Undergraduate Experiential Learning

Experiential Learning

Case Western Reserve University offers undergraduates a variety of experiences inside and outside the classroom that are built upon a process of guided inquiry, preparation, action, and reflection. Many research, internship, and employment opportunities are aligned with academic programs. Linguistic and cultural immersion characterize the study abroad experience. In many courses, Case Western Reserve students engage in experiential learning beyond the on-campus classrooms and laboratories. Experiences that form the basis for reflection and synthesis under the guidance of faculty include working with hospitalized children, designing engineering solutions for a problem presented by a municipality, interning at a local media outlet, tutoring in Cleveland’s Hispanic community, gaining experience in public health clinics, studying history with “the city as classroom,” or collecting aquatic specimens from the ponds at the university’s 389-acre farm. Courses that incorporate community service or internships into the curriculum forge links between Case Western Reserve undergraduates and schools, neighborhoods, businesses, and governmental and health care institutions in Cleveland and elsewhere.

International Experience

Case Western Reserve University encourages students to study, research, intern, and participate in service learning experiences abroad. Students benefit personally, academically, and professionally from educational experiences abroad.

Case Western Reserve University partners with overseas institutions to provide a wide selection of courses that students can take abroad. Students of all majors can stay on track to graduate while including study abroad in their degree timeline. Students should determine, in consultation with their academic advisors and study abroad advisors, which study abroad programs meet their academic and personal goals. They can choose from traditional semester or academic year study abroad programs or a shorter programs with CWRU faculty and students. Students should visit www.case.edu/studyabroad or contact a study abroad advisor at studyabroad@case.edu to find programs that meet their needs and can explore different program types and offerings online.

Many study abroad programs cost about the same as studying in Cleveland. Additionally, financial aid can be applied to study abroad, and many students find that they are eligible for study abroad scholarships. Students participating in semester or academic year study abroad must enroll in the equivalent of at least 12 credit-hours each semester in order to maintain full-time student status for the semester abroad. Upon presentation of an official transcript from the study abroad program, transfer credit will be awarded for courses completed with a grade of C or better and determined to be equivalent or comparable to those offered by the appropriate academic department at CWRU.

Students participating in semester or academic year study abroad pay the normal CWRU tuition to Case Western Reserve University and maintain their student status at CWRU during the period of study abroad. Case Western Reserve University will, in turn, pay the tuition costs for the student’s program abroad. Students are responsible for paying all non-tuition costs associated with study abroad to the study abroad program directly (i.e. housing, student fees, excursions, travel costs, etc.). Students retain all of their financial aid while studying abroad. Additional study abroad financial information is available online.

Semester and Academic Year Programs

In order to participate in semester and academic year programs of study or practical experience that immerse them in the culture and language of another country, students must first

- Have completed at least 24 credit-hours of coursework at CWRU,
- Have declared a major,
- Be in good academic and disciplinary standing with no pending judicial actions, and
- Be otherwise eligible to register on campus at CWRU for the proposed semester(s) (no financial holds, e.g.).

After matriculation at Case Western Reserve University, students are permitted to earn at other accredited colleges or universities or through an approved program of study abroad no more than 38 credit-hours toward the totals required for their degree, with no more than 15 credit-hours taken as part of domestic programs or as summer study in a student’s home country; this includes courses taken through the cross-registration program. Any off-campus study beyond 15 credit-hours may only be taken through approved study abroad programs. Any additional credits earned at other institutions after matriculation at Case Western Reserve beyond 15 domestically or as summer study in a student’s home country and beyond a total of 38 including study abroad will raise the total number of credit-hours required for the degree by a corresponding number.

Case Western Reserve does not require students to complete any foreign language prerequisites before studying abroad, though students wishing to study in a country where the native language is not English are advised to develop their language skills to the extent possible. Students studying for at least a semester in a single location where English is not an official language must take a course that advances their skills in a language of the host country during each semester of study abroad, provided such courses are available. This may be a course of language instruction or a course taught in a language of the host country. Students participating in study abroad experiences that are comparative in nature and visit several sites within the same semester are not required to include language study in their academic programs.

Summer Programs

All Case Western Reserve University undergraduates in good academic and disciplinary standing are permitted to study abroad during the summer. With approval, up to 15 credit-hours of summer coursework can be transferred to Case Western Reserve University. During the summer, study abroad students pay tuition and fees directly to the study abroad
program. A wide variety of summer programs is available through the 
Office of Education Abroad.

**Research, Service Learning, and Internship Opportunities Abroad**

Case Western Reserve University offers international research, service 
learning, and internship opportunities as part of a semester abroad on 
many of our approved programs. Through our partnerships with Acadia 
University (summer programs) and EuroScholars (semester programs), 
students can experience a research-intensive program abroad. The 
CWRU study abroad advisors can help students identify and apply to 
these programs. With the help of the Office of Education Abroad and 
CWRU faculty, students can also conduct independent research projects 
abroad.

**Research Experience**

**Undergraduate Research**

Case Western Reserve University is a research-intensive community 
with a tradition of involving undergraduates in research and creative 
endeavors. Regardless of a student’s major or academic interests, there 
are numerous opportunities to engage in research either on campus with 
Case Western Reserve faculty or elsewhere during both the academic 
year and the summer. SOURCE (Support of Undergraduate Research 
and Creative Endeavors) provides assistance to students throughout the 
undergraduate educational experience, including:

- helping students identify research and creative project opportunities 
on campus or around the university during the academic year and 
around the world during the summer,
- providing funding for on-campus summer research,
- providing funding for travel for students presenting their work at 
regional and national conferences,
- providing educational research and informational seminars,
- sponsoring Intersections: SOURCE Symposium and Poster Session 
for students to present their work to our academic community, and
- advising Discussions: The Undergraduate Research Journal of CWRU.

For more information, email source@case.edu or phone 216.368.8508.

In many cases, students pursuing research under the guidance of a 
faculty member may earn degree credit by registering for “Undergraduate 
Research” or “Independent Study” in the appropriate department. These 
are advanced-level courses and require departmental approval. However, 
students may not earn both degree credit and pay for the same work. 
Students may discuss academic credit for research with their major 
advisor.

**Work Experience**

**The Center for Civic Engagement and Learning**

The Center for Civic Engagement and Learning (CCEL) works to create 
an engaged campus by providing and supporting opportunities for 
community service and collective action while promoting civic awareness 
and leadership. CCEL offers a variety of programs, services, and 
resources to accommodate different student interests and schedules. 
These include one-day Saturdays of Service, flexible weekly opportunities 
through CCEL Serves, week-long and weekend Alternative Break 
experiences, and the year-long Civic Engagement Scholars program. 
CCEL coordinates Cleveland excursions to explore and connect with 
our community and facilitates educational training about community 
issues, responsible engagement, voter education/registration, and active 
citizenship. CCEL also provides community service advising and assists 
faculty and students in designing and implementing service learning 
courses and community-based capstone projects. For more information, 
visit the Center for Civic Engagement and Learning, Tinkham Veale 
University Center, Suite 165.

**Cooperative Education**

Cooperative Education (Co-op) is an academic program that enables 
students in majors offered by the Case School of Engineering to alternate 
classroom studies with career-based experiences in industry. It is a 
learning experience designed to integrate classroom theory with practical 
experience and professional development. Co-op is a paid full-time work 
experience designed to enhance the student’s education. Case Western 
Reserve co-op assignments are typically for two seven-month periods, 
each period consisting of a summer and a contiguous spring or fall 
semester. While participating in co-op, students maintain their full-time 
student status. This program is available to students pursuing majors 
in all fields of engineering, computer science (BA and BS), and data 
science. For additional information, contact the Division of Engineering 
Leadership and Professional Practice Office, Nord Hall, Room 312, 
216.368.5119.

**Professional Practicum**

Practicum is a non-credit experiential education program coordinated 
through Post-Graduate Planning and Experiential Education that provides 
students with opportunities to develop and enhance skills, insights, 
and knowledge related to career development. The desired learning 
outcome of the practicum experience is intellectual, professional, and 
personal growth in an area related to a student’s academic and career 
goals. Undergraduate and graduate students enrolled in the College of 
Arts and Sciences, the Case School of Engineering, the Frances Payne 
Bolton School of Nursing, or the Weatherhead School of Management 
who are pursuing career-related work experience and students pursuing 
entrepreneurial ventures may participate. (Most Case School of 
Engineering students participate in experiential education through the Co- 
op program, but may participate in practicum, depending on the duration 
of the assignment.) International students are eligible for the practicum 
program through Curricular Practical Training (CPT).

Practicum students enroll in course sections for the semester in which 
they are on assignment either full-time (40 hours/week) or part-time (20 
hours/week). The duration of the program can range from a minimum of 
6 weeks to a maximum of 14 weeks. Full-time practicum students do not 
enroll in other coursework, but maintain full-time student status during 
the practicum period; part-time participants are expected to enroll in 
other credit-bearing coursework. Although no credit is awarded, students 
who successfully complete the practicum assignment receive transcript 
notation. Successful completion is determined by the Practicum 
Coordinator with input from the faculty advisor and employer once the 
required deliverables are submitted by the student.

Students interested in participating in a practicum should contact Post- 
Graduate Planning and Experiential Education, 229 Sears Bldg., the 
semester prior to the intended practicum period.

**Entrepreneurship**

The Veale Institute for Entrepreneurship at Case Western Reserve 
University catalyzes entrepreneurial ideas through education and training, 
accelerates venture creation, and connects people in a transformative 
way. The Veale Institute’s mission is to ensure that all CWRU students, 
no matter their major, have the access and resources they need to foster 
their entrepreneurial mindset. Educational programming such as the
CWRU Alumni Entrepreneurship Speaker Series and Skills Lab workshops are available for students looking to explore their interests. For additional information, students should contact the Veale Institute by emailing vealeinstitute@case.edu or visit Sears think[box], suite 700.

CWRU LaunchNET is the entrepreneurship gateway on campus to help students in all majors test, validate, and turn their ideas into products and services. LaunchNET connects students to a network of mentors and peers who share an interest in entrepreneurship and innovation. For additional information, students should contact LaunchNET in 140 Thwing Center.

**Washington Study Program**

The **Washington Study Program** provides students with the opportunity to complete a full-time, research-intensive internship in Washington, D.C. By participating in a semester-length program during the fall or spring (WASH 2A Washington Center Internship), students earn 9 credit-hours; for a summer internship (WASH 2D Washington Center Summer Internship), they earn 3 credit-hours. In addition, students earn 3 credit-hours for participating in a seminar and attending a weekly lecture/discussion group (WASH 2B Washington Center - Politics and Public Policy Course) and 3 credit-hours by developing a portfolio based on their internship experiences (WASH 2C Washington Center - Portfolio). The credits earned can be counted as general electives or applied to a student's major or minor with the prior consent of the individual department(s).

To be eligible for the program, a student is expected to be a junior or senior and have a GPA of at least 3.000. The program director, the student's major advisor, and the appropriate dean in the Office of Undergraduate Studies must approve each application. Students must ensure that their participation will not prevent them from meeting on-campus residency or other university requirements.