



## The Office of Study Away Guide and Handbook

### Part I: Pre-Decision

#### Study Away at Connecticut College

*The Office of Study Away works to enhance the College's mission through promoting carefully selected study away programs that encourage an understanding of international peoples, groups, cultures, languages, and global issues.*

*This guide will walk you through the pre-decisions steps of deciding on and applying for a program. See Part II for more information on post-decision by Connecticut College.*

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# THINKING ABOUT STUDY AWAY

## Study Away Programs

Study away can be one of the more enriching and academically rewarding experiences that students can have during their college years. Not only does this experience expand a student's worldview, it also provides them with an opportunity to discover new strengths and abilities, conquer new challenges, and solve new problems.

**Connecticut College recognizes two types of study away programs:**

### **Traditional study away programs:**

The Office of Study Away, in consultation with the Faculty Study Away Committee, maintains a wide selection of reputable "approved" programs that are designed to meet the majority of our student's academic, linguistic and cultural needs. Approved programs are carefully selected because of their high academic standards, compatibility with the Connecticut College curriculum, opportunities for linguistic and cultural immersion, and the overall quality of the student services that are offered. There are currently approved programs in approximately 35 different countries. These programs are examined on an annual basis by the Faculty Study Away committee and may change from year to year. Faculty input and any feedback included with the study away survey administered by the Office of Study Away are some of the factors that are taken into consideration when making these decisions.

### **Conn Study Away/Teach Away (SATA) programs:**

SATA programs provide a unique opportunity for small groups of Conn students to study away at a host institution with our own Conn faculty.

Students can contact the Office of Study Away with any questions about these programs. In addition, the Study Away staff is experienced in providing guidance to help students select programs that support their majors, minors, and language needs.

For an up-to-date list of Connecticut College Approved Programs, consult the Study Away website at [studyaway.conncoll.edu](http://studyaway.conncoll.edu).

### **Non-affiliated/unapproved programs:**

Students may elect to petition for approval to apply to a program that Conn does not have an established affiliation or association. Students interested in petitioning a program should consider the following factors and criteria:

- Is the program a well-established program accredited by a US institution that incorporates cultural integration into its academic programming? Is it a traditional university-based program where students can take university coursework alongside local degree-seeking peers?
- Does the program accept semester-long study away students without being a member of a consortium or as part of an agreed student exchange?
- Does it offer a stronger level of language and/or cultural immersion not offered by CC approved programs within the same country/region?

- Does it offer coursework that is liberal arts in nature, similar to curriculum offered at CC?
- What are the eligibility requirements?

Students who choose to pursue approval for a non-affiliated/unapproved program must make an appointment with the Director of the Office of Study Away, to discuss the details of the program at least two weeks before the application deadline. Students must present detailed information about the program's admission requirements, grading system, academic offerings, arrangements for housing, and student support services for final review. It should be noted that students must also submit an application for an affiliated program as petition applications are highly scrutinized by the Faculty Study Away committee.

## Factors to consider when choosing a program

There is a wide range of approved study away programs available to students of any major. Sometimes narrowing down the program choices can feel overwhelming. To help avoid this, students are encouraged to consider the following questions when beginning their program search:

- How would the program compliment or supplement my major or minor?
- How would the program improve or enhance my language skills?
- Has my Conn coursework prepared me for a particular region of the world or a specific thematic study abroad program?
- Would the program help prepare me for a future internship or career experience?
- Will I have the necessary prerequisites for the coursework that I am interested in taking?
- Are there personal factors that I should consider when selecting a program such as health, program dates, travel costs, distance, weather, and 'comfort zone'?

## Program Providers & Study Away Models

Students will find different program models and providers on our website. Program providers are well-established, reputable organizations that develop and facilitate study away programs. They often manage student enrollment and offer a range of on-site student services. Understanding the different program models will help students determine which program may best meet their academic, cultural, and linguistic needs. Below are brief descriptions of the different models available to students:

### Integrated, Direct Enrollment Programs

These programs allow students to study directly at a local university and take courses alongside students from that country as well as other International students. An advantage to this type of program is that it maximizes cultural immersion and integration into a country. This type of program may appeal to students looking for a more independent study abroad experience.

### Field-based, Experiential Learning Programs

These programs typically center on educational themes. They feature hands-on, field-based learning, which may incorporate community-oriented internships and service learning. Students complete guided self-designed research opportunities related to their class seminars. These programs are small and are often

located in areas of the world where more traditional study is not as easy to arrange. Students looking for a more non-traditional, out of classroom, yet rigorous learning experience will find these types of programs very appealing.

### Study Center Programs

These types of programs allow students to study with other students from American colleges in a foreign country. They usually offer a specialized curriculum that often focuses on a particular discipline, culture, or theme to study abroad students. Depending on the academic focus of the program, classes may be taught in English or the language of the host country.

### Study Away, Teach Away (SATA)

Connecticut College's own SATA programs offer a perfect balance of academics, adventure, community and independence. CC Faculty and small groups of CC students travel abroad for a semester of hands-on learning and cultural immersion. Students take a combination of courses taught by both CC Faculty and faculty at host institutions. This type of program is open to students from all majors and appeals to both the "first time traveler" to the "seasoned traveler" alike.

## THE APPLICATION PROCESS

The application process should be taken very seriously. Students must receive approval from Conn in order to participate in a study away program during the fall or spring semester of the junior year. Students apply for approval by completing the online application that can be found on the Study Away website at [studyaway.conncoll.edu](http://studyaway.conncoll.edu). Students use the online platform to browse the program list and apply. Students seeking approval for a non-affiliated program will fill out a petition application. Applications will open in August to apply for Spring study away and applications will open in January for fall study away.

Students are encouraged to meet with study away staff if they have any questions about the application process. Students should closely follow the required materials on their online application portal.

It is important to note that study away operates within budgetary and enrollment parameters set by the College; as a result, there is a limit on the number of students who can be approved each semester to study away during their junior year. Therefore, submitting an application does not guarantee the College's approval to study abroad.

The Faculty Study Away Committee carefully reviews all applications. During the review process, first priority approval is given to qualified applicants based on a combination of the following criteria:

- **Choice of program:** with highest priority given to qualified students applying to the most intensive foreign language, cultural immersion, and SATA programs.
- **Answers to the Academic Rationale:** with highest priority given to students who provide strong and detailed academic, linguistic, and cultural connections in their answers to why they are pursuing a first and/or second choice program.
- **Overall academic record:** with highest priority given to students to study away during their **junior year** with a preferable GPA above **3.2** and meet the required number of CC credits to support their class year. Meeting a study away program's minimum GPA requirement does **not** guarantee approval.

- **Major Advisor Approval:** with highest priority given to students who have chosen programs and courses that support their major, minor and/or previously pursued language acquisition.

Students are responsible for completing all sections of their online application. The deadline for fall study away applications is mid-February and for spring semester applications is mid-September. An official application deadline will be announced via email each semester. Students must have a declared major in order to apply. **The Faculty Study Away Committee will not accept any late applications and incomplete applications will not be reviewed.**

**Any student on academic or disciplinary probation during the semester they propose to study away will not be approved by the Faculty Study Away Committee.**

Students will be notified within two weeks of the application deadline, via email. Students are then personally responsible for submitting all necessary application materials directly to their approved study abroad program within the stated deadlines. It is important to note that students must remain in good social and academic standing or their study away privilege will be revoked.

## **COURSE, CREDITS, AND ACADEMICS: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW**

Students studying away are required to carry the equivalent of a full-time course load to ensure the required amount of credits to graduate on time. Students should not assume that a full course load will mean only taking four courses. For many programs, the host institution will award only three credits per course. This means that in order to ensure that you earn a full semester's worth of transfer credit; you **must** register for a minimum of 15 credits for the semester.

Prior to leaving campus, you should meet with your faculty advisor to confirm your study abroad course selections. In addition, if you should change your course selections after arriving at your program, please be sure to contact your advisor for a review of your changes. If you plan to enroll in a course that you would like to count toward a major, minor, mode of inquiry or pathway, **the appropriate Conn academic department on campus must first approve the course.**

To have courses from another institution count toward a requirement or a particular department, the normal Conn petition process must be followed. To use a course from another institution toward a major or minor, a completed "*Variation in Courses Utilized to Satisfy the Major/Minor*" petition form should be signed and submitted to the Office of the Registrar. To use a course toward a general education requirement, students should complete and submit a "*Petition to the Committee on Academic Standing*" form. Some departments encourage students to complete these forms prior to leaving campus. It is important to note that should you wait until you return, you run the risk of the course substitution not being approved.

**Students will not receive credit for study away coursework that duplicates previously completed college-level coursework.** In addition, coursework must also be liberal arts in nature, similar to the curriculum offered on campus. If students would like to take a course under the satisfactory/unsatisfactory option, they must follow all existing Connecticut College policies regarding this option and any that the host institution might have. The Colleges policy and deadlines takes precedence regarding this issue. A



final credit evaluation will be completed by the Office of the Registrar upon receipt of an official transcript from the host institution.

Both credits and grades for all courses that you enroll in while on your approved Study Away/SATA Program will be posted to your Connecticut College transcript. The grades that you earn **WILL** be calculated into your cumulative grade point average at Connecticut College. The College **will not** change the grades or number of credits awarded by another institution.

Contact the Office of the Registrar at [registrar@conncoll.edu](mailto:registrar@conncoll.edu) to ask any questions regarding courses, credits, or grades while you are away from campus.

## LOOKING AHEAD


### After Conn approval, what's next?

There are a number of important steps to complete after receiving approval from Conn.

After the College has approved a student to study away, the student must then complete and submit a separate application directly to the approved study away program(s). Applications can be found on the specific study away program's website. It should be noted that some programs may have earlier deadlines. If so, the Director of Study Away will work with you in how to proceed.

- As part of a program's application process, students will need to request and mail a copy of their official transcript at the Office of the Registrar. It can take up to a week for transcripts to reach their final destinations so do not wait until the last minute to make your transcript request.
- In addition, most programs require that students submit a program approval form. This form is usually found online within the program's application. Upon notification of Conn approval, bring this form to the Director of the Office of Study Away to be signed. Be sure to fill out personal information such as your name and the name of your program before handing it in for the official signature. Keep in mind that program approval forms will not be signed until students have been approved by the College.
- Regarding faculty recommendations, students may be permitted to re-submit their Conn Faculty Recommendation Forms to their approved program. If the program that you intend to apply to requires a more specific recommendation, be sure to give professors ample time to complete the program's own recommendation.
- Once a student has been officially accepted to a program, they are responsible for making the acceptance and damage deposits directly to their accepted program. Connecticut College will credit the student's account for the amount of the acceptance deposit.

Students are responsible for applying for a student visa to the country where their study away program is located. Paperwork, fees, and application procedures differ country to country. All embassies and consulates require that passports are valid for six months after the completion of the study abroad program. Since obtaining a visa can take up to six weeks, be sure to apply for your visa as soon as your



program advises you to do so. If you need a letter from Conn verifying your study abroad plans and student status, contact the Office of Study Away.

All students **must** attend a Conn pre-departure meeting. The purpose of this meeting is to distribute required College related pre-departure materials and to better prepare students for the social and cultural differences they will encounter during their time abroad. Travel and safety tips will also be discussed.

All students must complete the “post-decision” readings, forms, and waivers on their Connecticut College online application.

Part II of this guide will cover international travel logistics, cultural adaptation, safety, and coming home.