



# The International Educator

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**UW-Eau Claire study abroad information for advisers, faculty, and staff**

## **Maximizing Study Abroad: Orientation for UW-Eau Claire Students**

“Maximizing” study abroad has become a buzz word in international education. A key to helping students get the most out of their experience abroad is thorough preparation before they go. The early study abroad application deadlines at UW-Eau Claire allow us to deliver a semester-long orientation that introduces students to important cultural and logistical information in a variety of formats: a written orientation guide, large group presentations, small group discussions, and weekly e-mail updates that allow students to focus on one important topic at a time. This approach seems to be working. Christine Martin, the international student adviser at Southern Cross University in Lismore, Australia recently wrote, “We find Eau Claire students to be, without a doubt, the best prepared members in our student cohort. After my recent visit to your campus I know that this comes as a result of the energy you put into your pre-departure orientation sessions and the comprehensive information you give to students.”

Students going abroad get site-specific written information in December (for fall/summer programs) or in May (for spring programs). They get also e-mail updates from the Study Abroad Coordinators over winterim or summer, helping them prepare to make the most of the required orientation day and giving them tools for learning basic information about their host site. On orientation day, students get a program-specific orientation guide. Updated each semester, the orientation guides are periodically reviewed by our partners abroad to ensure their accuracy. Carolina Regidor, a professor from Valladolid, Spain read her program’s guide while here for the Study Abroad Fair and said, “You’ve covered everything in this guide, from academics to health issues & insurance—you even have things on local gyms students can go to for exercise!”

Comprehensive written materials are important, but for orientation to be most effective, students need to have their individual questions answered. In any given semester, the study abroad coordinators are working with 600+ students, including those abroad, those accepted to study abroad the next semester, those currently working on the application process, and those back on campus with loose ends to tie up. Enter the Peer Adviser! Peer Advisers are returned students who participate in an intensive training and then take charge of the program-specific parts of the day-long orientation. They also hold two office hours/week, during which they send out a weekly e-mail to their students on specific topics such as academics, housing, community involvement, or money. Finally, they hold an end of the semester gathering to answer last minute questions. The students appreciate having a peer to go to with questions. In the words of a recent student, “I think that it is so helpful to have a peer adviser who is focused on one study abroad program. I know that sometimes I felt like I was freaking out or unsure of things, and I knew I could go directly to my peer adviser without feeling stupid!”

Students often do not realize what a solid foundation they have until they go abroad and talk with students from other U.S. institutions. On her program evaluation one student wrote: “I was so impressed with UWEC’s CIE and the orientation process. Many students here were not told anything by their study abroad office and had no idea that they would have to do really basic things, like cook for themselves.”

What’s next? We are in the process of developing a one-credit orientation class, to allow motivated students to explore cultural issues in more depth before going abroad. If you’d like to hear more, e-mail [studyabroad@uwec.edu](mailto:studyabroad@uwec.edu).

## **International Educator Archives**

Would you like to read a past issue of the International Educator? Check out our website for the archived editions: <http://www.uwec.edu/CIE/sac/Archive/index.htm>

## **UW-Eau Claire ranked 14th Nationally for Numbers of Students Abroad**

The latest Open Doors Report was released in November, and UW-Eau Claire ranked 14th nationally among master’s level institutions for total number of students studying abroad. The report is based on 2004-2005 statistics. UW-Eau Claire also sent more students abroad that year than any other master’s granting Wisconsin university.



## Summer/Fall/ Academic Year Programs Update

During the fall semester we are often able to extend the application deadlines for programs that do not have space limits. We have extended the deadline to January 16, 2007 for the following summer, fall, or academic year programs:

### FALL/ACADEMIC YEAR

Australia: Lismore & Perth

Graz, Austria

Santiago, Chile

Guangzhou, China

England: Harlaxton & Lancaster

Global Student Teaching

Limerick, Ireland

Riga, Latvia

ITESM semester

Nicaragua/Costa Rica

Study in Scotland (all sites)

Växjö, Sweden

### SUMMER

Central European Travel Seminar

Costa Rica-Nursing

Mexico: Cuernavaca (intensive track only)

Dalkeith, Scotland

Suwon, South Korea

Chiang Mai, Thailand

Please encourage your advisees or students in your classes to apply.

They can get more information on all the programs on the web: [www.uwec.edu/cie](http://www.uwec.edu/cie), or in our office, Schofield 111.

## New Programs Well Received

Students have four new destinations for fall 2007: three in Scotland and one in China. To date, we have applicants to two of our sites in Scotland: Glasgow and Stirling, and we have an applicant for the program in China.

Students going on any of the Study in Scotland programs will enroll directly into the Scottish university and live with Scottish and other international students.

At Jinan University in Guangzhou, China, students can take a full semester of Chinese language and culture courses, or a combination of Chinese language and courses taught in English at Jinan's International School.



**Nessa Severson is studying in Graz, Austria for the 2006-2007 academic year.**

**She has a double major: Instrumental and General Music Teaching (comprehensive major) and a German teaching major.**

## Two Students Win Gilman Scholarships for Spring 2007!

Amanda Draxler, a sophomore Spanish major, and Emily Richgels, a senior elementary education major, have won Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarships for Spring 2007. Amanda was awarded \$4,000 to use for her semester-long program in Costa Rica, where she will take Spanish language and Latin American studies courses. Emily's award of \$2,300 will support her 10-week student teaching experience, also in Costa Rica, through the Global Student Teaching program. A third UW-Eau Claire student, Mai Lee, was previously awarded a Gilman for her 2006-2007 academic year in Thailand. The Gilman program supports students who have been traditionally under-represented in study abroad. It is a Congressionally funded program, administered by the Institute of International Education. Find out more at <http://www.iie.org/programs/gilman/index.html>