Benefits of International Experience for WGS

When asked what they benefited from by going abroad, one of the most common responses from students is that they learned more about their own country and culture through their study in, and of, another culture. Students interested in Women, Gender and Sexuality (WGS) can enhance their U.Va. education by gaining another perspective on the United States and in their academic discipline. Upon graduation, undergraduate students must be prepared to embrace both the challenges and the exciting opportunities of an interconnected world. As such, studying abroad is a critical step towards being able to navigate such an environment, both in the workforce and in everyday life.

Studying abroad can help you develop skills in cross-cultural communication, critical thinking, empathy, and tolerance. A multi-faceted perspective in your discipline will help you develop abilities to approach problems and tasks with different methods.

Student Experience

Anya Good, UVA in Morocco, summer 2007

“By the end of six weeks, I recognized and extracted the ‘exotic’ postcard images from my pre-Morocco bubble. But at some point, somewhere between days twelve and fifteen perhaps, this bubble popped. I experienced moments that were pretty, and likewise ugly. I saw things that were seemingly painted, and other things I thought should be addressed, fixed, or erased... I no longer feel wholly unknowing, but it seems that such complex diversities demand continued study, experience, learning of and about Morocco. I wish, still, to know more.”

Funding your Experience Abroad

- There is a program for every budget! Speak with an education abroad advisor to learn about your options.
- Financial aid is portable. If you receive any kind of financial aid or use a program such as VPEP, make sure to tell your advisor early on in your planning.
- Scholarship deadlines are often earlier than program applications—research and apply early!
- Use the cost comparison worksheet on the Education Abroad website to compare programs, what is included in each program and what meets your budget.
Academic and Timing Considerations

Students who declare a major or minor in WGS can count up to six upper-level credits from their study abroad experience towards requirements. Since you will declare the major or minor in your second year, third year is likely to be the best time to study abroad. However, it may be possible to take WGS focused courses abroad before declaring the major or minor, but you should consult with the Director of Undergraduate Programs whether these classes can count towards requirements. All credits earned abroad will count as elective credits within the major or minor.

You may be able to count relevant independent study or internship credit while taken abroad, but this will count towards the 6 possible credits of independent study students can count towards the major overall, as well as the 6 credits allowed for study abroad.

If you are not a declared WGS major or minor student, but interested in taking courses in this area, this document may also be a good starting point for you. If you are only seeking general elective credit towards graduation (not a WGS major), you do not need formal approval from the department for your courses, but instead should see Meredith Burke in Monroe Hall for elective credit approval.

There are a wide variety of education abroad opportunities offered through U.Va., both through semester/year exchanges, faculty-led programs and internships, research, or service-learning experiences. The programs listed here are merely a starting point for your research.

Education Abroad Programs in Women, Gender & Sexuality

UVA Exchanges (semester, year) *

Canada
McGill University
McGill’s program in Women’s Studies offers U.Va. students the opportunity to continue their studies with a unique perspective from our Northern neighbor.

University of British Columbia
UBC has a variety of courses in Women and Gender studies. Note: UBC has one exchange deadline per year in February for the upcoming academic year. For example, applications for either fall or spring of the 2014-2015 academic year is in February, 2014).

Europe
Germany, Humboldt University
Live in the cosmopolitan and historically vibrant city of Berlin and take classes with local students. HU has a number of classes in Gender Studies. Four semesters of German language is required for this exchange.

The Netherlands, University of Amsterdam
Students have access to a range of courses in English while enjoying the culturally rich city of Amsterdam.

Sweden, Lund University
Many classes Lund are taught in English. There are a number of classes in Gender Studies from a Scandinavian and European perspective that exchange students can take.
Oceania

New Zealand, University of Otago
Students in Otago can take classes in areas such as English, History, Political Studies—among others. Courses in New Zealand are referred to as “Papers”.

Australia, University of New South Wales
The Women’s and Gender Studies program at UNSW is interdisciplinary covering areas such as philosophy, politics, sociology, and linguistics.

Outside Program Providers

Europe

Denmark, DIS (Danish Institute for Study Abroad)
Students take a core course that includes at least one week-long field study to another part of Europe. Students augment this core course with additional classes in one or multiple areas of interest. DIS offers several women and gender studies courses. No Danish is necessary.

Germany, Junior Year in Munich with Wayne State University
Take classes with local students at Ludwig Maximilian University or through the program center. This program requires two years of college-level German Language.

Latin America

Buenos Aires, Argentina: IFSA-Butler Argentine Universities Program: Continue to improve your Spanish while focusing on one of six concentrations, such as Diversity, Modernity, and Gender Studies; or Human Rights. Students live in a homestay and also have the opportunity to participate in service-learning or volunteer work. You must have five semesters of Spanish for this program.

Salvador da Bahia, Brazil: CIEE Liberal Arts in Salvador da Bahia: You’ll need either four semesters of Spanish and/or two semesters of Portuguese for this program. All students start with a four-week intensive language class before taking courses alongside local Brazilian students or at the CIEE study center.

Valparaiso, Chile: SIT: Cultural Identity, Social Justice, & Community Development: The SIT program combines seminars with field-based learning to offer students a truly experiential learning environment. After roughly six weeks in class, students participate in an independent research project out in the field.

Oceania

Australia: Education Abroad Network: Monash University: The Gender studies program at Monash focuses on feminist models of analysis and development of transferable professional skills, while examining the belief that social processes are “gendered”. EAN offers students multiple housing options, planned excursions and a variety of cultural activities. to introduce students to all Melbourne has to offer.

Australia: Education Abroad Network: Macquarie University: Based in the sociology department, Macquarie’s major in Gender Studies offers numerous courses to visiting students.

Africa

Senegal: Minnesota Studies in International Development: Students explore and engage in the contrasts of urban and rural environments with 7 weeks of coursework followed by 6 weeks in a rural area as an intern or conducting research with a local grassroots organization.

Asia

India: The Alliance for Global Education: Contemporary India: This program engages students in learning about some of the most dynamic, exciting areas of Indian society, politics, economics, and culture today. Students explore issues around development, the environment, social justice and gender with a culminating research project, internship, or documentary film.