

Studying Abroad as a Pre-Health Student

You have options! Just remember...

- Plan ahead! It is never too early to talk to your advisors (e.g., pre-health, college/major, study abroad).
- Summer study abroad options offer the most flexibility for pre-med/pre-health students, but going abroad during the academic year is also possible with careful planning.
- Study abroad programs that take place during the academic year are easier to incorporate if you:
 - Consider taking one or more gap years, **OR**
 - Take part or all of one of the core science sequences over the summer, **OR**
 - Double up on core science sequences during the academic year.

Key Considerations

Medical schools and other health professions programs want you to keep the following in mind:

- Most medical schools and health professions programs prefer that applicants take their prerequisite coursework at their home institution. We typically advise students not to take pre-med/pre-health coursework abroad, but there may be exceptions. Please talk with us to understand the implications of taking required courses abroad.
- Medical schools and health professions programs take patient care very seriously. Applicants who engage in patient care for which they are not properly trained may be putting the patient and their application/status as a candidate at risk.
- With patient contact/care, remember: If you are not allowed to do something here, you are not allowed to do it abroad. Further, even if you are allowed to do something here (e.g., you are a licensed EMT), your licensure may not transfer to another country, putting both you and the patients at risk.

Planning: Next steps

1. **Review your credit-bearing summer and academic year study abroad options:**
<https://www.northwestern.edu/abroad/>
2. **Meet with:**
 - **Global Learning Office (GLO) advisor:** to explore your program/location options and to learn more about application processes, deadlines, and requirements.
 - **Your school/college advisor:** to discuss a plan for completing major/distribution requirements.
 - **Your health professions advisor:** to discuss how study abroad may impact your choice of when to take your health professions entrance exam (e.g. MCAT, DAT, GRE) and the best time to apply.

Resources

Global Learning Office (GLO): <https://www.northwestern.edu/abroad/>

Health Professions Advising appointments: <https://www.northwestern.edu/hpa>

Guidelines for Premedical and Medical Students Providing Patient Care During Clinical Experiences Abroad from the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC): <https://bit.ly/2e2nGPf>