International Academic Programs: Education Abroad

The Education Abroad office, a unit of The Capstone International Center, provides support to the UA community through identifying, developing and administering overseas opportunities. Education Abroad offers academically challenging programs for students, promoting both academic and personal growth. The office is responsible for all of UA’s global learning experiences. Exchange programs, affiliate programs and numerous faculty-led programs are offered. Visit studyabroad.ua.edu to learn more about all of our study abroad programs.

Exchange Programs

The University of Alabama offers a number of international exchange programs allowing students to study as visiting students at overseas universities. Each program gives students opportunities to learn in a foreign country and obtain firsthand knowledge of another people, language and culture in addition to gaining course credits. In some cases, a working knowledge of the language of the host country is a prerequisite. In others, the language can be studied for the first time in the host country; sometimes, no language requirement is necessary (e.g., England and Australia). Students pay University of Alabama tuition based on residency and are assisted in arranging transfer of credits through appropriate departments and divisions prior to departure. Graduate students should secure approval from the Graduate School prior to taking any overseas credit that they may wish to transfer.

International exchange programs are currently available to UA students at the following partner universities for either one or two semesters and, in some cases, summer study.

- **Australia**
  - Queensland University of Technology (Brisbane)
- **Austria**
  - University of Klagenfurt
- **Belgium**
  - Université de Liège
- **Denmark**
  - Aarhus School of Business
- **England**
  - University of Birmingham
- **France**
  - Université François-Rabelais (Tours)
  - Bordeaux Business School
  - Paris-EST Marne la Vallée (Paris)
  - Université de Poitiers (Poitiers)
- **Germany**
  - University of Augsburg
  - University of Berlin
  - University of Mannheim
- **Italy**
  - Polytechnic University of Torino
  - University of the Sacred Heart (Milan)
- **Japan**
  - Chiba University
  - Ritsumeikan University (Kyoto)
  - Hiroshima University
  - Meiji University
  - Kansai Gaidai University (Hirakata-City)
- **Korea**
  - Pusan National University
  - Yonsei University (Seoul)
  - Ajou University (Suwon)
  - Yeungnam University (Daegu)
- **The Netherlands**
  - Hanzehogeschool-Groningen
- **Scotland**
  - University of Glasgow
- **Taiwan**
  - Feng Chia University (Taichung)
- **Wales**
  - University of Wales (Aberystwyth)

Faculty-led Programs

In addition to its longer-term international exchange programs, The University of Alabama conducts many overseas study programs lasting from two to six weeks, most often during the summer and interim sessions. These are normally led by UA faculty members. The number of these programs has expanded greatly over the last few years. Scholarships and financial aid are available to students participating in these programs. Examples of programs and fields of study in recent years have included the following:

- **Alabama at Oxford**: English, History, Honors
- **Alabama in Austria**: German language and culture
- **Alabama in Belgium**: Political Science
- **Alabama in China**: Chinese, business, communications, culture
- **Alabama in Ecuador**: Biology
- **Alabama in France**: French language, culture and literature
- **Alabama in Ghana**: Geography, healthcare
- **Alabama in Greece**: Classical civilization, religious studies
- **Alabama in Italy**: Italian language and culture, art history, New College
- **Alabama in Japan**: Japanese language and culture, transcultural nursing
- **Alabama in Spain**: Spanish language and culture
- **Alabama in Spain**: Engineering
- **Alabama in Sweden**: Political science
- **Alabama in Turkey**: Business
- **Alabama in Barcelona**: Internships
- **Alabama in Dublin**: Internships
- **Alabama in London**: Internships

Affiliate Programs

The University of Alabama also offers programs through third-party program providers and students continually have positive feedback on their experiences with these providers. Students participating in these programs can use their UA
scholarships and financial aid for funding. Also, students do not pay UA tuition but pay the program fee charged by the program provider and additional expenses including, but not limited to, travel, personal, meals, visa, housing expenses, etc.

Similar to third-party affiliate programs, students also have the opportunity to spend a summer, semester or academic year at several international universities with which we are affiliated. Participants in these programs can use their UA scholarships and financial aid for funding. Also, students do not pay UA tuition but pay the cost of attending the international university. A list of UA’s Affiliate Programs and international university programs can be found online at studyabroad.ua.edu.

**Study Abroad Program Policies**

- Students participating in UA programs abroad must be in academic good standing. GPA requirements vary by program.
- All UA students participating on programs abroad will be cleared through the Office of Judicial Affairs.
- Students must submit all application and pre-departure requirements prior to program departure.
- Study abroad in countries where current U.S. Department of State Travel Warnings exist is subject to additional restrictions and requirements, and may be denied.

Additional information about any international study program may be obtained from studyabroad.ua.edu; 135 B.B. Comer Hall; by writing The University of Alabama, Education Abroad, Capstone International Center, Box 780254, Tuscaloosa, AL 35487-0254; or by calling (205) 348-5256. In the rare instance where the University of Alabama is unable to meet the overseas study needs of a student, Education Abroad provides information about additional international education opportunities available through study abroad at other institutions and organizations.

**International Services**

International Services, a unit of the Capstone International Center, provides specialized services for international students, professors, research scholars, visitors and their families.

International Services’ primary function is to provide visa support for these international members of the UA community. The office is responsible for the creation and ongoing maintenance and verification of visa support documents within the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS); for both F-1 student visas and J-1 student and scholar visas. These ongoing services that monitor individual progress according to federal regulations. The office is also responsible for filing H-1B and other types of work-visa support documentation on behalf of international faculty and staff at UA.

International Services conducts comprehensive orientation programs and provides vital information regarding U.S. immigration compliance as well as multicultural guidance and counseling. Great emphasis is placed on international student programming. International Services coordinates a variety of student activities such as a weekly international coffee hour, an international spouse support group and an annual Welcome reception for international students at the President’s Mansion.

Professional staff members advise and assist the International Student Association, which represents all international students and the many nationality organizations on campus. Professional staff work closely with community groups such as Tuscaloosa’s International Friends (TIF), which sponsors a friendship family program for international students.

International Services may be contacted by telephone at (205) 348-5402; fax at (205) 348-5406; email at international@ua.edu; or mail at The University of Alabama, International Services, Box 870254, Tuscaloosa, AL 35487-0254, USA. More information about office services, visa regulations and processing of visa support is available online at is.ua.edu. International Services is located in 105 B. B. Comer Hall.

**English Language Institute (ELI)**

For the non-native speaker of English, The University of Alabama English Language Institute (ELI), a unit of the Capstone International Center, offers two types of year-round English-language programs: 1) The Intensive English Program which offers six sessions per year and six levels of proficiency, from beginning to advanced, and 2) Customized Group Programs which provide specially designed programs for groups of 10 or more participants. In addition, the ELI offers two programs for matriculated students at The University of Alabama: the Intensive Teaching Assistant Program, which trains and evaluates international graduate teaching assistants, and the Academic Support Program, which provides opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students who may want or need additional English-language instruction.

To obtain more information about any of the ELI programs, contact The University of Alabama, English Language Institute, Box 870250, Tuscaloosa, AL 35487-0250; visit eli.ua.edu; call (205) 348-7413; fax (205) 348-9266; or email info@eli.ua.edu.

**Intensive English Program**

The ELI Intensive English Program (IEP) is designed for individuals who need to learn English as a second language. The program focuses on preparing students for academic success, both in English-language proficiency and cultural awareness, for undergraduate and graduate study at The University of Alabama.

Six levels of study, from beginning to advanced, are available. Each level consists of a minimum of 20 hours of class per week. Sessions lasting 6-8 weeks are available six times per year in January, March, May, June, August and October. Students may begin their English study at the beginning of any one of these sessions.

An ELI student wishing to enter an undergraduate degree program at The University of Alabama may meet UA's English proficiency requirements either by obtaining the required TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) score or by completing Level 6 with a minimum grade point average of 3.0 in Levels 4, 5 and 6. Conditionally admitted students who meet certain conditions (minimum TOEFL score and GPA) become eligible to enroll in undergraduate courses while completing their ELI program of study. In such cases, the number of UA courses that an eligible student may take is determined by the ELI.

Students pursuing graduate study must complete Levels 4, 5 and 6 with a minimum GPA of 3.5 to meet English proficiency requirements. In certain cases, the Graduate School, the ELI and the student's academic department may together grant permission for a student who has completed Level 4 or higher with a minimum GPA of 3.5 to enroll in one graduate course per semester while completing the ELI program of study. The specific course must be approved by the instructor and department prior to enrollment.

Students who apply for admission to UA and meet the academic and financial qualifications to enter the University but do not meet the English proficiency requirements may receive conditional admission. Such conditionally admitted students will not be eligible to begin an academic program and will be required to register for study in ELI until they satisfy the requirements for English proficiency for full or partial academic program enrollment.

**Intensive English Program Courses**

**Structure: Levels 1 to 6**

Structure courses provide students with the basic grammatical structures they will need to communicate effectively in English in four language skill areas: listening, speaking, reading and writing. Each structure course emphasizes communication, both comprehension (listening and reading) and production (speaking and writing). Structure courses meet five hours per week.

**Speaking/Listening: Levels 1 to 6**

ELI courses in Speaking/Listening provide students with the opportunity to improve their listening and speaking skills and to gain confidence in using English to communicate orally. Students practice appropriate conversation management skills, receive instruction on problem areas of pronunciation and learn useful vocabulary. These activities are carried on through a variety of classroom exercises that focus on the everyday situations students are likely to encounter while adjusting to life in the United States. Speaking/Listening courses meet six hours per week.

**Reading/Writing: Levels 1 to 6**

The Reading/Writing curriculum of the English Language Institute is designed to provide students with both the skills and the practice that are necessary for them to develop satisfactory reading and writing skills in English and eventually to function successfully in U.S. university courses where extensive academic reading and essay writing are required. Skill instruction along with accessible, varied and challenging activities, supports students in constructing meaning from written texts, responding to those texts and producing writings of their own. Students will acquire new vocabulary and develop effective reading strategies for different types of tests. Working on closely-related reading and writing assignments, students will develop proficiency in understanding what they read and in thinking, drafting and revising their own ideas by working through the writing process with input from their classmates and teachers. Reading/Writing courses meet nine hours per week.

**Culturally Speaking Class**

Through the Culturally Speaking class, ELI students meet regularly with American students to converse in English in relaxed surroundings. Culturally Speaking provides a comfortable way for ELI students to form friendships with American students and to practice their English.

**Culture and Language Exchange Program**

The Culture and Language Exchange Program matches the ELI students with UA students who are studying the ELI student’s native language. Once matched, these pairs or groups of students then meet as often as they like for conversation practice in both English and in the particular foreign language.
Customized Group Programs

ELI Customized Programs can be designed for 10 or more participants who are interested in customized dates and curricula. Such programs are typically designed for international English teachers, students whose international universities have approved given curricula for credit, international graduate students preparing to enter universities throughout the United States, and business professionals who wish to improve their overall effectiveness in English or to concentrate on specific skills, such as written communication.

An organization wishing to participate in such a program should clearly define the goals of its group and keep in mind that program enrollments typically require a minimum of 10 participants. Financial sponsorship for the above programs may come from ministries of education, embassies, corporations, private philanthropic organizations, U.S. or other government sponsoring agencies, or the individual participants themselves. Programs may be offered at any time of the year and typically range in length from two to six weeks.

Academic Support Program

The ELI Academic Support Program provides opportunities for UA undergraduate and graduate students who may want or need additional English-language instruction. At the undergraduate level, newly admitted international students who taking the UA English Proficiency and Placement Exam (EPPE) prior to beginning their first semester at UA, may be asked to take one or two ELI courses in spoken and/or written English on a part-time basis. These students may pursue their academic studies while fulfilling their EPPE requirements. Students must pass the designated ELI Speaking/Listening or Academic Writing course(s) before enrolling in the University’s required English courses for credit. At the graduate level, ESL support courses in written and spoken English are available free of charge to full-time international graduate students each fall and spring semester. In addition, the ELI Study Center and the UA Language Resource Center are available for individualized language assistance.

International Teaching Assistant Program

The International Teaching Assistant Program (ITAP) provides training and evaluation for international students with graduate teaching assistantships. Participation in the ITAP program is mandatory for all non-native English-speaking GTAs and graduate assistants who have instructional responsibilities at the University.

Contact the ELI

To obtain more information about any of the above ELI programs, contact The University of Alabama English Language Institute, visit the ELI website (eli.ua.edu) or contact the ELI at Box 870250, Tuscaloosa, AL 35487-0250; telephone (205) 348-7413; fax (205) 348-9266; or e-mail info@eli.ua.edu.

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To obtain more information about any of the above ELI programs, request a brochure and application for the Intensive English Program, or to discuss the possibility of a customized group program, contact The University of Alabama English Language Institute, Box 870250, Tuscaloosa, AL 35487-0250; visit eli.ua.edu; call (205) 348-7413; fax (205) 348-9266; or email info@eli.ua.edu.

Community and Corporate Outreach

Outreach is an important function within Capstone International as evidenced by its Capstone International newsletter, support of the Sakura Festival (focused on Japanese culture) and the work of the English Language Institute (ELI). ELI provides the annual World Friends Day for local elementary schools, annual summer programs for students from our sister city in Japan, on-site corporate programs, and tailored courses for the children and spouses of employees. A variety of activities are coordinated in conjunction with the Rotary International Club of Tuscaloosa, Tuscaloosa’s International Friends (TIF), the Children’s Hands-on Museum (CHOM), University Place Montessori School and the Birmingham Committee on Foreign Relations. In addition, CIC has previously worked extensively with the German Supplementary School for school-age children from Germany and the Japanese Supplementary School in Birmingham.

Language Supplementary Schools

In 1995, the University, in cooperation with Mercedes-Benz U.S. International Inc., established the German Supplementary School to provide supplementary education in German to children ages six to 16 who will return to a German-speaking educational system after living in Alabama for several years. The school is no longer located on the UA campus, but CIC continues to work closely with Mercedes-Benz to promote German culture and language within the community. In addition, CIC works with the Birmingham Supplementary School for Japanese established by Honda to provide education to Japanese-speaking children.

Japan Program and Sakura Festival

Capstone International, working with numerous on and off campus partners, organizes the annual spring Sakura Festival and Haiku contest for the State of Alabama. For the academic years 2013-14 and 2014-15, CIC, along with Tuscaloosa Sister Cities and UA’s Department of Modern Languages, hosted a Japanese Outreach Coordinator to bring Japanese culture to the campus and into the community.

Reciprocal student exchange programs with Kansai Gaidai University in Osaka, Ritsumeikan University, Hiroshima University and Chiba University allow qualified undergraduate students to study Japanese in Japan while undertaking Asian studies, humanities, social science and science courses taught in English. Generous AIE-J scholarships providing round-trip transportation and a monthly stipend are available on a competitive basis to UA students. Gilman and Freeman-ASIA scholarships for students on financial aid are also available. Examples of courses offered at partner institutions include Japanese-Style Management, Japanese Economic Development, Sociology of Everyday Life in Japan, Survey of Modern Japanese History, Japanese Culture and Education, Seminar in Geography, Agriculture and Agricultural Sciences in Japan, and Introduction to Deep-Sea Biology. For students who have already earned undergraduate degrees, Chiba University offers prestigious Monbusho (Ministry of Education) research scholarships for 18 months of study. The Monbusho scholarship provides round-trip transportation and monthly stipends to cover living costs.