Planning for Study Abroad as a Biology major: The FAQs

1. How do I go about planning to study abroad?

You will want to attend one of the major Study Abroad meetings by the Study Abroad office. They will walk you through the steps the College requires for you to study away from Bates.

You will need to declare as a Biology major before you can apply to go abroad; this should occur before the end of the first semester sophomore year. Declarations are made through Garnet Gateway, and you will need to meet with the Biology department chair, Dr. Dearborn.

You will want to meet with your academic advisor and let her/him know that you plan to study away from Bates. This will allow you to make a tentative plan for what courses you will want and need to take over the next two years.

You will need to meet with Dr. Stephanie Richards, who serves as the Study Abroad liaison for Biology. She will go over your academic plan with you, discuss where you are thinking of going for your time abroad, and answer any questions you might have.

2. Where can I study?

Biology majors have regularly studied abroad in Denmark, Africa, Australia, New Zealand, Central America, and the United Kingdom.

Students have also attended programs here in North America, such as those offered by the following: Williams-Mystic semester in Mystic, CT; the SEA Semester programs in Woods Hole, MA; Jackson Laboratories in Bar Harbor, ME; and Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in New York City. The Study Abroad office has information on all these programs and others.

3. If I study abroad in a different language, can I take Biology courses and have them count toward my major?

If you are in an abroad program where the science courses are in English, you may be able to count them toward the Biology major if they meet the general requirements (see below).

However, if you are in a language immersion program where all your courses are in a different language (for example, an immersion program in France) we generally do not approve courses for Biology major credit. If you are considering this option, you will need to discuss it with your advisor and Dr. Richards.
4. **How many courses taken elsewhere can I count towards my Biology major?**

You may use two Biology courses taken elsewhere toward your Biology major requirements. You will be advised to take courses that are the equivalent of 200-level or 300-level Biology courses.

5. **How can I tell if courses will be accepted by the Biology department for major credit?**

Course numbering systems differ at different institutions. As a rule of thumb, you will want to make sure any courses you take away from Bates have a year of Chemistry and at least one semester of introductory Biology as pre-requisites. Furthermore, you will want to look for courses that have some sort of laboratory or field work component. These types of courses are generally equivalent to an upper-level course here at Bates.

6. **How do I get credit for Biology courses toward my major when I return?**

*After* you return, and *after* degree credit for your courses has been approved by the Study Abroad office, see Dr. Richards to have the courses formally approved for major credit.

For this you should have a course syllabus and any information that will help the Biology department evaluate the course. Useful information includes a list of course readings, the name of the textbook used (if any), and information on how the grade is generated (exams, projects, laboratory work). If you have a laboratory manual, that is useful as well.

The Biology department will determine if the courses you have taken are similar to what you might experience in a 200-level or 300-level course here at Bates, and that information will be given to your advisor and to the Biology department chair.