

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 gives experience and usually exercise in a foreign language, as well exposure to a foreign culture. Intention is that the student abroad would take courses taught in English, but he might take some subjects 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 would ordinarily occur in the first or second semester of the pre-seminary junior year.



Who may participate? All students who qualify. To take a semester abroad, a student must have a 3.0 cumulative GPA and the approval of the pre-seminary academic dean. Among current pre-seminary students, the only students presently on campus for whom a semester abroad is possible – *without postponing their graduation date* – are the current freshmen, members of the class of 2019 or 2020. Only for them is it possible to schedule courses for sophomore year in a way that accommodates a semester abroad in the junior year.

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 setting. The experience itself will fulfill the MLC's general education three-credit intercultural requirement. 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.



When and where will semesters abroad take place? Contact Prof. Hunter, international coordinator, for information. It's worth mentioning that 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-sem professors have visited *Frei Universität – Berlin* (Prof. Danell) and *Universidad San Ignacio de Loyola* in Lima, Peru (Prof. Balge with Prof. Bases). Both schools are relatively close to sister-synod Gospel 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. Confer also with Prof. Hunter's office.

What academic planning does a semester-abroad student need to do now? The Biblical language sequences need the most attention. If you as a current pre-seminary freshman are considering a semester abroad in either semester as a junior, you should do the following:

- 1) **schedule now** HEB1001 and HEB1002 *Elementary Hebrew I & 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 later** to take – if you plan to go as a first-semester junior – THE3010 *Symbolics* in the senior year.
- 4) **plan in the semester abroad** to take courses that correspond especially to your programmed MLC electives. You should keep those in reserve for the semester abroad.
- 5) **understand** that, if you schedule now with a junior semester abroad in mind, but your plans change and you do not do a semester abroad, you will remain on track for graduation on time.

Where can I find further information? As mentioned, contact Prof. Hunter. Also confer with your adviser and/or Dean Balge. You might find it useful also to talk to other students who have done or considered a semester abroad. Likewise, subject to Prof. Hunter's guidance, you can check the websites of prospective schools.