

# INTRODUCTION TO STUDY ABROAD AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA LAW SCHOOL

As the days become shorter, the sky darker, and the temperature colder, more students begin to consider study abroad. You may be thinking of pursuing a study abroad experience for a number of reasons: 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. There are as many reasons to study abroad as there are countries in which to study. 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 you may contact Hannah Kuether, International and Graduate Programs Assistant, at [hkuether@umn.edu](mailto:hkuether@umn.edu).

## **PART I – What Types of Study Abroad Opportunities Are Available?**

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

1. Law School Semester Exchange Programs
2. Summer Programs
3. Exchange programs through other Law Schools
4. Self-initiated study abroad

**Type 1: University of Minnesota Law School's Semester Abroad Exchange Programs**  
**Sweden, France, Germany, The Netherlands, Spain, Ireland, Uruguay, Italy and Brazil.** The University of Minnesota Law School has a student exchange agreement with each of the following universities:

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

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 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 in their third year of study, 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.

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

<http://www.jur.uu.se/InternationalInformation/tabid/1316/language/sv-SE/Default.aspx>

Known as the Harvard of northern Europe, Uppsala University is the oldest university in Scandinavia (est. 1477). Located in the town of Uppsala (pop. 160,000), 45 miles north of Stockholm, the University has more than 27,000 students, and offers degrees in theology, law, medicine, the humanities, the social and behavioral sciences, economics, technology, and natural sciences.

A few 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.

Students are able to participate in the program with support from the Knut and Alice Wallenberg Foundation. Additionally, a Tax Law Master’s program is available at Uppsala. For the Tax Law Master’s a student participates in one semester of the Tax Law program at Uppsala and completes a final paper after returning to Minnesota. Upon successful completion of these courses and final paper, a Master of Tax Law degree is awarded by Uppsala University.

Up to 10 students from the University of Minnesota Law School can study at the University of Uppsala each year, in either the fall or spring semester. Semester dates are approximate to those of the University of Minnesota semester dates. Some of the courses offered over the past few years include: Comparative Legal History and Contemporary Jurisprudence, Comparative Penal Law, the International Court of Justice, European Law Moot Court Competition, the Modern Law of Russia, International Law, Environmental Law, EC/EU Constitutional Law, European Consumer Law, International Family Law. Course offerings for the 2017-18 academic year have not yet been determined.

Students in Uppsala live on campus in student “flats,” and accommodations are arranged through the Faculty of Law.

***Université Jean Moulin – Lyon 3, Lyon, France*** [www.univ-lyon3.fr](http://www.univ-lyon3.fr)

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 Lyon 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. A major French city with a great selection of cultural, culinary, and professional opportunities, Lyon is a fantastic place to live.

Up to four Minnesota students can study at Lyon 3 in the fall or spring semester. Semester dates are similar to Minnesota’s. Through this program, 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 have the option of returning to Lyon 3 after obtaining their J.D. to complete an LL.M. in International and European Law with one more semester of study.

***Humboldt University, Berlin, Germany*** [www.hu-berlin.de/](http://www.hu-berlin.de/)

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 (dates are approximately mid-April to mid-July). 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, Hamburg, Germany*** [www.law-school.de/](http://www.law-school.de/)

Founded in 2000 by the ZEIT Foundation, one of Germany's largest private non-profit foundations, Bucerius Law School is the first private law school in Germany. The courses are focused on business law, with a decidedly international flavor. 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; course dates are early September through late December.

***Tilburg University, Tilburg, The Netherlands*** [www.tilburguniversity.nl](http://www.tilburguniversity.nl)

Founded in 1927, Tilburg University is a public university with 10,000 students and a specialty in social science and humanities. Three Minnesota students per year can study at Tilburg, in either the fall or the spring semester. 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 begin your study of European law. A wide range of courses are available in English in both the fall and spring semesters (e.g., Protection of Human Rights, Theory and History of the European Unification, Comparative Criminal Law, Environmental Law, International Liability Law, Comparative Constitutional Law, Protection of Minorities in International Law). Term dates are approximate to the University of Minnesota semester dates. Assistance in finding housing is provided by the administration at Tilburg University.

***ESADE Faculty of Law, Barcelona, Spain*** [www.esade.es](http://www.esade.es)

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 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. 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.

***University College Dublin, Dublin, Ireland*** [www.ucd.ie](http://www.ucd.ie)

University College Dublin is the National University of Ireland. Up to ten Minnesota students can study in Ireland in either the fall or spring semester. Term dates are approximate to the University of Minnesota semester dates. 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.

***University of Montevideo, Montevideo, Uruguay*** <http://www.um.edu.uy>

The University of Minnesota Law School began an exchange partnership with the School of Law at the Universidad de Montevideo in Uruguay in fall 2007. Up to two Minnesota students may attend a semester exchange in either fall or spring. 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.

***Bocconi University, Milan, Italy*** <http://www.unibocconi.eu>

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. Up to two Minnesota students may study at Bocconi in the fall semester, which runs from early September to late December. Students may live in a dormitory or find their own housing.

***FGV Direito Rio, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil*** <http://diretorio.fgv.br/>

The University of Minnesota Law School has begun a new exchange partnership with FGV Direito Rio in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Each year one Minnesota student can study at FGV Direito during the fall or spring semester. 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.

### **Type 2: Summer Programs Abroad**

Virtually every law school in the country now sponsors 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 5-6 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. The Law School 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 [jpark1@umn.edu](mailto:jpark1@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 out beginning mid-November. The application process for summer programs abroad is generally simple and straight-forward. You will need to check with individual schools for exact deadlines. The National Jurist magazine has an excellent website which identifies all summer programs available (<http://www.nationaljurist.com/content/study-abroad>). Another electronic search option is available through [www.studyabroad.com](http://www.studyabroad.com).

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 University of Minnesota Law School 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 the University of Minnesota Law School.

### **Type 4: Student-Initiated Study Abroad**

The most 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 again 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 U of M's Learning Abroad Center website <http://www.umabroad.umn.edu/> or by visiting the Learning Abroad Center's office at 230 Heller Hall, near the Law School on the West Bank campus.

## **PART II – Commonly Asked Questions 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: *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 may be possible. You are encouraged to check with the individual journal regarding whether you could fulfill the responsibilities of a particular journal position during a semester abroad.

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 Rule of Scholastic Requirements 5.4 in this regard.

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: Some of our exchange partners will allow our third-year students to take their exams early or to write papers in lieu of an exam. Students who will be leaving a semester exchange program early should notify the exchange program coordinators of the school they are attending of their need to take exams before the deadline early in the semester. There are a few programs whose spring semester dates don't match well with Minnesota's: the programs in Berlin, Milan and Montevideo end in either June or July. These would not work well if you need to return to Minnesota in May. If you plan to go to Berlin, Milan or Montevideo as a third-year student, please apply for the fall semester rather than spring.

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