Cheyney University of Pennsylvania

**STUDY ABROAD PROGRAM GUIDELINES**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Eligibility for Study Abroad and Guidelines for Application**

**General Information**

Studying abroad is one of the most exciting, rewarding and life changing experiences a student can have. Its numerous benefits include the opportunity to experience a new culture, to make lifelong friends, explore new environments, and learn a new language. Studying abroad also enhances job and graduate school applications.

Cheyney University is pleased to provide its students the opportunity to study abroad in several countries and in a variety of disciplines through a number of providers and partners. Students may apply to study abroad according to the guidelines below. There may be additional requirements established by specific programs or host universities, such as minimum GPA or level of study.

Students who apply to study abroad must demonstrate that they are flexible enough to adapt to new environments, are able to assume responsibility for their own medical and psychological needs, and are mature enough to respect their host culture as well as fellow program participants.

**Please note that students must first be approved for study abroad by their faculty advisor.**

**A separate application process to the study abroad provider or Host University must be completed.**

**Students wishing to study abroad should already have a valid passport or immediately apply for one.**

**I. Overview**

**To be eligible to study abroad, students must:**

* Be a student in good standing at Cheyney University for a minimum of one full semester
* Have completed a minimum of 30 credits of coursework at the university level
* Be in good standing academically with a GPA of at least 2.5, unless the GPA required by the program is higher
* Be in good standing financially as verified by the Bursar’s Office
* Demonstrate proof of financial resources as verified by the Financial Aid Office or by documentation of personal funds
* Demonstrate good character as verified by the Offices of Student Affairs and Residence Life
* Provide medical records and proof of medical insurance which is valid for overseas travel
* Have met with the faculty advisor and Dean to review all policies and guidelines

**To prepare for study abroad students must:**

* Apply for approval for study abroad through the International Programs online application
* Obtain necessary signatures in verification of the above eligibility requirements
* Apply to program of choice and secure relevant funding and scholarships
* Purchase an International Student Identity Card (“ISIC”) prior to departure
* Sign a Waiver and Release Agreement and Study Abroad Agreement prior to departure
* Attend Study Abroad Orientation with the faculty advisor and Dean
* Participate in reentry program upon return to Cheyney

**II. Detailed Information:**

1. **Study Abroad Guidelines**

**A. Student Behavior**

In addition to the various other eligibility requirements, such as GPA, students must be in good judicial standing at Cheyney. The opportunity to study abroad may be denied based on violations of the Student Code of Conduct that required a judicial ruling. In addition, any incidents while abroad that violate Cheyney’s Code of Conduct will be addressed through Cheyney’s judicial process.

**B. Financial Information**

Although students may apply for and receive scholarship funding for study abroad, such funding does not cover everything. Such things as free time, fun activities, weekend excursions, and break activities are not always provided for. Students will need to work with Financial Aid, their Academic Advisor, and the Office of International Programs to be sure that they have sufficient resources to cover everything that is not provided by the host program or through scholarship funding.

How much money to take depends on such things as your personal spending habits, the cost of living in the host country, fluctuating exchange rates, and so on. Students should take all of this into consideration when planning their study abroad experience. Study Abroad programs will generally have cost worksheets that will help you estimate personal expenses, but these usually do not cover activities such as those noted in the preceding paragraph.

Students should familiarize themselves with the exchange rates in the country or countries they will visit. These are easily accessible online. Cash can generally be exchanged at airports, banks, hotel lobbies, or currency exchange centers. You may also be able to use your bank card at an international ATM. Read up in advance to see where to get the best exchange rate (for example – airports usually do not give the best exchange rates).

ATM/Debit and Credit Cards may generally be used abroad. Visa and MasterCard are the most widely accepted. Before traveling, you should notify your credit card companies of the dates and places of your travel. This helps prevent ID theft and fraud.

**C. Passport & Visa**

A valid passport is required for international travel. Passports should be valid for at least 6 months after your return date. Many countries will not permit a traveler to enter unless the passport expiration date is a least 6 months after the final day of travel. Passport application and renewal information is available from the <https://www.state.gov/travel/>.

A visa is an endorsement on a passport indicating that the holder is allowed to enter, leave, or stay in a country for a specified period of time. It can be in the form of a sticker, a page insert, or a stamp placed in your passport. To review entry requirements for various countries visit their consular or embassy websites for the most up-to-date information. Visas are not always limited to the length of time you will be staying. Sometimes you must also have the purpose of your travel approved. For instance, some countries require you to travel on a student visa rather than a 90 day tourist visa. The visa process can sometimes be lengthy, so it is important to apply well before your anticipated travel date. Some countries require in-person interviews at offices in NYC or Washington DC, some require criminal background checks, and some require medical documentation. Be sure to carefully review the requirements for the country or countries that you plan to visit.

**D. International Health Insurance and Medical Information**

Cheyney University requires that students traveling abroad purchase an International Student Identity Card (ISIC) – to be valid for the duration of your program abroad. The ISIC Basic provides the required minimum health and travel insurance coverage. ISIC also offers other plan options which provide a higher level of health and travel insurance coverage as well as other benefits. For plan details refer to the [ISIC Website](https://www.myisic.com/).

Some countries limit the amount of particular medications that you can transport into and out of the host country. Some prescription and over-the-counter medication may be illegal in your host country - check in advance regarding all medications you plan to carry with you. If you take prescription medications, make sure to bring a sufficient supply to last the duration of your program – or be sure that you can obtain additional medicine in the host country. Always keep prescription medications in the original container, and have the prescription and a letter from your physician stating why you need the medication.

Depending on where you are traveling, you may need certain immunizations before departing. Consult the [Centers for Disease Control (CDC) Website](https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel) for information on your host country.

**2. Social & Cultural Information**

 **A. Alcohol & Drugs Abroad**

 Many countries do not have a legal drinking age, and it is not uncommon for young adults to

 consume beer or wine with meals. Public intoxication, however, is frowned upon in most places –

 and could land you in trouble with local authorities. In most Muslim-majority countries alcohol is

 strictly prohibited. Travelers have sometimes been detained for possessing alcohol in their luggage

 upon arrival in countries where alcohol is prohibited. Do not carry alcohol in your luggage – and

 be sure to learn the local laws and customs regarding alcohol in your host country.

 Existing legislation in most foreign countries imposes *very* severe penalties for use and/or possession of marijuana, cocaine, and other illegal drugs. Penalties may include jail terms, hard labor, or even the death penalty. Association with persons using or possessing drugs is generally viewed as the same as using/possessing them yourself. Remember, if you are arrested for any reason, you are subject to the laws of the host country, and neither Cheyney nor the U.S. Embassy can protect you from the local legal consequences.

 **B. Precautions in Times of Unrest/Conflict**

Some host countries may be experiencing political unrest or conflict. It is important that students in the Study Abroad programs not get involved in any way. Avoid participating in, or being near,

 demonstrations, protests, or other political activity. Stay away from areas known to have concentrations of residents hostile to America/Americans. The program onsite staff will generally have detailed information on this. If there are demonstrations planned or ongoing – stay clear of popular tourist locations where these may be taking place. Again, onsite staff should be helpful in identifying such places.

 **C. Transportation Safety**

Most Study Abroad students will rely on local public transportation. It is wise to become familiar with the rules for all forms, such as trains, metro (subways), taxis, buses, bicycles, and so on. If you plan on driving, riding a bicycle, or any other mode of personal transportation – be familiar with the local laws and customs – they differ a great deal from ours. It is generally better to move about in groups than to travel alone – especially at night.

 **D. Women’s Safety Abroad**

Thousands of women travel abroad each year without incident. When it comes to health and

 security, however, women travelers are more likely than their male counterparts to experience

 marginalization and unwelcome behavior in the countries they visit. Women students should always be alert to their surroundings, just as they would at home. Unfortunately, the issue of sexual harassment is defined differently in many cultures, and is often treated as a minor issue. Do be aware that behaviors, conversation patterns, styles of dress, and activities that may be considered quite normal at home, may be interpreted quite differently in your host country. Simple things like

 smiling at someone, a friendly touch on the hand or arm, asking someone to walk you home, asking

 someone to dance – may be interpreted as flirting and could place you in uncomfortable, even

 dangerous situations. The onsite staff for your program should have more detailed advice for

 your safety in the host country.

 **E. LGBTQ Travelers**

Attitudes and tolerance toward LGBTQ persons vary from country to country. Most European

 countries offer legal protections similar to those in America, but many other countries are less

 tolerant, and some even criminalize same-sex behavior or outward expressions of LGBTQ

 identity. Before traveling, educate yourself about the culture in your host country. A good source of information is the [LGBTQ Travel Information](https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel/before-you-go/travelers-with-special-considerations/lgbti.html) page at the State Department website.

 **F. What to do in an Emergency**

An emergency card is provided to all students during their pre-departure orientation. This card

 contains contact information for the host country’s local emergency services (police, ambulance,

 and so on). It also contains the address and contact information for the nearest U.S. Consulate

 or Embassy. If you find yourself in an emergency situation while abroad, first seek safety – then

 contact the onsite staff if possible – they will be the most knowledgeable about what to do.