

# STUDY ABROAD OPPORTUNITIES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA LAW SCHOOL

There are as many reasons to study abroad as there are universities at which to study. You may be thinking of pursuing a study abroad experience because you never had an opportunity as an undergraduate; because you did before and it was one of the best experiences of your life; because you want to specialize in comparative or international law; because you want to improve your second or third language skills; because you can't survive another Minnesota winter; because the courses offered in a particular program will assist you in developing an expertise; or because you know that once you start working you may not have the chance to spend extended time abroad! This document is intended to identify for you the study abroad options available, and to address some of the commonly asked questions about study abroad in law school. After reviewing this document, if you have additional questions about the programs offered please contact Hannah Kuether, Assistant Director of International and Graduate Programs, at [hkuether@umn.edu](mailto:hkuether@umn.edu).

## What Types of Study Abroad Opportunities Are Available?

There are four types of study abroad programs available to you while in good standing at Minnesota Law:

1. Minnesota Law semester exchange programs
2. Summer programs
3. Exchange programs through other law schools
4. Self-initiated study abroad

### Type 1: Minnesota Law Semester Exchange Programs

Minnesota Law has a student exchange arrangement with each of the following universities:

- FGV Direito Rio, Rio de Janeiro, **Brazil**
- Université Jean Moulin - Lyon 3, Lyon, **France**
- Humboldt University, Berlin, **Germany**
- Bucerius Law School, Hamburg, **Germany**
- University College Dublin, Dublin, **Ireland**
- Bocconi University, Milan, **Italy**
- Tilburg University, Tilburg, **The Netherlands**
- University of Bergen, Bergen, **Norway**
- ESADE Faculty of Law, Barcelona, **Spain**
- University of Uppsala Faculty of Law, Uppsala, **Sweden**
- University of Montevideo, Montevideo, **Uruguay**

Under the terms of the exchange arrangements, participants pay their University of Minnesota tuition and fees directly to the Law School (if you receive financial aid, you may use your financial aid to pay for the exchange opportunity). Up to 15 credits per semester (or 29 for a full year) are accepted by the Law School in satisfaction of your J.D. degree requirements. All grades are recorded on a S/N basis, requiring you to have obtained the equivalent of a "C" or better in order to receive credit in the course.

These programs are limited in the number of students who can go. Preference is given to students who will participate in their third year of the JD degree, and in the top half of the class. You are advised to begin planning a semester abroad at least one year before you would like to go.

### **FGV Direito Rio in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil**

FGV Direito Rio is one of the most well-respected educational institutions in Brazil and is located in one of the most exciting international cities in the world. During their semester abroad, students have the opportunity to take classes in Portuguese and limited offerings in Spanish, while experiencing Brazil's rich culture. Each year one Minnesota student can study at FGV Direito during the fall or spring semester.

### **Université Jean Moulin - Lyon 3 in Lyon, France**

The Université Jean Moulin - Lyon 3 is a public university ranked among the top ten in France. Lyon 3 is one of three universities in the city with a combined student population of 100,000 students. Lyon is the second largest city in France, with a population of over 1,000,000. Lyon is a major French city with a great selection of cultural, culinary, and professional opportunities.

Minnesota Law students may participate in French law classes, or participate in classes taught in English as part of Lyon 3's Semester Degree in International and European Law. Students participating in the French classes will be able to choose from the same law courses available to French students. A two-week, intensive French language and law review is offered before the beginning of the semester. Students participating in the English program will choose from a select group of courses and may be able to return to Lyon 3 after obtaining their J.D. to complete an LL.M. in International and European Law with one more semester of study. Up to four Minnesota Law students can study at Lyon 3 in the fall or spring semester.

### **Humboldt University in Berlin, Germany**

Study German and EU law subjects in either German or English at the impressive and historic Humboldt University. Four students per year can study at Humboldt during the German spring term. The program dates provide you with the opportunity to spend additional time in Germany before the spring term, while pursuing course work in the second half of spring semester and into the summer.

### **Bucerius Law School in Hamburg, Germany**

Founded in 2000, Bucerius Law School is the first private law school in Germany. The courses are focused on business law, with an international perspective. Total enrollment at Bucerius is limited to 100 students per year, and most teaching takes place in small classes. Bucerius also allows exchange students the unique opportunity of earning a Certificate in Management and Leadership for Lawyers. Courses for international students are all taught in English, but international students are also welcome to attend regular classes taught to Bucerius students, if their knowledge of German allows. Bucerius also offers two German language courses. One student from Minnesota can study in Hamburg each fall semester.

### **University College Dublin in Dublin, Ireland**

University College Dublin is the National University of Ireland. All courses are in English, and students can choose from a variety of domestic and comparative law courses. Accommodations are arranged in advance with the University College Dublin. Alternative arrangements can be made, but housing in Dublin is notoriously difficult to find. Up to ten Minnesota students can study in Ireland in either the fall or spring semester.

### **Bocconi University in Milan, Italy**

Università Bocconi, a private institution in Milan, Italy, has a global reputation as a research university in business, economics, and law. Bocconi offers its exchange students select law courses in English, generally including courses such as International and European Law, International Trade Law, and Comparative Business and Corporate Law. Students may live in a dormitory or find their own housing. Up to four Minnesota students may study at Bocconi in the fall semester.

### **Tilburg University in Tilburg, The Netherlands**

Founded in 1927, Tilburg University is a public university with 10,000 students and a specialty in social science and humanities. Its Faculty of Law is rated highly among European institutions; with its size and location – equidistant between The Hague and Amsterdam – Tilburg is an excellent place to enrich your study of European law. A wide range of courses are available in English and assistance in finding housing is provided by the administration at Tilburg University. Three Minnesota Law students per year can study at Tilburg, in either the fall or the spring semester.

### **University of Bergen in Bergen, Norway**

Bergen, Norway's second largest city, is located on the scenic southwestern coast. The University of Bergen is the most cited university in Norway and has a student population of nearly 17,000. More than 1,800 international students enroll in many courses offered in English. All international students may apply for housing through the student welfare organization. Two Minnesota Law students may student at UiB in either fall or spring semester.

### **ESADE Faculty of Law in Barcelona, Spain**

ESADE Faculty of Law is associated with one of the few private universities in Spain. Dedicated to the idea of providing personal and individualized instruction to its students, ESADE Faculty of Law has excellent faculty and high quality facilities located in the northern part of Barcelona. Students may study a variety of comparative and Spanish law courses while in Barcelona. Students are required to find their own housing around the campus area. Students study law in Spanish; those participating during the fall semester are provided with an intensive Spanish course prior to the beginning of classes. Four Minnesota students per year can study in Barcelona in either the fall or spring semester.

### **University of Uppsala Faculty of Law in Uppsala, Sweden**

Founded in 1477, Uppsala University is the oldest university in Scandinavia and Minnesota Law's oldest exchange partnership. Located in the town of Uppsala, 45 miles north of Stockholm, the University has more than 27,000 students which contribute to the permanent population of 160,000. Several select courses are offered in English each year at the Faculty of Law. The Law Faculty uses the "Problem Based Learning" method, which requires enrollment in a single course for 10 intensive weeks, and then a second course for an additional 10 weeks. Semester dates are approximate to those of the University of Minnesota semester dates. Students in Uppsala live on campus in student "flats," and accommodations are arranged through the Faculty of Law. Up to 10 students from the Minnesota Law can study at the University of Uppsala each year, in either the fall or spring semester.

### **Universidad de Montevideo in Montevideo, Uruguay**

Minnesota Law began an exchange partnership with the School of Law at the Universidad de Montevideo in Uruguay in fall 2007. Courses taught in English are only offered during the fall semester as a part of the International Business curriculum. The Universidad de Montevideo has acquired national and international prestige as a result of its challenging educational plan, quality of faculty, publications, and research. It emphasizes academic excellence, technological innovation, social responsibility, and the interdisciplinary nature of law, administration and economics. Students are required to find their own housing around the campus area. Up to two Minnesota students may attend a semester exchange in either fall or spring.

## Type 2: Summer Programs Abroad

Many US law schools sponsor at least one summer program in conjunction with a foreign institution. These programs are available throughout Europe, South America, Asia, and in some countries in Africa and the Middle East. Most programs are 4-6 weeks in length, giving students time before or after the program to travel or work.

Most summer programs focus on a substantive area of law (e.g., environmental, international, human rights, comparative law), or a particular area of the world, and many attract prominent legal scholars to serve as lecturers. Typically, students earn 4-6 credits for the entire summer program. Minnesota Law will verify for you, in advance, the number of credits the University of Minnesota will accept for work done in a foreign summer program.

The costs of these programs vary widely, as do the living accommodations. Some programs offer language courses, home stay experiences, or even internships both during and after the program. If you have obtained financial aid through the University of Minnesota for the costs of your academic year, you are likely eligible for loans for participation in the summer program. Contact Jim Parker in the Office of Student Finance at [j-park1@umn.edu](mailto:j-park1@umn.edu) to apply. You will want to get started early on this process if you intend to borrow money to fund your summer program.

Promotional materials about individual summer programs will be available beginning mid-November. The application process for summer programs abroad is generally simple and straightforward. You will need to check with individual schools for exact deadlines. The [National Jurist magazine](#) has an excellent website which identifies many summer programs available. The [American Bar Association](#) also has resources for studying abroad.

Advantages to participation in a summer program include: 1) instruction is generally in English; 2) administratively, it is the easiest way to study abroad as all arrangements are made for you in advance; 3) you will arrive back at school in August having earned 4-6 credits towards your degree, perhaps having seen a new part of the globe, and having had an opportunity to study subjects not typically offered at the University of Minnesota.

## Type 3: Cooperative Exchange Programs through other Law Schools

If you are interested in spending a semester at a foreign institution with which the University of Minnesota has no exchange relationship, but with which another U.S. law school does, you are encouraged to explore the possibility of being admitted to that school's program.

Particularly if the program is sponsored by an ABA-accredited law school, there is a good chance that the Minnesota Law will accept up to 15 credits of work done there towards your University of Minnesota J.D. degree requirements. Approval must be received in advance.

Generally speaking, this tends to be an expensive way to study abroad. Most schools will charge you either non-resident tuition for the semester in which you are enrolled with them, or their standard private tuition rates which are typically much higher than tuition rates at Minnesota Law.

## Type 4: Student-Initiated Study Abroad

Perhaps the most administratively difficult to arrange, but arguably the most challenging of the study abroad experiences, the student-initiated program permits you to find your own foreign law school at which to study for a semester. Several Minnesota students have taken advantage of this opportunity in the past few years, but a great deal of planning is required by the student to make the opportunity a reality.

You must identify a school at which you wish to study, and contact the school directly seeking information about the possibility of studying there for a semester. A faculty advisor must be identified, as well as dates of attendance, courses available, language of instruction, cost of tuition, housing arrangements, etc. A student must generally begin planning this option at least one year in advance. Also, be aware that most foreign schools do not offer courses in English, unless that is the country's national language.

Typically, students pay the rate of tuition charged by the foreign institution, which is frequently much lower than tuition rates in this country. If you receive financial aid through the University of Minnesota, it may be possible for you to access that aid for foreign study, but a great deal of planning is required.

The advantages to participating in a student-initiated study abroad program include: 1) a truly unique experience in which you may be the only U.S. student participating; 2) the opportunity to develop your second or third language skills; and 3) the chance to prove your skills in managing, navigating and surviving in a foreign environment.

**University of Minnesota Learning Abroad Center:** Each year, several thousand U of M undergraduate and graduate students, as well as many faculty and staff, travel abroad to study, teach or do research. You will find a wealth of information at the [Learning Abroad Center website](#) or by visiting the Learning Abroad Center's office at 230 Heller Hall, near the Law School on the West Bank campus.

## PART II: FAQs about Arranging Study Abroad Opportunities

Q: *How many credits may I transfer from my semester abroad?*

A: You may transfer from a foreign institution up to 15 credits for a semester and up to 29 credits for a full academic year.

Q: *If I study abroad in the fall semester of my second year, I will miss the On-Campus Interviewing season. Will this affect my ability to get a job?*

A: There is no question that on-campus interviewing (OCI) is an advantage to students who are in Minneapolis for the fall semester of their second and third years of law school. However, most students find jobs outside of the OCI process. A semester of study abroad will add to your résumé in a way which will distinguish you from many of your peers, thereby making you more marketable upon your return, and arguably increasing your opportunities for interviews with potential employers. Talking to Minnesota Law alumni who have studied abroad about their job-seeking experience is the best resource to learn more about this topic.

Q: *What do employers think of students who have spent either a summer or a semester abroad?*

A: At the risk of over-generalizing, most employers find students who have had the motivation, interest, and drive to study abroad a great addition to their legal staffs. An experience abroad adds dimension to your résumé, distinguishing you from your peers who perhaps have not been outside of the U.S. You may have just the added skills which will make you attractive to an employer if you have studied courses in an area of specialty which the employer values, or if you have used a foreign language abroad in a legal context. The contacts you make abroad may also lead to job offers, or at least to international connections an employer may value.

Q: *How does studying abroad affect participation in a moot court or on a journal?*

A: You cannot participate in a moot court the same year you will study abroad for a semester. You must be in Minnesota for both spring and fall semester in order to participate in a moot court. Participation in a journal while abroad is varied, and you are encouraged to check with the individual journals as to how studying abroad will affect your participation on that journal.

Q: *Will I be able to satisfy my second or third year writing requirement while abroad?*

A: No, you will need to participate in a journal or take a course in which satisfies your writing requirement during the semester you are in Minnesota. Third year students may be able to satisfy their writing requirement through an independent research paper, but students should carefully read [Minnesota Law Academic Rule 5.4](#) and contact the Dean of Students with any questions.

Q: *The semester exchange program I would like to attend has classes until June, but I need to be back for graduation and to study for the bar in mid-May. Can I still go?*

A: Students participating in an exchange program are expected to arrive before the first day of the semester – or any orientation programming, if applicable – and stay through the last day of the exam period. This is the same expectation Minnesota Law has for exchange students coming to Minneapolis from our international partners. It is very unlikely that exams can be rescheduled, so if you plan to study abroad spring semester of your 3L year, choose a destination where classes and all exams will be complete by the date you would like to return home.

**For answers to more questions about study abroad contact Hannah Kuether in Mondale Hall room 429 or send an email to [hkuether@umn.edu](mailto:hkuether@umn.edu).**