

Pros & Cons of Study Abroad Programs

Type	Potential Pros	Potential Cons
Direct Enrollment as Visiting Student	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Authentic academic experience - Immersion with local students - Likely to be less expensive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Unfamiliar administrative bureaucracy, teaching style, and support services - Unexpected costs
Semester Exchange	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tuition cost will be the same as paid on your home campus - Your campus has an established contact person at host institution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Unfamiliar administrative bureaucracy, teaching style, support services - Unexpected costs
Outside Program Provider	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support services established for the needs of US students - You get what you pay for 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Might pay extra for support services - Sometimes isolated/marginalized from host country people and culture
Faculty-Led/ Short-Term Courses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Accompanied by a professor you often know and trust - Take classes that are familiar and similar to what would be offered on your home campus - Accompanied by a group of US students from your home school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Take classes that are familiar and similar to what would be offered on your home campus - Accompanied by a group of US students mostly from your home school - Faculty not necessarily trained to provide full-service support and study abroad best practices and standards
Country Choice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Someplace that excites you - A pleasant break from your experience at "home" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Not always what you expected - Dislike the weather, or food, or living conditions, or other aspects - Not comfortable with political or economic development status
Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Language may be less of an obstacle than expected - I would like to learn a new language 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Language may be a larger obstacle than expected - I did not have the level of language skills I thought I had
Community/ Location	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Enjoy the different shops, restaurants, and activities - Experienced new activities that I never expected to like - Transportation was easy - Scenic and/or comfortable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Too big or too small for my enjoyment - Difficult to meet locals, or make friends - Transportation was not adequate - The location was dirty, noisy, boring, inconvenient, etc.
Host Institution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Appreciate the host program as much larger or much smaller than my home campus. - Conducive to meeting local students and making friends - Local professor and students were 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dislike the size the campus compared to my home campus - Not conducive to meeting locals or making friends - Local professors did not know how to deal with visiting/foreign students

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	welcoming and helpful - Courses were meaningful and challenging and motivated me to learn more	- Courses too easy or too difficult
Living Conditions	- Liked my housing - Lived close to campus - Cost of living less than the US - Conducive to meeting locals and making friends - I felt comfortable because it was similar to what I am used to, OR because it was new & interesting - Made it easy to focus on academics	- Disliked my housing - Lived too far from campus - Cost of living much more than the US - Not conducive to meeting locals and making friends - I felt uncomfortable because it was something I could not adapt to - A significant distraction from my academics

By Dr. Sandi M. Smith, Director of Institutional Relations, Global Learning Semesters, 2008