



BELLARMINE
UNIVERSITY
IN VERITATIS AMORE

Procedures to Apply for a Semester Abroad on Exchange

Bellarmino has over 150 partner universities around the world in over 50 countries! There are options available for ALL majors! Students may choose to take classes abroad in their major or they can take general elective courses such as a fine art; social science; English literature; or the IDC 301 Trans-cultural Experience. 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. Participation in an exchange program is designed not to delay graduation. With proper planning, students may study abroad for a semester or an academic year and graduate in 4 years.

Exchange participants are nominated by their home institution. Most qualified students who wish to participate in an exchange and complete their application on time will be able to do so. Applicants will be asked to prepare their application in stages.

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 IPO will review all applications and work with each student to complete and improve his/her application. The IPO will then forward the completed applications to either to ISEP in Washington, D.C. or 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 is **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 IPO staff who will in turn notify the student. This **usually** takes place in March or April. For competitive sites students may not have the final word until as late as October for spring placements.

If you would like to apply for placement as an exchange student for the junior year, the following dates should be noted during the fall of sophomore year:

- September - November** Interviews and advising sessions for interested students
- September/October** Annual Study Abroad Fair
- November 30** Applications are due in the International Programs Office 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 statements, 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 IPO at the end of the semester.**
- January 15-30** Notification of selection as Bellarmine University outbound Bilateral or ISEP Exchange Student.
- March** For students who apply for fall placement with ISEP, notification is typically between the months of March and April. Bilateral placements are done on a rolling basis. After acceptance in a program, the student will start the visa application process if necessary.
- April-May** Fall students receive information packets from the International Host University.
- February-November** Students prepare for their time abroad (passport, visa, health checks, financial aid, scholarships, etc.) Semester and full year abroad students must enroll in the FLIS 201 Perspectives of World Cultures course in the semester prior to their departure.
- July-October** Notification for spring placement. For students who apply for spring semester placements, notification may be later than those applying for the fall.

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

A **completed** semester abroad application will include:

1. **The Bellarmine Study Abroad Application**
2. **A completed ISEP application OR application for a bilateral institution.** (Note: some bilateral applications must be submitted online, please work closely with the IPO for bilateral procedures)
3. **One personal statement**
Use the personal statement to introduce yourself and to tell about any of your strengths and special interests. If the application has specific questions, pay special attention to these. 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 ISEP describe your academic program, but do not include specific references to or justification for wanting to study at a particular site. 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.**
4. **A translation of your essay into the language in which you will study if it is not in English.**
5. **Academic References from two professors, one of whom should be your academic advisor.**
Ask if they would be willing to prepare a reference for you. **Give them a copy of your personal statement** and let them know your application will not be complete without these letters. Give them **at least three weeks notice** to return these letters to the International Programs Office. It is a good idea to provide an envelope addressed to the IPO (Miles Hall, Suite 149) so your professors mail the references directly to the IPO through Campus Mail.
6. **A completed Language Proficiency Form if you are requesting placement at institutions where you will not study in English.**
7. **Study Site Request Forms for each institution at which you are requesting placement (ISEP ONLY).**
8. **Official transcripts from ALL higher education institutions attended since high school. Bellarmine transcripts should be requested at the BU registrar's office & should be sent at the end of the fall term.**
9. **Copy of passport (photo/ID & signature pages).** If a student does not have a passport or need to apply for a new passport, submit proof of submit a passport application (i.e. a receipt).
10. **ISEP FEES:** A NONREFUNDABLE Bellarmine Study Abroad Fee in the amount of \$100* for semester study or \$200* for an academic year is due with your ISEP application and ISEP fees and is payable by check to Bellarmine University. **For ISEP applicants only:** a check made payable to ISEP or credit card approval for \$390*. **After you have accepted a placement, no refund is possible.**
BILATERAL FEES: A NONREFUNDABLE 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 and is payable by check or credit card to Bellarmine University.
(*The above amounts are subject to change)

All of the above components are due in the Bellarmine International Programs Office by November 30. Once reviewed, we will then forward your application and fees to ISEP in Washington, D.C. or to the bilateral host institution.

Finally

Considering the lengthy application procedure, the Study Abroad Advisor, Director of International Programs 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.