

A Conversation about Study Abroad at WashU

Webinar Transcript

Reggie Gacad: Hello everybody. My name is Reggie Gacad and I want to welcome you to the 12th webinar of the year and the 3rd webinar of the 2020 Spring Family webinar series. I am the Assistant Director in the First Year Center and tonight I'm joined by my colleagues from each of the undergraduate academic divisions, we will introduce them shortly. However, before we begin, we want to acknowledge that some of you may have students who are currently abroad and have questions or concerns about the rest of the semester, given the unknowns of COVID-19. As that situation is changing daily, and each circumstance is unique based on the study abroad program and location, we will not be answering those questions this evening. Instead, our conversation will focus on the overall study abroad experience, including how to research and select the correct program with your student, how your student can apply, what resources are available, and how you can support your student contemplating studying abroad. If you have any questions, please visit emergency.wustl.edu. For those of you who have attended our webinars in the past, you may have also noticed that we are using a different venue for tonight's webinar. Due to spring break being held this week, we've decided to move forward with tonight's webinar into a different space on campus. What this means for you is that the PowerPoint slides for this evening are now housed in an online folder with the link in which we're posting the chat box now. Please feel free to pull up the PowerPoint slides and to follow along as we move through tonight's conversation.

We are excited that you've chosen to join us for tonight's conversation. Some additional information before we get started. First, you will notice that you've been given the ability to submit messages to us during the webinar using the chat function. Please use this feature to ask us questions. These questions will only be seen by our staff in the First Year Center and our panelists. Two of our professional staff within the First Year Center are helping to field these questions. We will answer those we find applicable to the audience as a whole on the webinar and will respond to more nuanced or personal questions via email next week. Let's go ahead and make sure you know how to use the chat function. Send us a chat with the location you're watching from, and we'll name a few of these on air. While you're doing that, the webinar is being recorded live. Next week, we will upload this webinar to families.wustl.edu website. Lastly, in a moment, we will hear from our panelists about study abroad opportunities here at Wash U. If something our panelists say sparks a question, don't forget to chat us. After hearing from our panelists, we will move into the Q&A portion of the evening. If you have questions for a specific panelist, please either list their name on the academic division, or their academic division rather, when submitting a question. We will answer questions after all panelists have had the opportunity to talk about their programs within their specific academic division. Before passing things along to panelists, I want to share with the places that people are joining us from. We have families tuning in from Cleveland, Ohio, St. Louis, Missouri, and New York City. Now, since I know that you all want to hear more about studying abroad, I will turn it over to our first panelist, Amy Suelzer, Director of Overseas Programs in the College of Arts and Sciences.

Amy Suelzer: Hi everybody, and thank you so much for tuning in. Talking about study abroad is one of the things I'm most enjoy. So I'm happy to have this opportunity and hopefully an audience who's already invested in this opportunity for their students. As Reggie mentioned, I am the director of overseas programs for the College of Arts & Sciences. So we work with students with majors, second majors, minors in Arts & Sciences who are interested in studying abroad specifically through that discipline. In Arts & Sciences, we have over 100 approved programs in over 50 countries. This list is

revisited regularly, programs are added, programs may be subtracted, but we always have a very robust set of offerings for our students in Arts & Sciences. These include pretty much all academic terms fall, spring, academic year, summer, and roughly, 40% of the students in Arts & Sciences study abroad each year. So we feel that study abroad is really an integral part of a lot of our students academic experience and we want to make study abroad, a good fit for our students. We want students to study abroad through an academic area of concentration, whether that's a major, minor, or what we call an area of significant concentration, like advanced foreign language study or pre-health. And programs are individually approved by academic departments because of the unique suitability of the curriculum that's being taught abroad for their subject area. A lot of our programs are going to allow students opportunities that go beyond just the academics. Some of our programs incorporate internships, community-based volunteer experiences, research, as well as opportunities beyond those areas. So what we'd like to make possible for students who are looking for an academic experience with something else, is the ability to identify a study abroad program that will provide both. We also feel that study abroad can be a really important means for our students to build personal skills, interpersonal, intercultural, as well as professional skills, whether that is leadership, intercultural communication, and perhaps more than anything else, adaptability. It is remarkable what the opportunity to be abroad, to navigate a new language, a new culture, can do to help a student recognize some internal skills that they have already been building through their lives, but then really have an opportunity to apply while they're abroad. More than anything else, study abroad provides the opportunity to do something new. The experience abroad is inherently going to be different than their experience on campus, and so an opportunity to explore new things for themselves.

When we start thinking about the requirements for study abroad, we're looking at a couple of different things. We're certainly looking for academic suitability. We really want to make sure our students can be successful abroad. And in order to help make sure that that is possible, we make sure that they're successful on campus. So usually we're looking for a 3.0 GPA, we're looking for students who are in good standing within the Wash U community. We are looking for students who have a major or minor or area of significant concentration relevant to the program that they've identified and that they'd like to apply for. Our students can study abroad at pretty much any moment in their academic career at Wash U. It can be as soon as the summer after their first year, it can be as late, in some cases, as fall semester of their senior year. It just depends on what works best for your students and when the program seems to fit best.

Finally, some programs are going to have additional requirements whether those are GPA requirements, prerequisite requirements. Those are things that we always try and make sure our students are aware of as they're making their program choices and as they're applying to their study abroad program. If a student is interested in study abroad, we want to make sure that they're getting a lot of good input from people who can help them with that decision. That is going to include the professional staff in my office. There are six of us who do advising for study abroad programs, and these are our study abroad professionals. These are people who know their programs well, who know study abroad within the university context well, and provide some really good information for our students. Additionally, we have two peer advisors in our office who can provide a student-to-student perspective and again, help provide some of that basic guidance to help move a student in the right direction. Because all study abroad programs are approved for specific majors and minors, we also have experts within each individual academic department in Arts & Sciences. That is the student point person for student academic questions. Can this course count for my major? What do I need to be thinking about in terms of the total number of credits I could do for my Arts & Sciences major? And things of that nature. And then finally we have a group of students who have returned from their study abroad excited about their experience who

are really interested in talking to prospective students. These are our study abroad ambassadors. Where possible we try and refer prospective students to students that have been on their program or have been on a program similar to it. We also often will encourage students to talk to other students who share their major about the experience of studying abroad through that major.

Reggie Gacad: Thank you for sharing that insightful information, Amy. As a reminder for families, we will answer questions after all panelists have had the opportunity to talk about programs within their specific academic division. Now, we're going to hear from Maureen Wysocki in the Olin School of Business.

Maureen Wysocki: Thank you all for joining us. My name is Maureen Wysocki. I'm a global and academic adviser in the Olin undergraduate office. So I'm going to speaking more to our specific BSBA portfolio of programs. So this first slide you'll see, why study abroad? A lot of these reasons are the same for business students and all the Wash U students. But some things that we highlight for why this is important, specifically for our BSBA students, is it adds value to the BSBA degree, provides students with talking points for behavioral interviews. When students come back from their abroad experience, we are constantly hearing how their experience abroad allowed them to really elaborate and talk about specific things during their interview. And some stories and obstacles they overcame-- it really helped them stand out and shine during their interview that they wouldn't have had if they hadn't studied abroad. It also enhances our student's skills. By the nature of living abroad, they learn to face ambiguity, they become more independent, adaptable, and flexible.

Of course, another thing I always like to remind students is exploring the world and having fun, and meeting new people is a goal of studying abroad beyond academics. We want to encourage our students to get out of the classroom and see the world, meet new people, and enjoy their semester abroad. And another aspect to study abroad that we really take into account are, what are employers saying when people are hiring our BSBA students? 73% of employers cite study abroad as important when evaluating resumes of junior-level positions, and that these are some top traits that students gain while they're abroad that they really place value on and are excited about when they see our students. Managerial ability, strategic international understanding, [inaudible] knowledge, and cross-cultural [inaudible]. And as you'll see that US participation in the study abroad has more than tripled over the past two decades. One in ten students has gone abroad. However, on the BSBA side, about 62% of our students study abroad. So it's more of an expectation. We want to encourage students to be more than that one in ten, so they can really stand out when they go out into the world and apply for a job. We hear a lot from students when they're considering studying abroad. Some myths and perceived to be barriers that we want to address and highlight now for why a student should consider studying abroad in potentially a location that they never considered before. So, it's too expensive. Financial aid and scholarships are available. Students who go abroad for a semester pay their Wash U tuition and receive their financial aid and scholarships towards that semester. It will delay graduation. As Amy mentioned, all of our offices have advisors to help students plan their study abroad career and their semester abroad or summer abroad to help meet their academic and degree requirements so that it doesn't delay their graduation. Not speaking a foreign language. In our BSBA portfolio, there are only a small handful of programs that require Foreign Language Proficiency. The rest of our programs, even in non-English-speaking countries, are open to students without a background in that language. And then, having a summer internship, this is incredibly important for our juniors who go abroad on their spring semester. They generally need to be back by June 1st to start their summer internship. And we offer programs that allow students to return to the US to begin their internship in time without any delay. So that's something that we prioritize and really help advise students to choose programs that fit those needs. And then, here you'll see a list of our global experiences, our study abroad programs. These are the locations. A more traditional study abroad

program where you go abroad for a semester. You take a class a semester between 12 and 15 credits. And then, the short-term programs are between one week and six weeks to a variety of location. Israel probably is one of our most popular summer program, the Israel Summer Business Academy. That takes place in Tel Aviv every summer. And then, our internship programs are very uniquely Olin. If students go abroad for the entire semester, for half of the semester, they take courses, and the other half of the semester, they do an internship. This is something we really encourage our students to consider if they want the international work experience that they wouldn't get on a traditional study abroad program but still gives them that international experience. And then, for the class of 2025, not yet this class, but an incoming class, Olin has passed the global mindset requirement for students either meet a list of requirements or have a study abroad experience. And so that's something we're really excited about to encourage all of our students to go abroad.

Reggie Gacad: Great, thank you, Maureen. Up next we have Dean Melanie Osborn with the McKelvey School of Engineering.

Melanie Osborn: Hi, everyone. My name is Melanie Osborn, and I work in the School of Engineering. I'm a senior Assistant Dean. My primary job is academic advising, but I'm also in charge of study abroad for engineering students. The great thing about going third was that my colleagues, Amy and Maureen, covered all the great ideas, points, and benefits of studying abroad. So for engineering students, it's the same thing. We want students to get out, see the world, find out what academics are like in other places, what it's like to live in another place, and all those benefits of tenacity and dealing with ambiguity and self-reliance are very important for engineering students as well. The first slide under engineering-- let you know that engineering students can study abroad. A lot of people come to our admission sessions and say, "Well, my student's engineering, so now they can't study abroad." That is definitely not true. Our students do study abroad. It is a small amount of students. It's probably 10%. But it has grown substantially. Right now, there are 48 engineering students who are abroad. And our locations do vary by what level the student is, what kind of program they want to attend. And they can also pick summer to do their General Ed or Humanities and Social Science credits, or they can go for their major requirements during the semester. I just want to put in a plug for the lovely girl that's sitting in this picture. She's looking out over Cape Town, South Africa. She and her now-husband both went to Cape Town. They were chemical engineering students. They met. And on Valentine's Day this year, they went back together to celebrate their favorite place on Valentine's Day. I can't guarantee your student will find a significant other [laughter], but they will surely have a great time wherever they go [laughter]. This is a list. The next set of slides are a list of the locations. And the slide is pretty long. It's several slides. You'll see that there are a number of locations mostly where the language of instruction is in English. And where the locations do not have English as the first language of the country, there is instruction in English. So that's very important. What you'll also see is that there are many places that say CSE after the location name. That's computer science or computer science and engineering. Engineering students in every major can study abroad. But the locations are more limited for some students by major. Computer science is everywhere. As the associate chair of computer science and engineering says, where there is oxygen, there is computer science. So the locations that say CSE, those locations are only for computer science. A student can only go there for computer science. However, the other locations, almost all of them, a computer science student can also go to those locations. And then the student does need to talk to me about the other locations and if that works for their major.

Like the other schools, engineering has some basic requirements. We all, at Washington University, follow the 3.0 GPA. Some locations will have slightly higher GPA requirements. And as Amy said, we are looking for students that are in good standing with our community. So when a student studies abroad, we do checks. So if the student has had problems, we have conversations with those students and

decisions are made about their study abroad. Engineering coursework is approved ahead of time. I will meet with the students, work with the departments. We have a running list of places, locations, and courses that are approved that's a database that everyone can access. And then a student needs to talk with me if they want to go to a location that we have not yet approved or if they want course work that hasn't been approved. Let's see. We also say you can fulfill major requirements. Everyone else has kind of covered that. And we do the same. And we have the same deadlines for most of the other programs. If the students looking to go in the summer or fall, they need to apply by February 1st. And for spring, it is May 1st. And that is it for engineering.

Reggie Gacad: Thank you, Dean Osborn. Our last panelist for the evening is Courtney Cushard representing the Sam Fox School of Design and Visual Arts.

Courtney Cushard: Hi, everyone. I'm Courtney. Thanks again for joining us [laughter]. Thanks for coming. So I'll talk about the Sam Fox School study-abroad programs. That is my main responsibility as coordinator for special programs in the school. We're the smallest school on campus with our art and architecture programs. And thus, we have a very specific and sort of contained program in Florence, Italy. We found that over our years of experience in trying various different programs and locations at Florence, our partners there have provided an exceptional place for our students in art and architecture to get that international experience but also one that is super-relevant to both the history and the contemporary needs of their degree and their education. So Florence is a beautiful city. It's a wonderful place. I love that our students get to go there. The fact that it's this amazing contemporary city that's set of course the great nature of the architecture and infrastructure is just a real benefit and a real difference in the way students [inaudible]. And so it's very unique to us. I mentioned that we have a partner there that we've been working with for over three years to provide academic and student services support with our students. So it's really great because those staff and faculty have come to know our program and our students very well. They meet the same high expectations of students who are here on campus related to their degree work.

So we have both semester and summer programs. Depending on which major track a student is following in the Sam Fox School depends on which semester they go abroad. So we make sure to align our program academically with the best semester for them. So for example, if you are an architecture major getting a bachelor of science in architecture, we found that the fall of senior year is really the best semester for those students to have that international experience. It's a really nice transition point into their cap stone, and then also into sort of launching them into a more global environment, consider what might happen post-graduation, whether that's graduate school or internship or often, living and working abroad for a while to decide what comes next for them. If a student is majoring in studio art or fashion design on the art side of things, we found that within the curriculum, that works best in the fall of junior year. So that's when those students go abroad with the architecture students. That all happens in fall. It's really nice because a lot of cross-collaboration happens there, which mean the architecture, fashion, and art students, that doesn't always happen here on campus. So it's a really exciting thing that is unique to Florence. And the communication design, one of our most popular majors, those students have sort of a more traditional slot for their study-abroad program, which is the junior spring semester. So we actually have made exciting transitions in the major programs for local Italian faculty that are professionals in their careers have joined our teaching staff to serve our students in a really sort of Italian way of thinking and learning about design and architecture and art. And I've heard nothing but rave reviews about those programs. It's really exciting for our students to make those really international connections with their faculty who also have professional colleagues. And it's amazing that they get to do that. The art history course, which you see the image on the second slide, happens both in the

semester in the summer, is one of the sort of quintessential core parts of studying, special to Florence, Italy.

Getting to visit the artworks, the galleries, the museums, the churches all in person, seeing artwork in real life is an unforgettable and life-changing experience that our students get to have. So it's really fun. The summer program is meant to be more flexible option. So for the students that, maybe, are second-majoring or minoring in Sam Fox School or also they're majoring in the Sam Fox School, say for example, a degree, a bachelor's degree in art but they're also pursuing the business minor of arts, right, the summer program offers a way to earn those two degrees still within four years with perhaps just one extra summer program for study abroad. So it's a nice sort of condensed program two months in the summer that gives a student nearly a full semester of credits, 10 credits in either art or architecture, to move forward with their degree program. So the following slides are just a few images of what our students experience in Florence. So we have a private studio in the [inaudible] where each student has their own desk and workspace. The faculty has an office there as well. So collaboration happens on a daily basis within that space. We also have shared studio art spaces including a beautiful printmaking workshop-- work studio that you can see here. We also have others including a 3D space for woodworking, welding, jewelry making, fashion design studios, full sewing machines, a model of Florence, painting studies, drawing studios, things like that. And we can't, of course, forget that Florence itself is a beautiful workplace. Going onsite is one of the key parts of the courses there. I mean, students spend quite a bit of time outside, onsite sketching both the landscapes and the architectural spaces in Florence. And then our program is also really heavily invested in field trips and making sure that students take advantage of all the places that are really closely accessible. So field trips include going to Venice with the [inaudible] which is seen here on the final slide, Rome, Milan, and various other sites throughout Italy depending on what the local museums have installed or exhibitions that are happening during the time that you're studying abroad.

So yeah. And of course, we can't talk about living in Italy without talking about the food. So students have great experience regardless of whether that's learning to cook for themselves and trying new Italian recipes in their own furnished apartments or eating fresh homemade Italian food with their Italian homestay families. So that's just a couple of fun things about our program. And then, I guess, we're happy to take questions.

Reggie Gacad: Yeah. Thank you, everybody. While hearing you all speak, I wanted to ask an initial question that I think families may be wondering. So how many credits do students usually take while studying abroad?

Amy Suelzer: If we're talking about an academic semester, it's usually going to be very comparable to what a student would be taking on campus-- minimum of 12, usually somewhere between 12 and 16 depending on the individual program. But I think all of our programs are constructed in such a way that it will allow a student to stay on track with their graduation timeline as long they take a full load of credits.

Reggie Gacad: What does a summer typically look like in terms of credits?

Maureen Wysocki: I would say there is no typical summer [laughter]. So for Olin, our programs range from three credits to six credits. There are partner programs and there also could be more than that. So summer programs really vary across the board and depends on what a student's interested in, the location and then what the offerings are.

Melanie Osborn: There are some summer programs where a student could choose to do session one, two, three depending on the program. So a lot of our partners where we send students to study abroad, they might take one class each session, but they could stay for two sessions and get six units of credit.

Reggie Gacad: Got it. Thank you. So we're now going to move into some of the live question and answer portion of the webinar. So for students planning on studying abroad in the future, what does that process look like? So for instance, do students rank their preferences and then get matched? Do they pick one program to apply to? What does that sort of look like?

Melanie Osborn: It depends on the school. In engineering, a student picks one program. We, as in I, I guess, help them with choosing that program, I'm happy to connect them with students that have been on that program. We look at classes where the most classes are available to them depending on the year. And we do ask that they choose only one program.

Amy Suelzer: In Arts & Sciences, it's the same. So we encourage students to choose one program. If we, as advisors, have any concerns either because of program capacity or we feel a student might be a little bit borderline in terms of admission, we'll be talking to that student as we go, making sure that they have a plan B in mind. But usually we ask them to apply directly to the program that they're most interested in and then we work with them if we need to.

Maureen Wysocki: And then at Olin students do apply to one program but within that application, they list their second and third alternate choice. And then students do very often get placed in a second or third choice. And so the lead up to the application similar to my colleagues, we really work with students to advise them on what are their choices, not their first choice but second and third to make sure they find a fit that is with them with what their goals are, academically, professionally and personally.

Courtney Cushard: I would also mention-- and similar for the Sam Fox School, ours is a little bit simpler, right? You apply for Florence [laughter]. The students in the Sam Fox School do have other opportunities. They can, if they're second majoring or minoring a different program, approach that program to do perhaps multiple study abroad programs. Perhaps, they do Florence plus another one from Arts & Sciences or something like that. So that's an option. They should always talk with their academic advisor about that. That's a really good place to start because they meet with that person on a regular basis. They can also attend-- we have a study abroad fair-- is that in the fall?

Amy Suelzer: We have one in the fall and then we host one in the spring.

Courtney Cushard: And they're also in the spring. Yeah, so that's a really great spot for students to learn about multiple different opportunities. If there's only one time that works for them-- say they can only do it this summer, then they can start planning for that and research opportunities within that. Or if they're interested in a semester program but they're not sure which one, they can also come to that fair to learn more about what's available and then also talk with their advisors. So I think sort of within each school and also those pooled sort of events, it's nice because the students have access to lots of resources.

Reggie Gacad: We've had a number of folks ask when accepted into a program, will students register for classes with their Wash U advisor or with their host institution?

Amy Suelzer: So students are always going to be registering for classes with the host institution but they're consulting on their course choices with people here at Wash U. In Arts & Sciences, if this student is hoping to earn major or minor credit, they need to be communicating with the study abroad advisor in that particular academic department to make sure the courses that they've identified are going to be suitable and are going to be transferable as major or minor credit. Sometimes they will be checking with

their four-year advisor just to make sure that the course choices that they've made, again, are going to keep them on track for graduation.

Melanie Osborn: For engineering, a student would work with me, not with their academic or faculty advisor, but I would be working with the department to make sure the classes are approved.

Reggie Gacad: Great.

Courtney Cushard: And I can speak to the Florence program a little bit. And I think most programs also have this. In the semester before a student studies abroad, we have a preparation seminar. So that's because our program is run by Wash U, we register the students in that semester. I know that you guys also have a preparation seminar for students before they go abroad to get them set up to be really successful there in whatever program they're attending.

Reggie Gacad: So we've received a number of housing questions for everybody. So if accepted into a study abroad program, is housing guaranteed or will students need to find their own housing? Is it dependent on the program?

Melanie Osborn: Yes [laughter]. Yes.

Reggie Gacad: Great. Do most students find housing on their respective university campuses?

Amy Suelzer: I think it depends very much on the program they choose. And I'm sorry that this is going to be an answer that we give a lot. So there are a number of our programs that would either allow or require a host family. Obviously, those families are not going to be living on campus. There are some programs that do have students in student housing of that university whether that is on campus or off campus, so the answers, I'm afraid, are quite variable.

Reggie Gacad: So for students who are living off campus while abroad, how long is the average daily commute for students to and from campus?

Melanie Osborn: And that varies [laughter]. In many of our programs, we contract with a third-party provider, at least in engineering and Arts & Sciences, and also in Olin. And that third-party provider helps us make sure students have housing that works. I have to say, I've visited places where the housing is on campus, I've visited places where the housing is a 20-minute bus ride, but that is the norm for that campus, that everyone's doing that. The local and native students are doing that as well.

Reggie Gacad: So a last question regarding housing. How much is paid for housing? And are costs similar to WashU rates? Are they different? Is this also program specific?

Amy Suelzer: It depends [laughter]. So in many cases, housing will be billed through the WashU student billing account. It will not be WashU on campus housing charges. It will be unique to the program that they're attending. There are some instances where students are going to be paying housing directly to the dorm or housing provider abroad. That is certainly the case for some of our programs. And the cost can be quite variable as well. And much of it depends on the economy of the location where they are. Housing is likely to be more expensive in Copenhagen than it would be in Vietnam. That's just part of the reality.

Reggie Gacad: Are students able to create their own study abroad experiences, or must they attend the program already offered by WashU?

Maureen Wysocki: At Olin, we do offer students to apply for what we call a petition program. They submit an application, and then they can make an argument about why this program specifically is necessary for their academics. So making the case for how this will help them improve their academic

experience. Not just they want to go to Bali, but why is this institution or the program or the course not an academic experience they could get at another program that we offer. We don't have very many petition programs. There are students that do petition programs, but it is something that we talk students through the process if it's something they're interested in.

Courtney Cushard: Sam Fox has the same thing.

Amy Suelzer: As does Arts & Sciences. I think that one of the things that is probably common across our different divisions is that our spectrum of program offerings that are already approved are really quite broad. And so being able to formulate an argument to make a strong academic justification for a petitioned program is not always easy to do. So we try to meet need through programs that we already approved, but certainly if a student has a very unique set of needs, we have a petition process to allow them to explore this.

Courtney Cushard: I think with the Sam Fox school in particular, because we know we're a small school, and we have one really robust, great offering, we know that sometimes students are looking for a slightly different experience. So we do encourage them to look at other WashU programs. But I would say it's maybe a little more common in the Sam Fox school for students to try to pursue a petition route, just because there are so many different types of art schools in the world, that they might find something that's really particularly important to them that they can't get through a more generalized program. So I do my best to work with those students to assess their academic and personal argument for this, and then also be able to hone that message as you take it to the chairs and the registrar and the RGs and things like that for people.

Melanie Osborn: I think it's important, especially for engineering students, to think about the language issue. So Arts & Sciences sends many students to study a language. If you're going to study engineering, you're not studying a language. So you need to go to a country where they instruct in English. Students come in all the time and say, "I want to go to Europe. I really want to go to France or Germany." And then when I say, "Do you speak German or French?"-- no, they do not. So since they don't instruct in engineering and English in those countries anywhere I can find, they're not going to be going to Germany or France. So they need to really be thinking about the language and why they're studying in that country before they pursue any kind of petition option.

Reggie Gacad: Thank you. Can students apply their WashU financial aid to their tuition while abroad?

Courtney Cushard: Absolutely.

Melanie Osborn: Absolutely.

Maureen Wysocki: Yeah.

Reggie Gacad: Great.

Melanie Osborn: And if they have housing, a tuition package or an aid package that covers housing, that applies as well.

Reggie Gacad: Great.

Melanie Osborn: And they should talk to Student Financial Services.

Reggie Gacad: Perfect.

Courtney Cushard: I will make one comment. And I don't know if it's different for you guys. That rule applies for our semester programs. Summer programs, because they are elective, meaning optional, for a student, meaning a student can choose to do it or not, financial aid doesn't automatically carry over to

the summer. So again, it doesn't mean no financial aid is available. It just means the students should talk to their financial services advisor about the details of how that will work out for them.

Reggie Gacad: I have an expansion on that question. Do you know if students can use their 529 accounts for tuition and housing?

Melanie Osborn: I believe that's why you talk to Student Financial Services [laughter]. I believe so.

Courtney Cushard: I would say so.

Amy Suelzer: I would say since tuition is charged through Washington University [crosstalk] the university housing often is, I think it's reasonable to assume yes, more likely than not. [crosstalk] talk to Student Financial Services.

Reggie Gacad: And we will put the contact information for Student Financial Services into the chat function now. How has travel to and from the program booked? I mean, how are those costs handled? Is that by the university or the students? Is that also program specific?

Maureen Wysocki: Yes [laughter]. Yes, it is. For most of the programs for Olin, students purchase their own flights. They're told on what date to arrive and where to arrive and, depending on the program, how they then get from the airport to the next location that their program [inaudible]. It does depend. But in general students travel on their own. [inaudible].

Amy Suelzer: Yes. I think for Arts and Sciences, there's a small number of programs that have optional group flights. But most of them, the students will look on their own.

And this allows families the flexibility of city of departure, whether they're using frequent flyer miles, whether they have layovers or intermediates.

Reggie Gacad: Are university-sponsored excursions included in the cost of tuition? Or do students [inaudible]?

Courtney Cushard: Our favorite answer [laughter]. It depends. Yeah, it depends on the program. For the Sam Fox School, for example, we have a certain number of field trips, approximately three, that are included in the semester or the summer program. And those show up as an activities fee, a line item, that the student pays separately for tuition. Again, that price is determined by the best price we can get available for group bookings or things like train tickets and museums and hotels and things like that. I would assume that other programs have optional field trips that students can sign up for once they're already on site. Yeah.

Maureen Wysocki: It depends on our programs. So for example, on some of our exchange programs where students can enroll as a student at that institution, there might be clubs that do excursions or events that they can sign up and go on. They might have a first-year center like this, that host events for them. And so those types of extra excursions come in a variety of different ways in how the students find out about them or sign up for them, or pay for them. There'll be a number of ways they can do that.

Reggie Gacad: Are their resources so students who have already studied abroad, talk about their experiences in the job or internship processes?

Amy Suelzer: Absolutely. So both the Career Center that serves Arts & Sciences, and Sam Fox school, and engineering, and Western Career Center, both work with students to make sure they can translate the experiences they've had, the skills they've acquired into their future job applications and interviews.

Reggie Gacad: Great, thank you. We have a number of folks asking, is there a specific program you would recommend for students on the pre-health track?

Amy Suelzer: Oh my gosh. Oh, there's so many options. So I think that the important thing to say is that there is no one way to study abroad as a pre-health student. There are a number of programs that offer really interesting opportunities for pre-health students, whether those are more experiential learning programs with a public health focus that might get them engaged within the community, learning about the health portfolio in that place from local experts. For a student who is more interested in the research or the bench science behind medicine, we have some outstanding universities with biomedical science, biomedical chemistry programs that a student could look at. And for some pre-health students, what they're really looking for is an opportunity to hone language skills, particularly Spanish language skills, foreign language skills that they hope to apply in their profession. And so looking at a program that's going to have that focus, that might allow them to engage extracurricularly in things related to helping community. That can be a wonderful way to go.

Melanie Osborn: I think a lot of pre-health students will study abroad to make themselves the best candidate for medical school. And the experiences that Amy mentioned, those are something that sets students apart and that is something to talk about in your med school interviews. One thing a pre-med student or pre-health student wants to be careful about is not taking the core pre-health requirement courses abroad. They may not be accepted by the medical school or the application process, so they need to talk to their pre-health advisor about the courses that they're taking.

Reggie Gacad: Do the study-abroad representatives within each of the academic divisions communicate and/or check-in with WashU students regularly while they are abroad?

Maureen Wysocki: So yeah, at Olin we offer-- not offer, it's a required half-credit course that students take while they're abroad. It's online, managed through our office, where students are doing assignments that kind of require them to reflect on their experience, talk about the country that they're in, their host country, their academics. And so that is one way that you're weekly and monthly keeping up on them, through their assignments and communicating with them. And then of course, just we like to touch base and send them an email and ask for pictures and see what they're doing. So a number of ways that we stay in touch with them.

Reggie Gacad: So we're going to ask one last question for the evening. As a reminder, any questions that we were not able to answer during the webinar will be addressed via email directly to the person who posed the question. Panelists, thank you all so much for the information that you've shared tonight. One last question. What is one last piece of advice for families of WashU students contemplating studying abroad?

Amy Suelzer: Wow, such a [laughter]. Sorry, I could think about 15 different things, I just need to come down to one answer. So I think I would really encourage your students to make sure that they're talking to their academic advisors as they are in this planning phase, just to make sure that they are staying on track with their requirements, that they're making choices that seem to make sense given their academic trajectory. And I think that it's important that parents be present and supportive, but really allow a student some agency in this process. Getting through the application, making the program suggestion, all of those are places where families really very much want to provide support for their students. But it's important that the student is doing a lot of the legwork themselves, just to make sure that they're really invested in [inaudible].

Melanie Osborn: I would say I agree with Amy that a student should be driving this process. I did not study abroad and I did send two students to study abroad, my own children. And I think it's a great

opportunity, it's fabulous, it's travel, it's education. But if your student does not want to study abroad, if they are telling you, "I'm a little anxious", or you know that your student is better staying in one place, listen to them. If they tell you, "I'm ready for adventure", listen to them again. And we are here to help them get abroad.

Maureen Wysocki: I would say kind of helping your students [inaudible] think about academics, think beyond the location and really look at the courses that are offered and the experience that's provided. It can be really exciting to think about all the places you can go, which is why we do have this huge portfolio of programs. But thinking about that [inaudible] and how those all tie in, can help narrow down the choice to make the experience as successful as possible.

Courtney Cushard: I would say that I'm sort of an opposite end of Melanie. I studied abroad a lot as a student. And it can be very nerve-racking. Myself now I would be more nervous to go and do what I did when I was young [laughter]. But it's a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. I mean, being an undergraduate in college is exciting enough in and of itself. It can be very nerve-racking to go abroad, but I would encourage students to step out of their comfort zone. It takes a lot of courage to do that and we're all here to support that courageous decision. And it is a nice combination of parents giving a little nudge and also respecting your students' choices. But yeah, don't pass it up. I would say, do everything you can to find something, even if it's a one-week program that works for you [inaudible] it's valuable for a lifetime.

Reggie Gacad: Panelists, the information you provided this evening was extremely helpful. I'm confident that families of Washington University students learned quite a bit from your presentations and your answers. As a reminder, we are not able to cover and answer questions about students currently abroad, or Covid-19. Please visit emergency.wustl.edu for more information about WashU response to Covid-19, and to reach Chancellor Martin's email sent to Wash U family members earlier today. Families we hope that you learned some valuable information this evening. Stay tuned for our next webinar a summer send-off conversation occurring on Tuesday, April 28th. We will be able-- you will be able to register for this webinar at families.wustl.edu. Thank you and we'll see you then.

Courtney Cushard: Bye.

Amy Suelzer: Thank you. Thanks everyone.

Melanie Osborn: Bye.

Maureen Wysocki: Thank you.