



Financial Aid and Students Studying Abroad

BSU sponsored study abroad programs:

Students who wish to attend a Bluefield State University (BSU) sponsored study abroad program(s) may use financial aid to assist them with paying for the expenses. A student in a study-abroad program is eligible for aid if the program is approved for academic credit toward his or her degree by BSU at which he or she is enrolled as a regular student.

The financial aid office at Bluefield State University must have a copy of the written study abroad agreement/or arrangement as well as a “reasonable” list of the costs for the study-abroad program at the time you submit your application & deposit for the study abroad program. Please note that students who participate in the study abroad program are required to provide proof of insurance (i.e., health, travel, etc).

BSU is responsible for maintaining information on the student’s eligibility, how the award was calculated, what money has been disbursed, and any other documentation associated with the award, even if some of that documentation comes from other schools. Moreover, Bluefield State University must return FSA funds if required, for example, in refund/return in withdrawal or overpayment situations.

A student who is eligible for Federal Student Aid (Federal Direct Stafford Subsidized & Unsubsidized loans) may receive loans in order to pay for a study abroad program if they haven’t used their academic year or lifetime loan limit. The student may obtain their loan eligibility from the BSU Financial Aid Office. ***A student’s loan may or may not pay all the costs associated with the study-abroad program.***

When the student has met with his study abroad coordinator and been approved to participate by completing the application and paying the deposit for the program, it is strongly recommended that the student come to the financial aid office and check their financial aid eligibility for the study-abroad program. In order for financial aid to counsel the student, a 30-day notification is requested. This will also allow time to make sure that the student has completed the FAFSA and that any documentation required has been submitted in order for financial aid to be processed. The FAFSA should be completed prior to the beginning of the financial aid year in which the study abroad program will be offered. It is recommended that students file their FAFSA by April 15th. The financial aid office is open M-F, 8 am to 4 pm; however, scheduling an appointment is the best course of action to make sure that you get the answers you need to your questions. The following additional document should be completed and submitted to the financial aid office prior to processing financial aid requests for study abroad:

- Study Abroad Worksheet of costs and expenses

The Study Abroad Worksheet of costs and expenses should list expenses that the student can be responsible to pay which may include:

- Airfare
- Visa
- Passport
- Proof of Insurance Required – (Health, Travel, etc.)
- Meals (some locations)
- Personal expenses
- On-site Director or Faculty and support costs

Other Study Abroad Programs outside BSU:

A student in a study-abroad program that is outside of BSU sponsorship is eligible for aid if the program is approved for academic credit toward his or her degree which he or she is enrolled as a regular student. In order for financial aid to counsel the student, a 30-day notification is requested. This will also allow time to make sure that the student has completed the FAFSA and that any documentation required has been submitted in order for financial aid to be processed. The FAFSA should be completed prior to the beginning of the financial aid year in which the study abroad program will be offered. It is recommended that students file their FAFSA by April 15th. The financial aid office is open M-F, 8 am to 4 pm; however, scheduling an appointment is the best course of action to make sure that you get the answers you need to your questions. The following steps/checklist should be followed in order to ensure that you are meeting financial aid guidelines for an outside study abroad program:

- 1) Student must complete a transient permission form with the BSU Office of the Registrars. Please follow Registrar policy & procedures for completion of the transient permission form.
- 2) Student is responsible for paying all expenses and submitting the Study abroad worksheet of costs and expenses with supporting documentation.
- 3) Student must provide an academic transcript at the end of the study abroad program to the office of the Registrar
- 4) Student must provide a paid tuition receipt to the financial aid office showing the costs of tuition and fees paid with Federal Student Aid Funds.
- 5) Please note, Bluefield State University must return FSA funds if required, for example, in refund/return in withdrawal or overpayment situations.

For students participating in either the BSU sponsored or Outside Study Abroad Programs, the student is responsible for paying all costs and meeting the requirements outlined in this document to use Federal Student Aid Funds.