



THE UNIVERSITY  
of NORTH CAROLINA  
at CHAPEL HILL

COLLEGE OF ARTS & SCIENCES

STUDY ABROAD OFFICE

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studyabroad.unc.edu

October 8, 2018

Administrative Board of the College of Arts & Sciences

Dear Colleagues:

The Study Abroad Office submits for your approval a proposal for the establishment of a new program, **Semester at Sea**, to be offered beginning **Fall 2019** and continuing annually.

## PROGRAM INFORMATION

**Host Organization/University:** Semester at Sea

**Host Organization/University Website:** <https://www.semesteratsea.org/>

**Proposed Program Type:** Third-Party Provider

**Program Terms Available:** Spring Semester, Fall Semester

**Rationale:** UNC students have regularly and consistently petitioned the Study Abroad (and been approved) to participate in the Semester at Sea program every semester. The program is popular because it offers a wide variety of course options and the opportunity to take classes with students from 250+ institutions all over the country/world while exploring 12-15 different ports of call during the semester. Currently there are no approved programs with a truly multi-site itinerary and Semester at Sea is a leader in shipboard education. Semester at Sea's mission is "to educate individuals with the global understanding necessary to address the challenges of our interdependent world. With the world as our classroom, our programs integrate multiple country study, interdisciplinary coursework, and experiential learning for meaningful engagement in the global community."

In addition, affiliating with Semester at Sea provides increased opportunities for financial assistance for our students through scholarships and grants (<https://www.semesteratsea.org/admission-aid/scholarships/>).

Given the history of petition trends from UNC students and the fact that it's under new academic sponsorship with Colorado State University, now is a good time to include it on our programs list.

**Target Audience/Major & Discipline:** The target audience includes any UNC student (sophomore year or above) seeking to do a multiple location semester program. Semester at Sea offers a very different experience than spending an in-depth semester in the same location, and allows students



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seeking breadth and exposure to visit over a dozen contrasting cities on multiple continents. In addition to traditional classroom courses, students are able to engage in their new environments through field classes and prominent guest speakers.

**Class Standing Eligibility:** Senior, Junior, Sophomore

**Anticipated Number of Students:** 3 – 5 per term

## PROGRAM ACADEMICS

**Minimum GPA Requirement:** 2.5

**Learning Objectives:** Semester at Sea has a robust statement highlighting its learning objectives which can be accessed here: <https://www.semesteratsea.org/our-program/global-citizenship/>. In short, the objective is to create empathetic, aware, and adaptable global citizens and leaders who are engaged and critical thinkers.

**Academic Options Available:** Areas of study available include the following disciplines: Anthropology, Art & Art History, Business, Communication Studies, Economics, Geography, Literature & Creative Writing, History, Human Development, International Studies, Media Communications & Journalism, Philosophy & Religion, Music, Theatre & Dance, Natural Resources, Political Science, Psychology, Sociology, Spanish, and Tourism & Recreation. Each course includes an in-country field class which takes place during the a port of call. It is designed to incorporate experiential learning and leverage the environment.

**Host Institution/Organization Courses & Faculty:** Semester at Sea offers 3 credit courses across various disciplines and up to 75 different courses on every voyage. Some of the frequently offered courses are listed here: <https://tinyurl.com/y8wbqfxf>. Students select 3-4 courses from the offering in addition to a required Global Studies course (3 credits) for a total of 12-15 credits. The Global Studies course "is required of all students and provides an integrated, interdisciplinary introduction to each of the countries visited on a given itinerary. The course examines the traditional and changing systems and values of a country and its cultures, while providing the fundamental knowledge necessary to prepare students for field activities in the host country." All of the courses are taught by faculty with terminal degrees from accredited universities, international experience, and expertise in one or more of the regions. As the academic sponsor of Semester at Sea, Colorado State University has the role of maintaining academic standards, including approving course syllabi and faculty, appointing the academic dean, and issuing course credits and transcripts.

**Academic Instruction:** Even though the program is non-traditional with 100+ days at sea, the courses still take place in a typical classroom setting while the ship is at sea. Instruction and contact hours are monitored by Colorado State University, a fully accredited institution. In addition to



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classroom teaching, each course offered during a voyage has a field class component designed by the faculty and constitute approximately 20 percent of a course's contact hours and 20 percent of a student's grade. A field class takes place during a full 8-hour port day and the same expectations are placed on a field class day as placed on a class day at sea.

**Transcripts & Credit Transfer:** Students participating on the Semester at Sea program are enrolled as visiting students of Colorado State University and CSU will issue the transcript. Students should follow UNC transfer credit procedures and all courses will be transferred as TREQ credits.

## PROGRAM LOGISTICS:

**Services Provided:** Semester at Sea provides all services for students on land and on the ship.

**Excursions/Activities Available:** Excursions and activities are at the core of the Semester at Sea program. During a typical semester voyage, approximately 45 days are spent on land during the 12-15 ports of call. While students are on land, they participate in a mandatory field class, which is component of every course. Additionally, they have the option to participate in field programs and independent travel. Field programs are organized by Semester at Sea and designed to focus on one of five areas: environmental stewardship, community and family engagement, social equity and access, history, and human expression and the arts.

**Orientation Activities:** Due to the unique nature of this program, students are required to attend an extensive orientation, which includes shipboard rules and regulations and health and safety matters. Prior to every port of call, the program brings in Interport Lecturers who are experts and locals from that country for intercultural briefings and to contribute to classes. Additionally, diplomats and consular officials from the US State Department are invited for diplomatic and political briefings. Finally, on the evenings immediately preceding a port of call, the shipboard community "gathers for presentations intended to enhance cultural understanding and to promote health and safety preparedness."

**Anticipated Accommodations:** Students are housed in cabins on the ship based on their personal preferences. They can choose from inside/outside and double/triple cabins. All student cabins are equipped with a closed-circuit TV, mini-refrigerator, closets (with hangers) drawers, a restroom (shower, toilet, shelf space), and a safe shared between cabin mates. Linens, towels and cabin cleaning are provided daily by cabin stewards.

## HEALTH & SAFETY INFORMATION

**Health Insurance:** The Study Abroad Office coordinates with the Office of Risk Management Services to enroll student and faculty participants in international accident and health insurance through GeoBlue for the duration of the program.



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**Safety & Risk Information:** Health and safety is the main priority for all students and personnel on a voyage. While on-board, students are at risk for concerns typically present on a college campus such as sexual harassment, theft and robbery, and other transgressions. However, being at sea also presents other risks such as seasickness to unforeseen weather/natural disasters.

**Health Information:** Given the numerous and diverse cities/countries visited on a semester voyage, there are unique possible health risks at each port of call. These will be addressed on an individual basis prior to every port of call.

**Required Vaccinations (if applicable):** In the pre-departure phase, Semester at Sea staff will advise students through any required and recommended vaccinations based on the unique voyage itinerary for the student.

**Local Medical Facilities:** While on-board, there is a medical clinic available to all students with US licensed medical professionals. There are also two licensed clinical psychologists charged with coordinating, implementing, and evaluating mental health care for passengers. While on land, SAS has identified medical facilities at each port of call.

Health, safety, and security information will be presented to students during the required UNC pre-departure orientation.

## CONCLUSION

A letter of support from a campus academic department in support of this program is included in as an addendum to this proposal.

We are happy to provide any additional information necessary for your review of this program. Thank you for your time and your support of global opportunities for Carolina students.

Sincerely,

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Jason A. Kinnear  
Interim Associate Dean of Study Abroad



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August 22, 2018

I am writing in support of the Semester at Sea program. In the past several years, a number of Global Studies majors have participated in the program and have had rewarding academic and experiential semesters. I anticipate that our majors will continue to have an interest in SAS.

Therefore, Global Studies happily endorses this program.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me, at [jweiler@email.unc.edu](mailto:jweiler@email.unc.edu), or by phone at 919 962-0491.

Sincerely,

Dr. Jonathan Weiler  
Teaching Associate Professor  
Director of Undergraduate Studies  
Curriculum in Global Studies  
UNC Chapel Hill