

Study Abroad: Pre-med

Career Services Center
Professional & Graduate School Advising:
(858) 534-4939
Located on Library Walk
<http://career.ucsd.edu/index.shtml>



So you want to be a Doctor?

Are you a pre-med student who's always wanted to study abroad? The Programs Abroad Office wants to assure you that there are programs available for pre-med students that will not only **count towards your major** but that will also **enhance your med school applications!** Culture is a predominant force in shaping behavior, values, and institutions. Every physician must understand that not only do cultural differences exist, but that they also impact health care delivery. For example, culturally competent physicians and health care providers appreciate family ties and realize that they are defined differently for each culture. Spend your time abroad acquiring an international perspective on medicine, gaining hands on experience, and challenging yourself in ways that will provide endless personal statement material! The benefits stretch beyond the classroom and can provide you with unique friendships, opportunities, cultural encounters, and career paths.

First Steps:

- Attend a First Steps Session. Sign up at: <http://pao.ucsd.edu>
- Visit with a professional and graduate school advisor in the Career Services Center
- Meet with a Programs Abroad Office Advisor
- Fill out your Academic Planning Form (APF)
- Share your APF with your department, college, and admissions advisors; get signatures
- Apply and go!

Why study abroad enhances your application to Medical School:

- Study abroad looks GREAT on applications
- Increase cultural awareness
- Improve language skills
- Gain valuable clinical experience
- Understand international medical practices
- Gain flexibility and problem solving skills

Pre-Medical Prerequisites you might take abroad:

- 1 year of English
- 1 year of general chemistry plus lab
- 1 year of calculus, some schools will require 1 statistics course
- 1 year of physics, including lab
- 1 year of organic chemistry plus lab
- 1 year of biology; many schools will insist on a biology lab

What will it cost?

Study on EAP/OAP/Global Seminars (GS) can be comparable to the cost of study at UC. In some cases, it is less. EAP and GS participants pay UC fees and continue to receive UC financial aid while abroad. Furthermore, EAP students are eligible for special grants and scholarships from UC, the host country, and other sources.

OAP students may retain all or some of their funding while abroad, including special study abroad scholarships, but because of the variety of the programs found through OAP, costs for individual programs can vary greatly.

Check here for specific information about scholarships and financial aid: <http://programsabroad.ucsd.edu/pao/funding.htm>

"I can say without question that my involvement with PRIME, more than any course I took, helped give me the level of professional understanding and maturity necessary for academic success and beyond...Furthermore, when interviewing for graduate schools, every program I visited, without exception, was impressed with the unique opportunities that PRIME offers" –John Colby, 2004 UCSD graduate, Premedical Bioengineering and Molecular Biology, now in 3rd year of UCLA Ph.D. program in Biomedical Engineering



"Having an international field experience working in health clinics and learning aspects of public health and prevention is a unique opportunity for aspiring premed students who want to get admitted in a well-recognized medical school. High-ranking medical schools nationwide give extra recognition and credit for [such] candidates...Having a worldview of health, especially among disadvantaged populations, makes better physicians who are compassionate and mature as a result of having seen first-hand the importance of health care among deprived populations."

–Professor Wael Al-Delaimy, UCSD School of Medicine

Relevant Articles on Cultural Competency in Medicine:

- <http://www.med-ed-online.org/pdf/10000001.pdf>
- <http://www.amsa.org/programs/gpit/cultural.cfm>

Possible Programs and Universities:

Global Seminar, Amman, Jordan: UCSD

(<http://programsabroad.ucsd.edu/pao/GSHome.html>)

During Summer Session I, 2010 Professor Wael Al-Dalaimy of the UCSD School of Medicine will lead a small group of students for a five week long Global Seminar to study Public Health in Refugee Populations. Students will take two UCSD courses focused on international public health. Students will volunteer in refugee clinics for first hand experience. Students will earn 8 UCSD units. (Pending CEP approval).

PRIME Program: UCSD (<http://prime.ucsd.edu/>)

The Pacific Rim Experiences for Undergraduates (PRIME) program provides undergraduates with the opportunity of doing real research while living for nine weeks in one of several Pacific Rim countries, working with mentors at both the host institution and at UC San Diego.

Students who participate in PRIME are working side-by-side with researchers of their host country. The students literally integrate into the culture of their host country on a day-to-day basis. They experience first-hand that pre-judging, impatient listening, and just tolerating (rather than embracing) somebody's difference impedes communication and the ability to work well together. Students become aware that different approaches to viewing issues or solving problems lead to different insights, which drives innovation and thinking outside the box. This lesson applies well beyond science.

Most importantly, students participating in PRIME learn humanity and appreciate the value in any cultural system, therefore developing a perspective that allows them to become compassionate and effective doctors.

University of Sussex, United Kingdom Pre-Med Program: EAP (http://www.sussex.ac.uk/Units/publications/sabroad2008/pre_med)

The yearlong Pre-Medical Program at the University of Sussex, Brighton, specializes in working with American students considering careers in the health professions. Not only would you be exposed to pre-med courses and seminars from a different perspective, you could also gain valuable work experience by volunteering in your second semester at the Royal Sussex County Hospital, a local hospice, or for the campus rescue team.

"Premedical education involves more than science and mathematics courses. Students should avail themselves of opportunities for exposure to a variety of life experiences. If they have the chance to study abroad, and learn how healthcare is delivered in different countries and cultures, it could help them become more culturally proficient physicians, with better insight into different healthcare delivery system options."

-Steve Green, M.D.

Vice-Speaker, California Academy of Family Physicians' Congress of Delegates



Students practicing phlebotomy at Amager Hospital with the DIS program in Copenhagen, Denmark.

Santiago Health Studies Summer, Chile: IES (OAP)

(https://www.iesabroad.org/IES/Programs/Chile/Santiago_Summer/santiagoSummer.html)

Study abroad on the IES Abroad Santiago Health Studies Summer Program and enhance your classroom studies through practical and direct experience in Chile's community-centered public health care system. You can gain first-hand experience through a guided Clinical Observation Internship focusing on patient care and develop Spanish skills through a course in Spanish for Medical Practitioners. This program is ideal for advanced Spanish students in pre-med studies, pharmacy, public health, and other health related professions.

Danish Institute for Study Abroad (DIS), Copenhagen, Denmark (OAP)

(<http://www.dis.dk/Academic1/mpp/index.php>)

The Medical Practice & Policy program is designed for students with a serious documented interest in medicine and the required science background. It offers you a unique clinical course for pre-med students not available in the US, valuable hands on experience such as patient cases and clinical lab exercises, as well as improved chances of getting into the medical school of your choice.

"The UCSD Career Services Center has extensive resources and services for students planning to attend medical school. In the first three years, most pre-med students are in the preparation phase, learning what the profession of medicine involves, developing their understanding of the academic, personal and professional skill sets required, being exposed to doctors, patients, and hospitals, getting experience in science and research, and dealing with the diversity of the peoples and communities which they will someday serve. They also have to take the required coursework, establish relationships with professors and excel academically. Study abroad can help students establish many of these required skills and experiences."

-Bill Wingard

Professional & Graduate School Advisor, UCSD Career Services Center

