

STUDENT GUIDE TO FINANCIAL AID AND STUDY ABROAD

2015-2016

This guide is meant to answer most of your basic questions about using your financial aid to help you cover the costs of a study abroad program. Please read this entire document before contacting the Financial Aid Office. It may not be necessary to meet with someone if your questions are answered below.

Who should read this document?

- ✓ Students studying abroad through a partnership program.
- ✓ Students studying abroad through an affiliate program or a non-GVSU.
- X This is not for GVSU faculty-led programs.
- X This is not for independent study where students are working directly with a GVSU faculty person for the academic credit.

FINANCIAL AID ADVISORS

It is not necessary that you meet with a financial aid advisor if you don't have questions after reading this document. However, once you have been accepted to study abroad **AND** you have completed your **Study Abroad Expense Form** through OASIS, you may email a Financial Aid Advisor for additional help. The advisor will determine at that point if a meeting is necessary.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Financial Aid Office
100 Student Services Building
www.gvsu.edu/financialaid
616-331-3234

Padnos International Center
130 Lake Ontario Hall
www.gvsu.edu/studyabroad
616-331-3898

When emailing the Financial Aid Office, please include:

GVSU "G Number"
Program Name (i.e. Ukraine Anthropology)
Program Type (i.e. GVSU faculty-led)

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THE BASICS – WHAT EVERY STUDENT NEEDS TO KNOW

1. Degree-seeking students who have been accepted by PIC to study abroad are eligible for financial aid through GVSU. International students should carefully review the International Student section for details on limitations that may exist.
2. There are different sources for financial aid: federal, state, GVSU funds, and private scholarships/grants.
3. Financial aid consists of: loans, scholarships, and/or grants.
4. In order to be eligible for most financial aid, you must complete the FAFSA. It is recommended that you apply for FAFSA by the priority deadline of **March 1**.
5. Keep in mind that many grants and scholarships have deadlines much earlier than March 1.
6. If you have any additional financial aid questions, you may contact the Financial Aid Office. We recommend you do this at least 5 months prior to your departure.
7. **All** students that study abroad through GVSU must register for a class at GVSU.
 - a. Students who are participating in a GVSU partnership, affiliate, or non-GVSU program will register for a course called IS 380 (International Studies 380).
 - i. Permission to register for this course will be given after you attend the required study abroad orientation offered through the Padnos International Center (PIC).
 - ii. IS 380 is a placeholder course to keep you registered as a GVSU student the entire time you are abroad.
 - iii. If you are not registered at GVSU, you will not be able to access financial aid through GVSU.
 - iv. There is a surcharge associated with the registration of IS 380. The charge is \$25 per credit hour which is due to GVSU by the payment deadline.
 - b. Faculty-led program participants or students participating in independent study work will register for a specific course here at GVSU. See your faculty director or PIC contact person for additional information.
8. Semester/Year participants must maintain full-time status (12 credit minimum) while studying abroad. **There may be consequences for students who fail to register or fail to maintain full-time status while abroad.** You must plan accordingly to transfer back a minimum of 12 GVSU credits.
9. Summer study abroad participants should discuss their funding options with the Financial Aid Office. Students may have access to Parent Plus loans, alternative loans, grants and scholarships. Additionally, students who do not take out the full amount of their annual federal loan eligibility during the fall and winter semesters may use the remaining amount to help cover summer study abroad costs. Students who receive fall or winter financial aid refunds should save as much of their refunds as possible to be used toward spring/summer expenses.

Students who plan to use alternative loans to help pay for summer study abroad expenses may have more flexibility with regards to the minimum number of summer credits they must register for. Some alternative lenders don't require students to be enrolled at least half-time.

10. Students can use both MET and employee tuition benefits towards the cost of their program, but these are not considered financial aid. Additional information is available at the end of this document. The disbursement of funds for MET and employee tuition benefits may differ from the regular financial aid disbursements.
11. Most students that study abroad apply for loans to help finance their program costs.
12. Most students who study abroad have access to some personal funds that will be used towards the cost of their study abroad program.

Advice from PIC Staff

Our staff are highly trained to respond to general financial aid questions, but each individual has unique circumstances that we may not know about. We do our best to provide students with general information and estimated costs. We rely on each person to provide us with a complete and accurate picture of his/her situation.

Students with unusual circumstances (i.e. out-of-state, international students, or special scholarship recipients, etc.) should contact Nick Bromley at bromleni@gvsu.edu.

Financial Aid Award Verification

PIC staff members are trained to help you find information on your current financial aid award. PIC cannot verify funding that a student will receive for his/her study abroad. Many students look at the current year's financial aid award to determine what aid **may be available** during the next academic year when they plan to be abroad. Please be advised that changes may occur from year to year with regards to your financial aid eligibility. You will not receive a final confirmation until a financial aid award is created in MyBanner for the semester/year that you will be abroad.

Students should contact the Financial Aid Office for the most accurate estimate of their financial aid eligibility at least five months prior to the semester/year they will be abroad.

STUDY ABROAD EXPENSE FORM

Before you meet with a Financial Aid Counselor to discuss your specific questions, you **MUST** submit your **Study Abroad Expense Form** through OASIS. If you do not complete this form, your study abroad costs will not be considered when your financial aid award is processed.

The **Study Abroad Expense Form** serves as an estimated cost of attendance for your study abroad program. The total amount listed is the maximum amount of aid you can receive from GVSU. This estimated cost of attendance does not reflect the amount of aid you will qualify for, simply the cap on

how much could be awarded to you. Unless you are participating in one of GVSU's partner institutions or faculty-led programs, you must submit a breakdown of your estimated costs.

The **Study Abroad Expense Form** can be found under "Required Forms" in your OASIS account. If you have questions on where to find this information, contact PIC. You will not have access to this form until you have been accepted to study abroad through PIC.

What costs can be included on the study abroad expense form?

Tuition	In-country transportation
Program fees	Misc. living expenses (i.e. laundry, bus pass, basic necessities)
Housing	Passport/visa fees
Meals	Course-related fees
Airfare to your host country	

Estimated Program Costs

PIC can help a student create an estimated budget for his/her study abroad program. **PIC cannot give students an exact dollar amount for every expense associated with a study abroad program.** Most travelers run into unexpected expenses while abroad. In addition, a great deal of a person's budget is based on personal spending habits. Students who intend to travel independently, regularly go out for entertainment purposes, purchase special equipment, etc. will have to budget additional funds to cover these types of expenses. At a minimum, students should expect to have \$700 set aside for unexpected expenses.

You are also advised to monitor the fluctuation of the currency exchange rate. The currency exchange rate can significantly impact estimated costs.

Web resources:

www.xe.com

www.oanda.com

Additional costs you may need to consider:

How often do you go out for social events?

How much do you plan to travel while abroad?

Will you eat out often or cook for yourself?

Are you going to purchase a cell phone?

Can you use skype or will you have to purchase minutes in order to call from your cell phone?

Do you have other habits (luxuries or personal habits) that you know you will maintain while abroad?

Do you plan to purchase souvenirs for yourself, family, and friends?

Do you need to purchase special items for an apartment or room? (i.e. pans, dishes, iron, sheets, hair dryer, etc.)

Do you plan to take a taxi or public transit to your housing? Will someone from your program meet you at the airport?

Are you requesting a single room or other housing that costs more than the typical student residence?

Do you have emergency funds available?

Are you building in a cushion to account for the fluctuation in exchange rates?

Are you considering the charges that your bank will charge for international transactions?

Are you building in a cushion for those unexpected expenses?

I am interested in traveling on weekends and breaks while I am studying abroad. Will these additional costs be considered when looking at my total cost of participation in study abroad?

No. The Financial Aid Office will only consider costs that are required for participation in your academic program. Additional funding for independent travel, gifts, or other personal spending are costs that you must budget for on your own. These costs will not be reflected in your Study Abroad Expense Form.

Confidentiality and FERPA

Can my family talk with the Financial Aid Office or the Padnos International Center regarding concerns or problems?

Due to confidentiality laws, there is limited information that can be provided to your family without your written consent. As part of the OASIS application process, students are asked if they would like to give PIC permission to speak with a parent or other contact person(s). If you provided a contact person, we will be happy to speak with that individual if questions arise.

If you did not give PIC permission to speak with a designated contact person, we will require written permission from you before information can be released to that individual. The Padnos International Center strongly encourages students to consider filling out a Limited Power of Attorney form giving someone you trust permission to act on your behalf while you are abroad. Alternatively, you can sign a FERPA Release Form giving GVSU permission to release information to an individual of your choosing. Additional information can be obtained in the Padnos International Center or through your OASIS account under “Study Abroad Services.”

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

GENERAL SECTION

Can I use my GVSU financial aid towards the cost of study abroad?

Yes, study abroad students can use their student financial aid towards the cost of study abroad, provided they are registered at GVSU for the appropriate course.

Since GVSU requires students to maintain their registration status at GVSU while abroad, they are able to access financial aid. Students who are not registered here at GVSU will not receive financial aid.

Do I have to be registered full-time in order to obtain my federal student aid?

Yes. Fall and Winter semester participants are expected to register for and complete a minimum of 12 GVSU credits during their semester abroad.

Spring/Summer Students

Summer study abroad participants should discuss their funding options with the Financial Aid Office. Students may have access to Parent Plus loans, alternative loans, grants and scholarships. Additionally, students who do not take out the full amount of their annual federal loan eligibility during the fall and winter semesters may use the remaining amount to help cover summer study abroad costs. Students who receive fall or winter financial aid refunds should save as much of their refunds as possible to be used toward spring/summer expenses.

Students who plan to use alternative loans to help pay for summer study abroad expenses may have more flexibility with regards to the minimum number of summer credits they must register for. Some alternative lenders don't require students to be enrolled at least half-time.

Do I need to make adjustments to my FAFSA for the semester(s) that I will be abroad?

No. The Padnos International Center will notify the Financial Aid Office of your acceptance to study abroad. You will be asked to complete a Study Abroad Expense Form that outlines the costs associated with your study abroad program. The expense form can be found through your OASIS account under Required Forms. Once you submit your estimated costs, the Padnos International Center will review the information and either approve it or make appropriate adjustments. Once your expense form is approved by the Padnos International Center, it is automatically sent to the Financial Aid Office. You do not need to notify FAFSA of your intentions to study abroad. The Financial Aid Office will put information into the system regarding your estimated cost of attendance.

What forms are required in order for me to access my federal student aid?

All students must complete a FAFSA in order to be eligible for Federal Student Aid. You will be notified if your application is selected for verification or if you are required to provide additional information.

Additionally, make sure to complete the following:

- ✓ Study Abroad Expense Form (available in OASIS)
- ✓ Accept your financial aid award through your GVSU MyBanner
- ✓ Complete the Summer Application for Financial Aid (spring/summer students only)

I have been approved to study abroad by the Padnos International Center. What is my next step?

First, you should log onto your OASIS account to submit an expense form and other required post-acceptance forms. An expense form is a breakdown of your estimated study abroad program costs. The Padnos International Center will review all expense forms and make any necessary adjustments (sometimes lower or higher amounts from what was submitted). Once the Expense Form is approved, it will automatically be sent to the Financial Aid Office for processing.

Second, complete all required application materials for your host institution. Follow the instructions on applying for the program.

Third, carefully review the Orientation Information posted on the Padnos International Center website at www.gvsu.edu/studyabroad. Click on Pre-Departure and then select which program you are participating in.

Fourth, read and carefully review all financial aid information sent to you through your GVSU student account. In order to receive your financial aid, you must accept your financial aid award.

Once I have my financial aid award in MyBanner, what is my next step?

Your financial aid award letter will reflect all possible aid available to you based on the GVSU cost of attendance. Dependent students may be awarded a Parent (PLUS) loan. Please note, your parent(s) must apply for a Parent (PLUS) loan, it is not automatically approved. The amount of the PLUS loan can be substituted with an alternative loan if parents do not wish to apply for a PLUS. If you have any questions, you should contact the Financial Aid Office at this point. Otherwise, you need to go to MyBanner and accept the types of aid you want and decline what you do not want. This will allow the aid to apply to your account at the appropriate time.

I am going to study abroad in the fall (or winter, or academic year) so what types of aid can I get for that time frame?

You will get the same types and amounts of aid that you normally would receive if you were taking classes here at Grand Valley. Because of the additional costs of study abroad, you may qualify for additional federal loans. You may also qualify for a Study Abroad Grant through the Padnos International Center, and you can apply for an alternative loan to make up the difference between what you have been awarded in other aid and your total estimated cost listed on your Study Abroad Expense Form. Visit the Financial Aid website for additional information on alternative loan programs at: www.gvsu.edu/financialaid/altloans.

If you need assistance determining the exact amount you can borrow through an alternative loan program, please contact the Financial Aid Office at (616) 331-3234.

Am I eligible for more financial aid because I am studying abroad?

Not necessarily. In most cases, study abroad students will be eligible for the same amount of financial aid as if they were studying here at GVSU. Since studying abroad often costs more than studying here

at GVSU, the Financial Aid Office will adjust the “cost of attendance” for your semester abroad provided that you complete the Study Abroad Expense Form.

Adjusting the cost of attendance means the cap on the amount of financial aid you can receive is adjusted to reflect the estimated costs associated with your academic program.

Students can apply for alternative loan programs to help finance their study abroad. Additionally, there are some grant and scholarship programs that students can apply for which could help to reduce the out-of-pocket cost to the student.

I will be abroad during the time when FAFSA is due for the next year. How will this work?

FAFSA is an online form. You can log onto the FAFSA at any time by going to, www.fafsa.ed.gov.

What if I have a form from my study abroad program that needs to be completed and signed by the Financial Aid Office?

You should check with the Padnos International Center first to see if we can process the form. If we cannot, then you need to turn the form in to the Financial Aid Office as soon as possible. It will take 5 to 7 days to process the form. We can fax forms to your program for you or you can pick the form back up at the Financial Aid Office front desk. **We recommend that you keep a copy of the form for your records.**

Am I required to pay anything to GVSU?

Yes. See below.

DEPOSIT

All study abroad applicants pay a \$100 non-refundable deposit at the time of application, plus a \$5 processing fee. If you withdraw your study abroad application at any time, you will not receive a refund of this deposit. If you continue with your plans for study abroad, you will see this \$100 credited to your GVSU student account at the start of the GVSU semester.

PIC reserves the right to hold a refund deposit until all required post-acceptance documents have been completed (excluding the expense form and credit form). If a student fails to complete the required documents prior to departure, the student may forfeit the refund of this deposit.

IS 380/IS 680 COURSE SURCHARGE

All students who register for IS 380 (International Studies 380) or IS 680 (for graduate students) will be required to pay a course fee of \$25 per credit.

TUITION

Students participating in one of GVSU’s exchange programs will be required to pay tuition to GVSU. You will not be required to pay tuition to the host institution. All semester study abroad students will register here at GVSU for 12 credits of IS 380. This will allow the student to transfer back 12-15 study abroad credits.

IMPORTANT NOTICE FOR STUDENTS PARTICIPATING IN AN EXCHANGE PROGRAM

If a student completes more than 15 US credits through their host institution, tuition charges for the credits above 15 will be charged to the student's account retroactively. In order to avoid paying additional tuition charges upon return from your program, students are encouraged to stay within the 12-15 US credit block.

PROGRAM FEES

The Padnos International Center collects program fees for several study abroad programs. **Note:** some programs are charged GVSU tuition and a program fee. Please reference the relevant program information sheet to determine if you are paying tuition and/or program fees to GVSU or an outside organization.

IMPORTANT NOTICE REGARDING PROGRAM FEES

GVSU does not collect program fees on behalf of any other study abroad program. If you are participating in a non-GVSU program, you will pay all fees directly to your study abroad provider.

Are there any penalties if I withdraw from study abroad after being accepted through OASIS?

For many students, the dates of their study abroad program do not align perfectly with the GVSU semester. In many cases, the GVSU semester may start much earlier than the overseas program. This does pose some challenges and it is important for students to understand the implications of withdrawing from study abroad after the start of the GVSU semester.

As you are already aware, students are required to register for a course at GVSU if they are studying abroad. Regardless of the course, you are still registered here at GVSU and are subject to the same registration rules as if you were here on-campus. If you choose to withdraw from study abroad after the start of the GVSU semester, you may be responsible for any applicable tuition charges or related fees at GVSU.

If you are participating in an exchange program where tuition is paid to GVSU, you will receive a refund based on the standard GVSU withdrawal policies. If you have missed the refund deadlines, you will be required to submit a Tuition Refund Appeal. PIC can give you information on this process.

If you are participating in a non-GVSU program or a program where your tuition is not paid to GVSU, there may be implications for a late withdrawal from study abroad.

Explanation:

- ✓ All students are to be registered at GVSU for study abroad.
- ✓ Any time a student registers at GVSU, a GVSU tuition charge is generated.
- ✓ Students paying tuition to GVSU will pay in accordance to all GVSU payment regulations. This includes the payment of the IS 380/IS 680 course fee. Withdrawals will be handled in the same manner as if a student was on-campus.

- ✓ Students who pay their tuition to a study abroad provider or host institution will receive a GVSU tuition credit on their student account to cancel out the GVSU tuition charge so they are not paying tuition to two institutions for the same credits. The tuition credit will be for the exact amount of the GVSU tuition charge. **Students will, however, be responsible for the IS 380/IS 680 course fee of \$25 per credit.**
- ✓ If a student withdraws from study abroad after the start of the GVSU semester (after the 100% tuition refund deadline), regardless of when his/her study abroad program starts, the tuition credit will immediately be removed from his/her account leaving a GVSU tuition charge.
- ✓ A student would then be responsible for submitting a tuition refund appeal through the Registrar's Office requesting that this tuition charge be removed from the GVSU system. **This appeal is subject to approval, and is not automatic. Students are expected to supply clear and substantial evidence for why the withdrawal happened after the tuition refund deadlines.**

SPRING/SUMMER STUDY ABROAD (excludes faculty-led programs)

If I am studying abroad in the summer is there anything else I need to do to let the Financial Aid office know this?

You need to go to the Financial Aid website at www.gvsu.edu/financialaid. Select the Spring/Summer Application for Financial Aid. You **MUST** do this in order to receive a spring/summer award.

The Spring/Summer Application for Financial Aid will be available to students on or around February 1.

I am going to study abroad in the spring/summer months. Does this make a difference in what types of aid I can get?

Yes, in the spring/summer there is less financial aid available – students may be required to apply for alternative loans or work with their parents to apply for a Parent Plus loan.

Students who do not take out the full amount of their annual federal loan eligibility during the fall and winter semesters may be able to use any unused portion of their federal loans for summer study abroad costs. Students who receive fall or winter financial aid refunds should save as much of their refunds as possible to be used toward spring/summer expenses. Students are advised to speak with a Financial Aid Advisor to discuss loan eligibility.

GRANTS AND SCHOLARSHIPS

I am interested in applying for study abroad scholarships and grants. When should I begin the search and where can I find information on what is available? Is there anyone that can help?

We encourage students to begin searching for grants and scholarships as early as possible (at least 12-18 months prior to your program start date). The Padnos International Center does have information on a number of common scholarships and grants geared towards study abroad. In most cases, the student will be expected to do most of the research on what is available. The Padnos International Center does have a staff of Peer Advisors that can help study abroad students get started on their search.

For semester or academic year applicants, many scholarship deadlines are in February/March of the year prior to the semester you may be abroad. So, if you are planning to study abroad in the Fall 2015 or Winter 2016, a scholarship deadline may be in February 2015.

Students should plan to start searching for scholarships 12-18 months prior to studying abroad in order to keep as many options open as possible. You should leave ample time to prepare a good scholarship application. You will want to begin preparing your application several weeks prior to the deadline. Applications which require essays should be given careful consideration. In order to prepare a competitive application, students should seek at least 3 reviews from faculty advisors, the Writing Center, the Office of Fellowships, and others who can offer constructive feedback. PIC has additional information on our website on writing strong scholarship proposals. Visit www.gvsu.edu/studyabroad

Additional information and support is available through GVSU's Office of Fellowships located at 126 Niemeyer Hall, 331-3219.

I meet the eligibility requirements for the study abroad grant. Does this mean I will automatically be awarded a grant for study abroad?

No. If you meet the eligibility requirements for the study abroad grant, you are not guaranteed an award. In the past, most students have received some grant assistance, but there are limited grant funds available each year. A number of factors are considered when evaluating grant awards such as: financial need, program location, the overall cost of the study abroad program and funding available to allocate. Unfortunately, due to limitations in grant funds available, not all eligible students will receive a grant. Each year, approximately 40-50% of study abroad students are awarded some grant or scholarship assistance for study abroad through GVSU.

When will I find out if I will be receiving a study abroad grant?

All study abroad grant awards will be administered through the Financial Aid Office. The Padnos International Center will provide a list of eligible candidates to the Financial Aid Office for review and consideration. In general, study abroad grant awards will be decided at the following times:

Winter semester	October
Fall semester	June
Academic Year	June
Summer	Grants for GV faculty-led programs only.

Please review the Study Abroad Grant Guidelines in the Padnos International Center for additional information on eligibility criteria and conditions. This information can also be found online at <http://www.gvsu.edu/studyabroad/financial-planning-271.htm>

PROGRAM FEES AND DISBURSEMENT OF FUNDS

When can I get my money?

Normally, any money left over after all charges to Grand Valley have been paid, will be issued in one of two ways - either a check will be mailed to your permanent address or, if you have set up direct deposit, the funds will be sent to your bank account during the **2nd week of classes here at GV**. To set up direct deposit go to MyBanner, go to Student, Financial Aid, then click on Student Account. You will need to know your bank account number and the routing number to complete the request.

If you will be leaving for your study abroad program prior to the 2nd week of GV classes during the semester you are abroad, you will be eligible to receive your refund check prior to your departure.

Spring/Summer Study Abroad Participants

If the program start date listed on OASIS is prior to May 27, 2016 for spring/summer, your refund check will automatically be available to you on April 15, 2016. If your program start date in OASIS is after May 27, 2016, you will receive your refund check on or around May 20, 2016.

Fall/ Academic Year Participants

Program start date before August 10 (Fall semester)

If you are leaving prior to August 10, 2016 please email Nick Bromley at bromleni@gvsu.edu after May 1, 2016 to make special arrangements. The release of funds prior to August 10 will be on a case-by-case basis.

If you are departing prior to July 31, your financial aid refund will be an estimated amount. GVSU tuition rates are not set until the end of July when the Board of Trustees approves the tuition rates for the next academic year. The GVSU tuition rate often impacts a student's financial aid refund.

Program start date between August 10- August 31 (Fall semester)

If the program start date listed on OASIS is between August 10- 31, 2016, for fall semester, your refund check will automatically be available to you on August 1, 2016.

Program start date between September 1-September 16

If your program start date in OASIS is between September 1– 16, 2016, your refund check will be made available to you on or around August 19, 2016.

Program start date after September 16

If your program start date in OASIS is after September 16, 2016, your refund check will be made available at the regularly scheduled disbursement time which is on or around September 9, 2016.

Winter Semester Study Abroad Participants

If the program start date listed on OASIS is prior to January 22, 2016 for winter semester, your refund check will automatically be available to you on December 11, 2015. Winter 2017 applicants will receive updated information during the Fall 2016 semester.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Early checks will be processed based on the Program Start Date listed in your OASIS account. You will receive an email message confirming your program start date.

My program fees are due before I will receive my financial aid check. Since I won't have the money to pay for my program at the due date, what can I do?

You can submit a Program Fee Deferment request by logging into your OASIS account. You will find information on how to make this request by looking under "Study Abroad Services," which is located under Post Acceptance Forms. You will need to submit the request online detailing the contact information for your program. This process can take a week or longer, so please make the request well in advance of your program fee due date. **PIC asks for a minimum of two weeks notice for processing Program Fee Deferment Requests.**

The Program Fee Deferment is simply a letter from the Padnos International Center verifying the amount of financial aid we can verify you will be receiving and when these funds will be made available to you. If you have not applied for or accepted your financial aid, we cannot request deferment of your payment.

In most cases, your program sponsor will require a "good faith payment" before they process the program fee deferment request. This means that they will require you to pay a portion of the program fee, but will defer the majority of the balance due until your financial aid is made available to you. It will be your responsibility to follow-up with your program to make sure that no other paperwork is required in order to finalize the program fee deferment request.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

The Padnos International Center CAN request a deferment of study abroad programs fees. PIC CANNOT request a deferment of any deposits you are required to pay upfront.

What if I need to buy a plane ticket much earlier than my departure date and I have financial aid coming?

If you have a financial aid award in place and you are in need of funding to purchase a flight well before the departure date, you can contact the Financial Aid Office and ask for a Short Term Emergency Loan. This will take a couple of days to process and a check to be issued to you. The loan will then be paid off by the remainder of your financial aid once it is applied to your account.

Exactly how does my tuition and program fee get paid?

Non-GVSU Program Participants

If you are going on a non-GV program, your financial aid will be applied to your student account at Grand Valley. You will either receive a check in the mail at your permanent address or you will receive your refund through direct deposit. You will not be charged tuition at Grand Valley, however you will be charged a course fee for IS 380/IS 680 which is \$20 per credit. Your IS 380/IS 680 course fee will be due at the regularly scheduled GVSU payment deadline. GVSU will first pay off any charges on your GVSU student account. All remaining funds will be disbursed in a refund check. You will then use that money to pay your program fees to your study abroad provider.

GVSU Partnership Participants

If you are going on a program that is charging you GV tuition or a program fee is paid to GVSU, these charges will be posted to your GV account. Your financial aid award will cover these charges and any leftover monies will be available for you to use for other program expenses. If your financial aid does not cover the amount of GV tuition and the program fee, where applicable, you may have to pay any remaining balance to GVSU.

Can the Financial Aid Office or the Padnos International Center forward a financial aid check to a study abroad program to pay for the program fee?

No. All financial aid checks are released directly to the GVSU student. The student is responsible for paying all fees directly to the study abroad program.

Exception: The Japan Center for Michigan Universities (JCMU) requires that GVSU charge a program fee to the student through his/her GVSU student account. The student is expected to pay the fee to GVSU using a combination of financial aid and personal funds. The Padnos International Center receives an invoice from JCMU and will forward the funds to the program.

Note: Students planning to participate in an exchange program may be expected to pay tuition and, in some cases, a program fee to GVSU. Please check the program information for more details.

I am studying abroad for an academic year. How will I get my financial aid for the second semester (Winter)?

If you will be out of the country for the entire academic year, we recommend you make arrangements for direct deposit. If you are abroad for the entire academic year, you will receive your financial aid in two disbursements. You are able to log on to MyBanner under the Student Accounts section and sign up for direct deposit into your personal bank account. For academic year students, winter semester disbursements are typically released to you in January.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

It is your responsibility to respond to any requests that the Financial Aid Office may send you in order to follow up for any missing or required documents. The Financial Aid Office is available for phone consultations Monday through Thursday 8am to 6pm and Friday 8am to 5pm to answer your questions or concerns.

OUT-OF-STATE STUDENTS

I am an out-of-state student. Is anything different for me?

No. Students who participate in a program where tuition is paid to GVSU will pay the same rate they would expect to pay if they stayed here for the semester. If you qualify for the tuition differential scholarship or grant, you may still qualify for this award. If you are participating in a non-GVSU program or affiliate program, you will not be required to pay tuition to GVSU for the credits you earn through study abroad and, therefore, are **not eligible** for the tuition differential scholarship or grant.

If you have any questions about this section, contact Nick Bromley in the Financial Aid Office at bromleni@gvsu.edu.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

If you are a current international student there may be limitations on the financial aid you can receive for study abroad. International students are generally not eligible for federal or state student aid. Additionally, GVSU scholarships are awarded for students to study here and may not be used for a study abroad program.

In general, the GVSU aid available to international students consists of the following:

PIC Study Abroad Grant (letter of appeal required since FAFSA is a requirement for this grant)
Barbara H. Padnos Scholarship (application required)
Mark A. Murray Scholarship (application required)

MET BENEFITS

I receive the Michigan Education Trust (MET). Can this be used for study abroad?

Yes. Students that receive the MET can use this for study abroad. When you register for IS 380, the GVSU system generates a tuition charge. GVSU Student Accounts Office uses this tuition charge to secure funds from MET. If you are participating in a GVSU exchange program, where your tuition is paid to GVSU, you will see the MET applied as you would any other semester. If you are participating in a non-GVSU program and you are responsible for paying tuition to your study abroad provider, you will see a tuition charge for 12-15 credits here at GVSU, a study abroad tuition credit, and a MET tuition credit.

Example: GVSU tuition charge: \$5,652
- PIC tuition credit: \$5,652
\$ 0
+ MET credit: \$5,652
Your Refund = \$5,652

If you have questions, contact Cheryl Lillibridge at 331-2209 in Student Accounts.

Please note: Fall semester tuition is not posted to the GVSU system until the end of July. If you are participating in a program that departs in early July, you will not receive your MET benefits until the tuition charge has been posted to your GVSU student account. This may be well after your departure date. There may be a possibility of receiving funds early by completing an emergency loan through the Financial Aid Office. All such requests are handled on a case-by-case basis.

GVSU EMPLOYEE TUITION BENEFITS

I am eligible for the employee tuition benefits. Does this benefit apply towards study abroad?

Yes, provided you complete all required forms necessary to receive the benefit.

Note: The benefit will reflect the GVSU tuition rate. If you are participating in a study abroad program where the tuition charge is much higher than GVSU's tuition, you will still only be receiving the tuition benefit at the GVSU tuition rates.

Also, you will not be eligible to receive your employee benefits until after the GVSU tuition has been posted to your account. This applies to dependents who are eligible for benefits as well. Once the benefit is applied to your account, you can access these funds to pay any required program expenses.

Please note: Fall semester tuition is not posted to the GVSU system until the end of July. If you are participating in a program that departs in early July, you will not receive your benefits until the tuition charge has been posted and a credit has been applied to your account. This may be well after your departure date. There may be a possibility of receiving funds early by completing an emergency loan through the Financial Aid Office. All such requests are handled on a case-by-case basis.

Students should also understand that while the employee benefits are not considered financial aid, the benefit is still applicable.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

The Padnos International Center does not know if you are a MET recipient or eligible for employee benefits. These two programs are not considered financial aid. Financial aid is defined as scholarships, grants and loans. If you have questions, please be sure to let an advisor know that you are a recipient of one or both of these benefits so that we can provide you with the most accurate information.