

# STUDY ABROAD

Here are 10 excellent reasons why you should take the plunge:

1. ***Study abroad is a great way to learn a foreign language:*** There is no better and more effective way to learn a language than to be immersed in a culture that speaks the language you are learning. You will be surrounded by the language on a daily basis and are seeing and hearing it in the proper cultural context. Language learning happens most quickly under these circumstances.
2. ***Study abroad provides the opportunity to travel:*** Weekends and academic breaks allow you to venture out and explore both your immediate and distant surroundings. Since studying abroad often puts you on a completely different continent, you are much closer to places you might otherwise not have had the opportunity to visit. Some more structured study abroad programs even have field trip excursions planned in or around the curriculum.
3. ***Study abroad allows you get to know another culture first-hand:*** Cultural differences are more than just differences in language, food, appearances, and personal habits. A person's culture reflects very deep perceptions, beliefs, and values that influence his or her way of life and the way that s/he views the world. Students who experience cultural differences personally can come to truly understand where other cultures are coming from.
4. ***Study abroad will help you develop skills and give you experiences a classroom setting will never provide:*** Being immersed in an entirely new cultural setting is scary at first, but it is also exciting. It is an opportunity to discover new strengths and abilities, conquer new challenges, and solve new problems. You will encounter situations that are wholly unfamiliar to you and will learn to adapt and respond in effective ways.
5. ***Study abroad affords you the opportunity to make friends around the world:*** While abroad, you will meet local students as well as other international students who are studying far from home - just as you are.
6. ***Study abroad helps you to learn about yourself:*** Students who study abroad return home with new ideas and perspectives about themselves and their own culture. The experience abroad often challenges them to reconsider their own beliefs and values. The experience may cause you to alter or abandon old values and embrace new concepts and perceptions. The encounter with other cultures enables students to see their own culture through the eyes of someone else.

7. ***Study abroad expands your worldview:*** Students who study abroad return home with an informed and much less biased perspective toward other cultures and peoples.

8. ***Study abroad gives you the opportunity to break out of your academic routine:*** You may become familiar with an entirely new academic system and you will have the chance to take courses offered at Sul Ross State University but in a foreign country and courses that are not normally offered here.

9. ***Study abroad enhances employment opportunities:*** Did you know that only 4% of U.S. undergraduates ever study abroad? Yet, the world continues to become more globalized, American companies are increasingly investing dollars abroad, and companies from countries around the world continue to invest in the international market. Through an employer's eyes, a student who has studied abroad is self-motivated, independent, willing to embrace challenges, and able to cope with diverse problems and situations. Your experience living and studying in a foreign country, negotiating another culture, and acquiring another language will all set you apart from the majority of other job applicants.

10. ***Study abroad can enhance the value of your degree:*** While abroad, you can take our courses that have been specifically designed for experiential learning and you can take courses you would never have had the opportunity to take on your home campus. In addition, study abroad gives your language skills such a boost that it is normally quite easy to add a minor in a language or even a second major without having to take many more additional courses after the return to your home campus.

See the Fulbright Scholarships and Boren Awards websites for information on scholarship opportunities that may be available. Students may also consider approaching overseas universities as a private individual. Choose a country and institution you might be interested in, look on their website and talk to them!

Before you start, you must realize that competition for these scholarships is fierce! Successful applicants take time and great pains to construct an impressive and persuasive application. No one is going to write the application for you, but you should seek help from the appropriate faculty. Trying to pull something together a couple of weeks before the submission deadline is not likely to be successful!

For Study Abroad opportunities that may be available for your particular program or department, please contact your department chair or program coordinator. You may also contact the Director of International Studies, Dr. Esther Rumsey, at [erumsey@sulross.edu](mailto:erumsey@sulross.edu), (432) 837-8211 or you may visit her website <http://www.sulross.edu/international-studies>.