

Lake Erie College Study Abroad and Study Away Policy

Purpose

Lake Erie College (LEC) affirms the educational value of study abroad and domestic study-away experiences as high-impact practices that enhance academic learning, intercultural competence, global awareness, and personal and professional development. This policy establishes institutional standards for participation in all LEC-approved study abroad and study-away programs to ensure academic rigor, student safety, fiscal responsibility, and alignment with College learning outcomes.

This policy applies to all students participating in semester-long, short-term, faculty-led, exchange, or partner-based study abroad or domestic study-away programs, regardless of whether the experience fulfills a major, minor, CORE requirement, or elective credit.

Definitions

- **Study Abroad:** Academic programs conducted outside the United States that include credit-bearing coursework.
 - **Study Away:** Credit-bearing academic programs conducted within the United States but outside a student's home region that provide immersive cultural, civic, or experiential learning.
 - **Partner Institution:** A regionally accredited domestic or international institution or organization formally approved by Lake Erie College.
 - **Faculty-Led Program:** A study abroad or study-away experience led by Lake Erie College faculty, typically short-term or embedded within a course.
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Eligibility Requirements

To participate in an LEC-approved study abroad or study-away program, students must:

- Be degree-seeking students at Lake Erie College.
- Be in good academic standing.
- Meet GPA requirements of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale.
- Have achieved at least sophomore standing by the start of the program, unless otherwise approved.
- Have completed a minimum of two semesters at Lake Erie College prior to departure.
- Receive written approval from their Academic Advisor, Financial Aid Office, the Dean of their School, and the Dean of Academic and Student Engagement.

Lake Erie College reserves the right to deny participation based on academic performance, conduct history, or failure to meet program prerequisites and deadlines.

Academic Requirements and Credit

Coursework and Credit Hours

- All study abroad and study-away experiences must include credit-bearing, transcribed coursework.
- Courses must be offered through Lake Erie College or an approved partner institution.
- A minimum course load equivalent to full-time enrollment is required for semester programs unless otherwise approved.
- Credit will only be awarded for coursework that is pre-approved and completed with a grade of C or higher (or equivalent).

Course Approval and Transfer Credit

- Students must work with their advisor to submit a proposed academic plan prior to departure outlining intended courses, credit hours, and learning outcomes.
 - Final credit transfer is contingent upon receipt of official transcripts and verification of course completion.
 - Pass/Fail, Incomplete, or grades below C will not normally transfer unless explicitly approved in writing by the Dean.
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Pre-Departure Requirements

Prior to departure, students must:

- Complete all required application materials and deadlines.
- Attend mandatory pre-departure orientation sessions.
- Complete any required preparatory coursework or seminars.
- Submit emergency contact information, health forms, and travel documentation.
- Acknowledge and comply with College policies related to conduct, travel, and risk management.
- All financial obligations must be met and guaranteed by Financial Aid and Bursar's office.

Failure to complete pre-departure requirements may result in removal from the program.

Student Conduct and Responsibilities

Students participating in study abroad or study-away programs are representatives of Lake Erie College and are subject to:

- The LEC Student Code of Conduct.
- All applicable host institution rules and local laws.
- Program-specific behavioral and academic expectations.

Violations may result in disciplinary action, removal from the program, loss of academic credit, and/or financial liability.

Health, Safety, and Risk Management

- Students are responsible for maintaining appropriate health insurance coverage, including international coverage when applicable.
 - Lake Erie College reserves the right to cancel, suspend, or modify programs due to health, safety, political instability, or other exigent circumstances.
 - Students may be required to comply with travel advisories and institutional risk assessments.
 - All required college forms are completed and returned to the appropriate offices.
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Withdrawal, Dismissal, and Non-Completion

Voluntary Withdrawal

If a student withdraws from a program after acceptance:

- Academic credit may not be awarded for incomplete coursework.
- The student may be responsible for non-refundable program costs.
- Financial aid may be adjusted in accordance with federal and institutional regulations.

Involuntary Dismissal

Students may be dismissed from a program for academic failure, misconduct, or safety concerns. Dismissal will result in loss of credit and financial responsibility for incurred expenses.

Emergency Withdrawals

In cases of documented medical, safety, or program-related emergencies, the Dean of the School and the Dean of Academic and Student Engagement will review the situation on a case-by-case basis to determine eligibility for partial credit, incompletes, or deferred completion.

Financial Aid and Billing

- Students remain financially responsible to Lake Erie College during study abroad or study-away participation.
 - Financial aid eligibility is determined by enrollment status and federal regulations.
 - Scholarships or institutional funding tied to study abroad may require repayment if program requirements are not met.
 - Students are required to have all financial obligations approved by Financial Aid and the Bursar's office prior to approval of the experience.
 - All financial obligations must be met and guaranteed by Financial Aid and Bursar's office.
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Oversight and Administration

Oversight of all study abroad and study-away programs is shared by:

- The Dean of the student's academic school
- The Dean of Academic and Student Engagement

Lake Erie College reserves the right to approve, modify, suspend, or discontinue programs to maintain academic quality, compliance, and student safety.
