

UCCS Abroad 101: Academics

Hello, and on behalf of the International Affairs office, welcome to another section of Abroad 101. This time, we'll be focusing on academics and credit transfer, particularly as it relates to exchange and 3rd party programs. After watching, I encourage you to view our other Abroad 101 videos, which offer an overview of education abroad here at UCCS and go in-depth about finances, the application process, and more. Now, let's jump on in to academics.

If you want credit for your time abroad, as most students do, you must take courses while abroad that will count toward your degree here at UCCS in some way. Those courses could fulfill a major, minor, or graduate program requirement, or simply help you to complete your general education curriculum. If you're hoping to go abroad on an exchange or 3rd party program, you'll also need to have the courses you take while abroad pre-approved before you leave campus so that the credits will transfer back.

To do that, you'll first need to make sure the program you pick has course offerings that work for your degree plan, and to do *that*, you'll need to meet with your academic advisor. If you're interested in UCCS short-term programs, this process will likely be fairly simple and you'll go on to register for the short-term program's course as you normally would for UCCS classes, but if you're thinking about an exchange or 3rd party program, you'll want to meet with your advisor as soon as possible to discuss your options since the process is a little different.

With exchange and 3rd party programs, your courses must tie in toward your degree. You might be able to take courses for major or program credit while abroad, or

you might need to take gen ed requirements instead. Since your progress towards your degree is unique, your advisor is essential to help you determine which course options are available for your specific situation. Make sure you know all your options, as you'll want to have alternate courses pre-approved as well. I'll explain more about that in a minute.

For graduate students, it's even more important to meet with your advisor as soon as possible, because unlike at the undergraduate level, there's no centralized advising in this area. How many credits you'll be allowed to transfer back is entirely determined by your department and program, so you'll need to get an understanding of what your department will allow very early on in the process since the number of credits you can transfer in will determine what type and length of program will work best for you.

Undergrads, the impact the number of credits you'll be able to count toward your degree has on program selection applies to you, as well, though to a lesser extent since there's usually more flexibility within your degrees. Nevertheless, it's good to know this information early on as you start to consider program options, so you'll still want to meet with your advisor as soon as you can.

You can also do some preliminary program research before your meeting with your advisor, as long as you keep your options open and don't get too set on a specific program or program type. If you do find a program or two that you think may be a good fit, you can bring a list of available courses (which are usually found on the provider's website) to the meeting to see if any of those courses will work with your degree plan. Most of your program research will likely happen after you've determined which courses you'll be able to take abroad, though.

Once you've determined what kinds of courses are available to you while abroad and which program and location is the best fit, you'll need to fill out the Study Away Course Approval Form during the application process to get your courses pre-approved. For more information about the application process, you can check out our How to Apply segment of Abroad 101.

Since UCCS short-term programs offer UCCS courses, the Study Away Form is only for students applying to exchange or 3rd party programs. It is an essential part of the credit transfer process for these programs. Once you've picked a program and created a UCCSAbroad application, you'll write down the courses you plan to take while abroad and take the form to your advisor so that they can fill in the UCCS course equivalents and sign it to confirm their approval. Since final course registration may not take place until arrival in-country, it's essential that you select and get pre-approval for several alternate courses as well, in case one of your preferred courses is not available. The Study Away Form has sections for both preferred and alternate courses for this reason.

I cannot emphasize enough how imperative it is that you get your planned courses and alternates pre-approved before you leave the U.S. In fact, it's mandatory. If you don't get your courses pre-approved, you will not be able to receive credit for your time abroad, nor will financial aid be able to be used toward your time abroad. For more details on financial aid and why pre-approval is essential, take a look at our Finances video.

Still, we know things happen sometimes, so if you arrive in-country for your exchange or 3rd party program and you're unable to take one of your pre-approved courses and your alternates are unavailable, get in touch with International Affairs and your

advisor immediately to fill out an updated Study Away Form so the course you are able to take can be approved. Again, this doesn't apply to UCCS short-term programs, since those programs offer UCCS courses.

For exchange and 3rd party programs, however, there's also a second half of the credit transfer process, and it involves your study abroad transcript. At the end of your program, you'll be issued a transcript for the courses you took while abroad, and your provider will ask you where to send it. Many programs will ask you during the provider-specific application process before you leave the U.S.; others will ask after you return.

Please have your provider mail your transcript to:

University of Colorado Colorado Springs
International Affairs
Copper House 9202
1420 Austin Bluffs Parkway
Colorado Springs, CO 80918

Note that it may take a few months after the program ends for transcripts to be sent out.

Most international institutions have different transcript issuance processes that take longer than the ones we're used to here at UCCS.

Once we've received your transcript, we'll review it alongside your Study Away Form, making sure the courses you took and are attempting to receive credit for were pre-approved. After we've determined everything's in order, we'll send it to the Registrar so your time abroad can be applied to your degree. If you were on an exchange program, your UCCS transcript will reflect letter grades for your time abroad, and your GPA on your exchange program will factor in to your overall cumulative UCCS GPA. If you were on a 3rd party program, you'll receive transfer credit that will be recorded as pass/fail on your

UCCS transcript, and your semester abroad won't be factored in to your overall cumulative UCCS GPA. If you participated in a UCCS short-term program, on the other hand, your course and grade will post and be recorded as normal on your UCCS transcript and will count towards your overall cumulative UCCS GPA. No additional transcript will be issued.

We here in International Affairs hope this video has helped you understand the academic processes related to going abroad, but as always, if you have questions you can reach us via email at international@uccs.edu, by phone at 719-255-5018, on Facebook at UCCS International Affairs, on Instagram at [@uccs_international](https://www.instagram.com/uccs_international), and on Twitter at [@uccsinternat](https://twitter.com/uccsinternat). You're also welcome to stop by our office in Copper House 9202 or visit our website at abroad.uccs.edu. Thanks for watching!