

Office of Study Abroad

International Internships Available in 14 Countries

Internships are a proven method of preparing students for the real world. International internships help students gain a better understanding of the changing world of work, as well as helping them develop career planning and decision-making skills. They allow exploration of formal and informal organizational structures, communication styles and work cultures.

MSU sponsors 20 international academic internships in 14 countries coordinated by the Office of Study Abroad. Several colleges, including Agriculture & Natural Resources, Arts & Letters, Business, Communication Arts & Sciences, James Madison and Social Science, offer full-time internships throughout the year, as well as others that are incorporated into a study abroad experience before, during or after the program.

These internships carry varying amounts and types of credit. Each is customized and tailored to each student's skills, interests and education. In most cases, an on-site contact works with MSU to arrange the placement; some programs require direct contact between students and local coordinators.

Most internships are unpaid due to visa requirements and international regulations and because MSU doesn't want to displace local workers. However, hosts and organizations sometimes defray associated costs with subsidized housing and allowances for transportation and food.



Freshman Seminars Abroad

Freshman Seminars Abroad introduce incoming first-year students to both college life and international learning. While exploring new cultures, participants get to know faculty and staff and make friends while being exposed to coursework that helps develop their critical thinking, writing and study skills.

The initiative was launched in 2003 with a program that took 35 students to Québec City. Five years later, program capacity has increased to more than 200 students, who can choose from eight programs in seven countries: Canada, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Mexico, New Zealand and South Africa.

Participants earn credit while traveling, gain international experience, develop an appreciation of the knowledge and skills required to become successful players in a global economy and face college-level academic work and expectations for the first time. Past Freshman Seminar Abroad students say the experience helped them clarify academic and career goals and become more confident about living and learning at MSU.

Plans are underway for more destinations to be added in 2009, including South America and Scotland.

Study Abroad Task Force

In 1995, MSU first convened a university-wide task force to gauge the status and future directions of Study Abroad. There had been no similar university-wide examinations since, so the provost and the dean of International Studies & Programs commissioned a new Task Force on Study Abroad to take stock of where MSU is regarding its study abroad goals, and where it should be heading.

The task force started with a comprehensive information-gathering effort, including Web-based surveys of students and faculty. It then solicited feedback from stakeholders across campus.

The task force is examining such issues as financial and academic barriers for students who hope to study abroad, the university's future mix of program types and locations, faculty participation, quality in the programming and expanded opportunities for foreign language study abroad.