

Go Abroad

Why go abroad?

- Study, volunteer, intern, work, or do research in a new country and culture
- Hone your skills such as: language ability, adaptability, effective engagement with diverse populations, and communication
- Fulfill major or minor requirements and/or liberal education requirements

Get started exploring abroad options

Go to the Learning Abroad Center's website: umabroad.umn.edu to explore resources and complete the first step meeting, then meet with an advisor to discuss program options that may be a good fit for you.

Explore programs

There are opportunities to study, work, intern, volunteer, teach English, and research abroad! Experiences can vary from a few weeks during winter break, may session, or summer and can be as long as a year. There are all kinds of programs depending on your interests and goals offered in an array of countries.

Financial support for abroad experiences

Abroad experiences vary from program to program, there are many options that cost the same (or even less) than attending the UMN. Also, there are many scholarships, grants, and fee reductions available.

Student Groups & Leadership

Why get involved with student groups and leadership

- Develop teamwork/collaboration and leadership competencies (great for future jobs)
- Build friendships with other students who share a similar interest
- Connect to alumni and employers

Finding student groups: Contact Lisa Samuelson or Megan Beck in Student Activities to find organizations that fit your interests.

Visit www.crk.umn.edu/units/student-activities to learn more.

Gaining experience BEFORE you graduate is key to securing a job or getting accepted to graduate school. Degree + Skills/Competencies + Experience = Career Options. Be intentional about pursuing opportunities that will help you develop career core competencies and specific skills needed for your plans after graduation. Not sure what career interests you? That's ok, these experiences will help you to narrow down your options--jump in and try something!

Internships

Internships are paid or unpaid experiences that are connected to learning and career goals, as well as professional and skill development. Benefits of doing an internship include:

- Test out potential career choices and organizations
- Explore what type of job tasks you enjoy and don't enjoy
- Develop professional skills and build a network
- Connect the learning you are doing in the classroom to the world of work
- Get work experience at an organization, which could lead to a full-time position

When to do an internship: Getting career-related experience early is highly recommended. Most students do internships in their sophomore and junior years, but they are possible for first-year students as well.

On average 65% of organizations offer their eligible interns full-time jobs.

73% of employers look for relevant work experience on a résumé, and 60% of employers prefer that work experience be gained through an internship or co-op experience.

HECUA (Higher Education Consortium for Urban Affairs) offers semester-long programs that incorporate classroom studies, an internship, and field work at a non profit organization. Learn more at servicelearning.umn.edu

Although your major does not equal any one career, your education presents you with opportunities to build competencies. Look for experiences in and outside of the classroom that help you develop:

1. Analytical & Critical Thinking
2. Applied Problem Solving
3. Ethical Reasoning & Decision Making
4. Innovation & Creativity
5. Oral & Written Communication
6. Teamwork & Leadership
7. Engaging Diversity
8. Active Citizenship & Community Engagement
9. Digital Literacy
10. Career Management

Finding an internship: Use GoldPASS, the University's free database of internships and jobs. See the Internship & Job Search Guide for other search strategies.

Getting academic credit for internships: Check with your academic department for internship and/or directed study for credit options.

Interning abroad: Visit the Learning Abroad Center (umabroad.umn.edu)

Become a competitive applicant: Gain experience through research, volunteering, part-time and on-campus jobs, abroad experiences, student groups, and leadership roles.

Make the most of your internship: Talk with your supervisor to get guidance on what their expectations are, ask a lot of questions, take initiative, follow-through on your responsibilities, and take time to connect with professionals at the organization to learn more about the organization, their current job, and their career path.

Research

Why do research?

- Develop skills that will benefit you in your career
- Build relationships with faculty
- Explore research as a career path
- Learn about a subject in depth to develop expertise
- Earn money and/or earn academic credit

Did You Know?

If you're interested in graduate school, research experiences will strengthen your application. Oftentimes, it is required for admission.

Get started with research: Find a faculty member expert in your field of interest. You can reach out to a faculty member you have had a class with, ask your academic department for recommendations and/or read faculty profiles on their website, search experts.umn.edu, or contact urop@umn.edu for help.

Remember, faculty are doing research all the time and often need help, so you don't need to have a completely fleshed out research plan or even a specific research idea. All you need is an interest that matches the faculty member and a willingness to ask how you can get involved!

Sample email to a faculty member:

Hello Dr. Maxwell,

My name is Heidi Angen and I am contacting you because I took a course with you last semester and really learned a lot from you as an instructor. I particularly enjoyed when you discussed your research on women in politics. I was wondering if we could meet to discuss your research further and also to discuss if you have any opportunities for an undergraduate like myself to get involved and contribute to a future project?

Thank you for considering!

Sincerely,

Heidi Angen

Volunteering

Why volunteer?

- Build your résumé and further develop and apply skills
- Develop relationships with professionals
- Create positive change in your community
- Gain experience to explore career interests

Did You Know?

92% of employers surveyed believe volunteering expands an employee's professional skill set.

82% of employers surveyed are more likely to choose a candidate with volunteering experience.

Finding volunteer opportunities: Lisa Loegering in the office of Community Engagement is available to meet with you to learn more about your interests and connect you to community partners.

Visit www.crk.umn.edu/units/comunity-engagement to learn more.

Volunteer positions are also often posted to GoldPASS.

Part-Time & On-Campus Jobs

Why do a part-time or on-campus job?

- Gain exposure to the professional world, co-workers, supervisors, and mentors
- Get hands on experience related to your career goals
- Financial support for education and living expenses
- On-campus employment provides flexibility to schedule work hours around your classes
- Examples of how part-time jobs help you develop skills:
 - Working as a camp counselor to develop skills for a teaching career
 - Working as a social media assistant for an office on campus to develop skills for a marketing career
 - Working as a student technology specialist to develop skills for a computer science career

On-campus jobs are a great opportunity for international students! F-1 and J-1 students are eligible to work on-campus and the work does not need to be related to your field of study.

Finding an on-campus and part-time job: Search for positions through humanresources.umn.edu/jobs, GoldPASS, groovejob.com, and indeed.com.

Talk to friends, family, advisors, and others in your network to ask for any job leads.