

Psychology and Culture: The Light Side and the Dark Side (Austria, Summer 2016)

Frequently Asked Questions

APPLICATIONS

Q: What are the program requirements?

A: This program is being offered by The College at Brockport for advanced students of psychology. Dr. DeHart and Dr. Snarr will determine on an individual basis whether each applicant's psychology background can be considered sufficiently advanced. Generally, qualified students will be either majoring or minoring in psychology and—by the time the program begins in May 2016—will either (a) have senior status (i.e., have at least 90 credits) or (b) already possess a bachelor's degree. Brockport students should have met all or almost all of the requirements for a capstone course; capstone-ready Brockport students will be accepted before Brockport students who are not capstone-ready. If you have any questions about whether your background will qualify you by next May—or any other questions, for that matter—please feel free to email Dr. DeHart (dehart@genseo.edu) or Dr. Snarr (jsnarr@brockport.edu).

Q: Do I have to be a Brockport student to apply?

A: No. Any and all students are welcome as long as they meet the above requirements.

Q: What if I am not even a student at a SUNY school?

A: Doesn't matter. Any and all students are welcome as long as they meet the above requirements.

Q: What if I am not a matriculated student ANYWHERE?

A: If you already have a bachelor's degree, you can come as a non-matriculated graduate student (see below). If you don't have a bachelor's degree, apply and join us in the future year when you are matriculated and have senior status.

Q: How does the application process work?

A: For 2016, we are using a rolling application process. This means that we will take the first 40 students who apply, meet the requirements above, are accepted, and commit to the program by depositing funds. In 2018 and beyond, we may implement a competitive admissions process. For 2016, however, it is first come, first served.

Q: When can I apply?

A: Now. Students with complete applications are already being accepted (https://brockport.studioabroad.com/index.cfm?FuseAction=Programs.ViewProgram&Program_ID=10183).

- Q: When are applications due?
A: By mid-January of 2016 at the latest. We realize that this is an earlier due date than most other Brockport study abroad programs, but it is necessary so that housing, etc. in Austria can be reserved by our on-site program coordinators.
- Q: Do I have to provide letters of recommendation?
A: Not for the 2016 trip. All you need to do to apply is fill out the personal information questionnaire, submit a scan of your transcript(s), and type or attach your study statement.
- Q: If I apply and am accepted, does that mean I have committed to go on the trip?
A: No. On the one hand, we would appreciate it if only students who are seriously interested apply. On the other hand, you will not have committed to go on the trip until you deposit funds toward it, so there is no harm in applying. If you are indeed seriously interested, **APPLY NOW!** Applying and having your application accepted will both (a) get you on our radar so that we can keep you updated on trip-related developments and (b) allow you to start exploring funding/financial aid options (see below).

CREDIT HOURS

General Questions

- Q: How many credit hours is the program worth?
A: This is a six-credit program. You may not complete it for fewer than six credit hours.
- Q: How do the credit hours work?
A: Unless you decide to take both psychology courses for graduate credit (see below), three of the credits will be 400- or 500-level psychology credits and three will be general study abroad credits (i.e., OAP 404 or 504).
- Q: When it is time to register, for what course(s) will I sign up?
A: You will register for six credits of OAP 404 or 504. When grades are assigned after the program ends, the Brockport Office for International Education will automatically switch the appropriate number of credits to match the appropriate psychology course(s). Doing it this way allows all of the tuition you are paying to be applied to the cost of the trip, per SUNY regulations.

Undergraduate Questions

- Q: What are my three-credit psychology course options?
A: You must choose to complete either Dr. DeHart's course (Cross-Cultural Psychology) or Dr. Snarr's course (Historical and Systemic Perspectives on Clinical Psychology). Tentative syllabi for these 400-level courses are available on the Brockport study abroad website.

- Q: If I am a Brockport student, will one of these courses fulfill the capstone requirement for the psychology major?
- A: Neither course has been approved yet by the appropriate committees, but Dr. Snarr intends for his course, at least, to count as a capstone course. Ideally, Dr. DeHart's course will do so as well. This question will be answered definitively as soon as possible—certainly before January.
- Q: If I am planning to graduate this semester (Fall 2015), can I still come on the trip?
- A: Yes, but you would have to either delay graduation until next summer or come as a non-matriculated or matriculated graduate student (see below).
- Q: What if I am currently scheduled to graduate in Spring 2016?
- A: You have two choices: (a) walk in your Spring 2016 graduation ceremony but delay applying for your diploma until the summer, or (b) graduate in Spring 2016 as planned and come on the trip as a graduate student (see below).
- Q: Is it possible for me to complete this program for graduate credit—and get a head start on grad school—even if I am still an undergraduate?
- A: If you are not a Brockport student, we do not yet know whether this is possible for you. Let us know if you are interested, and we will find out and get back to you. If you are a Brockport student, though, this is indeed possible under certain circumstances and with the proper permissions (see https://www.brockport.edu/policies/docs/undergraduates_taking_graduate_courses.pdf). If you qualify and take this route, you will receive graduate credits while paying the undergraduate rate. Please note, however, that these 500-level credits might not count toward your undergraduate degree or the undergraduate psychology major; that is apparently up to the psychology department chair to decide. Furthermore, if credits will not count toward the degree program in which you are currently matriculated, you will not be eligible for federal aid to pay for them. If you might be interested in this path, let Dr. Snarr know that and he will speak to Dr. Abwender about the possibility.
- Q: Can I complete the program for three undergrad credits and three grad credits?
- A: No. They all have to be one or the other.
- Q: Can I take both psychology courses and get six undergraduate psychology credits?
- A: No. That option is only for students receiving graduate credit (see **Graduate Questions** section below).

Graduate Questions

- Q: Does the program cost more if I want graduate-level credits?
- A: Yes, but not nearly as much as the difference would usually be between undergraduate and graduate tuition rates. Word is, it will cost graduate students a couple hundred dollars more for the entire program.

Q: Do I have to be a matriculated graduate student of psychology to complete the program for graduate credit?

A: No. Under certain circumstances (see above), you might be able to receive grad credits while still an undergraduate. Otherwise, the Brockport study abroad office will provide you with the necessary forms to fill out to take the courses as a non-matriculated grad student. PLEASE NOTE: Non-matriculated students are not eligible for federal financial aid to help pay for the program (see **Funding/Financial Aid** section below).

Q: What are my graduate credit options?

A: If you are completing the program for graduate credit, you can choose either (**Option 1**) to complete one of the two psychology courses (syllabi still in development) and receive three 500-level psychology credits plus three credits of OAP 504, or (**Option 2**) to complete BOTH of the psychology courses instead and receive three 500-level psych credits for each (six grad-level psychology credits total).

Q: What are the advantages and disadvantages of **Option 1**?

A: The primary advantage is that it will be less difficult to complete than **Option 2**. The primary disadvantage is that federally subsidized loans can only be obtained to pay for credits that count toward a degree (which OAP credits most likely do not do at the graduate level). **Option 1** may be a particularly good choice for (a) non-matriculated students (who are not eligible for federal aid anyway) who do not plan on going to grad school in psychology, (b) matriculated grad students who do not qualify for federal loans or do not need financial aid to pay for the trip, or (c) undergraduates who are eligible to take grad courses AND either do not need federal aid or will be allowed to count the grad courses toward their undergraduate degree.

Q: What are the advantages and disadvantages of **Option 2**?

A: The primary disadvantage is that it will be more challenging, particularly during the four weeks before we leave for Vienna. We suggest that if you are completing **Option 2**, you would do well to get your article summaries for both courses all or mostly written during Spring 2016. (We will give you the reading lists well ahead of time.) That way, come May, you can focus on participating in the online discussions for both courses and getting going on your papers. We will also extend the final paper deadlines for any students completing **Option 2**—most likely by giving you an incomplete grade in one or both courses and allowing you until later in the summer to complete the papers. If you are a matriculated grad student who can count both psychology courses toward your degree, one advantage of **Option 2** is that you may be eligible for federally subsidized loans to help pay your way. The primary advantage, however, is that both courses will count toward your degree and/or career. Indeed, future or current doctoral students in an applied field (e.g., clinical, school, I/O) who will eventually want to apply for a psychology license, in particular, may wish to avail themselves of **Option 2**. This is because an individual differences/diversity course and a history and systems course are both required for licensure as a psychologist in many if not most states, including New York (see <http://www.op.nysed.gov/prof/psych/psychlic.htm>).

Q: Will one or both of these psychology courses transfer into my current or future graduate program?

A: We cannot guarantee that this will be the case. Talk to said program.

- Q: Will one or both of these psychology courses count toward psychology licensure in the future?
- A: They should, but we cannot guarantee that this will be the case.

FUNDING/FINANCIAL AID

- Q: The study abroad website estimates that the program will cost about \$5,500 per person. Is that price set in stone?
- A: It is only an estimate. The price may go up or down a little depending, for example, on fluctuations in the dollar→Euro exchange rate. The dollar has been doing much better against the Euro in 2015 than in any of the four previous years; hopefully that trend will continue. Also, please note that the estimate is based on only 20 students participating. For every student over 20 who comes on the trip, everyone's costs will drop. (This is because some program components cost the same no matter how many participants we have, so more participants means more sharing of the cost burden.)
- Q: How can I find out what kinds of financial aid (and in what amounts) I might be able to access to help pay for this program?
- A: The best thing to do is apply for and get accepted into the program, then take the program description and budget sheet (available on the website) to your institution's financial aid office and see what they say. It will totally depend on what loans, grants, fellowships, scholarships, waivers, etc. you are receiving and the regulations that go with them. Some general answers we have already obtained for you:
- 1 – Pell Grants, TAP, and other state and federal grants usually cannot be accessed during summer terms.
- 2 – Federally subsidized loans may be available, but only (a) if you submit a FAFSA on time and qualify and (b) to pay for credits that are required (specifically or as electives) for completion of a degree program in which you are currently enrolled.
- 3 – Unsubsidized loans (a.k.a. alternative or private loans) may be available, but only if you qualify. These often require a cosigner and may or may not offer reasonable interest rates. If you are a non-matriculated student who needs financial aid, these may be your only option.
- Q: If I can't or don't want to borrow money, how else can I pay for my trip?
- A: Again, your first stop should be your local financial aid office. If you have a scholarship, it may cover some or all of the costs. Otherwise, start saving. Tell everybody that what you want for holiday gifts, birthday gifts, and graduate gifts is contributions to your study abroad trip. Create an account at www.FundMyTravel.com and see if your friends and family—and your parents' work colleagues and friends and family—will contribute to your study abroad experience. Just some ideas.

MISCELLANEOUS

Q: Where will we be staying in Austria?

A: In 2016, we will stay in a hotel in Vienna. When we take our field trip to Salzburg, we will stay in a hotel there. In 2018 and thereafter, we hope to be able to maximize the experience—and reduce costs even further—by having students stay with Austrian host families.

Q: Will we all be in the same hotel?

A: Hopefully. We won't know for sure what is available until the rooms are booked in February.

Q: Will we each have our own room?

A: Probably not.

Q: Will we each have our own bed?

A: Yes. Even "double" beds in Austria are almost always two mattresses pushed next to each other, each with its own sheets and comforter.

Q: Can we choose our own roommate(s) if we want to?

A: Most likely.

Q: If I am vegetarian, will I be able to survive in Austria?

A: Shouldn't be difficult, especially if you are willing and able to eat eggs and/or cheese.