any medical expenses not covered by the student's health insurance plan. If AUC determines that a student from the Host Institution is in an emergency situation, AUC will promptly notify the Home Institution and cooperate fully in determining what additional actions may be required.
15. AUC will provide to the Home Institution a final transcript describing the student's academic performance, within six (6) weeks after the conclusion of the academic term in which the student was enrolled, on condition that the student has cleared his/her financial accounts with the host institution and has no other unfulfilled obligation to that institution that would restrict the release of his/her records and grades.
16. The Parties to any exchange or study abroad agreement will each maintain books, records, documents and other evidence that sufficiently and properly reflect all direct and indirect costs expended by either Party in the performance of the services and work contemplated by Agreement. These records will be subject to inspection, review or audit by personnel of the Parties, other personnel duly authorized by either Party. Such inspection, review or audit shall be subject to the applicable laws and procedures.

17. AUC shall only share data and/or personally identifiable information with host institutions as permitted by law and in accordance with the applicable requirements of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), 20 U.S.C. §1232g, 34 C.F.R. Part 99, and other applicable privacy laws including without limitation, the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 and the federal regulations adopted to implement that Act (45 C.F.R. Parts 160 & 164; the HIPAA Privacy and Security Rules;), collectively referred to as “HIPAA”
18. AUC requires the following of the Home Institution in the cases of both exchange and partner-nominated study abroad students)
 - a. collecting and reviewing student applications and recommending qualified students to AUC for the study desired.
 - b. The Home Institution will provide AUC with details of courses that are essential for particular students.
 - c. Each Home Institution is responsible for maintaining its own students registered at the Home Institution for the duration of the program.
 - d. Each Home Institution should inform AUC in advance of the arrival of any student in need of disability accommodations.