

Policies and Procedures for Students in the Swarthmore Off-Campus Study Program

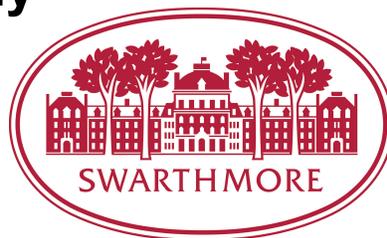
Spring 2023 Participants



Photo credit: Liz Gallagher '23 (South Africa, IES, fall 2022)

Off-Campus Study

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INTRODUCTION

This handbook serves as a reference for students to use before traveling and while living abroad. It is important that you read this document carefully. It contains information that you will need to complete your preparations and succeed with your abroad experience.

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I. Permission to Participate in Off-Campus Study

Students can study abroad in the second semester of sophomore year, throughout junior year, or in the first semester of senior year (with permission from their major(s) department, for a total of no more than two semesters). Note that permission to participate in the Swarthmore Off-Campus Study Program requires that you maintain good academic and conduct standing at the College and that your account does not have any outstanding charges. Eligible students must have completed on average four credits per semester. Students will jeopardize their ability to participate in study abroad as part of the Off-Campus Study Program with incompletes as part of their academic record. The deadline for the completion of incompletes will reflect the need to meet deadlines relating to acceptance to abroad programs and /or to the submission of acceptance forms, deposits, the purchase of airfares, applying for visas, etc. Normally students will have been accepted into a major, or in the case of sophomores, have a plan for applying for a major.

The Off-Campus Study office (OCS) and the Dean's office meet to review student standing and to determine eligibility. Students must also meet the eligibility requirements of the programs to which they apply.

Note: Permission to participate in Off-Campus Study can be revoked at any time if the student no longer meets the stated eligibility requirements of Swarthmore College and/or the Off-Campus Study program.

You must withdraw from any programs you do not plan on attending, both in the OCS online system and directly with the programs to which you applied.

II. Your Off-Campus Study Portal and Acceptance Procedures

1. Once you have been admitted to a study abroad program, notify OCS and let us know if you accept the offer.
2. Also notify your study abroad program or university that you accept their offer and follow their admission instructions. Follow instructions from the program to apply for housing and to attend the orientation program (if that is a separate process).
3. Once we are notified that you are accepting the offer of admission to your program or university, OCS will change your status in our application system from pending to accepted. You should then log in and change your status to committed. You will then have a check-list of items to complete.

The following items in the OCS application system will be checked off by OCS once permission is granted by the appropriate offices:

- Bursar Office Clearance
- Dean's Office Permission to Participate

The following must be completed in order for OCS to pay deposits (**OCS only pays for non-refundable deposits**) or book travel. **You should complete the following within one week of accepting your offer:**

1. Contact the Worth Health Center to schedule a travel health consultation. **To do this you must complete the travel health consultation request in the health center portal.**
2. Complete the items on your OCS portal.

In addition to all of the above, normally students must complete the following requirements in order to book travel.

1. Pre-estimation of Credit Submission (unless given an extension by OCS).
2. Completion of outstanding items from the OCS application and post-admission checklists.
3. Attend a large group orientation session.
4. Attend a program-specific Post-Admission Planning Session with an OCS Staff Member. The following information will be covered in this session along with other important preparation matters: Financial planning/budgets; paying deposits and invoices for tuition, room and board (be sure to forward all requests for payment to OCS); the payment plan and withdrawal/refund policy; housing applications; credit approval questions; applying for a student visa (if required); travel questions (make sure you understand your arrival and departure dates)
5. Attend at least one Intercultural Orientation Session

In order for tuition invoices to be paid, students must have completed their travel health consultations and completed their student health records in the OCS system.

III. Student Visa

Research whether you are required to apply for a student visa. If yes, research the process carefully, collect necessary documents, and apply unless otherwise instructed by your program or OCS. OCS will produce a letter that indicates that we will pay for your tuition, room, and board, and that can be used as part of your financial documentation when applying for a visa.

IV. Travel Arrangements

1. Once you have completed your post-admission documents and the arrival and departure dates for your program have been confirmed, OCS will notify Key Travel that you are eligible to book your travel. Note that you must participate in the abroad orientation program and stay until all examinations and any other program requirements are completed. Otherwise, you can plan to arrive earlier or leave later if that is permitted by your program and by your visa requirements (check this carefully – you usually cannot enter the host country before the official start date on your visa). You can book your flight from any location to your abroad site; it does not have to be from Philadelphia but OCS cannot pay more than the roundtrip cost from Philly to the host site. Note that we do not pay for travel other than to and from the study abroad site, and so students have to be prepared to pay for additional costs. We will not pay for flights during vacation periods. **Keep in mind any additional living costs (room and food costs) outside of those dates may not be covered by the College and you must make sure you have appropriate**

travel and health insurance for those additional dates as well.

Carefully check the travel and arrival instructions that you have been given by your program or university. We will give Key Travel your latest day of arrival. Your program may allow you to arrive a few days earlier than that, so look carefully when making your decision about day of travel. Each program may have detailed travel, arrival, meet up, pick up, or other details about the day of arrival. Please read these very carefully. They may be in acceptance letters, in handbooks, emails, or on program websites.

Note: You will be given a deadline by which you need to request travel. If you book your travel after that time, you will be responsible for any increase in air fares after that date.

2. OCS can pay for your round-trip airfare up to the cost of a round-trip from Philadelphia, taking into account a reasonable itinerary. If your proposed travel costs more than a round-trip flight from Philadelphia, you will be responsible to pay the additional cost.
3. If your flight does not include an allotment for checked bags, OCS will pay for up to two checked bags. OCS can reimburse you if receipts are provided in the designated timeframe.
4. If applying for a student visa, make sure you do not book a ticket that will have you arrive before the start date on your visa. Be aware of the end date of the visa as well, and how long you will be allowed to remain in the host country.
5. Research if you need to apply for a transit visa if you have a layover in a different country.
6. Be aware that many flights may leave one day and arrive the next, or you might cross the international date line. Therefore, you should check your ARRIVAL DATE carefully!
7. Students are expected to purchase round-trip tickets for a flight to and departure from the host country. Swarthmore will not cover the additional cost of one-way tickets.
8. For students who are abroad for one semester, the travel allowance provides for one round trip. Students who are abroad for two semesters can be reimbursed for a second round-trip, according to Swarthmore College guidelines, to visit their home once during the year over the winter break. The budgeted amount cannot exceed the cost of a round-trip fare with Philadelphia as the gateway city. Students who receive a round-trip airfare to return home will not receive a stipend to live abroad during that winter break period.
9. If you withdraw from the program after the ticket is issued, you will owe the cost of the unrecoverable ticket costs to Swarthmore College.
10. If you make changes to your ticket after it is issued (unless required and approved by OCS), you will be responsible for any costs incurred.

Note: More detailed information about travel available in the Practical Matters handbook.

V. Post-Admission Planning Sessions

Following the OCS deadline for submission of applications, you will be contacted to schedule a meeting with an OCS staff member. If you have not been admitted at that point in time it is still important to meet. OCS will work closely with you on billing, travel allowance, insurance questions, your board and/or room arrangements while abroad (as necessary), preparing for pre-estimation of credit, student visa questions (if required), and any other preparation matters. Please make sure that you get this important work under way early.

Prior to this meeting be sure to read about policies and procedures on the Off-Campus Study website and in the Off-Campus Study handbooks. Carefully read all documents when you log in to your study abroad portal.

You are required to attend one of several post-admission group sessions which will be facilitated by an OCS staff member. The group sessions will explain the online OCS credit system, Key Travel, and other important policies that pertain to all study abroad participants.

Preparing to study abroad involves much more than just logistical issues. To help you prepare for the cultural aspects (culture shock, identity politics abroad, intercultural communication, etc.) OCS offers several intercultural orientation sessions. Some sessions are facilitated by students, others by OCS staff members, and still others are lectures offered by the college. You are encouraged to attend several but only required to attend one.

VI. Finances

A. Financial Aid Policy and Off-Campus Study

Financial aid consideration is possible only during a normal eight-semester Swarthmore program of study and only if the student earns at least four credits each semester. Students must return to Swarthmore on schedule for the eight-semester graduation timetable. If this condition as well as those stated above is not met, continuation of financial aid will be in jeopardy.

Your eligibility for Swarthmore financial aid during study abroad will be based on Swarthmore's actual charges and allowances for personal expenses as if you were living on campus. In practice, this policy allows for a more generous budget for your study abroad, since you will not pay the student activity fee.

Note: Most study-abroad programs do not offer campus work opportunities, so you may wish to borrow additional funds to fill that gap. If that is the case, you should discuss this option with the Financial Aid office.

B. Payment Plan

Students who study abroad and wish to receive credit for it toward the Swarthmore degree will pay to Swarthmore, for the semester or year abroad, the full cost of Swarthmore tuition, room, and board. Swarthmore will pay program tuition, room, and board on the student's behalf. The student activity fee is not charged. If room and/or board are not fully provided by the program,

an appropriate amount will be provided to the student to meet this expense. Swarthmore will pay for any portion of round-trip travel not covered by the program according to established practice for determining the appropriate travel budget (based on the cost of a round-trip from Philadelphia).

The payment schedule for study abroad is the same as the College payment schedule for semesters in residence. Please call the Office of Student Accounts (610-328-8394) for more information.

Note: Students are responsible for paying any refundable program deposits. If this represents a hardship, please discuss with your study abroad advisor.

C. Withdrawal/Refund Policy

1. Withdrawal before the Study Abroad Program Begins: As soon as Swarthmore makes a non-refundable payment on the student's behalf to a study abroad program (e.g., application fee, deposit, part or full payment for tuition and/or room and/or board and/or any other program costs), and/or as soon as Swarthmore has paid for round-trip travel in association with study abroad, the student is obligated either to pay the College full Swarthmore tuition, room, and board for the semester or year abroad (less whatever may be covered by financial aid), or to pay to Swarthmore the unrecoverable portion of the paid out or obligated amount. Failure to meet this condition will comprise an unfulfilled financial obligation on the student's part to the College. So long as the obligation remains unfulfilled, the student may be denied re-enrollment by the College; the student's College transcript may not leave the Registrar's Office; and the student will not be permitted to receive a degree from Swarthmore College. Financial aid will not be available for this purpose.

2. Withdrawal after the Study Abroad Program Begins: If the student withdraws after the program is underway, any adjustment of billed tuition, room, and board, due to involuntary or voluntary withdrawal can only be made after all financial obligations due the abroad program have been satisfied, as verified by Off-Campus Study. Once the unrecoverable portion of the paid out and/or obligated amounts have been met by the student (these include but are not limited to the payment of tuition, room and board and round-trip travel), the College charges will be reduced in a manner consistent with the charge reduction/withdrawal policy for tuition, room, and board set forth in the Swarthmore College Bulletin. In addition, if the student has received a cash advance for meals and/or lodgings and/or round-trip travel expenses, the unused part must be returned to the college before the student will be permitted to re-enroll at the college, receive an official transcript, or be graduated from the College.

3. Required withdrawal: If the student is required by the College for any reason to withdraw from the Off-Campus Study Program and/or to withdraw from Swarthmore College before or after being accepted by a study abroad program, the student will be ineligible to participate in the Off-Campus Study Program until and unless readmitted to Swarthmore. In this event, the student will be obliged to pay to Swarthmore the unrecoverable portion of any amount paid or obligated on their behalf by Swarthmore to a study abroad program along with funds released to the student and the cost of a purchased airfare. Failure to do so will comprise an unfulfilled financial

obligation on the student's part to the College. So long as the obligation remains unfulfilled, the student will be denied re-enrollment and will not be allowed to graduate from the College, and the Registrar's Office will not release the student's transcript.

D. Costs and Budgeting

1. Obligatory Expenses

Some programs provide you with lodging and all of your regular meals. If you attend one of these programs, you will not have to do any budgeting for room and board. Other programs will require you to make some or all of the payments for food or lodging, or both. In all such cases, an amount of money adequate for these payments will be provided for you in advance, either by the program or by Swarthmore College, or both.

If money for room and/or board expenses is advanced to you, it is imperative that you understand clearly in advance what your obligatory expenses will be, how much money you have to meet them, and how long this money has to last. For example, you may attend a program that provides breakfast and dinner, and, gives you a cash allowance to buy your own lunch. You have to work out the relationship between the size of the allowance and the number of lunches over the time period involved. Or, lodgings are provided for you, but you are required to buy (and/or cook) all of your meals for yourself out of a cash allowance. Or, you are expected both to rent lodgings and pay for your meals out of a cash allowance. In all such cases, it will be your responsibility to work out the budget for the time period involved.

On-campus students have an annual budget for the purchase of books through the Swarthmore BookStore. The remainder of that annual budget from the fall, is available to Spring OCS participants for the purchase of **required** books for your classes. Fall OCS participants will have the remainder of their book stipend available for use at the Swarthmore Book Store during the following Spring semester. Students must upload a copy of their syllabus, which shows the required books, and a copy of the receipt of purchase, to their OCS application portal for reimbursement by OCS.

If you have to take public transportation to and from classes, please contact the Off-Campus Study Office to determine if you are eligible for a local travel allowance.

2. Refundable Deposits

Some programs may require of you a refundable room/security deposit. Such deposits are not covered under the Off-Campus Study Program; you must pay for this yourself. Check with your program regarding the amount of the deposit, conditions for full refund when the program is completed, and how the deposit is to be refunded to you upon completion of the program. If paying the refundable deposit represents a financial hardship, please contact your OCS advisor.

3. Application Fee

OCS can reimburse you for one application fee, for the program that you attend.

4. Discretionary Expenses

These expenses include toiletries and other personal items, gifts, recreation and entertainment,

shopping, and vacation travel. A few important points here: First, it's important to know at the beginning of your stay abroad how much you can spend, total, on discretionary expenses. Second, for 'musts' (e.g., toiletries), make it a point to learn where local people shop for these items, and do your shopping there. Be willing to purchase local products that are comparable to those you use at home. If you are someplace where the cost of living is significantly higher than here, pick and choose your activities carefully, in line with your budget. Rules of thumb: if you are attending a university, the recreational practices of university students from the host country will usually be affordable to you. This should also be the case if you are staying with a host family or if you participate in program-recommended activities. If you go to those places in your city or locale where lots of Americans hang out, you may expect to spend a lot more.

5. Additional Expenses

Some of the items that you will need to budget for that are not paid for by Swarthmore College are printing costs, gym memberships, memberships in student organizations, bedding (in some cases these are provided), and travel immunizations and medications. Please note that for those students who receive financial aid from Swarthmore College, the allowances that have been allocated for personal expenses at Swarthmore still apply. The Dean's Office has an emergency fund that may apply in some cases to some of these expenses for students with a demonstrated financial need.

6. How Much Money Will You Need?

If you are going to have obligatory expenses, as described above, it should be clear to you before you go what they will be and how you will be provided with the funds to meet them. For discretionary expenses, normally your program can advise you very specifically about this. This advice will be informed by the standard of living that the program deems suitable for its participants.

7. Budgeting

A budgeting worksheet is provided in the Off-Campus Study Moodle site. This will help guide you as you plan your finances for the semester or year abroad.

VII. Academic Matters

A. Swarthmore Course Registration and Credit Policy

1. While abroad, you will be registered by the Registrar's Office for 4 credits of Off-Campus Study (OCST) credit registrations. You are required to take the equivalent of 4 Swarthmore credits on your OCS program.
2. Following admission by programs, students must take all courses abroad for a grade. Students are not permitted to take courses pass/fail.
3. For any abroad course to be eligible for evaluation for Swarthmore credit, it must receive the equivalent to a grade of straight C or better. All completed study abroad work receiving the equivalent grade of straight C or better must be evaluated for credit at Swarthmore. Study abroad work with equivalent grades lower than C is not eligible for transfer of credit to Swarthmore.

4. Courses that were not approved for auto-credit by a department/program during pre-estimation need to be submitted through the Off-Campus Study Credit Evaluation System for final approval. Students should keep all their work and submit it to the department/program. Courses that were approved for auto-credit do not need to go through the separate final approval process. Once all credits have been approved for final credit, the Registrar will enter the courses and credits on the Swarthmore transcript.

5. Off-Campus Study courses on the Swarthmore transcript will show department/program or OCST, course title, and corresponding U.S. letter grade. The grades will not count in the Swarthmore grade point average.

6. For students who were pre-estimated for four credits at Swarthmore, and who successfully completed their courses with an equivalent grade of a straight “C” or better, OCST credit will be used to round up the credit to four credits in cases in which students did not receive all of the credit that was pre-estimated during the final approval process. Note that OCST credit cannot be used for business/finance classes.

7. Upon return, you are required to complete the program evaluation, and to have a debriefing session with an OCS faculty or staff member. Failure to do either will result in a hold on your account, preventing you from registering for classes the following semester.

8. Note: If you fail to complete the credit review process within the established deadline, your case will be referred to the Dean’s Office and will be subject to policies and procedures that pertain to the incompleteness of academic course requirements. Any courses that were supposed to be reviewed by academic departments will remain listed as OCST courses with grades of Incomplete.

B. Your Off-Campus Study Course Load

At Swarthmore, the semester course credit is the unit of credit. One semester course credit is normally equivalent to 4 semester hours elsewhere. Four or five units of credit comprise a normal full semester. You are required to take a course load that corresponds to what will transfer back to Swarthmore as at least four credits per semester or eight credits per year. In some cases when participating in a trimester program, it may be possible to earn up to a maximum of six credits per semester, or up to a maximum of ten credits per year. Normally, receiving more than five credits per semester or ten credits per year is not permitted.

Swarthmore requires that you, while abroad, take a full academic load by the standards of the program or university you are attending and what will transfer to Swarthmore as at least four course credits per semester. Sometimes this is a set number of courses or credits, e.g., at many universities four equally weighted courses comprise a full semester, or 15 units of credit comprise a full semester. For other programs or universities, 'full academic load' is defined by positing a range, e.g., four or five courses, 16 to 20 credits. For such situations, Swarthmore students are required to be at the upper end of the range, e.g., five courses or 19 or 20 credits. Swarthmore permits you to take more than a full load. If you wish to do so, and if the program requires approval of the home institution, this office will be glad to provide you with a

supporting letter. If you have any uncertainty as to what 'full academic load' means for your program or university, please be in touch with OCS.

Please note this regulation is in force irrespective of how much Swarthmore credit you have in hand when you depart, and/or what you believe your credit needs to be for your semester or year abroad. No exceptions.

C. Pre-estimation of Credit

Students will be instructed on how to use the online OCS Credit Evaluation System which is accessible through mySwarthmore. The group post-admission session covers the online system in detail.

You will need to obtain course descriptions and, whenever possible, syllabi of proposed courses for the pre-estimation of credit process, which you will upload to the system.

Courses can be approved for credit in the following two ways:

1. Courses proposed for OCST credit will be reviewed by the Off-Campus Study Faculty Advisor. A course approved for OCST credit can be re-submitted for major/minor/departmental credit, as long as the course has not yet been processed by the Registrar. The course will go through the standard pre-estimation process and will be reviewed by the program/department, and pre-estimation of credit is not guaranteed. The extra credit option is not available for courses pre-estimated for OCST credit. Students cannot request OCST credit for coursework in their major/minor, unless the department gives the student written permission. OCST credit cannot be used for business/finance courses.
2. Courses proposed for credit by academic departments or programs for major, minor, or distributional credit must be approved for evaluation for credit by chairs (or other credit evaluator in the department) of appropriate departments/programs. The departments/programs will determine whether the student will receive auto-credit or not. If the course is approved for auto-credit, the credit will be processed as long as the student receives the equivalent of a C or better. If the course is not approved for auto-credit, the student is required to submit their coursework for final approval. The student should communicate with the department/program to understand what type of final work the department/program would like to review (e.g. essays, lab reports, etc).

The chairs/credit evaluators will also pre-estimate the amount of credit you will receive for successful completion of the courses and will indicate whether or not their departments extend the extra work/credit added option. This option, which is available at the discretion of departments, allows you to do extra work set by the department to increase the amount of credit received for a study abroad course. The extra-work for credit option can only be used in situations in which a student needs it to obtain the expected four credits for a semester, or eight credits for a year abroad, or when extra-work for credit is specifically necessary to complete a major requirement or minor requirement, and then only with the approval of the appropriate department or program. This will be the case only as long as the semester and yearly maximums are not exceeded.

Keep in mind that it is your responsibility to ask about prerequisites that some departments/programs might have in order to get credit for courses taken abroad. You also must be aware of the limit of how many courses can be taken abroad in each subject area and counted in the major, minor, or toward graduation at Swarthmore College. Keep in mind that you cannot take the same subject matter in a course abroad that you have already taken at Swarthmore. This would result in not receiving full credit for the course at Swarthmore.

Please remember that some departments will not evaluate a course done elsewhere for Swarthmore credit unless the student has completed a course in the department, or program, here at Swarthmore prior to study abroad (e.g. English and art history). Other departments may require you to take a course on campus after the OCS semester as a condition for credit transfer (e.g., history). Additionally, if you would like to take two history courses abroad for credit, you must take two history courses at Swarthmore (This may be true for other departments as well). Some departments require that you have taken specific introductory courses before taking other courses in that discipline (e.g., economics, education, psychology).

Some departments, even if you have completed work in that subject at Swarthmore, will not evaluate a course done elsewhere unless the department has pre-estimated it. If, for example, your major department has required you to complete a specific course while you are abroad, and you are thinking of replacing this course with another, be sure to be in touch about this with the chair of your major department. Note that some departments also require that their own form be completed and submitted to them in order to request credit approval (e.g., psychology).

If in order to graduate on time you must take a specific course while abroad, it is important to get a confirmation from the study abroad program or university that the course will be available to you at your study abroad destination. This is not always possible, particularly for direct enrollment and exchange programs. If we are getting the uncertainty message, it is your responsibility to decide whether or not to chance it.

Following the meeting with OCS, you will upload courses, along with the course descriptions and syllabi, in the OCS Credit Evaluation System. When seeking major or minor credit, you are expected to meet with the appropriate department credit reviewer to discuss your academic plans. This credit review normally takes place during the pre-enrollment advising period each semester. Please note that some departments will require you to translate a syllabus into English.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Students are only allowed to transfer a total of two business or finance credits to Swarthmore. Consequently, students are limited to only taking business or finance courses that will transfer as up to two business credits. Business credits are approved by the economics department and will be listed on your transcript as BUSI.

D. Changing your course schedule after the start of your program

You may want or need to change your course schedule after you have reached your off-campus study program. You will simply add the course that has not yet been pre-estimated to the online OCS Credit Evaluation system (including the corresponding syllabus). It is important to complete this process before your program's add/drop period, because if this new course is not

approved for credit, you will need to make another change. You do not need to worry about deleting courses that have already been pre-estimated from the OCS Credit Evaluation System.

You must upload the syllabus for any course you add to the system. Important: You must select “OCS pre-estimation documents” as the document type for any course you are submitting for pre-estimation.

Ultimately all of the courses that you take abroad must be pre-estimated for credit. Remember that you are not guaranteed credit for any courses for which you do not seek pre-estimation of credit.

E. Procedures for Final Credit Approval Upon Program Completion

Courses that were approved for auto-credit do not need to go through the separate final approval process. Provided the student successfully completes the course with the equivalent of a C or better, the course will be processed by the Registrar’s Office.

Courses that were not approved for auto-credit need to go through the final credit approval process. In this case, credits that were pre-estimated are not a guarantee of final credit. However, as long as you pre-estimated those four Swarthmore credits before your departure and you took those courses, you are guaranteed to receive four credits at Swarthmore. Any deficit of credit awarded in the final approval process by academic departments/programs will be awarded OCST credit. This supplemental OCST credit will not receive a letter grade but will be recorded as CR/NCR.

Students need to start the final approval process upon their return, prior to or immediately following the meeting with the OCS staff member/OCS Faculty Advisor. In most cases, materials can be submitted electronically in the OCS Credit Evaluation System, but in some cases materials need to be submitted directly to the department/program. It is the student’s responsibility to inquire what materials the department/program would like to see in the final approval phase.

IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO DOCUMENT FULLY THE ACADEMIC WORK THAT YOU DO ABROAD FOR THIS PROCEDURE.

Ideally for each course this will involve your submission of a syllabus and copies of all of your assigned written work (you do NOT need graded copies, any copies will do). If the syllabus does not contain an organized and complete overview of the course - e.g., assigned readings, schedule of classes and topics treated, instructional format, written assignments - then, from your knowledge of the course, you can write out an accompaniment to the syllabus which contains all of this information. Written work includes papers or essays, exams, reports (including lab reports), language class exercises. It is a good idea to hang onto class and reading notes. If you are required to do oral reports for one or more courses, provide a brief summary of what the report consisted of and what you read in preparation for it. Whenever possible, make an extra copy of required written work before submitting it, and hang on to it, in the event that your submitted copy is not returned to you.

Note: whenever possible, compile all your final materials into one pdf document (the SOAN department requires this.) Do NOT upload password-protected documents, and do not upload zipfiles. Some documents will not review work that is not in English. Check with the departments *before* you leave for your off-campus study program what their requirements are for post-admission documents.

Frequently Asked Questions:

a) What if the final exam is not returned? An example: Final exams (which often are the larger part of the course grade) are normally hand written under proctored conditions, only one copy of the exam exists, and it is never returned to the student. You can't change this. What you can do, if you face this examination situation, is return to your room as soon as the exam is over and, from memory, write out the questions and a brief summary of how you answered them (e.g., what readings you referred to, brief outline of your essays). This should take 30-45 minutes, two or three pages of writing. When possible, in advance, check with the department/program that will award credit for this course, to see if this is part of their expectation for the documentation of work completed for the course.

b) How do I provide information on fieldwork? On fieldwork programs, often the required field reports or papers don't begin to express what the work actually consisted of. But you can present your field notes, and a brief written summary of the organization of your field work, topical or descriptive foci, time allocated to this and that, methods (e.g., interview, observation, participation) employed, consultations with program staff re your ongoing work, etc.

c) Should I document class “extras”? Often, there are out of class ‘extras’, which enhance the educational value of the course, e.g., field trips, museum visits, lectures, films, and concerts. Be prepared to present a record of these kinds of activities whether assigned or not, which for you was part of the educational experience.

These are guidelines, not an instruction manual. YOU will know in full detail what you did for each course you complete while abroad. It is your responsibility to devise ways to fully represent what you did for the Swarthmore faculty members who will be evaluating your courses for Swarthmore credit. Please remember: it is the prerogative of the credit awarding departments/programs to give you less than full credit, right down to no credit at all, for courses that they judge to be insufficiently documented. If while you are abroad you have questions, for any of your courses, about what sufficient documentation of work comprises, please be in touch either with Off-Campus Study or the credit evaluator of the department/program that will evaluate the course, or both.

Through the OCS Credit Evaluation System, departments/programs will grant credit for the academic work done abroad. Once all of the department/program and OCST credits have been awarded, the Registrar’s Office will remove the temporary OCST course registrations from your transcript, and the courses taken abroad will be listed on your transcript along with US letter grades. The grades are not included in a Swarthmore grade point average, except in cases in which departments/programs award actual Swarthmore credit for their courses (e.g., for certain courses in the Swarthmore/Pomona/Macalester Cape Town program).

Departments/programs have until the end of the semester in which you returned to Swarthmore to complete their review of the work that you did abroad and to award final credit. You will be able to observe this process through the OCS Credit Evaluation system.

Note: If you fail to complete the credit review process within the established deadline upon your return, your case will be referred to the Dean's Office and will be subject to policies and procedures that pertain to the incompleteness of academic course requirements. This is likely to result in a hold on your transcript and a hold on your registration for the following semester. Any courses that were supposed to be reviewed by academic departments will remain listed as OCST courses with grades of Incomplete.

F. Pre-registration while Away

(see Office of the Registrar website)

*** Make note of the dates for pre-enrollment for the semester you plan to return to campus.**

1. Confer with your academic advisor(s): The ideal is to communicate with your academic adviser(s) and/or the chair(s) of your actual or prospective major department(s) before pre-registration to make sure that whatever credits you may be earning while away as well as your future registration plans are compatible with completion of the major(s) and all other requirements for the degree on schedule with your planned graduation date. If you can't confer with your adviser before pre-registration, try to pre-register anyway, and confer with your adviser after. This should include examining in detail how, in your remaining semesters (including the ones away), all of your requirements will be met and, especially, how you will complete your major and your honors program, if you are hoping or planning to do honors.

2. Pre-register for your return semester:

a) Use mySwarthmore if you can just as if you were on campus (try this on the first day of pre-registration)

b) If somehow you cannot use mySwarthmore: Tell the instructor(s) your wish to be in their course(s) or seminar(s), and then request in writing (email) to have your name entered on the list for the course(s) and/or seminar(s) offered at that future time. If you cannot tell who the instructor is, contact the Department Chair.

c) Also send a copy of these communications to the Off-Campus Study Office. Please note: This procedure does not guarantee you membership in the course(s) and/or seminar(s) at issue. Normally, however, it will make the probability of membership the same as it would be if you were here next semester to participate in the pre-registration.

3. If you miss Pre-registration, use Drop/Add:

If you were not able to pre-register, you can register afterwards by completing the online Add "e-form" available on mySwarthmore "Registration". The on-line form is routed to the faculty, who may need time to approve it, especially over a break.

G. Official Transcript from your Program or University

You are required to provide the Registrar's Office with an official transcript certifying the work you have completed. In some cases, you must personally request the transcript directly from the host university or program.