



AMERICAN
UNIVERSITY
OF BEIRUT

Office of International Programs
(OIP)
Graduate

The Office of International Programs (OIP) promotes internationalization and diversity at AUB by initiating, developing, and administering institutional partnerships that foster both incoming and outgoing students, faculty, and staff mobility. Through its Study Abroad Program, OIP promotes exchange opportunities and advises AUB students, faculty, and staff wishing to pursue international academic experiences that are academically challenging, professionally relevant, and personally engaging. OIP supports all international students at AUB, enabling them to integrate into the community and enjoy a rich academic and cultural experience.

Contact Information

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International Student Services

The Office of International Programs provides support to all international students studying at AUB by providing the following services:

- > Pre-arrival support and visa assistance (following admission to AUB).
- > On-site orientation, mentoring, and intercultural activities as well as explanations of public government services, processes, and on-campus procedures.
- > Support in obtaining student residence permits and/or following up on transactions at immigration authorities.
- > Support in reporting theft or loss of legal identification documents at local authorities.
- > Forums—both electronic and in-person—for interaction with other AUB student populations.
- > For international degree-seeking students, advice on studying abroad as part of their AUB degree.

Visas and Residence Permits

International students joining AUB who do not hold a Lebanese passport or Lebanese identity card must have their foreign passports valid for a period of no less than 12 months from the date of joining the university. Non-Lebanese students should also check with the nearest Lebanese Embassy or consulate in their country as to whether they require an entry visa in order to legally enter Lebanon or if they are eligible to obtain an entry visa at the airport. The OIP may assist students in securing their visas to Lebanon. Students who wish to benefit from OIP visa assistance must indicate this in their confirmation letters upon acceptance. Further information is available on the OIP website.

Once registered at AUB, all students who do not hold Lebanese passports and wish to remain in Lebanon beyond the validity of their entry visas are required to obtain a residence permit before their visa expires. Students must apply for this permit within one month of arriving in Beirut—and only after registering and paying their AUB tuition fees.

The Office of International Programs (OIP), in coordination with the Office of the Registrar, assists registered non-Lebanese students in obtaining the necessary certificates required for securing residence permits from the Lebanese authorities. Information regarding the residence permit process is communicated at the beginning and throughout each academic term and is also available on the OIP website.

Study Abroad and Student Exchange

AUB graduate students may spend a year or a term abroad in an approved program of study without losing their status at AUB. They may apply to an established program at a university that has an exchange agreement with AUB or initiate their own proposal for study abroad at an accredited university of their choice. In both cases, an application (see below), approval of their faculty/school, and clearance from The Office of International Programs (OIP) are required. In cases where students will be taking courses at a host university that are prerequisite courses for future courses at AUB, departments/faculties will need to make sure that the relevant courses at the host university meet the required learning objectives of the relevant course at AUB. Study abroad and exchange programs provide students with the opportunity to travel to another country, experience a new culture, and build connections with students and faculty members at host institutions. These in-person interactions are a vital part the overall experience. As such, only in-person study abroad and exchange programs are approved at AUB.

Definitions

Exchange Students

Students on exchange programs at universities with which AUB has bilateral exchange agreements, pay the standard AUB tuition rate, based on a 9-credit course load.

Study Abroad Students

Students on study abroad programs at universities with which AUB does not have a bilateral exchange agreement are required to pay the host university fees at the receiving institution. However, they must continue to pay the AUB miscellaneous fees as applicable. Summer abroad students are exempted from the AUB miscellaneous fees.

Students wishing to go on exchange or study abroad programs must complete both the AUB Study Abroad Course Approval Petition and the host university's application. Students are responsible for the completion of both sets of application forms by the assigned deadlines.

Procedures for Study Abroad and Exchange Students

To spend a term or up to a year abroad, all students must meet the following eligibility criteria:

1. Students must have completed 6 credits at AUB to apply for a study abroad program lasting up to one academic year, unless applying for a summer abroad program.
2. Students may earn a maximum of 9 credits in an exchange or study abroad coursework and/or perform research work related to their thesis during regular terms or a summer term abroad without losing their status as AUB students.
3. Students must meet the AUB residency requirements as stipulated in the General University Academic Information section.
4. Students may not go on exchange or study abroad during their final term at AUB.
5. To be considered for exchange and study abroad programs, students should have a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.3.

Students will receive credit for all course work completed abroad provided that the following conditions are met:

- a. The relevant academic departments at AUB have pre-approved the courses through the Study Abroad Online Petition System.
- b. Students achieve a minimum passing grade equivalent to the required AUB grade in each of the courses as accepted by the students' faculty/school. Credits received on study abroad and exchange programs are considered to be transfer credits and will appear as pass/fail on the AUB transcript.
- c. The host university provides an official transcript of record directly to the Office of International Programs. An official transcript from the host institution must be received by AUB in order for credits to be successfully transferred.
- d. None of the courses taken is online but up to 25 percent of them may be hybrid.
- e. Certificate of Physical Attendance is required.

Note: Students who decide to change one or more of their pre-approved courses once they are at the host university must contact their department chair by email and submit the Study Abroad Petition for approval of the replacement or added course(s) within one month of the beginning of the AUB term. Failure to do so may result in denial of course transfer upon return to AUB.

Registration Process at AUB for Students Approved to go on Study Abroad or Exchange Programs

To maintain their status as active students at AUB while abroad, students are required to:

- > Submit the completed AUB Study Abroad Course Approval Petition by the assigned deadline;
- > Attend a mandatory OIP pre-departure meeting;
- > Complete the Final Confirmation and Clearance Form and submit it to OIP by the assigned deadline;
- > Pay all fees due to AUB by the assigned deadline;
- > Not register for classes at AUB or at any other institution of higher learning, either in-person or online, where there is an overlap in time.

Residency Requirements

- > Master's degree students must register and be in residence as graduate students for at least two years, that is four regular terms or three regular terms and one summer. All requirements for the master's degree must be completed within eight regular terms for full-time students and 10 regular terms for part-time students, starting from admission to graduate study.
- > PhD students must register for at least six terms beyond the completion of the master's degree. All requirements for the degree of doctor of philosophy must be completed within ten regular terms of starting graduate work beyond the master's degree.

Thesis Registration

- > **Master's degree students:** Thesis credits can only be registered after the proposal has been accepted and must be registered at AUB (the first thesis registration that carries credit must be registered at AUB). The subsequent zero-credit master's thesis registration may be permitted, upon approval of appropriate faculty/school committees, while studying abroad. The thesis defense must take place at AUB according to the requirements stipulated in the General University Academic Information section.
- > **PhD students:** PhD thesis credit registration can only be done once the proposal has been accepted, must be continuous and sequential, and must be approved by the department concerned.

Once students complete all of the steps above, their registration status will appear as either EXPR (Study Abroad) or EXCH (Exchange), depending on the type of program they wish to be enrolled in. Students will then be able to maintain access to AUBsis and online library resources. Students will also be eligible for early advising and early online registration for the term following their study abroad program. Study abroad and exchange students will enjoy the same privileges as continuing students on campus.

Credit Transfer for Students Upon Return from Their Term or Year Abroad

To ensure successful credit transfer upon returning to AUB, students must:

- > Obtain an official transcript from the host university and request that it be sent directly to the Office of International Programs (OIP):
 - Hardcopy official transcripts should be mailed to the following address:
AUB / Office of International Programs
West Hall, 3rd Floor, Room 313
1107 2020, Beirut, Lebanon
 - Electronic official transcripts: If the host university issues only electronic transcripts, they must be:
 - Certified by a university official with a certificate provided by a recognized security vendor, or
 - Encrypted and accessible only to the recipient. These should be emailed to:
aubabroad@aub.edu.lb
- > Submit an Exchange or Study Abroad Testimonial Survey.

For a complete list of exchange and study abroad opportunities at AUB, or to review the study abroad guidelines, please visit www.aub.edu.lb/oip or go to Room 313, West Hall.

Study Away – AUB and AUB Mediterraneo

Eligible AUB and AUB Mediterraneo graduate students must complete at least 2/3 of the program at the home campus (i.e., a maximum of 3 courses out of 10 can be taken at AUB). The following condition must be met to establish eligibility:

- > Graduate students must have completed six (6) credits or eighteen (18) ECTS at their home campus.

For AUB students, this mobility program offers the opportunity for taking part in graduate programs at AUB Mediterraneo that can enhance their academic, personal, and professional development.

Credit Transfer

AUB and AUB – Mediterraneo students participating in this mobility program will receive the credits and grades associated with the course work completed at the host campus provided that the relevant academic departments/programs at the home campus have pre-approved the courses. All academic rules and regulations will apply at the “home campus” once the students return from the Study Away program, as per the study guide for AUB Mediterraneo students and the University Catalogue for AUB students.

OIP facilitates several study abroad and exchange programs including Erasmus+ for graduate students. AUB’s growing number of international partner institutions are listed on the following website: <https://www.aub.edu.lb/oip/pages/search.aspx>.

OIP Resources for Faculty

The Office of International Programs (OIP) serves as a central resource for faculty engaged in international education, mobility, and global collaboration. OIP supports faculty by providing guidance on international standards and best practices related to credit and grade transfer, when applicable. OIP maintains an up-to-date list of institutions, consortia, and universities with which AUB has formal agreements for student, staff, and faculty mobility. OIP also advises faculty on the development of new student exchange agreements and institutional partnerships. All exchange agreements require provost approval prior to implementation. Faculty interested in exploring new international collaborations are encouraged to consult with the director of OIP at an early stage of the process.



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