

Graduate Program in Homeland Security (HSEC): The SDSU International Experience Process and Checklist



DEADLINE: Start planning your international experience at least a semester (6-9 months) ahead of the date you plan to travel. Don't wait, it will affect your options.

An international experience is required for students in the Graduate Program in Homeland Security. The recommended pathways as a graduate student at San Diego State University are outlined in this document in sections 1-3 below. These include **(1) participation in a short winter or summer faculty-led Global Seminar**, or **(2) enrollment in a minimum of 3-units on another approved SDSU program during the summer or winter**, or an **(3) independent study abroad that you organize and register for approval with SDSU**. The [“Program Types” page in Aztecs Abroad](#) contains a summary of the various types of programs available.

Regardless of the option you choose, study abroad for HSEC requires enrollment in a graduate-level course numbered 500 and above, a minimum of 45 academic contact hours in another country, immersion in another culture (through activities and experiences), and several other process and procedural requirements which are listed below. The path to study abroad involves working with the Global Education Office and your Graduate Advisor. Homeland Security students are encouraged to attend their study abroad experience with a group of student peers – the experience is usually more rewarding.

Pre-Experience Checklist for All Programs

- Obtain a passport (*View processing times at travel.state.gov*). If you already have one, check that the expiration date is at least 6 months after you plan to return. Rationale: Countries' border officials note your passport's expiration date and your anticipated return date to the USA. Travelers are often required to have a passport that allows six months between return to the USA and expiration of passport. If not, you may be turned away, and required to return to the United States.

Students may visit the SDSU Passport office. Great service & convenience, plus no appointment needed! www.sdsu.edu/passportoffice/

- Be aware that some countries require a visa (special passport endorsement) in addition to a passport. If you need an entry visa for any countries in which you will be traveling, obtain an entry visa according to the instructions for your destinations on this [“US Students Abroad” section of the Department of State website](#).
- [Explore Scholarships/Financial aid Information:](#)

- Attend an information session about scholarships and financial aid for study abroad. Visit the “Financing & Scholarships” section of Aztecs Abroad for more information: www.sdsu.edu/aztecsabroad
- Apply for the SDSU Associated Students Scholarship and indicate your plans to study abroad on the Aztec Scholarships Portal. Information about both of these on the [Financing & Scholarships section of Aztecs Abroad](#)
- Consider applying for a Boren Award (<https://www.borenawards.org/apply-now>) - these are targeted at national security and public service interest, and [HSEC students have been awarded in the past](#).

1. SDSU Global Seminars (Led by SDSU Faculty)

If you choose to experience a pre-selected faculty-led program, review the list of options by visiting www.sdsu.edu/aztecsabroad and consulting your Graduate Adviser. *If you are interested in one of these programs, visit their respective web pages (link below), select “APPLY NOW” and complete an application, or Put your name on the “inquiry” list if applications are not yet open.* If you select a pre-approved faculty-led program listed at the link below, there is no need to search any further for a study abroad program. Faculty will help you with registration and preparing to travel.

- [List of all current Global Seminars](#)

2. Study Abroad Partner Programs and ISEP Programs

- Visit the SDSU Aztecs Abroad database at www.sdsu.edu/aztecsabroad and start the online Advising Phase to begin learning about the programs available and identifying your goals for the experience. The final step of this phase is to meet with a Global Education Advisor.
- With an “Advanced Search” you can search by term (e.g. Summer, Winter), or filter by Program Type.
- **Follow the instructions** to Apply to your selected program before the deadline. Follow any additional instructions given to you by the Study Abroad Office. This will include having paperwork signed by your Graduate Advisor approving the credit.
- **The following partner programs are recommended for their focus on topics related to or relevant to Homeland Security:**
 - [ISEP Study Abroad](#) (examples with relevant coursework: “ISEP Direct Summer in London: Journalism, Business and Political Science”; “ISEP Direct Summer in Germany”, “ISEP Direct Summer in Greece”)
 - [SIT Study Abroad](#) (programs focused on Climate & Environment, Development & Inequality, Education & Social Change, or Geopolitics & Power)
 - [DIS Summer in Scandinavia](#) (variety of topics)
 - [University of Amsterdam](#) summer & winter school (variety of topics)
 - [Berlin School of Economics and Law summer & winter schools](#) (variety of topics)
 - [GREEN Program](#) (sustainability)
 - [Child & Family Health International](#) (volunteer programs)

3. Independent Study Abroad - Travel Registration (internships, grant-funded travel, non-approved programs)

Pre-Experience Checklist

- **Make an appointment with your graduate adviser (Dr. Larson or Dr. Frost)** to discuss approval via <http://hsecsdsu.appointy.com/> and selecting “Study Abroad Questions/Approval Meeting”. Phone appointments are perfectly fine or in-person.
- **Enroll in course HSEC 797 – Study Abroad/Research in the Fall or Spring semester (registration code obtained through Dr. Larson)** to complete the independent study abroad assignment and discussions in the HSEC 797 CANVAS course. If you are completing your experience over Summer or Winter, you will need to still enroll in HSEC 797 in Fall or Spring (we are not allowed to run HSEC courses during Summer or Winter sessions). For all independent study abroad experiences (i.e. **NOT faculty-led, NOT a course at another University accepted for SDSU credit, NOT a partner University**) we require HSEC students to enroll in HSEC 797 - Study Abroad/Research.
- **Register your Travel Plans in Aztecs Abroad**: Please register no later than *one month* prior to travel.

Before you begin, please note:

You will need your passport and about 15 minutes to complete the registration.

The system will request you to upload a picture of your passport. If you can't upload your passport photo you should still enter in the passport info and complete all the other steps.

- Complete the all of the emergency contact information – make sure you enter a phone number. Enter the full name of your emergency contact in the "Addressee Name" box.
- Complete the mailing address and phone number. You can leave the permanent, current and abroad addresses blank.

Application Instructions:

- Depending on your plans, select the appropriate type of Travel Registration. This will likely be option 4 ([Research, Conferences, Grant-funded Travel](#)) or option 5 (non-SDSU programs)

If your travel is sponsored by an SDSU Research Foundation grant please make sure that you choose option 4 and indicate that you are participating in grant-funded travel.

- Click the "APPLY NOW" button (do not login before you click apply)
- Select "Log in with your SDSUId credentials"
- Sign in using your **SDSUid** (Do not NOT use your RED ID, but rather your @sdsu.edu email credentials). If you do not yet have your SDSUId or forgot your password, [go here for assistance](#).

Enter the following information:

- **Arrival Date:** enter the date you depart the U.S. and not the date you arrive in the foreign country. This is so we have an accurate date to begin your insurance coverage.
- **Departure Date:** this is the date you depart the foreign country to return to the U.S.
- **Location:** enter the city and country you are traveling to
- Click "Add to Itinerary"

- If you are traveling to multiple countries you can follow the steps above to enter the dates for the second country. In this case, you will enter your actual arrival date in the new country.

Complete the application

- Once your itinerary is complete, click the "Continue" button at the bottom of the page
 - Proceed to the application. Click on the hot links on the right side of the page to open the questionnaires and documents. Review, complete, and submit each section to check it off. Click the "Submit" button when all steps are complete.
 - Click "Committed" and complete all post-decision steps
- **SDSU Foreign Travel Insurance through JCB / OnCall**– as part of the online application, students will be directed to enroll in the required insurance plan. The insurance card will be accessible in your Aztecs Abroad portal once coverage is confirmed. The cost of the plan is based on the length of time abroad. In general, coverage is approximately \$15-20 per week. If your travel dates change, it is your responsibility to contact JCB. Note that cancelled insurance results in a \$35 administration fee.

For assistance in completing these steps, contact the Global Education Office at globaleducationoffice@sdsu.edu

Help is available! If at any point you get lost in the process, contact the Global Education Office at 619-594-2475.

<https://www.sdsu.edu/global-education>

Kelsey Toyoda, M.A., is the Global Education Advisor for the College of Sciences and College of Engineering in the Global Education Office, who specializes in support for SDSU graduate students in the HSEC program. She is happy to assist you in selecting a program: ktoyoda@sdsu.edu