Study Abroad Liaison Resource Handbook
Office of Study Abroad
Brandeis University

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This handbook is meant to be a helpful tool for Study Abroad Liaisons. It includes some information on your role, timelines, resources, and ways to connect with the Office of Study Abroad. This is not meant to hold all the answers to everyday advising questions but can help you as you enter this role. For more complicated issues or questions you can always feel free to reach out to a member of the Office of Study Abroad staff.

1. Overview of Liaison Responsibilities
   • Serve as an academic advising resource to students, other faculty, and study abroad staff within given department or program.
   • Advise students and review their Academic Proposal of Study or Petition for Study Abroad Summer School Transfer Credit, and sign this form if courses are appropriate.
   • Be aware of study abroad application deadlines, programs, and resources.
   • Provide feedback to the Office of Study Abroad about process, study abroad programs, and courses taken abroad.

2. Mission and Philosophy
   **Our Mission**
   The mission of the Office of Study Abroad at Brandeis University is to help all students take advantage of the opportunity to live and learn in a new and different cultural context. The staff of the Office of Study Abroad work to ensure that students have access to educational experiences that foster their development as global citizens. We strive to provide students with opportunities to develop the skills required to address the challenges of our increasingly interconnected world.

   **What We Do**
   The Office of Study Abroad, in collaboration with Global Brandeis, works to ensure that study abroad is a fully integrated aspect of students’ academic careers at Brandeis University. Our office advises undergraduate students who are seeking academic credit for Brandeis-Led and exchange programs as well for all other study abroad and domestic off-campus programs. We also work with Midyear students seeking to study abroad before beginning their Brandeis career. Our advising, programming, and scholarship support help students make study abroad an integral part of their Brandeis education.

   **Our Philosophy**
   As asserted in the university mission statement “... Brandeis affirms the importance of a broad and critical education in enriching the lives of students and preparing them for full participation in a changing society, capable of promoting their own welfare, yet remaining deeply concerned about the welfare of others.” The following principles which guide the Brandeis Study Abroad advising process and policies are closely aligned with the spirit of this mission:
   • An education experience abroad is intended to enhance a student’s overall educational endeavors at Brandeis and provide opportunities for intellectual, professional, and personal growth.
   • Students are encouraged to explore experiences abroad that will expose them to cultures and languages that are different from their own.
   • Experiences abroad should provide maximum opportunities for students to integrate and immerse themselves in the educational, cultural and linguistic context of the host location.
   • To promote cultural integration, students are encouraged to undertake the maximum period of study abroad available to them.
   • All students who meet the minimum requirements should have access to study abroad regardless of financial need or other personal circumstances.
   • All phases of an experience abroad (including application, time abroad and re-entry) provide students with unique opportunities to become increasingly self-sufficient and reflective. Students are encouraged to embrace these opportunities.
   • Regardless of background or identity, students are encouraged to make studying abroad and intercultural learning an integral aspect of their personal growth, academic career, and professional development.
3. Timeline and Deadlines

Each department and program manages their processes slightly differently as fitting with culture, staffing, and focus. The following timeline is meant to be helpful and general so that you can prepare and plan for your year.

September:
- September 15, 2016 – **Go Away! Study Abroad Fair** – all liaisons are invited and welcome to attend
- Many events to promote programs and studying abroad. These may include classroom visits or collaborative programing with departments and programs.
- Returning academic year, spring, and summer students will be submitting course equivalencies and contacting you about major / minor requirements. Study abroad will plan re-entry programming for returning students.

October:
- October 26, 2016 - **Advising Night** – an open house type event where students can come to drop-ins with advisors, Study Abroad Ambassadors, and, if available, faculty members.

November:
- November 12-19, 2016 - **“I Am Global Week”** – a week planned by Global Brandeis and the Office of the Provost that highlights the international nature of campus through academic and cultural programs and events.

December:
- This is the start of increased advising for liaisons. During this period students will ask to meet with you to discuss and sign the “Academic Proposal of Study” (see appendix #1).
- New Program Approval Deadline – the deadline for new programs to be approved by the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee is in December.
- Students are encouraged to open their study abroad application before winter break.
- December 8, 2017 - **Applications and Apple Cider** event – an afternoon during which students can come in and have their applications opened and seek advice from staff, students, and available faculty.
- Study abroad will plan a pre-departure program for departing students.

January:
- Continue advising and signing the “Academic Proposal of Study” form.
- Returning fall students will be submitting course equivalencies and contacting you about major / minor requirements. Study abroad plans a re-entry program for these students.
- January 25, 2017 - **Study Abroad Extravaganza!** event – an evening open house event where students can work on the pieces of their application and seek advising from staff, faculty, and student leaders. Representatives from our top 15 programs will be present on campus. This event usually attracts many students and faculty have found it useful for meeting with many students in one session.

February:
- A good amount of advising for many departments and programs until deadline.
- **February 16, 2017 at Midnight - Fall, Spring, and Academic Year Application Deadline**

March:
- **March 2, 2017 at Midnight – Sachar Study Abroad Scholarship Application Deadline**
- Advising and pre-approval of summer abroad courses continues.
- **March 16, 2017 at Midnight – Summer Study Abroad Application Deadline**
April/May:
- Study abroad will plan a pre-departure program for departing students.

4. Study Abroad Staff
You can contact our office by calling 781-736-3483 with any questions. Our graduate assistants will be able to direct your call to the appropriate or available staff member. Below is a quick and generalized breakdown of some reasons you might contact an individual staff member.

Mr. **J. Scott Van Der Meid**  
Associate Dean and Director of Study Abroad  
svanderm@brandeis.edu  
Contact Scott for:
- Overall collaboration and understanding of the connection of study abroad with your department/program.
- Concerns about a student abroad or planning to study abroad.

Ms. **Alisha Cardwell**  
Study Abroad Advisor  
acardwel@brandeis.edu  
Contact Alisha for:
- Advising questions, especially for summer study abroad, scholarships, and diversity-related topics.
- Programming for your department/program related to study abroad.
- Information about incoming exchange students.
- Collaborating with Study Abroad Ambassadors

Mr. **Andrew McGeoch**  
Senior Department Coordinator  
amcgeoch@brandeis.edu  
Contact Andrew for:
- Lists of students and statistical information of study abroad students.
- For any questions of which you’re unsure of who to contact.

Mr. **Darren R. Gallant ’08**  
Assistant Director of Study Abroad  
gallantd@brandeis.edu  
Contact Darren for:
- Advising questions, especially for the academic year, fall, and spring.
- Transfer of credit from abroad questions.
- Concerns about a student abroad or planning to study abroad.
- Designated as a Deputy Title IX Coordinator for study abroad students.
- Programming for your department/program related to study abroad.
- Questions related to the fall Midyear programs.
- Information on the Brandeis student journal: *Wander: Brandeis Abroad*.

Ms. **Wanda Weinberger**  
Assistant Director, Brandeis-Led Study Programs  
wweinberger@brandeis.edu  
Contact Wanda for:
- Discussing existing Brandeis-Led Programs and the process of proposing a Brandeis-Led Program.
- Concerns about a student abroad or planning to study abroad on a Brandeis-Led Program
- Programming for your department/program related to Brandeis-Led Programs
Study Abroad Ambassadors

Each year the Office of Study Abroad trains about 10 returned students to help advise, market, and program around study abroad on-campus. You can learn more about these students and their experience’s here: [http://www.brandeis.edu/abroad/about/saambassadors.html](http://www.brandeis.edu/abroad/about/saambassadors.html). Alisha Cardwell is the best contact for working with these students.

5. Helpful Resources

- Office of Study Abroad website – [www.brandeis.edu/abroad](http://www.brandeis.edu/abroad)
- Faculty Portal on our website - [http://www.brandeis.edu/abroad/faculty/index.html](http://www.brandeis.edu/abroad/faculty/index.html)
- Major / Minor Pages - [http://www.brandeis.edu/abroad/depts/index.html](http://www.brandeis.edu/abroad/depts/index.html)
- Study Abroad Calendar of Events - [http://www.brandeis.edu/abroad/about/calendar.html](http://www.brandeis.edu/abroad/about/calendar.html)
- Global Brandeis - [http://www.brandeis.edu/globalbrandeis/index.html](http://www.brandeis.edu/globalbrandeis/index.html)
- Online Study Abroad Information Session, a 25 minute video required for students to watch – [https://youtu.be/-qCJHREglxM](https://youtu.be/-qCJHREglxM)

6. Collaborating with the Office of Study Abroad

- **Events, Programs, Classroom Visits**
  - Examples:
    - Romance Languages Meet the Majors events
    - Business Major Required Study Abroad Meeting
    - faculty advising at some of our evening programs
    - visits from staff or student leaders to talk about the impact of study abroad on students’ academics during the beginning of class

- **New Program Review**
  - If you or one of your students has found a program not currently on our approved list. Please connect with our office to explore this program.

- **Program Development**
  - To learn more about proposing or developing programs for Brandeis students, please review this website (http://www.brandeis.edu/abroad/faculty/progdevel.html) and contact Wanda Weinberger (wweinberger@brandeis.edu).

- **Major/Minor Webpages**
  - [http://www.brandeis.edu/abroad/depts/index.html](http://www.brandeis.edu/abroad/depts/index.html)
  - A work in progress that exists as a collaboration between your departments/programs and our office. Pages can be updated or created by contacting Darren Gallant (gallantd@brandeis.edu)

- **Providing Student Data**
  - Please contact Andrew McGeoch ([amcgeoch@brandeis.edu](mailto:amcgeoch@brandeis.edu)) for a list of students who have been abroad or are going abroad. We provide these automatically at the beginning of each semester.

- **Serving on a Study Abroad Committee:**
Undergraduate Committee for Study and Research Abroad – help select and administer the Sachar Study Abroad Scholarship Awards. Contact Alisha Cardwell (acardwel@brandeis.edu) for more information.

7. Policies to Be Aware of:
Below are some common policies that students often have questions about. This is not an encompassing list but more of a FAQ. You can find more information about eligibility and application requirements on our website (http://www.brandeis.edu/abroad).

Approved List of Programs: The Office of Study Abroad manages the UCC approved list of study abroad programs. If a student is interested in a program not on this list, they need to propose the program to the Office of Study Abroad who will vet the program and, if appropriate, submit a petition to the UCC on their behalf. The deadline to approve a new program is in December for academic year programs (including fall and spring semesters) and in January for the summer term. The approved list is available here (https://brandeis.studioabroad.com/index.cfm?FuseAction=Programs.AdvancedSearch).

Language Requirements: While many programs vary in their requirements for language preparation, Brandeis does have a minimum language requirement for five languages. For French, German, Hebrew, Italian, and Spanish, Brandeis students are required to have taken the equivalent of the first two semesters of the language before studying in a country that speaks that language as a majority language. This requirement only applies to the fall, spring, and academic year and does not apply to languages other than those listed.

GPA Requirements: Fall, spring, and academic year students are required to have a cumulative GPA of a 3.0. This is meant to ensure that students will be able to succeed academically in a new environment. The 3.0 requirement is a Brandeis requirement, although some programs have higher GPA requirements or individual major/department GPA requirements. There is no GPA requirement for summer study abroad but many programs have a minimum GPA.

Residency Requirements: To be eligible for a semester or academic year of study abroad, students must be a member of the junior class or a first-semester senior and must return to Brandeis for at least one semester at an eligible rate of work in order to receive credit. This means that most students apply to study abroad during the February of their sophomore year. There are no residency requirements for summer study abroad but there is a maximum amount of credit a student can transfer to the university, from all external sources, and that is 16 transfer credits.