Study Abroad and BC Requirements

All Boston College students are expected to take a full course load while they are abroad (i.e., the equivalent of 15 BC credits). For BC programs, information regarding what constitutes a full load at each host institution is outlined on the OIP web site (see the Academics link). External program students are expected to take the equivalent of at least 15 US credits while overseas.

Students who study abroad must take note that not all courses taken are eligible to fulfill BC major, minor, or core requirements due to credit restrictions. BC policy dictates that such requirements must be at least 3 BC credits, and not all courses abroad will meet this guideline - even if the BC department has approved the course via a Course Substitution Form. This is especially relevant for programs that require students to take 6+ courses, or where some courses have low credits.

If you attend a BC program that requires you to take at least six courses to earn 15 BC credits, the OIP cannot award you 3 BC credits for every course because doing so would grant a BC overload that was not earned. Such situations therefore require OIP to reduce the BC credit on some courses to accurately reflect the load taken overseas (i.e., the equivalent of 15 BC credits). OIP must also award lower BC credit for overseas courses that do not equate to 3 BC credits.

It is therefore not recommended that any student abroad plan to fulfill more than 3-4 major, minor, or core requirements. For European programs that award ECTS course credits, do not expect to have a BC requirement met if the course is less than 5 ECTS credits. You can take courses that are less than 5 ECTS credits, but those courses would count for general elective credit only.

For students that study on external programs, keep in mind that courses awarded less than 3 US credits are not eligible to fulfill BC major, minor, or core requirements. If you are unsure how many US credits will be awarded, check with your program directly.
Please keep these guidelines in mind when planning your courses. If you have questions feel free to contact Janet Kalunian at the OIP (janet.kalunian@bc.edu).