

# Academic Policies

## Introduction

This section contains important information about academic policies pertaining to participation in the CSU International Programs (IP). It is the participant's responsibility to read the information provided in this section in conjunction with the publications entitled "Academic Planning, Crediting and Reporting" and the "Academic Bulletin" for the study center attended.

## Minimum Academic Qualification

The CSU IP Office (also known as CSU IP) requires that accepted applicants must:

- remain in good academic standing;
- maintain the required GPA (as set for the particular program) after acceptance into the program;
- fulfill any program language and other requirements prior to the program start date;
- meet all other conditions set by CSU IP.

Students who do not meet these requirements may be subject to action including disenrollment.

## Academic Disqualification

All CSU IP participants must be degree seeking students who are matriculated at a CSU campus. If a student is disqualified by his or her CSU campus after having been selected for participation by CSU IP, the student is no longer eligible and will be dismissed from the program.

## CSU Registration

CSU IP participants are fully matriculated CSU students who remain enrolled at their home CSU campuses as full time students while studying overseas. This will allow students to maintain their status as CSU students and receive financial aid, if applicable.

The International (Study Abroad) Office at the student's home CSU campus arranges for the concurrent CSU registration for all CSU IP participants before the start the academic year abroad. Therefore, students must not enroll for any courses at their home CSU campus for the time that they will be abroad through IP. If participants discover that they are not concurrently enrolled at their home CSU campus at any time while they are abroad, they are advised to contact his/her International (Study Abroad) Office at their home CSU campus immediately.

CSU IP participants are expected to enroll at their overseas study center in a minimum of 15 units each semester, which is a CSU IP requirement. In unique cases, a student may have compelling reasons for requesting to enroll in a course at their home CSU campus while taking the required units abroad. In these cases, students must seek approval to enroll in the campus course from the International (Study Abroad) Office at their home CSU campus, who will facilitate the request. Student should make their requests several months prior to studying abroad unless instructed otherwise. If the request is approved, the following will apply:

- The IP Coordinator at the International (Study Abroad) Office at the student's home CSU campus will coordinate course registration and instruct the student on how to register for the course.
- The student must maintain the enrollment of a minimum of 15 units each semester at his/her overseas study center.

- Financial aid recipients are responsible for checking that enrollment in total units while abroad is permitted as per financial aid regulations and how these units may affect future financial aid awards.

## **Enrollment Requirements Abroad**

While abroad CSU IP participants are enrolled both at their home CSU campus and their overseas study center. While attending their overseas study center, the following unit enrollment policies apply:

- Undergraduate students are required to carry a minimum course load equivalent of 15 semester units per semester and a total of 30 semester units for the academic year abroad. This requirement applies to all undergraduate students regardless of the number of units they need to graduate or the enrollment requirement of the study center if this differs from the CSU IP requirement.
- Post-baccalaureate students pursuing credentials or second undergraduate degrees are admitted as post-baccalaureates, but academically they are treated as undergraduate students and as such, are required to carry the same course load as undergraduates, as described above.
- Graduate students must carry a minimum course load equivalent of 12 semester units per term on condition that at least six of those units are taken at the graduate level; otherwise, graduate students must carry a course load on the same basis as undergraduates as described above.
- Any units earned during a pre-session, special session or preparatory language program conducted outside the study center academic year calendar, are not counted in meeting the semester course load requirement unless advised otherwise in the Academic Bulletin for that program.

Full time enrollment at the study center is critical and a requirement of participation in the IP. Failure to enroll and maintain the prescribed academic load can jeopardize conditions of the student's visa to remain in the host country, impact financial aid eligibility and result in dismissal from the program.

## **Adding and Dropping Courses**

Students are permitted to add or drop a course by the end of the third week of instruction unless the study center has imposed an earlier deadline date. In case of the latter, students must follow the study center's deadline dates and policies.

Adding or dropping a course after the third week of the term is generally not permitted by CSU IP except for:

- conditions or circumstances beyond the student's control;
- for serious and compelling reasons in the case of course withdrawals (see section under "Course Withdrawals"); or
- when it is determined by CSU IP that there is an academic overload (see section under "Maximum Unit Load in One Semester").

Students who are requesting to add or drop a course after their third week of instruction must submit the General Petition Form found their "Academic Toolkit" in their online CSU IP portal. Refer to section entitled "Academic Forms" found towards the end of this publication.

## Course Withdrawals

Students are not permitted to drop a course after the third week of instruction except for serious and compelling reasons. See also "Minimum Unit Load in One Semester".

A *serious and compelling reason* is defined as a condition that was not present prior to the start of the course and/or circumstances beyond the control of the student that interferes with a student's ability to attend class meetings and/or complete course requirements. The reason for the request must be stated in writing on the appropriate form (refer to section on "Adding and Dropping Courses"). The student must provide documentation that supports the student's request and reason for the request. Reasons that are not considered serious or compelling include failing or performing poorly in a class, the coursework is at a greater degree of difficulty or complexity than was assumed, dissatisfaction with the subject matter, class or instructor, units are not needed for the degree, more time is needed for non-credit bearing activities.

In cases when students have been given permission by CSU IP to drop a course, a student will receive an administrative grade of "W" (Withdrawal) when the student has withdrawn from a course after the third week of instruction with the approval of the study center. It carries no connotation of the quality of student performance and it is not used in calculating grade point average.

Students who do not officially withdraw from courses with approval from CSU IP shall be assigned the administrative grade of "WU" (Withdrawal Unauthorized) which for purposes of grade point average and progress point computation, is equivalent to an F.

Withdrawals shall not be permitted during the final twenty percent of instruction (typically the last three weeks of a semester long course) except in cases, such as accident or serious illness, where the cause of withdrawal is due to circumstances clearly beyond the student's control. Withdrawals of this sort may involve total withdrawal from the campus or may involve only one course.

## Minimum Unit Load in One Semester

While the minimum unit load for students of the CSU to be considered full time is 12 units per term, CSU IP participants are required to enroll in a minimum unit load is 15 units each semester for all study centers.

In exceptional cases, students may petition for a reduction in the prescribed course load. Requests are granted for serious and compelling reasons and in cases of extreme hardship due to a condition or circumstances beyond the control of the student. (See "Course Withdrawals".) The discovery that coursework is at a greater degree of difficulty or complexity than was assumed, academic requirements are demanding, units are not needed for the degree, more time is needed for non-credit bearing activities or enrollment in courses outside of your study center, or that the student may not do well in a course or was unaware of deadlines or policies are not grounds for the approval of a reduced course load.

The reasons for requesting a reduced course load must be stated in writing on the appropriate form. The student must provide documentation that substantiates the condition.

Students who are requesting an exception to policy must complete the General Petition Form found their "Academic Toolkit" in their online CSU portal. Refer to section entitled "Academic Forms" found towards the end of this publication.

## Maximum Unit Load in One Semester

Students are not normally allowed to enroll in more than 19 units in any given semester since this is considered to be an academic overload. This is strictly enforced particularly in the first

semester of study to allow the students to get adjusted to their new academic environment, a different style of teaching, new living situation and culture, thus allowing students the best chance to succeed at their overseas study center.

Students requesting to take more than 19 units in the second semester of their international study must be in good academic standing and have earned a grade point average of 3.0 in the first semester of study.

Requests to take more than 19 units must have approval from the CSU IP. Students must have compelling reasons to take excessive units which must be stated in their request. The following will be taken in account:

- The student has a minimum cumulative 3.0 Grade Point Average (GPA) for their university work that he/she has completed before studying abroad.
- The student earned a minimum 3.0 GPA in the last term during the regular academic year preceding the semester in which the request is being submitted with no failed or incomplete courses on record;
- The student has strong skills in the language in which the course is being taught (for courses taught in a language other than English) as determined by language courses taken with a grade of B or better;
- The student has demonstrated success with taking over 19 units with a minimum GPA of 3.0 GPA as shown in their college transcripts prior to studying abroad;
- The student is enrolled in mix of courses for the semester in which the request is being submitted that will allow for a reasonable and manageable course load (given difficulty of courses).
- The student has attended class from the second week of instruction.
- The student has permission from the study center to add the course and bring the unit total above 19, and permission from the course instructor to add the student to the course.

Requests must be submitted no later than the last day of the third week of instruction for the semester being requested unless the study center an earlier deadline to add and drop courses. Requests received after the third week of class will not be considered except in circumstances beyond the control of the student.

Financial aid recipients are responsible for checking that enrollment in total units while abroad is permitted as per financial aid regulations and how these units may affect future financial aid awards.

Students who are requesting an exception to policy must complete the General Petition Form found their "Academic Toolkit" in their online CSU IP portal. Refer to section entitled "Academic Forms" found towards the end of this publication.

## **Attendance**

CSU IP participants are expected to attend classes in which they are enrolled regardless of the flexibility of the host country's educational system or the practices of local students. Personal travel should be restricted to weekends and university holidays. Students are advised that various study centers as well as individual faculty may establish attendance policies in their courses and may link absences to their evaluation of students' performance in a course.

In addition to its effect on academic performance, excessive and/or unauthorized absences during the academic year is a violation of the CSU IP Student Code of Conduct, and constitute grounds for disciplinary action by the CSU IP including dismissal from the program.

## **Academic Progress**

As an official academic program of the CSU, all CSU IP students are subject to all of the academic regulations of their home CSU campuses as well as those of the CSU IP and the overseas study centers they attend abroad. Home campus rules for academic probation and disqualification apply overseas at the study centers just as they do at home.

CSU IP participants are expected to make normal academic progress and to maintain a grade point average of at least a 2.0. Graduate CSU IP participants are expected to maintain a minimum grade point average of 3.0 for all graded work for the degree. Students who fail to meet these requirements are subject to probation or disenrollment from the program.

Furthermore, any student whose academic performance does not meet standards necessary for successful progression in the program may be in jeopardy of disenrollment.

## **Examinations**

Students are expected to complete all course requirements and take all examinations (including final exams) for the courses that they are enrolled in before leaving their study center. They may not request early exams or special favors in order to leave before the end of the term unless there are circumstances beyond the control of the student and CSU IP has approved an early exam date.

Study centers can have strict test-taking policies, including refusal to permit students to take exams if they arrive late or they have failed to achieve minimum academic standards prior to the final exam. Students are expected to read and comply with university policies which pertain to their studies at their study center.

Although some study centers permit students to retake (or re-sit) a final examination several weeks or months after the original examination period has taken place, CSU IP participants are not permitted to retake exams once the academic year at their study center has ended.

## **Independent Study**

In general, programs offered by CSU IP are not designed to accommodate students pursuing independent study. The structure of overseas programs offered by CSU IP is fundamentally one of immersion in study center instruction and supporting studies — such as language studies. The pursuit of other academic purposes tends to remove the student from the immersion environment and is, therefore, not generally encouraged. However, there may be a few students whose academic needs involve the completion of a paper or project during the period of study abroad, or who have a unique and very specific interest to pursue which is particularly relevant to the study center locale. In such instances, the CSU IP may approve limited independent studies on a case-by-case basis.

Where and when it is permitted and approved by the CSU IP, Independent Study is limited to a maximum of three semester units per term, except where the student's home campus only permits a lesser amount. In order to carry out independent study, a student may need to possess near-native fluency in the language of instruction, and may need special academic preparation and research skills. The student must have advanced written approval from the major department advisor and department chair, as well as from the CSU IP. Independent study must result in a paper or project capable of being graded on the student's home campus. Special tutors are not available, and students must be capable of carrying out all aspects of such study in terms of study and research skills, language skills, and access to appropriate resources. Independent study that involves additional instructional cost to the student cannot be given credit by CSU IP, and additional cost to CSU IP cannot be authorized. Based on special circumstances and upon request, the Independent Study Request Form will be provided to interested students who are studying at a study center where this is possible.

## **Internships**

Internships are unavailable at most study abroad centers, but where internship opportunities are available and pre-approved by CSU IP, the following guidelines are used:

- internships are credited at one unit per three internship hours per week over a 15-week semester;
- internships will not exceed six semester units for the year (i.e., three units per semester);
- internships will be appropriately supervised by an academic supervisor from the study center and an internship supervisor from the organization where the internship is being performed;
- internships require a written component to be stipulated by the overseas study center/supervisor;
- students seeking internship credit in their major or minor must comply with all the policies and procedures on their home campus for internships and have approval of the major department; and
- CSU IP has final approval of all internship requests.

Upon request, the Internship Application will be provided to interested students who are studying at a study center where this is possible and internship opportunities have been pre-approved by CSU IP. Internship requests must be completed and submitted to CSU IP within the first three weeks of the semester. Late applications will be not approved.

## **Repeated Course Work**

Undergraduate students may not repeat courses which are equivalent to courses they have already successfully completed. Since a course taken abroad may have the same or a similar title but have different content than a course previously taken, the student should keep complete records of their coursework so that if credit for the course is questioned at the home campus, the content of the course can be verified. For more information, students are advised to consult with their home campus catalog and advisors regarding the repeat of courses.

## **Assignment of Grades**

CSU IP uses a carefully developed general system for converting foreign grades to CSU equivalents. Great care is exercised by the CSU IP to ensure that students neither benefit from nor are penalized by different evaluation methods prevailing at the various study centers.

CSU IP is required to report all courses taken at the study center and report a grade for each course attempted. This includes any failed courses which may or may not appear on the study center academic report or transcript, e.g., Waseda University, Uppsala University and German institutions.

All grades reported to the CSU campus registrars by CSU IP are considered permanent and final except "incompletes," which are rarely given. Under ordinary circumstances a grade may not be changed except to correct a clerical or procedural error. No change of a final grade may be made on the basis of re-examination or by completing additional work for the course.

## **Assessment and Grading Systems**

Higher education institutions outside the United States typically use grading systems which differ from those in use in the CSU. The examination systems vary widely as well. In many universities, students pursue specific degree objectives in which the individual courses taken are not graded separately. Rather, a final comprehensive examination is given at the end of the year or at the end of the course of study, when the student's advisors feel that the student is prepared in all



subject areas. Continuous assessment as practiced on American campuses is uncommon. Where examinations are given, they are usually highly specific, may focus on only a fraction of the subject, and may be oral or written. Grades for an entire term or year's work may be assigned on the basis of a single final examination.

Since the grade reporting systems and procedures of international institutions differ from the CSU campuses, CSU IP students should not expect to receive their grades as quickly as they do at their home campus. For most countries, it can take a minimum of four months after completion of the year abroad for courses taken at the study center to be reported to the student's home CSU campus. In some cases, reports can take longer than four months to process depending on specific circumstances. Refer to the "Academic Planning, Crediting and Reporting" publication for more information.

## **Grading Symbols**

To evaluate student performance, host universities often use different grading symbols which are converted to the grading symbols used at the CSU.

Grades earned on programs offered by CSU IP will be calculated in the cumulative grade point average on the student's CSU transcript. Academic symbols CR, NC and W do not affect grade point averages.

The basic grading system that CSU IP uses in academic reporting to the CSU campuses is the A through F system in which the highest grade that can be reported is an A. To obtain a definition for each grade, students are instructed to refer to their home campus catalog.

## **The Use of Withdrawal Unauthorized (WU)**

The symbol "WU" indicates that an enrolled student did not follow administrative procedures to properly withdraw from the course and also failed to complete course requirements. It is used when completed assignments, course activities or both were insufficient to make normal evaluation of academic performance possible, such as not taking the final exam. It is also used when students withdraw from courses without authorization from CSU IP. For purposes of grade point average and progress point computation, this symbol is equivalent to an "F" and shall be counted as units attempted but not passed.

## **Incomplete Work**

Because of the difficulty of completing and grading work after the study abroad period is complete, no incomplete grades are given. In addition, the CSU IP does not permit students to complete coursework after the student has left the study abroad center. Students who fail to complete all course requirements by the end of the final semester at their overseas study center will receive a grade of WU. Exceptions to this policy must be pre-approved by the CSU IP.

## **Auditing**

Auditing a course must be approved by the study center and CSU IP. Audited courses which bear an additional cost to CSU IP will not be approved.

Enrollment as an auditor is also subject to permission of the instructor of the course. Regular class attendance is expected although full participation in classroom activities will be at the discretion of the instructor. Once enrolled as an auditor, a student may not change to credit status.

Students do not receive credit for audited courses, and they are not reported to the CSU home campus. An audited course may not be counted toward meeting the required minimum academic course load requirement and may not be considered a reason for a student to be permitted to take a deficit load.

## **Credit/No Credit Option**

Subject to home campus restrictions, students may request to have one course during each semester reported to the home campus for a Credit or No Credit (CR/NC) grade which will not affect CSU grade point averages. The following conditions apply:

1. All courses must be taken for a regular grade at the study center; however, via this form, students may designate one course per semester for a maximum of eight semester units for the year to be reported to the home campus as a CR/NC.
2. Requests must be consistent with CR/NC regulations set by the student's home campus and major department. Normally, courses fulfilling major requirements must be taken for a letter grade.
3. CR is awarded for grades A through C- in undergraduate courses, and A through B- in graduate courses. NC is assigned for D+ through F in undergraduate courses, C+ through F in graduate courses, contingent upon compliance with #2, above.
4. Approved requests are final and will be reported to the student's home campus as a CR/NC which will appear on student's CSU academic record. CR/NC grading symbols have no effect on the grade point average.
5. Language courses which are local or native in countries where the national language is not English do not qualify for the CR/NC option and will be reported to the student's home campus using letter grades except when approved by CSU IP.
6. CR/NC requests must be submitted to CSU IP at least four weeks prior to the scheduled final examination date for courses which are two or more months in length. If the course is less than two months in length, requests must be submitted at least two weeks prior to the scheduled final examination date. Forms must be received in the term in which the course was taken. Deadline dates to submit forms are strictly enforced.
7. Incomplete forms, which omit the information requested above and/or signatures and dates below will not be considered.

Students who select CR/NC grading should be informed that CR grades may be interpreted as a C and NC grades may be interpreted as an F when considered by other institutions e.g. when applying to graduate or law degree programs.

Students whose Credit/No Credit requests have been approved are still required to attend class until the end of the semester. Failure to do is considered a violation of the CSU IP Student Code of Conduct, and constitute grounds for disciplinary action by CSU IP including dismissal from the program.

Students who are requesting that a Credit/No Credit grade be applied for a course must complete the Credit/No Credit Request Form found in their "Academic Toolkit". Refer to section entitled "Academic Forms" found towards the end of this publication. Students studying in Chile, China, France, Germany, Ghana, Italy, Japan, Spain and Taiwan must give completed and signed forms to the on-site CSU IP representative (Resident Director/Coordinator or Program Assistant) at their study center. Students studying at other study centers must follow the instructions provided in the form.

## **Program Withdrawal**

A student may withdraw completely from CSU IP for serious and compelling reasons or in verified cases of accident or serious illness. Withdrawal after departure constitutes withdrawal not only from CSU IP, but also from the student's home CSU campus for the remainder of the term. The health and accident insurance plan is terminated and the student's visa status to remain in the



host country is also affected.

All requests for withdrawal from the study center must be submitted in writing using the Program Withdrawal Form. Students studying in Chile, China, France, Germany, Ghana, Italy, Japan, Spain and Taiwan can obtain the form from their on-site Resident Director, Program Coordinator or Program Assistant. Students studying in other locations must consult with the International Office at their study center about their plan to withdraw and contact the CSU IP by e-mailing [IPacademics@calstate.edu](mailto:IPacademics@calstate.edu). The CSU IP Withdrawal Notification Form will be provided to the student.

Failure to follow formal CSU IP procedures may result in the assignment of WU's for all courses. Students who receive financial aid funds must consult with their Financial Aid Office at their home campus. If a recipient of student financial aid funds withdraws from the IP during an academic term or a payment period, the amount of grant or loan assistance received may be subject to return and/or repayment provisions.

## Academic Forms

In order for CSU IP to consider various student requests or exceptions to academic policy, students will be asked to submit a form and possibly documentation to support the request.

Academic forms mentioned in this publication can be found in the student's "Academic Toolkit" located in the Attached Documents or Learning Content section of their online CSU IP portal ". Forms include (but are not limited to):

- General Petition Form
- Credit/No Credit Request

To access forms not found in the Academic Toolkit, students must follow these instructions:

- Students studying in Chile, China, France, Germany, Ghana, Italy, Japan, Spain and Taiwan must contact their on-site CSU IP representative.
- Students attending programs in other locations must email [IPacademics@calstate.edu](mailto:IPacademics@calstate.edu).

## Academic Reporting

At the conclusion of the student's study abroad experience, CSU IP issues an Academic Report which is the only report that a student will receive for coursework attempted abroad through CSU IP. Mid-year reports are not provided. Courses, units and grades that appear on the student's report will be posted to student's CSU record. Once posted, the CSU transcript becomes the official record of the coursework attempted and grades earned abroad. (Refer to the section entitled "Academic Planning, Crediting and Reporting" for additional information.)

## Academic Review

Once an Academic Report has been provided to the student, it is the student's responsibility to review the information to ensure the report is complete and accurate. If a student believes that an error has been made or the student has a question about what has been reported, then the student can request an academic review of the course, grade or units in question by emailing [IPacademics@calstate.edu](mailto:IPacademics@calstate.edu).

Academic reviews can take several months to complete depending on circumstances. Reviews must be requested 1) before a student graduates with the degree that they were pursuing while

studying abroad on IP and 2) no later than 12 months after the date that appears on his/her Academic Report, whichever date comes first. Requests made after this time will not be considered.

### **Academic Misconduct**

Students are expected to follow the same principles on academic integrity at their host universities as they would at their home campuses. Students who have committed any act of academic misconduct including (but not limited to) plagiarism, forgery, cheating or other such actions, are subject to disciplinary action based on the CSU IP Student Conduct Code found in the online CSU IP portal.

### **Academic Questions**

The first point of contact for all academic questions for students attending programs where the CSU IP employs a CSU IP representative is the resident director, program coordinator or program assistant. Programs where CSU IP employs a representative include Chile, China, France, Germany, Ghana, Italy, Japan, Spain, and Taiwan. Students attending programs in other locations who have academic policy questions may e-mail [IPacademics@calstate.edu](mailto:IPacademics@calstate.edu).

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