

## Study Abroad for International Students

International students are welcome to apply for all study abroad opportunities.

As a J-1 or F-1 visa holder in the U.S., below are necessary steps to take before studying abroad.

- Review your financial aid package for any scholarships you receive as an international student and how they might apply towards study abroad programs.
- Meet with OISS any time prior to or immediately upon acceptance to a program to discuss your current U.S. visa status, what documents you will need to have with you when you enter back into the U.S., and to receive an updated I-20/DS-2019 with a recent travel signature to ensure a safe return to the U.S.
- Research visa requirements for your study abroad program host country. As an international student, you may have different visa requirements than those of U.S. students.
  - o Remember to research requirements for countries in which you have a flight layover, even if you will not be leaving the airport (i.e., transit visas).
- Once accepted to a program we encourage you to notify the Office of Study Abroad (OSA) right away if you hold a passport for a country other than the U.S. OSA can help guide you towards visa resources and provide a letter of support if needed.
- Consider using a visa service provider if a visa is needed. While they charge an additional cost, these providers can be a valuable resource in the event of delays or issues with a visa.
  - o [visahq.com](http://visahq.com) and [cibtvisas.com](http://cibtvisas.com) are two resources St Thomas students have successfully used.
- Check your passport. In addition to any visa requirements, many countries require 6 months of validity beyond the date of return to the U.S.
- Make photocopies of all travel documents! Carry one copy with you and give one copy to your emergency contact.