

Faculty Credit Guide



Pre-Estimation

"Pre-estimation" is a preliminary evaluation of a student's intended study abroad courses by Swarthmore departments/programs. This guide describes step-by-step instructions for faculty "credit evaluators" to pre-estimate courses and solutions to common issues.

1) Review Notification Email

Abroad Credit Evaluation - Pre-Estimation of Credit - Students Ready for Review Inbox x



geo@swarthmore.edu <geo@swarthmore.edu>

to [REDACTED]

Dear Credit Evaluator,

Greetings from the Global Engagement Office (GEO). The following student(s) have requested credit from your department/program for course(s) offered by their study abroad program(s).

[REDACTED]

To review the request(s), please click the "Abroad Credit Evaluation System (ACES)" link in [AppGarden](#). In the "Pre-Estimation of Credit" tab of ACES, click on each student's name under "Study Abroad" and the "Pre-Estimation" table will appear. The table contains each pending course that the student has submitted to your department/program. The "Credit Evaluation Documents" below the table include a PDF of the student's study abroad program information for each course.

Please review the course information then submit your department/program's pre-estimation decision(s) via ACES. Scroll right over each row in the Pre-Estimation table to complete the required "Add/Review Comments" to share further information about a decision (comments are visible to both the student and GEO).

Evaluators receive automated emails from GEO, which list students who have submitted credit pre-estimation requests to their department/program. Notifications are sent on a weekly basis (on Mondays) until an evaluator in the department has submitted decisions for all pending courses.

Common Issues with Notification Emails

Were you not notified of a new ACES request?

Evaluators do not receive notification emails immediately after students submit new requests. GEO reviews each request before routing it to the selected department/program (which may take several days). Once GEO has routed a request, evaluators can view the student's course information in ACES, but they will not receive an email until the next weekly notification period.

Do the recipients of these emails need to be corrected?

If you or a colleague needs to be added or removed from credit evaluation emails, please contact GEO (geo@swarthmore.edu) so that we can update our records. Note: When looking at a notification, each evaluator will only see their own email address listed, even when other evaluators in their department have received the same email.

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2) Access ACES



Using the Abroad Credit Evaluation System (ACES), evaluators can view information about course credit requests and submit approval decisions. To access ACES, log into [AppGarden](#) and click “Abroad Credit Evaluation (ACES).”

3) Click Student Name

Abroad Credit Evaluation System (ACES)

Correct tab → **Pre-Estimation of Credit** Final Credit Evaluation

Students Waiting for Review All pending requests listed in this section

Please click on the student's name to review their course(s).

Term ↑	Student	Major	Minor 1	Minor 2
Fall 2025	Umi K [REDACTED]	Psychology, Art	-	-

1 - 1

Click here

Pre-Estimation of Credit Complete No action required for courses in this section

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Make sure the “Pre-Estimation” tab of ACES opens. In the top section, “Students Waiting for Review,” all students are listed whose courses are pending review by your department/program. Click the name of a student to view the course(s) they have submitted for pre-estimation.

Note: Courses listed under the “Pre-Estimation of Credit of Complete” section have already been reviewed by your department/program, and no further action is required.

Common Issues with Access to ACES Students

If a student was listed in a notification email from GEO but does not appear in the “Students Waiting for Review” section, one of the following issues may have occurred.

- **Incorrect system?**

Semester abroad courses must be submitted to the Abroad Credit Evaluation System (ACES), NOT the Transfer Credit Evaluation System.

- **Incorrect tab?**

Pre-estimation requests show up in the "Pre-estimation of Credit" tab (which opens by default), while final approval requests show up in the "Final Credit Evaluation Tab" (to the right of the "Pre-estimation" tab).

- **Has the course already been reviewed?**

A different evaluator in your department/program may have already pre-estimated the course. In this case, the course should show up in the "Pre-estimation of Credit Complete" section (at the bottom of the “Pre-Estimation” tab).

- **Are you designated as the evaluator?**

ACES submissions are not accessible to all members of a department/program, only to the designated course evaluator(s) that GEO has on file. If a different faculty member needs to review a specific course, they can ask their AA/AC or another designated evaluator to download course information for them to review and input decisions on their behalf. If the list of designated evaluators needs to be updated, please contact GEO (geo@swarthmore.edu).

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4) Review Info in Pre-Estimation Table

Pre-Estimation for Umi K							
Scroll down to "Pre-Estimation" table							
Search: All Text Columns Go Actions Edit Save Reset							
Term	Study Abroad Program	Full Course Load at Program	Program Credit Units	# of Course Credits in Program's Units	Course Title	Type of Credit	# of Equivalent SWAT Credits Recommended by QSO
Fall 2025	CIEE Arts and Sciences Program in Seoul, Korea	15	Credit Hours	3	1001 Example Course 1	OCST	0.8

Scroll right over table to view more cells →

Once you click a student's name, a new page will load, which includes information about their course(s) pending pre-estimation. Scroll down to the table titled "Pre-Estimation for [Name]."

Check the following details entered in the table for each course (you may need to scroll right over the table to view all information).

- **Term:** The student's planned semester abroad. Note: Students are advised to submit requests during the semester before their term abroad, and as far in advance of their program's registration period as possible. However, programs do not always provide an updated course list or syllabi/descriptions before the term abroad has started. Therefore, students may submit pre-estimation requests after their term abroad has started.
- **Study Abroad Program:** The program to which the student has been accepted and has committed. Note: Students must commit to a program before submitting ACES requests.
- **Full Course Load and Credit Units for Program:** Programs use different credit units (e.g., U.S. semester credit hours, ECTS). The table includes information about which units the program uses and how many credits in those units constitute a full course load.
- **# of Course Credits in Program's Units:** Number of credits for the individual course.
- **Course Title** (and number if provided)
- **Type of Credit:** It is the student who chooses whether to request "Major," "Minor," or "Departmental" credit from your department/program. However, you can decide whether or not to approve the selected type of credit, based on the student's academic profile and departmental credit policies.

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5) Review Student Records (if Necessary)

Evaluators check whether ACES requests comply with their [department/program's credit policies](#).

- If your department/program requires students to have taken certain Swarthmore course(s) to be eligible for study abroad credit, you can review the student's records in Faculty Services.
- If your department/program has a maximum number of study abroad credits they can grant, which student's requested number of credits exceeds, you can contact the student to check how many of the submitted courses they plan to take. If the student has not finalized course selections, we encourage you to pre-approve any eligible courses so that they can base their registrations on which courses receive departmental pre-approval.

6) Review Pre-Estimation Documents

Credit Evaluation Documents for Umi K					
Term ↑↓	Study Abroad Program	Department/Program	Course	Document	Date Uploaded
Fall 2025	CIEE Arts and Sciences Program in Seoul, Korea	Off Campus Study	1001 EXAMPLE COURSE 1	OCS PRE ESTIMATION DOCUMENTS	02/05/2025

Click to view syllabus or course description 1 - 2

Scroll down to the “Credit Evaluation Documents” section (below the “Pre-Estimation” table). Click the “PRE ESTIMATION DOCUMENTS” for the course to view the syllabus or description uploaded by the student. The document will load in a pop-up window.

Common Issues with Access to ACES Documents

- **Are you connected to VPN?**

Evaluators who are working off-campus need to be [connected to VPN](#) to open documents.

- **Is your Chrome browser glitching?**

The "Access Denied: You do not have permission to view this page" error message often appears when evaluators click on document titles in Chrome. If this issue occurs, close the window and try again—the document should appear on the second attempt.

- **Do you use a pop-up blocker?**

You may need to disable it.

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Review the uploaded syllabus or description to check whether the course meets your department or program's requirements for credit.

Common Issues with Syllabi/Descriptions

What if a document does not contain sufficient detail?

Students are advised to upload a full syllabus when available. However, some programs do not provide syllabi until courses are well underway (or ever). If a syllabus is not available, students need to upload a course description. If documents do not contain enough information for you to pre-estimate a course, you can select "Waiting for Material" as the decision (see Step 7).

What if a document is in another language?

If you do not read the language, you can select "Waiting for Material" as the pre-estimation decision (see Step 7) and leave a comment in ACES to request a translation of the document (see Step 9). GEO will work with the student to obtain a translated version.

What if a document lists the wrong term?

Students must upload pre-estimation documents before their semester abroad, but some programs do not release syllabi or course descriptions until classes begin. In such cases, students may need to upload documents that list an earlier semester (which will often remain the same in the student's term semester). If you would prefer to review a course after information for the correct semester is available, you can select "Waiting for Material" as the pre-estimation decision (see Step 7) and leave a comment in ACES to request a document for the following semester (see Step 9).

7) Select Pre-Estimation Decision

*Is Extra Work/Credit Added Available?	*Can Coursework be Submitted via ACES?	*Pre-Estimation Decision
-	-	<div>✓ - Select - Yes Approved Waiting for Material Not Approved</div>

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Scroll to the far right of the “Pre-Estimation” table and click “Edit” to select an approval decision.

Definitions and steps related to each decision are below.

- **Yes Approved:** Credit from your department/program is approved if the student passes this course (with a grade of C or higher) and submits sufficient coursework for final review after their return from abroad (if required by your department/program). If you select this decision, complete the other fields in the table before saving changes (see Step 8).
- **Waiting for Material:** Additional course information or student input is needed before you can reach a decision. If you select this decision, add a comment to ACES (see Step 9) or email the student to specify what materials or input they should provide. Then, click the blue “Save” button above the table to record this decision (you do not need to complete other fields in the table). Later, once notified that the student has provided the needed information, you will need to access their “Pre-Estimation” table again and select a different decision.
 - Note: The student will need to email you when they upload additional requested materials to ACES (you will not be notified automatically). You can then click the student’s name, review the course again, and select a different decision.
 - Note: The student will continue to appear as pending in the ACES Pre-Estimation tab until the decision has been changed to “Yes Approved” or “Not Approved.”
- **Not Approved:** Either your department/program cannot approve the course OR changes need to be made to course details (e.g., credit type). If you select this decision, click the blue “Save” button above the table to record your changes (you do not need to complete other fields in the table).
 - If the course cannot be approved, GEO will generally route it to a different department/program or evaluate it for study abroad elective credit (OCST). If you have concerns about the course receiving another type of credit, please email GEO.
 - If course information needs to be edited, leave a comment in ACES about the needed changes (see Step 9). GEO will update the course information and send the course back to your department/program.

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8) Enter Further Details and Save Decisions

Edit Save

Complete all fields marked with asterisk (*)

Equivalent SWAT Course (optional)	# of Equivalent SWAT Credits Recommended by GEO	*Accept # of SWAT Credits Recommended by GEO	*# of Pre-estimated SWAT Credits	*Does Course Quality for Auto Credit?	*Is Extra Work/Credit Added Available?	*Can Coursework be Submitted via ACES?	*Pre-Estimation Decision
-	0.8		0.8	-	-	-	- Select -

Save changes

If you selected “Yes Approved” for the course, please enter further details and save your changes for the decision to be recorded. Please click the “Edit” button above the “Pre-Estimation” table.

Scroll right over the table to complete needed fields (required columns are marked with an asterisk):

- **Equivalent SWAT Course (optional):** If the course is equivalent to a specific Swarthmore course, you can indicate Swarthmore’s course number (e.g., DEPT 101). The abroad course could then fulfill the same degree requirements as the Swarthmore course. If this column is left blank, the course would receive elective credit from your department/program.
- **Accept # of SWAT Credits Recommended by GEO (required):** The “number of equivalent Swarthmore credits recommended by GEO” is based on a standard conversion between the program’s credit units and Swarthmore’s, wherein a full course load as defined by the program is equivalent to 4 Swarthmore credits. Note: Many programs require students to take more or fewer than four courses, in which the recommended number of credits is less or greater than 1.

You may choose whether or not to accept the recommended number of credits, based on your review of course content. If the course has been recommended for partial credit (e.g., 0.8 credits), but you believe it is eligible for a full credit toward a major, minor, or divisional requirement, you can override GEO’s recommendation and pre-estimate 1 credit. If you pre-estimate less credit than the default conversion, GEO may grant supplemental study abroad elective credit (OCST) to the student so they can reach 4 credits for the semester.

- **# of Pre-Estimated SWAT Credits (required):** If you accept the number of credits recommended by GEO, this field will be populated automatically. If you decide to override this default number, please enter the amount of credit you would like to pre-estimate.

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- **Does Course Qualify for Auto Credit? (required):** If you approve “Auto Credit,” the student will be guaranteed the pre-estimated number of credits from your department/program provided they pass the course with a C or higher. Auto Credit eliminates the departmental “Final Credit Evaluation” stage of the credit review process. Departments/programs may choose to always approve Auto Credit or may use specific criteria to determine whether a course qualifies for Auto Credit (e.g., whether the course has been approved in the past, level of detail included in the syllabus).

If you select “No” in this column and the student takes this course, your department/program will be asked to evaluate the student’s completed coursework after their return from abroad. Follow steps in our [Faculty Guide to Final Credit Evaluation](#).

- **Is Extra Work/Credit Added Available? (required):** “Extra Work/Credit Added” is an option for students to receive more credit for a course than the evaluator’s default estimate. For example, evaluators could agree to approve supplemental credit if a student completes an extra paper or project during or after their term abroad. Students who pursue this option should consult the department/program about what kinds of extra work can be considered. Note: This option can only be enabled for non-Auto Credit courses.

Some departments/programs allow “Extra Work/Credit Added” if a study abroad course is pre-estimated for less than one credit. This option can enable a student to reach one full credit and fulfill a major, minor, or divisional requirement. However, we understand that not all departments/programs can supervise extra work. Another option for students to meet major and minor requirements is to take multiple partial-credit courses.

- **Can Coursework be Submitted via ACES?:** Usually evaluators allow coursework to be submitted to ACES for the Final Credit Evaluation process. However, you may decide that coursework should be reviewed outside ACES. For example, certain artwork, audio files, coding, or other work might be difficult or impossible to upload as a PDF. When electronic submissions are not allowed, students should communicate with evaluators about the preferred format, then share their work outside ACES.

Click the blue “Save” button above the table to record your decisions.

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9) Enter Comment (if Necessary)

Abroad Credit Evaluation System (ACES) - Student Comments

Select Student Add/Update

Comments for [Student Name]

Course: 1001 Example Course 1

Please Enter Comments: Enter comment here

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Click to submit

Save Comments Return to Student

Click to add comment

Add/Review Comments

If you need to leave a comment related to the course (e.g., details about required additional materials), please click the blue “Add/Review Comments” button above the student’s “Pre-Estimation” table. Select the appropriate course from the dropdown and enter the comment (which will be visible to both the student and GEO). Click “Save Comments” to submit it.

Please note that students are not notified of decisions and comments recorded in ACES. GEO instructs students to check ACES for updates until their courses have been reviewed, but they do not always do so regularly. If you need to share a time-sensitive message, we recommend that you email the student.

10) Review Submitted Decisions (Optional)

If you need to check pre-estimation decisions you have already submitted, you can return to the “Pre-Estimation” tab of ACES and check the “Pre-Estimation of Credit Complete” section at the bottom of the page (which includes decisions for all courses for which you are listed as an evaluator). You can click column headers to sort the data and find a course. If any decisions you have submitted need to be edited, please email GEO (geo@swarthmore.edu).

Abroad Credit Evaluation System (ACES)

Pre-Estimation of Credit Final Credit Evaluation

Students Waiting for Review

Please click on the student's name to review their course(s).

Review completed pre-estimations

Pre-Estimation of Credit Complete

*** All columns on this report are sortable. Double click on the column header to sort. This report can be downloaded to a spreadsheet. Scroll to the bottom and click on Download. To view all of the documents that a student has uploaded, click on their name.

Term	Student	Study Abroad Program	Full Course Load in Program's Units	Course Title	Equivalent SWAT Course (Optional)	# of Course Credits in Program's Units	Type of Credit
Fall 2025	[Student Name]	CIEE Arts and Sciences Program in Seoul, Korea	15	1001 Example Course 1	-	3	OCS
Spring 2026	[Student Name]	Junior Year in [Country]	15	1001 Example Course 1	-	3	OCS

Questions? Contact geo@swarthmore.edu