

Pre-seminary Students and Semester Abroad

What is a semester abroad? A semester abroad is a semester of college education in a foreign country at a host college. Expectation is that the MLC student studying abroad remains on schedule to graduate according to his degree program plan. A semester abroad usually offers experience and exercise in a foreign language, as well as exposure to a foreign culture. Intention is that the student abroad takes courses taught in English, but, if he has the proficiency, he might take some classes through the medium of his foreign language (e.g., a sociology course taught in German). Housing with host families is preferred. For MLC pre-seminary students, the semester abroad ordinarily occurs in the first or second semester of the junior year.



Who may participate? MLC students who qualify, up to six per school year. To take a semester abroad, a student must have a 3.0 cumulative GPA in the May before his departure and the approval of his academic dean.

What are the advantages to a semester abroad? As mentioned above, a student encounters another culture for an extended period of time. He enjoys ample opportunity to improve his proficiency in a foreign language and learns what it is to cope in an unfamiliar context. In some settings the student abroad can live near enough to congregations of WELS sister synods to become personally acquainted with others in the world-wide fellowship of the Wisconsin Synod. In all this, the student does not lose time toward graduation, if he thoughtfully schedules his sophomore year.



When and where will semesters abroad take place? Contact MLC's International Services Office – Prof. Hunter, ISO Director; Mrs. Kassuelke, ISO Coordinator – for information. (The ISO is on the second floor of the LSC, near the mailroom and next to Pastor Boeder's office.) The pre-seminary emphasis on semester abroad is experience in one of the living non-Biblical languages offered as pre-sem options – Chinese, German, and Spanish. Pre-seminary professors have visited *Frei Universität* – Berlin (Prof. Danell) and *Universidad San Ignacio de Loyola* in Lima, Peru (Prof. Balge with Prof. Bases). Moreover, both schools are near places where sister synods carry on Gospel ministry. A future pastor will want to make the most of the opportunity to get to know these fellow Christians and their work. Our prospective Chinese school is one with which Bethany Lutheran College has had a relationship.



What is the cost of a semester abroad? Intention is to partner with colleges whose costs are comparable to MLC's, but there might be a cost difference. Travel expenses will be a factor, as will medical coverage and living expenses. Financial aid *might* follow you from the home college (MLC) to the host college. The Financial Aid Office will work out details with students who plan a semester abroad. Semester abroad involves an administrative fee paid to MLC. About these matters, confer with the ISO.

What academic planning does a semester-abroad student need to do? To graduate on time, a pre-seminary student must – *already in spring of the freshman year* – schedule classes for the *sophomore year* in a way that accommodates a semester abroad in the *junior year*. The biblical language sequences need the most attention.

If you, as a pre-seminary freshman, are considering a semester abroad in a junior semester, you should do the following:

- 1) **Schedule now** HEB1001 *Elementary Hebrew I* and HEB1002 *Elementary Hebrew II* for your sophomore year.
- 2) **Schedule now** – if you plan to go as a second-semester junior – THE3011 *The Gospel of John* for second semester of the sophomore year. It will be concurrent with *Intermediate Greek II*.
- 3) **Plan in your semester abroad** to take courses that correspond to your programmed MLC courses. Electives provide the most possibilities. You should keep those in reserve (i.e., don't take them at MLC) for the semester abroad.
- 4) **Plan in your senior year** – if you plan to go abroad as a first-semester junior – THE3010 *Symbolics*.
- 5) **Understand** that, if you schedule now, anticipating a junior semester abroad, but your plans change and you do not do a semester abroad, you will remain on schedule for graduation on time.

Where can I find further information? As mentioned, contact the ISO. Also confer with your adviser and/or Dean Balge. Talk also to other students who have done or have considered a semester abroad. Likewise, subject to ISO guidance, you can check the websites of prospective schools abroad.