Courses taken during a study abroad experience must be reviewed and approved by GW faculty before these courses can appear on the GW transcript. Do so before departing GW for abroad, when possible, to avoid any issues with graduation. Remember you must achieve a letter grade of “C” or better to receive credit.

Submit course approvals to the Office for Study Abroad—no later than 3 weeks prior to the registration period.

**Acquiring Course Approvals**

1. **Fill out columns 1 and 2 on the Course Approval Form**, located on the Office for Study Abroad website or from the Office for Study Abroad in Colonial Crossroads.

2. **Assemble a course description or syllabus** for each course. In some cases, faculty will ask to see assignments.

3. For each course, **visit with the designated approver** in the academic department at GW that is most similar to the course content. (For example, if British History, go to the History Department.)

4. **Submit the completed Course Approval Form** to the Office for Study Abroad. Keep a copy for your personal records.

**Mechanics of Transferring Credits**

The “GW Course Equivalent” indicates how the course will appear on your GW transcript when transferred. There are four types of designations:

- **Exact equivalent** – a specific course within a department, i.e. PSC 2442, HIST 3811, SPAN 2005
- **Variable topics within a department** – a special topics number within a department, i.e. HIST 3001
- **Variable credit within a department** – indication that the course is within the realm of the department, but they do not have the equivalent, i.e. PSC 2099, ANTH 1099, BISC 3099
- **No equivalent department** – indication that GW does not have an equivalent department, i.e. Swahili. Students may submit the Course Approval Form and the course description/syllabus to Phillips 107 to review for Interdisciplinary (IDIS) credit. Students interested in obtaining IDIS credit should exhaust all options and speak with all possible departments before submitting the syllabus for review.

**Fulfilling Degree Requirements**

Study Abroad Course Approval Guide
Requirements for a **major or minor** may be fulfilled by study abroad courses that transfer as exact equivalents—no further action required. By DegreeMAP Petition, a faculty advisor may allow other courses to count if appropriate.

**University general education** or **school-specific requirements** may be satisfied by study abroad courses only when exact equivalents exist.

**Course Approvals and DegreeMAP**

While abroad, the Office for Study Abroad registers students for EXCH XXXX: Undergraduate Study Abroad – a placeholder to maintain continuing student status, while not enrolled in courses at GW. This placeholder is listed for 15 credit hours for Student Account/Financial Aid purposes, but does not count towards your “earned hours” for registration, nor does it mean that you will necessarily earn 15 credits upon returning from abroad.

- During your semester abroad, remember you need to register for the following semester’s courses. Instead of DegreeMAP, refer to your unofficial transcript through GWeb to understand the number of earned credit hours you have for the course registration process.
- Upon your return – The EXCH placeholder remains on your transcript. Credits earned abroad will only be posted once all course approvals are submitted as well as an official transcript from the international institution is received by the Office for Study Abroad.
- Questions – Any questions regarding official transcripts, course approval forms, and the credits posted to the GW transcript should be handled through the Office for Study Abroad.

Once a study abroad course is approved as a substitution for a major or minor requirement with faculty approval through the appropriate department, a petition should be entered by your faculty advisor on DegreeMAP to officially approve the substitution. **A petition cannot be entered until the study abroad credits are posted to your GW transcript.**