



Procedures to Apply for a Semester Abroad on Exchange

Bellarmino has over 160 partner universities around the world in over 60 countries! There are options available for ALL majors! Students may choose to take classes abroad in their major or they can take general education courses such as a fine art, social science, and English literature. Students may also take electives in other areas of interest. The cost of participating in an exchange is only slightly more than spending a similar period on the Bellarmine campus. With proper planning, students may study abroad for a semester or an academic year and graduate in 4 years. Participation in an exchange program is designed not to delay graduation—in fact, students who study abroad graduate in 4 years at a higher rate than those who don't study abroad!

Applicants will be asked to prepare their application in stages. Most qualified students who wish to participate in an exchange and complete their application on time will be able to do so. Exchange participants are then nominated at the host institution/organization by the Bellarmine Office for Study Abroad and International Learning.

The process to apply for a semester or academic year on exchange is lengthy but relatively simple. Here is a summary of the process:

In the first stage, students wishing to apply for an exchange will have advising sessions with the Study Abroad Advisor and the Faculty Liaison for their major. They should also have regular consultations with his/her academic advisor and foreign language instructor (if applicable).

In the second stage, Bellarmine students will complete either an ISEP application or the corresponding bilateral institution application. The Bellarmine OSAIL will review all applications and work with each student to complete and improve his/her application. The OSAIL will then approve the applicant with ISEP (or other organization) or nominate applicant to the host bilateral institution, as appropriate.

During the third stage, the host institution and **ISEP** will attempt to place applicants at the institutions they have requested. For ISEP applicants, placement at the most often-requested sites will be **very competitive** and **in some cases, ISEP will need to explore alternative placements for students**. Once placed, the host institution or ISEP will notify the Bellarmine OSAIL staff who will in turn notify the student. For bilateral applicants, the student will apply directly to the host institution (according to their procedures). Notification of acceptance **usually** takes place in March or April for fall or September or October for spring placements.

If you would like to apply for placement as an exchange student (usually done in the junior year), the following dates should be observed during the fall of preceding year (usually sophomore year):

September - November	Interviews and advising sessions for interested students
September/ October	Annual Study Abroad Fair
November 30	Applications are due in the Office for Study Abroad and International Learning for submission to the bilateral institution or ISEP Central. This includes the BU Study Abroad Application and Study Abroad Fee, the ISEP or bilateral partner application, the ISEP placement fee (if applicable) academic references, personal statement, official transcripts from all institutions attended and language evaluations. Please make sure you do not have a hold on your BU account so that your transcripts can be sent to the OSAIL at the end of the semester.
January	Notification of selection as Bellarmine University outbound Bilateral or ISEP Exchange Student.
March/April (fall) September/October (spring)	For students who apply for placement with ISEP, notification is typically between the months of March and April for fall or September and October for spring. Bilateral placements are processed according to each host institution's procedures. After acceptance in a program, the student will start the visa application process, as necessary.
April-May (fall) October-November (spring)	Fall students receive information packets from the International Host University.
September/February	Students prepare for their time abroad (passport, visa, health checks, financial aid, scholarships, etc.).
Semester preceding study abroad	Semester and full year abroad students must enroll in the FLIS 201 Perspectives of World Cultures course in the semester prior to their departure

Interviews and Advising Sessions (September -November)

Interested students should attend the Study Abroad Fair and schedule advising sessions with the Study Abroad Advisor and the Faculty Liaison for his/her major. Students should also regularly consult his/her academic advisor. Successful exchange participants will be **mature, independent, highly motivated students** with an interest in other cultures and the flexibility to adapt to new environments. As some of these characteristics are not always evident in written applications, they will be discussed during the screening interviews. **To be eligible, a student must be in good academic and social standing and meet the minimum 2.75 GPA requirement.**

Application due date: November 30th preceding the year of study abroad

A **completed** semester abroad application will include the following (circled items are for ALL applicants):

1. **The Bellarmine Study Abroad Application (online):** <https://bellarmine.wufoo.com/forms/application-packet-for-experiences-abroad/>
2. **ISEP only: A completed ISEP application (online).** (Note: bilateral applications must be submitted according to the procedure and timeline of the individual institution AFTER nomination by the OSAIL. Please work closely with the OSAIL during this process.)
3. **Personal statement**
Use the personal statement to introduce yourself and to tell about any of your strengths and special interests. Explain your motivation and why study abroad will be beneficial to you. Refer to such things as your educational achievements, intellectual and personal interests and career goals. For the ISEP application, describe your academic program, but do not include specific references to or justification for wanting to study at a particular site. (You will have the opportunity to do this at another point in the application.) Things to take into consideration: **your statements must be typed and your name and Bellarmine University should be noted at the top of each page. PLEASE review your statement with the Writing Center before submitting it!**
4. **A translation of your essay into the language in which you will study if it is not in English.**
5. **Academic References from one professor.** *
Ask your Academic Advisor if he/she would be willing to prepare a reference for you. **Give your Academic Advisor a copy of your personal statement** and let them know your application will not be complete without this form and letter. **Give the reference form to the Study Abroad Advisor**, who will submit it to the Academic Advisor. Give your Academic Advisor **at least three weeks' notice** to return these items to the OSAIL.
* If you are a Nursing student, you are required to meet with the Chair of Undergraduate Nursing. Please schedule this meeting as soon as possible.
6. **A completed Language Proficiency Form if you are requesting placement at institutions where you will not study in English.**
7. **For both Bilateral and ISEP applicants, you will need to research courses that you could possibly take while at the requested study site(s).** For ISEP, this is part of the online application. For a bilateral partner, there is a specific form to fill out (A.2. Course Request List for Bilateral Application). This will help you to determine if the site is appropriate for you and in NO way guarantees that these courses will be the ones you will take while abroad.
8. **Official transcripts from ALL higher education institutions attended since high school. Bellarmine transcripts should be requested (see the BU registrar's webpage) and should be sent at the end of the fall term.**
9. **Copy of passport (photo/ID & signature pages).** If you do not have a passport by the application deadline or you need to apply for a new passport, submit proof of a passport application (i.e., a receipt or copy of a receipt).

ISEP FEES: A NON-REFUNDABLE Bellarmine Study Abroad Fee in the amount of \$100** for semester study or \$200** for an academic year is due with your BU application. A non-refundable application fee of \$100* is due upon submission of your application to ISEP. Upon placement by ISEP, a \$325** fee will be due. **After you have accepted a placement, no refund is possible.**

BILATERAL FEES: A NON-REFUNDABLE Bilateral Placement/Bellarmino Study Abroad Fee in the amount of \$300* for semester study or \$ 500* for an academic year is due with your bilateral application.

(The above amounts are subject to change)**

All of the above components are due in the OSAIL by November 30.

Finally

Considering the lengthy application procedure, the Study Abroad Advisor, Executive Director of OSAIL and the Admissions and Financial Aid staff will provide you with advice and assistance as you prepare your application. Preparing the application will help clarify your plans for overseas study and give you the opportunity to raise questions about the exchange process. Almost all qualified students who are recommended by Bellarmine University can be placed by ISEP or in a bilateral program. Thus, there are concrete rewards for persisting through the application procedures.