

STUDYING ABROAD WITH YOUR COMMUNITY COLLEGE

**A selection of international exchange opportunities abound.
Learn where to find them.**

More and more students find that community colleges are an affordable way to obtain a college degree. In states like Maryland, disabled students even have the option to seek a tuition waiver on some community college classes. Community colleges realize the value of serving a broad range of students and offering options including technical and general education: two-year and four-year degree programs.

Despite the growing opportunities, study abroad is not the first thing that comes to mind when discussing the benefits of community colleges; nevertheless, international programs are one of the growing opportunities. Try these tips and start your international experience now on your campus.

START BEFORE YOU ENROLL

While more community colleges are seeking ways to internationalize their offerings, it is still important to make sure they have what you are looking for. Make the campus's commitment to internationalization and to creating a welcoming environment for students with disabilities one of the deciding factors before enrolling. Educate yourself about the specific program and services offered vis-à-vis your interest.

MEET THE FACULTY

Many overseas programs at community colleges are faculty-led. Research your options.

LEARN IF YOUR COLLEGE IS PART OF A CONSORTIUM

Many community colleges belong to consortia, or have agreements with other community colleges to pool resources in order to offer a wide selection of programs. Consortia typically tend to be among colleges within the same state, though some entities such as the Illinois Consortium for International Studies and Programs include members from contiguous states. Sometimes consortia offer their own exchange programs completely apart from any particular college.

Specifically, Community Colleges for International Development (CCID) is an international association of community, technical, and vocational institutions creating

globally engaged learning environments.

And the College Consortium for International Studies (CCIS) is a partnership of colleges and universities encompassing the broad spectrum of international higher education. CCIS builds collaborative arrangements, most notably study abroad programs, among institutions who share the commitment for developing international dimensions as an integral part of collegiate education.

THIRD-PARTY PROVIDERS

Third-party organizations like the Council on International Educational Exchange (CIEE) and the American Institute for Foreign Study (AIFS) sometimes contract with community colleges to make their programs available to their students. These organizations establish partnerships with universities around the world to offer a rich selection of study and work opportunities for community college students and beyond.

ASK ABOUT SCHOLARSHIPS

Some community colleges offer need-based aid to enable students to study abroad. Check the opportunities at your college, and don't forget to learn about the U.S Department of State sponsored Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship Program and the Fund for Education Abroad which give priority to community college students.