

LEARNING ABROAD CENTER

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA



Annual Report

Academic Year 2021–22



Message from Ann

Dear Friends,

As the new assistant dean of the Learning Abroad Center (LAC), I'm excited to join a talented team while building on its diverse, innovative programming. In my short time here so far, I am extremely impressed with the degree of collaboration across campus to develop and deliver learning abroad opportunities for students.

We have entered a new era of global learning—with new priorities and new modalities for engagement. We continue to focus on intercultural engagement in our host communities as well as in virtual programming. As the Global Programs and Strategy Alliance at the University is working on integrating the U.N.'s Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the LAC is also focused on climate literacy for travelers, learning objectives by destination, and an examination of sustainable practices in our offices and at our events.

We continue to rebound from the pandemic: The number of students abroad this fall is more than 80% of what we would consider typical for the semester—and spring applications are strong. There is much optimism that this trajectory will continue.

Thank you for everything you do to support learning abroad.

Sincerely,
Ann Hubbard, PhD
Assistant Dean, Learning Abroad



About the Learning Abroad Center

The Learning Abroad Center (LAC) in the Global Programs and Strategy Alliance is the University of Minnesota's comprehensive resource for study, intern, community engagement, research, and volunteer experiences worldwide.

The LAC is a leader in providing innovative international learning experiences that expand and redefine the world for a diverse population of students, colleagues, and staff. LAC staff and University of Minnesota faculty and staff participate in numerous leadership opportunities and serve on the advisory boards of organizations that provide and/or support education abroad programs. Through collaboration and individual attention, the LAC continues to promote empowerment, development, understanding, and responsibility in the global community.

The LAC creates a learning climate that respects and celebrates diversity. We are committed to and accountable for strategically addressing barriers affecting marginalized groups by providing inclusive advising, program and curriculum design, global faculty and staff recruitment and training, and campus stakeholder engagement.

Student Participation

Open Doors

Open Doors is an annual report that provides statistics on study abroad participation by US students and international student enrollment at US institutions. The report, published in November 2022 by the Institute of International Education (IIE) in New York with support from the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs at the US Department of State, contains rankings for the 2020–21 academic year.

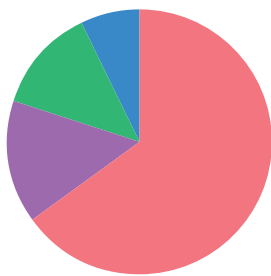
Twin Cities campus ranking (in number of students sent abroad on credit-bearing programs):

1. **1st in the Big Ten.**
2. **2nd among doctorate-granting universities.**

US News and World Report

We're happy to be **ranked #25** in the US News and World Report's **Best Study Abroad** category. As a large, land-grant public institution and national program provider, it's an honor to be surrounded by these schools and be nominated and positively perceived by the public in this qualitative study. We're collectively committed to constantly improving our work and offering high-quality programs.

Where Do Gophers Go?



7% Africa & the Middle East

13% Americas

15% Asia & Oceania

65% Europe

Top 5 Destinations

- 1 Spain
- 2 China
- 3 Italy
- 4 Denmark
- 5 United Kingdom



Student Advising & Support Services

We offer a full range of advising and support services to students, including program selection, academic planning, financial planning, registration, credit, cultural adjustment, and re-entry.

Advising is a critical part of supporting students through the program selection process and helping them prepare to go abroad once they have applied for a program. Our 20 full-time advisers meet individually with students to answer their questions about study abroad and guide them through the application and enrollment process.

2021–22 Highlights

- **72** students attended our You Can Afford to Study Abroad information session to learn about how financial aid can be applied to study abroad, available scholarship opportunities, and how to write a strong scholarship application essay.
- **964** students met one-on-one with an adviser in the LAC to discuss program options that fit their academic, career, personal, and financial goals and needs.
- **2,075** students completed a First Step session online to learn the basics about choosing a study abroad program, academic planning, and financial aid and scholarship opportunities.
- **153,257** unique users visited UMabroad.umn.edu.

Program Offerings

We have developed a variety of program options—**180 programs in 50 countries**—to address the diverse needs of students. Programs vary in length, level, academic focus, teaching format, language requirements, cost, and degree of independence required.

New Program Highlight

Virtual Internships

Virtual International Internship opportunities offered students 4 credits to gain experience, expand their skill base, and add a global perspective to their resumés. Students worked on projects from the US for an international organization.

- Fall 2021: **16 interns** in Buenos Aires, Dublin, Florence, London, Madrid, Nairobi, and Sydney
- Summer 2022: **5 interns** in Buenos Aires, Florence, and Madrid



Institutional Relations

We recruit undergraduate students from around the US for 20+ learning abroad programs. The addition of students from other institutions creates a more diverse and better learning environment for UMTC students. With the addition of these non-UofM students, we run more programs and add more courses to our existing programs, thereby creating more opportunities for UofM students. To date, we have more than **125 affiliate partnerships**.

In 2021–22, the Institutional Relations team took a hybrid approach to its recruitment of non-UofM students. About 2/3 of the recruitment continued in the virtual world, while 1/3 of our events took place in person.

We continued our Discovery Series to introduce non-UofM students to our programs. In the fall, we held info sessions for MSID Senegal, MSID Thailand, Study & Intern in Buenos Aires, and University Study in Ireland. In the spring, we held info sessions for Cross-Cultural Health in Spain and Psychology & Research in Madrid.

We also hosted a virtual launch event for our new summer programs in Sicily (Design in Sicily and Summer in Sicily). At the event, our Italy program team and on-site staff introduced these programs to our non-UofM audience.

Scholarships & Funding

- **977** applications were submitted by students, of which **216** were awarded a scholarship by the LAC.
- **65** advisers, faculty, and staff from across the UMTC campus helped review study abroad scholarship applications and select award recipients.



International Educator Outreach Events & Training

UMTC Education Abroad Network

The UofM Twin Cities Education Abroad Network (EAN) includes and serves professional advisers, faculty members, administrators, and others involved with education abroad. Meetings involve sharing of practices, benchmarking, and updates to foster communication and expanded, multidisciplinary collaboration with study abroad. EAN Advisory Board members come from a variety of units and colleges across campus. This year's EAN Summer Spotlight Series included the following topics:

- Global Identity: Connecting Your International Experience to Your Future
- Health-Related Programs Abroad
- Internships Abroad
- Minnesota Studies in International Development (MSID)
- University Study Abroad

Excellence in Leading Learning Abroad Series

From October 2021 to April 2022, we hosted three highly interactive sessions facilitated by program leaders or campus experts that were attended by approximately 75 past, current, and future program leaders. Topics included:

- Supporting Student Mental Health & Wellness During a Pandemic & Ongoing Racial Stress in the US
- Marketing Your Learning Abroad Program to Gen Z
- Leading Students Abroad During COVID

Curriculum & Program Oversight

Learning Abroad Center Advisory Committee (LACAC)

LACAC was established with the specific responsibility of assisting the Learning Abroad Center with program and curriculum oversight and review, as well as assisting with program development and school of record mechanisms with a focus on undergraduate education. It meets 2–4 times annually and comprises 5–7 faculty and/or administrative staff. The committee membership is designed to provide a breadth of guidance from across the University.

Responsibilities

- Assist with program and curriculum oversight
- Assist with academic policy
- Assist with program development
- Assist with school of record mechanisms
- Participate on program reviews
- Participate on occasional task forces
- Assist with Global Seminar proposals
- Engage with affiliate and university partners

2021–22 Members

Chair: **Christine Anderson**—Learning Abroad Center, Academic Director

Pamela Baker—University Honors Program, Associate Director

Kirsten Canterbury—Carlson Global Institute, Director, Education Abroad

Sauman Chu—College of Design, Associate Dean

Nanette Hanks—College of Liberal Arts, Assistant Dean

Kim Hindbjorgen—Learning Abroad Center, Assistant Director

Martha Johnson—Learning Abroad Center, Assistant Dean

Susan Kubitschek—College of Science and Engineering, Assistant Dean, Collegiate Life

Nikki Letawsky Shultz—College of Biological Sciences, Assistant Dean for Student Affairs and International Programs

Zach Mohs—Learning Abroad Center, Associate Director

Tricia Todd—Pre-Health Student Resource Center, Director

Michael White—College of Food, Agricultural, and Natural Resource Sciences, Associate Dean



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