Just like any new opportunity, there are many assumptions about studying abroad. Get the facts and make an educated decision about going abroad!

"It was probably the best experience of my life and I wouldn't trade it for the world. I learned so much about myself, others, and the world around me. I can truly say that my experience there has changed me and my life goals in a way that staying at school would have never been able to do."

- Jessica Tai, SESP, Study Abroad in South Africa

Come visit us!
Study Abroad Advisers are available every week in the Study Abroad Office.

Tuesdays
10 am-12 pm

Wednesdays
3-5 pm

See our website for other walk-in hours and locations.

Study Abroad Office
630 Dartmouth Place
Evanston, IL 60208
(847) 467-6400
studyabroad@northwestern.edu
www.northwestern.edu/studyabroad
NUstudyabroad
NUstudyabroad

Over 30% of Northwestern students study abroad during their academic career– don’t let the myths stop you!
Myth: I won’t get credit or graduate on time.
Reality: All affiliated programs offered through the Study Abroad Office are Northwestern-approved. As long as you pass your courses with a C or above and take eligible classes (literature=yes, basket weaving=no) your credits will transfer. You will consult with your academic and study abroad advisors to see how going abroad fits into your NU career. With careful planning, many students receive credit for their major and minor programs, and there’s no reason why you shouldn’t graduate on time, even if you spend a full year abroad.

Myth: It’s too competitive and difficult to get accepted.
Reality: The majority of NU students who meet the requirements and complete the application process are approved to study abroad. You will work with a Study Abroad Adviser throughout the application process, including identifying which programs you are the most qualified for. We encourage you to look into the study abroad options and requirements early on; ask us about any concerns you have and we can advise you on how to make your application as strong as possible!

Myth: I can’t afford it.
Reality: There are many options for study abroad that will often cost the same or even less than spending a quarter or year at Northwestern. If you qualify for federal financial aid, you will be able to use that aid toward affiliated study abroad program costs. If you do not receive federal aid, there are grants and fellowships through NU specifically for study abroad, as well as outside scholarships that you can apply for. NU provides financial aid counseling for all study abroad applicants, and you can schedule an appointment by calling the Office of Undergraduate Financial Aid at 847-491-7400.

Myth: I need to be fluent in a language other than English to study abroad.
Reality: There is a wide range of foreign language requirements for study abroad programs, from none to near fluency. Although we encourage all students to study a foreign language while in college and improve their proficiency in the language while abroad, we understand that not everyone can do so. NU is affiliated with several programs in English-speaking countries, as well as programs that are taught in English but in countries where the official language is not English. Many students start learning a second language for the first time while abroad.

Myth: I’ll have to commit to a year away from Northwestern, and it’s not worth leaving campus for that long.
Reality: While we encourage you to study abroad for as long as your degree plan allows, NU offers programs that run over the summer, for one quarter only, for two quarters, or for the full academic year. We encourage you to find the length of time that not only gives you a significant immersion experience, but that also fits in with your overall academic, professional and personal goals. Consider the significance that a study abroad experience will carry on your resume or graduate school application; study abroad is one of the factors that can differentiate you from the crowd! While abroad you will develop valuable skills such as independence and leadership, cross-cultural understanding and communication, and adaptability in unfamiliar situations.

Myth: The world’s too dangerous to study abroad; it’s safer to stay home.
Reality: Just as in the U.S., your safety abroad depends on you exercising mature and responsible behavior and making good decisions. With advance preparation and common sense precautions, you can have a safe and enjoyable experience in another country. Be careful and plan ahead, but don’t be afraid to study abroad!

Myth: My family would not support my decision to study abroad.
Reality: Family support is an important consideration when deciding to study abroad. When you start the conversation, be open to their concerns; you might find that their questions are similar to your own. Common concerns are your personal safety, the affordability of study abroad, and if you will graduate on time. First educate yourself about these issues and use this opportunity to help your family better understand the NU resources available to you before, during and after your time abroad. Need advice about how to start this conversation with your family? Just ask us!