

# Study Abroad for English Majors

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*The Department of English encourages its students to complete some portion of their undergraduate study through Berkeley Study Abroad (BSA). English majors can deepen their understanding of British, American, and post-colonial English literature by study in a foreign university and at the same time add an international dimension to their undergraduate education. Because all courses taken through BSA are accepted as UC courses, with careful planning students may spend as much as a year of study in a foreign university with no loss of time in completing their degrees.*



## Why study abroad?

The opportunities for enhancing one's understanding of literature written in English through foreign study are almost boundless: seeing Shakespeare performed in the rebuilt London Globe, visiting the Lake District where Wordsworth and Coleridge wrote their finest poetry, reading Joyce's *Ulysses* in Dublin, discussing American literary texts with British, Australian, or Indian students, or experiencing Cotzee's South Africa.

English majors who study abroad come to understand that cultural context is crucial for interpreting literary texts, that knowledge is constructed differently in other political and social milieu. Or through immersion in a foreign-language university, they may gain fluency in another language and acquire a sense of its literature while at the same time studying English literature.

English majors find that a term, or better, a year in a foreign university not only enhances their critical and writing skills, but that the experience of adapting to another academic and cultural world expands their self-understanding and gives them a keen sense of the political and social differences in today's world. The personal and intellectual growth of study abroad provides further advantages when it comes to the challenges of graduate and professional study.



## When can I study abroad?

### Freshmen

It's best to begin planning as early as possible for study abroad. If you want to begin or continue the study of a foreign language through the short-term language and culture programs, you can apply in your freshman year to go abroad as a sophomore.

### Sophomores & Juniors

You can also apply sophomore year to do a language and culture program in your junior year. But if you want to complete a significant portion of your major studies abroad, you should apply in fall of your sophomore year to do your junior year abroad (see below, "Where can I study abroad?"). Also, students who have completed their lower-division language studies may elect to expand their knowledge of that language through classes in a foreign language university during their junior or senior year.

### Seniors

If you want to go abroad in your senior year, you should complete all your major requirements or plan to take courses meeting your remaining requirements while abroad. It is possible to graduate while abroad, but close consultation with an advisor is essential.

## Plan ahead!

Applications typically are due six months to a year prior to the program's start date and some programs have academic or linguistic prerequisites that must be satisfied in advance.

Please check the BSA website for guidance on "how to apply": [studyabroad.berkeley.edu/how-to-apply](http://studyabroad.berkeley.edu/how-to-apply)

## Cost:

Study on BSA can be comparable to the cost of study at UC. In some cases, it is less. BSA participants pay UC fees and continue to receive UC financial aid while abroad.

Furthermore, BSA students are eligible for special grants and scholarships from UC, the host country, and other sources.



## Where can I study abroad?

If you want to complete a substantial part of your English major abroad, you have a wide variety of options. Fourteen universities within the United Kingdom offer the possibility of study during the semester or year in English departments in England and Scotland. In the Republic of Ireland another four universities are available. Similar possibilities for study in your major can be found in eight of the universities that make up BSA's exchanges in Australia and six universities in New Zealand, where the academic system follows the British model of small, seminar-sized tutorials. Summer programs at Cambridge and Sussex Universities also offer literature & writing courses.

If you have a strong interest in post-colonial literature, you should consider study in Barbados, Ghana, South Africa, or India, all of which have university systems modeled on Britain's. At University of British Columbia you can study English on the familiar North American model, but with the possibility of studying Canadian literature as well.

If you want to enhance your language skills, consider BSA programs in Western Europe: France, Germany, Italy, or Spain, where you can study their literatures and at the same time take courses in English and American literature. Japanese universities also offer the possibility of melding language study with courses in English literature. Study in English is offered in Europe — Denmark, Italy, France, Netherlands and Sweden, and in Asia — Korea, Hong Kong, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam and in many other universities around the world. The UC London Bloomsbury Center Fall Program offers an opportunity for sophomores, juniors, or seniors to do courses focused on London and British culture and politics.



## What classes can I take?

English Majors abroad should look for courses similar to their courses here at UCB in terms of subject matter, class time, workload, and rigor. Courses on British, American, and Anglophone literature are most easily used towards the major, but literature courses in translation or in a foreign language may also be considered.

If you want to do a significant part of your major abroad, you should complete the lower-division preparation for the major and at least some of the upper-division requirements before you go. You should also complete all, or most, of your general education requirements. This way you'll have maximum flexibility in the courses you do abroad. But it's possible to substitute classes from many BSA universities for English department electives.

Credit for major courses is determined by the English major advisors upon the student's return. Two literature courses in a foreign language are routinely counted towards the major. The student should bring back course syllabi, descriptions, and work in order to get courses taken abroad approved.

**Course credit:** Students will earn UC credit for BSA courses they complete abroad. However, application of credit to major requirements is subject to the discretion of the department. To search for program and course options, go to the BSA website: [studyabroad.berkeley.edu/programs](http://studyabroad.berkeley.edu/programs) and follow the links to courses offered through UCEAP and Berkeley Abroad.

## What happens when I return?

A faculty Major Advisor determines credit toward the major for coursework completed through BSA on a case-by-case basis. Students should submit documentation (e.g. course descriptions, syllabi, completed exams, papers, and other written work) to demonstrate that the education abroad course is comparable in coverage, rigor, and substance to a UCB upper-division course. This could include up to 2 education abroad literature courses in a foreign language.

## I'm interested! What are the next steps?

English students interested in study abroad through BSA should first research program options on the BSA website [studyabroad.berkeley.edu](http://studyabroad.berkeley.edu), then meet with an English advisor to discuss departmental regulations and the academic planning process. Application information and BSA advising are available at the Berkeley Study Abroad office, 160 Stephens Hall.