

SECTION: 5. Student Policies

SUBJECT: Study Away Policy

Background: This policy outlines a clear path for students choosing to study abroad to follow, both for financial aid and to assure they enroll in transferable courses.

Point of Contact: International Programs Office Study Away Coordinator

Other LCSC offices directly involved with implementation of this policy, or significantly affected by the policy: Financial Aid, Controller's Office staff, Office of Admission/Registrar, Student's Division Office

Date of approval by LCSC authority: January 31, 2014

Date of State Board Approval: N/A

Date of Most Recent Review: 1/31/2014

Summary of Major Changes incorporated in this revision to the policy:
Updated policy to reflect actual practice.

LCSC encourages students to study away for their academic, professional and personal development and enrichment.

- A. Programs. Study away options available to Lewis-Clark State College (LCSC) students are as follows:
1. **Self-Initiated Study Abroad:** A student decides on an international college, university or program and then applies to that institution/program. Credits are treated as regular transfer credit and no credits or classes are guaranteed without prior approval. Students are not registered with LCSC during the time away. As such, students are not eligible for federal financial aid through LCSC, but may be eligible through the administering program or host college, depending on their individual circumstances.
 2. **Sister School Relationships /National Student Exchange:** LCSC students can pursue a summer, semester or year abroad at specific post-secondary institutions with which LCSC has a sister school or exchange relationship. Application must be made through the LCSC Study Away Coordinator. Students must also complete a credit equivalency agreement before departure. After the exchange period, students must request an official transcript be sent to the Office of Admission/Registrar. Using the credit equivalency agreement, the classes and grades will be entered onto the student's transcript. These credits are not treated as transfer credit, which means that grades are transcribed as LCSC grades but the courses are recorded on the transcript with the name of the host institution. These students are registered at LCSC for the duration of the exchange and pay LCSC tuition, and are thus eligible for federal financial aid.

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3. Faculty-Led Study Away (FSA): Periodically, academic departments may arrange for groups of LCSC students to experience/study international culture and earn college credit through institutional, faculty-led programs overseas. Acceptance into these programs is at the discretion of the faculty/department offering the program, as are credits/grades received. As these students will be registered at LCSC for this/these credit(s), these students MAY be eligible for financial aid; questions should be directed to the Financial Aid Office after consulting with the Study Away Coordinator.
 4. Third-Party Program Providers: LCSC contracts with study abroad providers to be the official LCSC study away providers for qualified students. Approved programs are listed at <http://www.lcsc.edu/international/study-away/>. LCSC reviews its list of approved programs annually and has selected to work with the partners and programs based on a number of factors including financial, risk management, academic and LCSC international strategy considerations. Programs will not be added to the official LCSC list based on individual student interest. Students may apply to and participate in these programs after consultation with the Study Away Coordinator. Students must also complete a credit equivalency agreement before departure. After the period away, students must request an official transcript be sent to the Office of Admission/Registrar. Using the credit equivalency agreement, the classes and grades will be entered onto the student's transcript. These credits are not treated as transfer credit, which means that grades are transcribed as LCSC grades but the courses are recorded on the transcript with the name of the host institution. These students are registered at LCSC for the duration of the term abroad, and are thus eligible to apply for federal financial aid. Students do not pay LCSC tuition during the term away, but they are personally responsible for all costs and fees associated with the program.
- B. Eligibility. Students must fulfill the following criteria in order to be eligible, unless participating in Self-Initiated Study Away (described in A.1. of this policy).
1. Students must be fully admitted to LCSC with degree-seeking status,
 2. Students must be registered full-time in the fall or spring semester before the term abroad.
 3. Students must have completed at least 30 total college credits (transfer credit is allowable).
 4. Students must have a current (at time of application and term abroad) cumulative GPA of 2.75 or greater.
 5. Students must register with the host institution/program for the equivalent of a full-time credit load while studying away (12+ credits during the semester, 6+ credits during the summer), unless participating in Self-Initiated Study Away (described in A.1. of this policy).
- C. Student Process Required to Study Abroad (exception: Self-Initiated Study Away – A.1. of this policy):

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1. Student must meet with the Study Away Coordinator and his/her academic and financial advisors to discuss suitability of the desired program. Student completes any application(s) and pays the necessary application fee(s) to the Study Away Office.
2. Student consults with his/her academic advisor and relevant division chairs to confirm course equivalency for courses the student intends to take while studying away. Using this information, the student then completes Part II of the Study Away Agreement Form (contact the Study Away Office) and secures the signature(s) of the LCSC division chair(s) for the classes they intend to take abroad. Only division chair signatures are acceptable.
3. Student delivers the Study Away Agreement form to the Financial Aid Office and then to the Controller's Office and secures the appropriate signature(s) from each office. Each office makes a copy of the form at the time of signature.
 - a. Any arrangements for scholarships or financial aid and attendance verification requirements are discussed with the Financial Aid Office at this time.
 - b. Any arrangements for payment of fees to the college or to a third party program provider are discussed with the Controller's Office at this time.
4. The Registrar signs the Study Away Agreement form and sends a copy to the Study Away Coordinator; the original is retained by the Office of Admissions/Registrar.
5. Once the Study Away Agreement Form is submitted, the Study Away Coordinator will submit the Add/Drop form to the Office of Admissions/Registrar for the appropriate SD course to act as a placeholder for credits earned abroad (SD 200, 201, 202, etc.).
6. Upon the student's return from the term(s) away:
 - a. Students are responsible to order an official transcript be sent to LCSC. The Study Away Coordinator will not order it for them.
 - b. Upon receipt of official transcript, the Office of Admissions/Registrar removes the SD placeholder course and enters directly onto the student's record the actual study away courses, in addition to noting the term of study abroad, the institution, and the location where course work was completed. The student is notified when the study abroad credits have been recorded on their official transcript. The student is then responsible for informing the Financial Aid Office.
 - c. If an official transcript is not received before the start of the next semester, there may be delays in financial aid and the ability of the student to register or attend classes.

D. Study Away Grades and Transcripts

1. Students are responsible to request official transcripts from the host program/institution. LCSC will not request the transcript for them. Only official transcripts will be accepted.

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2. All study away grades transfer as letter grades (A-F). Grades are recorded directly from the host institution/program transcript by the Office of Admissions/Registrar.
3. In the case that a student is unhappy with the grades received during the study away period, the student should go through the official appeal process of the host program/institution attended in order to remedy any disagreements. It is not possible to appeal for a grade change through the LCSC appeals process, and no grade changes will be allowed in this manner.