

# General Guidelines for Semester Legal Studies Abroad

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UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN LAW SCHOOL  
CENTER FOR INTERNATIONAL AND COMPARATIVE LAW

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The University of Michigan Law School faculty supports the idea of studies overseas for one semester for credit toward the J.D. degree with the primary goal of enabling students to study at foreign law faculties. This opportunity is offered with the awareness that, increasingly, legal endeavors transcend national boundaries and that an international, cross-border, and comparative perspective is an important part of professional preparation for the 21st Century.

The goal of an opportunity for semester legal studies abroad is to permit students to receive the educational benefit of engaging in legal studies in another country at an outstanding educational institution where the Michigan student will be pursuing a foreign curriculum in classes with predominantly non-U.S. students. Students who wish to spend a semester taking law courses at a foreign law school must obtain permission from this Law School's Global Affairs Committee (the "Committee").

## **Opportunities Available**

Students interested in any of the opportunities mentioned below should obtain program-specific information available in the Center for International and Comparative Law (212 Hutchins Hall), or on the Law School's web site at: <http://www.law.umich.edu/curriculum/studyabroad/Pages/default.aspx>.

## **University Linkages**

Semester study abroad opportunities exist for University of Michigan law students at Amsterdam Law School in the Netherlands; Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies (the Graduate Institute) in Geneva; University of Hong Kong Faculty of Law; KU Leuven in Belgium, Bucerius Law School in Hamburg, Germany; European University Institute in Florence, Italy; and Waseda University Law School in Tokyo.

**Amsterdam Law School** in the Netherlands offers a study abroad opportunity, created in 2007, for up to four students each academic year in either the fall or winter term. The program is conducted in English.

**Graduate Institute of International & Development Studies (the Graduate Institute)** in Geneva offers a study abroad opportunity, created in 2007, for up to two students each academic year in either the fall or winter term. The language of instruction is English and French. It is possible to take only courses offered in English, but the curricular offerings are more extensive if the student is sufficiently proficient in French to take courses offered in French.

**The University of Hong Kong Faculty of Law** offers a study abroad opportunity, created in 2013, for up to two students each academic year in either the fall or winter term. Except for some courses

offered in the LLM (Chinese Law), the teaching medium for most courses at Hong Kong is in English.

**KU Leuven** in Belgium offers a study abroad opportunity, created in 1998, for up to two students each academic year in either the fall or winter term. This program is conducted in English.

**Bucerius Law School** in Hamburg offers a study abroad opportunity, which began in fall 2002, for up to two students for the fall term. Students who are proficient in German will be given preference. However, knowledge of German is not required.

**European University Institute** in Florence offers a study abroad opportunity, which began in fall 2003, for up to two students for the fall term. The working languages of the Institute are French and English.

**Waseda University Law School** in Tokyo, Japan offers a study abroad opportunity, which began in Fall 2006, permitting one (and sometimes more than one) student per academic year for either the fall or winter term (however, due to Waseda's academic calendar, the fall term is recommended for most students) There currently are a limited number of appropriate courses offered in English at Waseda University Law School. Therefore, fluency or substantial ability in Japanese may be necessary.

**Student-Initiated Semester Study Abroad Program** Students may propose a student-initiated semester study abroad program at law faculties of foreign universities.

**NOTE:** Student Study Abroad reports are available for review at the Center for International and Comparative Law. The student reports describe in detail the overseas experience from the perspective of students who have studied at the foreign university. It is strongly recommended that interested students read these reports before deciding to study abroad.

### **Requirements for Transfer of Credit**

As a condition to receiving credit for the study abroad semester, students:

1. Must satisfactorily complete an independent research paper under the supervision of a University of Michigan Law School faculty member in addition to the student's course work at the foreign law school, which needs to have been approved in advance by the University of Michigan Law School. The legal research paper must be for a grade, consist of 3 credit hours, and be on a topic which relates to the semester studies overseas.
2. Must satisfactorily complete their class requirements overseas with grades equivalent to "C" or better or as required by the Committee.
3. Must submit to Assistant Dean for International Affairs Theresa Kaiser-Jarvis a 10-page report on their overseas studies experience. The report should contain a detailed description of the student's academic experience abroad including the nature and content of each class taken. The report is due no later than three weeks after your last exam.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Credit for semester legal studies abroad will be recorded on the University of Michigan transcript on a mandatory pass/fail basis except for the research paper under the supervision of a University of Michigan Law School faculty member which must be for a grade.

## **Selection Process**

Students who wish to be considered for study abroad opportunities must submit a **COMPLETE** proposal to the Law School's Global Affairs Committee ("the Committee"). It is the responsibility of the student to establish to the satisfaction of the Committee that his or her proposal for semester legal studies abroad is thoughtfully related to his or her educational and professional development.

See **Attachment A** for proposal requirements.

To be eligible for consideration for study abroad, a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 is expected. For compelling reasons and upon special application of the student, the Committee will consider a request for an exception to this minimum GPA requirement. Regardless of GPA., the Committee may consider the academic record of the student in determining whether to approve overseas study for the student.

Only third, fourth, and fifth semester law students, who have at least one remaining semester of study at this Law School following completion of a semester abroad, are eligible to study abroad. There is a strong presumption against a semester abroad in the final semester of school. A final semester abroad may be approved by the Committee only upon a special petition of the student which should demonstrate sound academic reasons for not undertaking the program in an earlier semester, should show important educational benefits to be gained from the program, and should include a very well-developed description of the student's research proposal with a time table, approved by the student's Michigan supervisor, demonstrating timely completion of the research paper. Students should be aware that typically grades will NOT arrive from the foreign law school in time for the student to take the bar exam immediately following their final semester.

The Committee will review each student's proposal to reach a decision whether to approve the student for study abroad. As noted above, each foreign university has a limited number of openings for Michigan students.

In the case of over-subscription of spaces in study abroad programs at particular foreign universities, eligible students will be selected by lottery as follows. All students who have been granted permission by the Committee to study abroad will be assigned a number at random. Starting with the lowest number (1), students will be assigned to their highest preference foreign university for which there is still available space.

Selection criteria for each study abroad opportunity may differ (e.g., higher GPA requirement, language proficiency requirement, etc.) and students should consult the specific information for each university to see additional requirements. The foreign law schools reserve the right to review student applications for semester study abroad following their pre-selection by the Committee (and when relevant, the lottery) and to make the final admission decision.

**Because selection for a semester study abroad opportunity is not guaranteed, students are cautioned against making plans, such as air ticket purchase and housing decisions, until they have received written notification of whether they have been finally selected for semester study abroad at a particular school.**

Students wishing to pursue legal studies for one semester at a foreign law school for credit toward the JD degree are advised to first consult with Assistant Dean Theresa Kaiser-Jarvis ([tkjlaw@umich.edu](mailto:tkjlaw@umich.edu)) to discuss their proposed study plans.

## **Deadline**

The deadline for submission of the student's **COMPLETE** proposal to the Committee for semester study at any of the seven foreign universities listed on pages 1 and 2 of these Guidelines for either the 2019 fall term or the 2020 winter term is Thursday, January 31, 2019.

The deadline for student-initiated semester study abroad proposals is also Thursday, January 31, 2019, for either the 2019 fall term or 2020 winter term. Requests to submit late proposals should be made to Assistant Dean Theresa Kaiser-Jarvis ([tkjlaw@umich.edu](mailto:tkjlaw@umich.edu); TEL: 734-764-5269).

Interested applicants must complete the online application form linked from the "Apply" instructions on the [Semester Study Abroad home page](#). The form is similarly linked on each of the sub pages which describe Michigan Law's seven foreign partner universities and the student-initiated option.

<http://www.law.umich.edu/curriculum/studyabroad/Pages/default.aspx>

## **Tuition Charges**

Students who choose to study overseas are required to pay the same full tuition and fees to the University of Michigan Law School they would pay if they remained in residence at the University of Michigan Law School. Tuition and fees for the 2018-19 academic year per term are \$29,672 (in-state) and \$31,172 (out-of-state). (Actual 2019-2020 tuition and fees will be determined by the Board of Regents of the University in the summer of 2019.) Tuition for students proposing student-initiated studies abroad is described in the Guidelines for Student-Initiated Semester Study Abroad.

## **Financial Aid**

If eligible for financial aid, students may receive financial aid to cover tuition charges as well as living expenses and travel costs for an approved semester abroad. For further information about financial aid, students should consult with the Law School's Office of Financial Aid (Room 2200 South Hall; [lawfinaid@umich.edu](mailto:lawfinaid@umich.edu); tel: 734-764-5289). Students will be asked to provide documentation about estimated living expenses and tuition charges.

## **U-M Travel Registry, Travel Release, Health Insurance and Visa**

Study abroad students must comply with the University of Michigan International Travel Policy (<http://spg.umich.edu/policy/601.31>). Students are responsible for reading the web site and full compliance. Three/four main requirements follow:

- 1) Travel must be registered in the U-M Travel Registry (<http://global.umich.edu/travel-resources/register-your-travel/>). The Registry supports emergency communications and access to University-approved travel abroad health insurance. In the event of an emergency, the Travel Registry will help the University get in touch with the student and will support the student's ability to reach the University for urgent health, safety and security-related information.
- 2) The student is required to sign a Student International Travel Release.
- 3) The student is required to purchase U-M Travel Abroad Health Insurance (<https://www.uhs.umich.edu/tai>) at \$1.15/day plus a \$5 administrative fee. (U-M contracts with GeoBlue/HTH Worldwide, a leader in international travel health insurance, to provide this coverage.) Purchase of the low-cost insurance should be done through the U-M Travel Registry (<http://global.umich.edu/travel-resources/register-your-travel/>).

- 4) If a University Travel Warning or University Travel Restriction (<http://global.umich.edu/travel-resources/warnings-restrictions/>) is in effect for the destination to which the student plans to travel, the student needs to comply with and satisfy the University's procedures and requirements for a University Travel Warning or University Travel Restriction Destination as a condition to enrolling for study abroad credit.

It is the student's responsibility to determine and comply with the legal requirements for entry. Students should consult with the closest consulate of the country where their study abroad is located to take the necessary steps required by the government for entry (i.e. if obtaining a visa is necessary, etc.).

There is also a wealth of information to assist the student in planning his/her travel on the University of Michigan's Global Michigan web site (<http://global.umich.edu/>).

## **Disabilities**

If a student interested in studying abroad has a disability for which he or she may need accommodation during the semester overseas, please contact Assistant Dean Theresa Kaiser-Jarvis in advance of submitting your proposal to the Committee.

**Students seeking approval for semester study abroad should be aware they need to comply with all University of Michigan Law School's graduation requirements.**

**The following paragraphs provide answers to some frequently asked questions:**

1. For all programs, a **maximum of twelve credit hours** may be earned in a regular (non-summer) term for an approved study abroad semester. The twelve credits include the required three-credit, graded research paper. The number of credit hours to be transferred will be established by the Committee following review of the student's proposal.
2. Thirteen weeks of classes (exclusive of exam periods) generally are required for receipt of one semester of residence credit for study either here or abroad.
3. Students may not take more than twelve hours of non-law credits toward their law degrees. Permission to take a non-law course at a university outside the University of Michigan that counts toward fulfillment of J.D. degree requirements is only rarely granted.
4. The Academic Regulations impose a six-hour limit on independent study toward a J.D. This overall limit is equally applicable to students who take a semester abroad. A project in excess of three hours requires the student to arrange supervision by three faculty members, and this applies to study both here and abroad.
5. Students may not receive credit for both a study abroad semester and an externship for a semester away from the Law School toward a JD degree.
6. Students must satisfactorily complete at least 64 credit hours in regularly scheduled law school classes (RSLSC) out of the total necessary for graduation. Credits earned in a study abroad semester program (Law 945) do count toward the 64 RSLSC credits. Credits earned in the Semester Study Abroad Paper course (Law 946) do not count as RSLSC. (Additionally, credits earned for work such as independent research, an externship, and non-law courses do not count as RSLSC credits). If you have questions about this, please consult with Director and Registrar Jane Ozanich ([jozanich@umich.edu](mailto:jozanich@umich.edu)) in the Office of Student Records.

## **Miscellaneous**

Some states have requirements for hours of study in a U.S. law school. Students should check the requirements of the states in which they wish to be admitted to practice to determine the permissibility of studies at a foreign law school.

## **For Further Information**

Questions about study abroad should be directed to International Affairs Administrative Assistant Elizabeth Snook (212 Hutchins Hall, 764-5269, [esnook@umich.edu](mailto:esnook@umich.edu)) or Assistant Dean Theresa Kaiser-Jarvis (212 Hutchins Hall, 764-5269, [tkjlaw@umich.edu](mailto:tkjlaw@umich.edu)) in the Center for International & Comparative Law.

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## **ATTACHMENT A**

### **COMPLETE PROPOSALS MUST INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:**

1. An insightful explanation of the student's reasons for wishing to pursue semester study abroad in general and reasons for wishing to pursue studies at each of the foreign universities for which the student is applying. It should describe the specific educational objectives to be achieved during the study abroad semester, including how study abroad fits into the student's overall legal education and professional goals.
2. Students may apply for more than one semester study abroad opportunity. If they do, they must indicate in their proposals their rank order of preference for the opportunities applied for.
3. The proposal should also include a description of the 3-credit hour research project which the student must complete under the supervision of a University of Michigan Law School professor and the manner in which the paper relates to the student's study objectives. The proposal must include the name of the professor who has agreed to serve as research supervisor, if the student is selected for study abroad. The proposal should specify that the professor has agreed to supervise the student's paper and has approved the student's educational objectives and paper topic. It is the student's responsibility to develop a research topic and obtain a faculty supervisor.
4. The title, professor's name, and description of the courses which the student proposes to take. In addition, the number of units/credits for each course and the total number of units/credits are to be included. Please note that students probably will make preliminary course selections from the course offerings from the current academic year, because, most likely, the course schedule for the upcoming year will not yet be available. Proposals will be reviewed based on this preliminary selection of courses. Students are required to later submit to the University of Michigan Law School final course selections for advance approval by Assistant Dean Theresa Kaiser-Jarvis after receipt of the new course schedules from the host institution.
5. Please address the issues of last term and/or below 3.0 GPA, if relevant, as previously mentioned in these guidelines.
6. Number of transfer credit hours requested toward the JD degree

## **ADDITIONAL APPLICATION DOCUMENTS REQUIRED:**

7. A letter of verification from your faculty sponsor addressed to the Global Affairs Committee which confirms the following:
  - your general fitness for studying abroad and representing Michigan Law
  - their approval of and agreement with your educational objectives
  - their agreement to supervise your 3-credit hour research project and paper topic

*file upload by student via online form – (Please inform your professor that you will see this letter)*

8. Unofficial law school transcript (i.e. printed to PDF from Wolverine Access is acceptable) – *file upload via online form*
9. Current resume – *file upload via online form*
10. Undergraduate Transcript(s)\*

### **\*Undergraduate Transcript Request Procedure:**

The student is to request from the Law School's Office of Student Records (416 HH; TEL: 763-6499; E-mail: [lawrecords@umich.edu](mailto:lawrecords@umich.edu)) that a copy of his/her undergraduate transcript(s) from his/her Law School file be sent to the Center for International & Comparative Law (ATTN: Elizabeth Snook, 212 Hutchins Hall) to arrive **BY THE DEADLINE** for submission of his or her proposal to the Committee. **The Office of Student Records requires the student to place the request AT LEAST two business days prior to the study abroad proposal deadline.**

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