

SCRIPT: Studying Abroad on a Direct-Enroll program

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Hi! Thanks for joining us to learn more about studying abroad on a direct enroll program.

What is a direct enroll program? These are programs where the Office of International Education (OIE) at DU has a direct relationship with a foreign institution abroad and you as the student get to work directly with your host institution. Understanding cultural and academic differences is key to student's success on these programs.

In this video, we'll talk about the basic information you need to know, and some of the most common questions about these programs. After watching this video, please come in to chat with an OIE advisor so we can talk about you, your goals, and finding the program that fits you best.

Benefits

Now let's start with the fun stuff: benefits! There are a lot of great things about studying abroad on a direct enroll program!

You'll get to have a true experience as an international student. You will not be required to go on any specific trips, you'll be able to create your own itinerary and join any university clubs as a regular student can.

One of the greatest benefits to enrolling directly is that you'll be taking classes with local students getting to know what life of a local is truly like.

As an international student at your host institution you'll have access to a wider range of course offerings than you might on a study center program.

On direct enroll programs, you get to be in the driver's seat of your experience, managing all aspects of studying abroad and communicating with your host institution.

Challenges

But, along with all the benefits these programs provide, there are also many challenges.

You will be communicating directly with your host program, so take into consideration that the time differences can make communicating challenging. This will require some patience especially since other cultures may operate on different timelines or schedules than we do in the USA.

Many direct enroll institutions view their students as adults, meaning that there could be different mentalities around student expectations which can lead to miscommunications. Most foreign universities do not have the level of support many American students expect.

With different expectations, it's important to be a self-advocate, keep asking questions! You must stand up for yourself and if you don't understand something, ask!

When going on a direct enroll program it's helpful to think about it as though you're transferring schools and think about all the things you would need to navigate at a new school, it is very similar to going on these types of programs.

Myths

Now, let's talk about some common misconceptions.

I've heard that there is no support!

This is not true. While direct enroll programs may offer less support than program providers or study center programs there will always be some level of support for you at the abroad institution. It is up to you to take advantage of the support available.

I've heard it's impossible to navigate.

Direct enrolls can certainly be more challenging to navigate but they are not impossible! It will require that you know your resources well and are comfortable being a self-advocate for when you do need assistance.

I've heard these programs are only for very independent students.

Not necessarily. Every direct enroll program has different level of support. Check your program brochure to see the level of support offered. Regardless, you will need to be comfortable asking for help and are looking to grow your independence. Every program is different so it is important to ask your OIE advisor about this if you have any concerns.

But, how will I communicate at direct enrolls in non-English speaking countries?

The staff in the international office at your host institution will speak some English. We always recommend brushing up on basic language skills if you are going to a non-English speaking country but you can be rest assured you will have support options in English available to you as well.

Other Differences to Consider

Next, let's talk about some differences between direct enroll programs and other programs abroad.

Educational System

The educational system in the US is very different than in most other countries.

For one, many countries don't have the same inflated grades as we do, and usually only based on one test that makes up 100% of your grade. In the US we're used to having many assessments, like midterms, finals, homework, and so on.

It's important to note that classes are also very different. They tend to be very lecture based and sometimes will have only 1 or 2 exams as the assessment. While the US is focused on learning in the classroom, in other countries, learning is mostly independent. Classes are less structured and meet less

often. Syllabi are often vague. It's up to students to make sure they understand the professor's expectations and to understand how they will be graded.

At DU, students spend two years on common curriculum courses. Students in most other countries have 3 year degrees and study ONLY in their major. They don't take general courses, and develop a deep understanding of their subject.

In addition to differences in grading, classroom expectations, and degree focus, you should expect student life and accommodations to look quite different in other countries.

Housing

Direct enroll programs aren't a good fit for students who want to do a homestay. Most have university owned housing. This means the host university owns the housing and helps students secure a spot.

This housing isn't always on-campus, though. In some cases, commutes can be as long as 45 minutes, especially in big cities. Students usually live with a mix of local and international students, but there is no guarantee who will make up that mix.

Many programs require students to pay a refundable security deposit. It will be your responsibility to pay the deposit and to keep your new home in good repair, in order to get the deposit back.

Meal plans are rare on these programs, so students will need to pay for and cook their own food. There are shared kitchens, but they don't always have cooking utensils, so you may need to buy them.

Some buildings are much, much older than those at DU. This means you may need to adjust to smaller sizes and different aesthetics. Buildings won't look brand new like the ones at DU.

And just a quick note about the University of Queensland program in Australia: they DO NOT include housing. Students have to organize and pay for housing on their own (using university resources), which can be more expensive than DU and often includes a separate application process. The other Australian programs all include housing, which are Tasmania Newcastle and Western Australia.

Southern Hemisphere Calendar

Programs in the Southern Hemisphere also have different academic calendars. If you apply to these programs double check that you apply to the correct term. These programs will start earlier than we're used to. For fall term, that usually means starting in July.

Wrap Up

As you continue researching study abroad programs, remember the different benefits and challenges of going to on a direct-enroll program. Question your assumptions about these programs, and remember to consider the different educational systems, housing options, and academic calendars.

Next Steps

Now that you know the key points to consider about these programs, make sure you attend a First Step session, and that you come in to meet with an OIE advisor. You can come to regional drop-in sessions for

the areas you're interested in ([find the schedule here](#)), or schedule an individual appointment with a study abroad advisor ([which you can do here](#)).

You've got lots of research to do in DU Passport and on each program's own website. Be sure to narrow down your best fit programs and complete your application by the deadline.

Be sure to come in to the I-House to speak with an advisor as soon as possible about what you're looking for from your study abroad experience. We recommend coming in before Halloween to stay on track for study abroad. We're here to help you navigate this process and we look forward to seeing you soon!