



NON-KENT STATE UNIVERSITY EDUCATION ABROAD PROGRAM SELF-ADVISING GUIDE

Kent State University Education Abroad would be happy to assist you with your non-Kent State program application process.

For information on the education abroad programs offered by Kent State, please refer to the Office of Global Education searchable database, which includes the hundreds of Kent State sponsored programs at <http://educationabroad.kent.edu>.

You should also consider contacting one of our Education Abroad advisors to learn about upcoming programs that may not be in the database yet. Please check our website for walk-in advising hours and contact information (<http://www.kent.edu/globaleducation/ed-abroad-staffadvising>).

Students who plan to study abroad should always meet with their academic advisors for more information on transferable credit and graduation deadlines.

Below are some things to consider before committing to a non-Kent State education abroad program.

1. Research the Program:

Make sure to research the non-Kent State education abroad program thoroughly. Find out as much information as possible about the organization that is running the program, whether that is a company that works with a variety of U.S. universities and has an accredited school of record. Well-established organizations are typically more organized and have a better infrastructure in place to assist you (both during the application process and while abroad). Here are some questions to consider while researching your program:

- Does the non-Kent State school have a pre-existing partnership with Kent State University and, therefore, there is an exchange option already available to you through Kent State?
- Where will you be studying? Is it safe?
- Do they offer courses that will count toward your major/are the credits transferable to Kent State? Remember to speak with your academic advisor concerning transferable credits.
- Does the academic term align with the dates of Kent State's or will you miss part of a semester when you return to Kent?
- How long has the organization/school been in operation?

- How many students have studied abroad through this organization/ have any KSU students ever studied there?
- Can you see student evaluations or contact a returnee?
- Why do you want to participate in this specific program? What will you get out of it?
- Does this program fit with your career goals?
- How much will it cost? How will you pay for it? Can you use any of your financial aid/scholarships?¹ Remember to speak with a Financial Aid Counselor concerning financial aid and study abroad.

2. Program Costs:

When researching an education abroad program, whether non-Kent State or Kent State-sponsored, it is important to understand not only how much the program will cost, but also what hidden costs there may be. Often there will be a program fee, but sometimes that fee does not include things like tuition, housing, meals, flights, or health insurance. So make sure to find out as much as possible about estimated costs so that you can prepare yourself for the total cost of living and studying abroad. Here are some questions to consider while researching the cost of your program:

- Is the cost of tuition included in the program fee?
- Housing (Is it dorm-living, off-campus apartments, or homestay? Prices can vary significantly from one option to the next.)
- Meals (Are any meals covered in the program fee? Will you be able to buy groceries and cook or will you be eating at restaurants every day?)
- Airfare (Make sure you are taking into account round trip flight costs. Be aware that prices fluctuate and the prices will increase as your departure date approaches.)
- Local Transportation (Will you have access to public transportation to navigate to and from class? Do they have inexpensive options for commuter passes?)
- Health Insurance (Does the program/school require you to purchase international health insurance? If not, you will be required to purchase health insurance through Kent State.)
- Program excursions (Are there program field trips that will require you to pay additional fees? Will you travel outside of the program on weekends or days off?)
- When do these costs need to be paid? Is there a timeline for deposits?

¹ Please note that not all scholarships, grants, loans, etc. that can be used at Kent State can be used for education abroad programs.

3. Academic Credit:

Some programs offer service learning or internships that are volunteer-based and not seen as credit-bearing. As a result, you need to find out if the non-Kent State organization offers academic credit for the courses you will take. If it does not, you will need to meet with your academic advisor to find out if Kent State can offer direct Kent State credit (in the case of an internship for example). Another thing to consider is that not all courses will transfer to Kent State University. So, you must meet with your academic advisor and an education abroad advisor at Kent State before you commit to your non-Kent State program. You will be asked to complete a **Transfer Course Planning (TCP) form** for approval of the transfer of your course credit. You must also register through the Office of Global Education's application system. Here are some additional questions to consider when researching the academic side of a non-Kent State education abroad program:

- Is the non-Kent State program accredited?
- Can the organization/school provide a syllabus for each course you would like to take?
- When will the non-Kent State program send transcripts to Kent State? Will this delay your graduation?
- Do you need to pay extra for those transcripts?

4. On-Site Staff and Services:

On-site staff and services can make your adjustment to a new school and culture relatively pain-free. Beyond finding out if your non-Kent State program has any on-site staff dedicated to assisting international students, you should also consider the following questions:

- How well organized is the program?
- Do they offer a pre-departure orientation?
- Will there be an on-site orientation upon arrival?
- Do they have a handbook or guide for participating in the program?
- Will there be people to assist you with visa applications, finding housing, registering for classes, etc.?
- Is there an on-site contact for questions or emergencies that may arise throughout the semester?

5. Safety and Security:

You should feel safe and secure while studying abroad so that you can focus on your studies and experiencing a new culture. All Kent State University education abroad programs have been vetted for safety and security, but that cannot be said for non-Kent State programs. So here are some things to consider when researching a non-Kent State education abroad program:

- Do they provide pre-departure or on-site orientations with specific guidance on what safety measures should be taken? For example, is the school/housing located in an urban environment where you should be vigilant of pick pockets? Is it a rural environment where you may be far from police or medical care? Are there neighborhoods to avoid? Is public transportation relatively safe? Are there recommended taxi companies?
- Do they have safety and security protocols put in place in case of emergency, both personal emergencies and wide-spread emergencies, such as a natural disaster?
- Kent State University does not encourage students to study abroad in locations under U.S. State Department Warning. Please visit <https://travel.state.gov> for more information on travel warnings.
- Are there additional immunizations that you will need to get before traveling? When do you need to get these? How much will they cost?

QUESTIONS?

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