

Subject: To Sophomores about OCS/Study Abroad Planning

Dear Sophomores,

As this most unusual summer winds down, Off-Campus Studies (OCS) wants to help you with your OCS/study abroad planning for your junior year by providing a few FAQs. We look forward to working with you this year about ways to further your global education!

Please read this message carefully.

How do I get more information about OCS opportunities?

The Whitman OCS homepage is a great starting point. Check out program options through the **Search All Programs** section in myOCS.

<https://www.whitman.edu/off-campus-studies>

How do I plan for my major credits and OCS?

The **OCS Advising by Major** tool on our homepage is an excellent way to discover what courses you should be enrolled in in your major (or your intended majors) to be able to fit OCS into your schedule. It also includes information about maximum transferable credits in your major as well as OCS programs recommended by your department.

<https://www.whitman.edu/off-campus-studies/advising-by-major>

If I take a Leave of Absence (LOA) this semester, can I still participate in semester or year-long OCS/study abroad? Keep in mind that to be eligible for semester or year-long OCS, students must have completed at least four semesters of college and have junior standing (58 credits) prior to commencing their OCS semester.

Additionally, the OCS Committee expects students to have made good progress in their major (this usually means completion of at least two major courses) at the time of application for semester OCS.

How do I schedule an OCS Advising Appointment?

To schedule an OCS advising appointment, you must first attend an online *OCS First Step Meeting*. These meetings cover all the basics you need to know about program options and how to apply. First Step meetings will start up again in October and all sophomores will receive an email announcement about them. After attending a First Step Meeting, you can request an appointment with an OCS Adviser by emailing offcampusstudies@whitman.edu

In light of the ongoing COVID19 pandemic, will OCS/study abroad even be possible in 2021-22? Maybe. We cannot guarantee that students will be able to study abroad in the 2021-22 academic year, but we are proceeding now as if it will be possible and encourage you to plan for it. We continue to monitor health and safety worldwide as student wellbeing is a top priority for us. We expect to know about risk levels and availability of Fall 2021 OCS programs by late next spring or early summer.

What factors does Whitman consider when deciding whether to cancel approval for OCS programs? The primary factors we consider are:

- guidance about travel, health and safety from the US Department of State, Centers for Disease Control and other official sources

- status of the OCS program itself including the mode of teaching offered
- the quality of the OCS experience overall in the face of COVID19 precautions in that destination
- barriers due to travel restrictions, ability to obtain a passport or visa, and/or mandatory quarantines upon arrival
- the quality of medical resources and medical infrastructure in the host country

Is summer study abroad more flexible?

Yes, there is no Whitman minimum college credit requirement to be eligible to transfer credit from summer study abroad. However, Whitman need-based aid and merit scholarships are not available for summer study abroad (except for Whitman's own faculty-led Crossroads courses).

We look forward to talking with you this fall about off-campus studies around the world.

Warmly,

The OCS Team
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