Hundreds of opportunities exist for students majoring in Biology to learn or work abroad. Some students take unique coursework in topics not available at Iowa State, such as marine biology, tropical ecology, or Antarctic studies. Others choose to study the flora and fauna specific to regions outside the U.S. and across the world. Viewing the U.S. from the outside is an equally valuable asset for today’s students; and of course the opportunity to learn or master a foreign language is enhanced via immersion in another culture.

Study abroad can help you...
• Take unique coursework relating to your discipline in an international setting
• Improve your language skills
• Prepare to live and work in an increasingly diverse world
• Build your résumé with an internship abroad
• Become a more competitive graduate school applicant
• Expose yourself to new perspectives on international issues
• Fulfill a double major or a minor in a World Language or International Studies
• Gain confidence in yourself personally and professionally

Set goals and plan for results
Biology students can go abroad at any time, given the flexibility of the required advanced biology coursework in the major. The process of selecting a study abroad program is similar to selecting your major or minor:
• Begin planning right away.
• Set some goals. No single program is best suited for Biology students. The best one for you depends on what you want to get out of your experience.
• Prioritize your goals. Consider your long-term academic and professional goals, as well as on-campus degree requirements.
• Consider both short- and long-term programs.
• Consider internship, volunteer, and research opportunities abroad.
• Prepare academically. You may need to take language or other prerequisite courses for your chosen program.
• Take time to talk to your Biology adviser as well as to other students who have studied abroad.

Can I afford to study abroad?
Yes! If you earn academic credit, most or all of your ISU financial aid may be used to fund study abroad. It doesn’t matter whether you study with an ISU program or through another institution. Student Financial Aid, 0210 Beardshear, can provide information on how your current aid package will apply as well as other sources of funding available. The ISU Study Abroad Center offers need-based Sojourner Scholarships for summer, spring, fall, and academic year programs. The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences offers merit-based scholarships in two annual competitions (March 1 and November 1). Go to isuabroad.iastate.edu to apply.

“I’m so glad I studied in Tasmania during my junior fall semester because I was able to take unique classes like Antarctic Ecology and Tasmania Wildlife Conservation. It was refreshing to experience a different academic environment and I really enjoyed the hands-on approach and field trips to wildlife sanctuaries!” - Brandon Woods, Senior, Biology, Semester in Australia at University of Tasmania
What are my next steps?

1. **Explore your options**
   Search isuabroad.iastate.edu to identify locations or programs that look appealing. Visit the Study Abroad Center and meet with a Peer Adviser, weekdays between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m.

2. **Meet with a Study Abroad Center staff member or program coordinator**
   Call the Study Abroad Center (294-6792) to make an appointment with a study abroad adviser familiar with the program or country that interests you. The staff can suggest programs you may not have considered. If you’ve already chosen a program, meet with the program coordinator to clarify details and requirements.

3. **Meet with your academic adviser in Biology**
   Discuss the course requirements for your major and the course options from the program you want to attend. Your academic adviser will help you make selections from what is available at the host program or school.

### ACADEMIC CONSIDERATIONS FOR BIOLOGY MAJORS

**Fulfill general education requirements**
Plan early to apply study abroad credits to meet your general education requirements. Elective courses in the humanities and social sciences are most easily available abroad; foundational mathematics and sciences courses are also available at many institutions. As a rule, we recommend courses specific to the region or country in which you are studying. Taking these courses abroad can help you maintain or accelerate progress toward graduation.

**Work on your Biology major or minor requirements**
Study abroad for the sort of experience that can set you apart as you move forward in your career and that can alter your perceptions and provide new direction. Biology majors find it advantageous to take advanced biological courses while abroad, as these courses can be approved without having a direct match to ISU courses: marine biology, ecology, zoology, botany courses specific to the region of the program; however, planning and communication with advisers is key to getting course options pre-approved to fulfill these requirements. Summer programs are a great opportunity to get field experience abroad or an in-depth look at one or two biological topics.

**Participate in an internship in your discipline**
Students can apply an internship abroad to the major with a little advanced planning. If it is a credit-bearing internship, your Biology adviser can assist in getting it approved for advanced coursework. If you find a relevant non-credit internship or even a volunteer experience that is hands-on (for example, biological volunteering, such as at a wildlife clinic or park), you can get ISU credit when you return by fulfilling reflection pieces as outlined by the Biology program’s internship guidelines available online at: www.biology.iastate.edu/faculty resources/Biology_Intern9-27-06.pdf. Internship and volunteer opportunities are strongly encouraged but must be pre-approved on an individual basis by your Biology adviser.

**Develop or improve second language skills**
Study abroad is a smart option for making progress towards or fulfilling your language requirement. You can make rapid progress in starting a new language by being immersed in the target-language culture. If you already have advanced language skills, consider a program taught entirely in the language.
Best practices for a successful international experience in Biology

Students should consult an academic adviser in the Biology Student Services Office, in addition to their faculty adviser, as they plan ahead for a study abroad or other international experience. Please see advisers in the Biology Student Services Office to get pre-approval regarding the 300-level coursework that may be applied to the Biology Minor. Some courses may be listed as being evaluated at the 200-level, but the Biology Program is willing to reevaluate on a case-by-case basis. Syllabi, contact information for instructors, and the link to the current course catalog are helpful to the department and your adviser when assessing courses for application to your degree audit. Look for opportunities to gain relevant experience once you’re abroad. Not everything can be pre-planned, so stay in contact with your adviser.

Learning Abroad Options

The list below provides some learning abroad options that can fit well into the program of study of Biology majors and minors. These are meant to be examples, so do not limit your search to this list. Be aware that many study abroad programs actually combine elements of classroom study and experiential learning (e.g., internships, service learning, volunteer work, field experience). More information on these and other programs can be found at isuabroad.iastate.edu.

**SHORT-TERM PROGRAMS**

Students with no prior international experience may feel the need for a short-term experience before they are ready for a semester or year abroad. Others seek short-term programs because they best fit schedule, interest, or need. Short-term programs are sometimes taught by ISU faculty, and offerings may vary from year to year.

**CARIBBEAN MARINE BIOLOGY (BIO/BMS 394A AND B)**

This spring semester seminar includes a Spring Break trip to Roatan Island, to study the biology of the coral reefs found off the eastern coast of Honduras. Using the facilities of the Roatan Marine Institute, the group will snorkel and dive on the incredibly beautiful and biological diverse reefs of the western Caribbean. [Click here to view the Caribbean Marine Biology brochure.](#)

There are also other classes available with Spring Break travel. [Click here to see other classes with Spring Break Travel](#)

As well as stand-alone Spring Break programs, [Click here to see ISU “shorts” programs](#)

**SUMMER PROGRAMS**

Summer programs are another option for students that may want a short-term experience or for students that do not have time or have conflicting obligations and are not able to study abroad for an entire semester or year.

**COSTA RICA: CEA-VERITAS UNIVERSITY**

These 3-5 week programs takes place in the majestic capital city of San Jose. Students can take an Intro to Marine Biology (J-term), Environmental Studies, Tropical Ecology, or Spanish language class. [Click here to view the Costa Rica brochure](#)
SPAIN: ISU ON THE MEDITERRANEAN
Valencia is a part of Spain’s world-renowned Costa Blanca (White Coast) that provides an exceptional location for a summer program. This six-week program allows students to start or further their study of Spanish, and Biology 394 is available to students seeking to take advantage of the unique biology of the region. [Click here to view the Valencia brochure]

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT EXCHANGE PROGRAMS (ISEP)
ISEP offers a variety of summer programs, some of which are topic-based and taught in English, and others that focus on the study of a foreign language. Program locations vary by year but may include Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Chile, China, Costa Rica, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, India, Italy, Japan, Korea, South Africa, Thailand, and the UK. [Click here for current locations and more information]

SEMESTER OR ACADEMIC YEAR PROGRAMS
For all semester or academic year programs noted below, course options are varied and, in many cases, mirror courses and programs at Iowa State, unless otherwise noted.

WALES: SWANSEA UNIVERSITY
This program begins with either a London or Swansea three-week orientation class. With beautiful scenery and active nightlife, Swansea has something for everyone. Students are fully integrated academically and socially with their British counterparts. Students studying at Swansea during the spring semester will have a three-week spring break. [Click here to visit the Swansea brochure]

ENGLAND: UNIVERSITY OF EXETER EXCHANGE
Exeter is one of the UK’s most popular and successful universities. Exeter’s surrounding area boasts an unrivaled mix of city life, countryside, and coastline. Courses in astrobiology, marine biology, exotoxicology and developmental biology. [Click here to visit the Exeter brochure]

SCOTLAND: UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH
Study at one of the finest universities in the UK in one of Europe’s most exciting cultural centers. Students are fully integrated academically and socially with their Scottish counterparts. An internship program with the Scottish Parliament is available to those students who qualify. [Click here to view the Scotland brochure]

NEW ZEALAND: MASSEY UNIVERSITY
Massey University’s three campuses – Palmerston North, Auckland, and Wellington – offer a variety of locales, from the capital city to stunning harbors and lush green hills. Semesters run from February to June and July to November, and there may be an opportunity for students to gain additional academic credit by attending a J-term “summer” course at University of Otago before joining the Massey Feb.-June semester. Students enroll in regular courses offered by the university. [Click here to view the Massey brochure]

AUSTRALIA: UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA
From miles of unspoiled beaches to magnificent mountains, Tassie is a special place that is very accessible to university students. It has two campuses, one in Hobart, and one in Launceston. The program begins
with a week-long orientation that prepares students for the academic and cultural experience ahead. [Click here to visit the Tasmania brochure]

**SEMESTER AT SEA**
Get a taste of the entire globe as you travel more than 24,000 nautical miles to as many as 13 off-the-beaten-path international destinations or to a single fascinating world region for intensive exploration. [Click here to visit the Semester at Sea website]

**LANGUAGE-LEARNING PROGRAMS**

Almost all study programs in non-English-speaking countries offer language coursework, but some programs are built mostly around intensive language study.

Under each language, examples of beginner programs are listed. To acquire more information about a specific school, navigate to the “Programs” tab on the ISUAbroad website, isuabroad.iastate.edu, click on the ‘Advanced Search’ tab and choose a language of study in the appropriate drop-box.

**ARABIC:**
- Morocco: Iowa Regents’ Arabic Program Summer in Fez
- United Arab Emirates: ISEP Direct Program in Sharjah

**FRENCH:**
- France: ISEP Exchange or Direct Program at Université Paul in Montpellier
- Québec, Canada: Iowa State University exchange with Université Laval

**GERMAN:**
- Germany: ISEP Exchange at Technische Universitat Dortmund in Dortmund

**ITALIAN:**
- Italy: Lorenzo de’ Medici in Rome, Florence, Tuscania, and Venice

**MANDARIN:**
- Hong Kong, China: Summer 5-week AsiaLearn Program in Hong Kong
- China: ISEP Exchange with Jiangxi University in Nanchang

**SPANISH:**
- Chile: ISEP Exchange or Direct to Pontificia Universidad Católica in Valparaíso
- Spain: CEA Spanish Culture and Society Program in Seville
- Costa Rica: ISA in Heredia or San José