Thank you for attending this session and for your interest in the study abroad credit approval process at KU. Faculty, staff and advisors play a vital role in sending students abroad. We appreciate all the support and guidance that faculty, staff and advisors provide to students who are beginning the study abroad journey.

Introductions
- Angela Perryman – Director of Study Abroad
- Nancy Chaison – Associate Director
- Michele Arellano – Associate Director
- Nathan Bremer – Project Manager - Curriculum Integration
- Justine Hamilton – Program Coordinator for Germany, Netherlands, Central/Eastern Europe, Russia, Eurasia, Middle East & South Asia
- David Wiley – Program Coordinator for the British Isles and Scandinavia
- Renee Frias – Program Coordinator for East Asia, Pacific Rim, Australia & New Zealand
- Ingrid Horton – Program Coordinator for France, Italy, Greece & the African countries
- Mari Keyser – Program Coordinator for Spain, Portugal and Latin America
- Kate Gerken – Program Coordinator for International Internships
Key Contributors to the Credit Approval Process

• Departmental Faculty Advisors

• Office of Study Abroad Program Coordinators

1. Faculty Advisors - Selected annually by academic department following solicitation from OSA in late summer
   • provide guidance to majors/minors/non-departmental students on program selection based on academic needs
   • assess content of overseas courses, approve appropriate KU equivalencies
   • connect student with departmental resources

2. Program Coordinators - Full time, permanent staff within the OSA. Program Coordinators have regional portfolios as noted in previous slide.
   • provide information on program opportunities for students according to their major, geographic preferences, and personal interests
   • provide information to departments/campus on overseas academic systems, grading scales, credit hour conversions, etc.
   • serve as liaison between student and overseas institutions for transcript receipt, course/grade concerns, etc.
The “faculty and departmental advisors” list is available on the OSA website and is also handed out to students in hard copy form in the office.

It is intended to provide students with information on the designated individuals within a department who can approve courses offered abroad for KU equivalent credits. It is up to the department to determine whether one or multiple selected persons should be responsible for credit approvals, or if they would like to allow students to get credit from any faculty member in the department (such as a major asking their advisor for credit approval directly).

In departments where a large number of courses are often requested for approval, some units have chosen to have either one person designated to approve FR/SO-level credit and another JR/SR level or one person designated to approve non-major credit and another all credit for majors.

Faculty advisors and departments should feel free to contact the Office of Study Abroad if they would like to have their contact information updated/changed or the designated contact persons updated. This can be done at any time, but please note that old hard copies of this form may still be inadvertently used by students if they have not received an updated version since a change was made.
Faculty advisors can only approve credit for courses that would be offered within their own department on campus.

For example, if a design major seeks approval from their departmental advisor for coursework taken in Germany, the design professor/advisor can only approve design courses taken abroad. German language courses should be approved by the German department advisor, even if the student is not majoring or minoring in German.

Interdisciplinary coursework, such as area studies or cultural studies, can often times be approved by more than one department, especially when a course could be cross-listed when offered on campus (History of China could be approved by East Asian Studies AND History, for example). In these cases, it is generally decided by the student (in consultation with their advisor) which department to approach for credit approval. This decision is based on which course (History or EALC using the above example) will best fit the student with regards to the necessary requirements still unmet within the student’s degree plan.

Faculty advisors can choose how they prefer to receive information for credit approval. For example, some advisors would like all students to meet with them in person to review the coursework and sign the required forms. Others prefer the student email all the information to them and then inform the student when the signed forms are ready to be picked up. Still others would rather the student come in twice for a meeting, once to drop off the forms and discuss the material and then again to pick them up and review the approvals.

Again, faculty advisors and departments should contact the Office of Study Abroad if they would like to have the information currently appearing on the Faculty and Departmental Advisor list updated/changed. The list can also include information on your preferred method for processing credit approval requests.
All students are encouraged to start the credit approval process as part of their program selection process. Students requesting credit approval at this stage are typically doing so with less information, as they are still exploring their options and attempting to determine if one program is better than another due to the range and type of courses offered and/or that could be approved for transfer to KU. They may be looking to have a faculty advisor review information with them with only a course description (no syllabi).

This is the ideal scenario, because students are more open to their options and planning their study abroad program with academic concerns in mind.

If a student has already selected a program, they will have been advised to do their research on courses available at the foreign institution, to the extent that is possible, so they can provide the faculty advisor with as much information as there is available.

In some cases, students may seek approval for courses without knowing if that course will be offered in the term they intend to study abroad, and have been advised by their OSA coordinator to use previous courses offered as a guide. For example, a student applying to a program in Denmark may use the spring 2011 list of courses offered and syllabi as part of their application process for spring 2012 based upon the assumption that many courses are repeated at institutions on an annual basis.
This is a sample of the Academic Plan & Approval Form that students complete as a component of their study abroad program application. Guidance on common questions faculty advisors have in completing this form are noted in red.

A student (with help from their OSA coordinator) should complete the left-hand side of this form, listing all courses they plan to take abroad plus alternates. The faculty advisor, in consultation with the student and upon reviewing all supporting documentation provided by the student, completes the columns on the right-hand side of the form. If you are unsure of the level of the course, equivalent KU credit hours, etc. please do not hesitate to contact us for clarification.

On the next slide, we will walk through some of the more common questions in more detail, regarding Conditional Approval, Level of Coursework, Major/Minor Requirements, and Amount of Credits.
Amount of credits: In cases where a course abroad is worth more credits than the KU equivalent course, the advisor should consider adding a credit hour or more of directed study, special topics, or readings to ensure that all credits earned abroad are translated to a student’s KU academic record. This is especially important in cases where a student must maintain fulltime status at KU, thus requiring that they transfer in a minimum of 12 credit hours.

Similarly, in cases where the courses abroad are less than the appropriate KU equivalent course, the faculty member may decide to combine foreign courses together to equal the desired KU course, or in rare cases such as foreign language courses completed abroad, the faculty member may decide to award more credit for a lesser credit course taking into consideration the contact with the language provided through immersion experiences such as host families, cultural activities, etc.

Conditional Approval: This option may be selected by the advisor if they would like to review course materials after the student completes the study abroad program. If this option is selected, the OSA recommends that the Faculty/Departmental Advisor and the student discuss what information and documentation will be needed upon the student’s return to campus, as the student will be required by the OSA staff to return to the faculty advisor post-program for signature approval once again.

Major/Minor and General Education requirements: This has caused confusion for some advisors who mark that a course can fulfill an HR/HT on the OSA form, for example, but the KU course they approved is not a designated HR or HT course through CUSA/CLAS. In order for a foreign-taught course to apply toward a general education requirement at KU, it must be approved for transfer as one of the KU courses already appearing on the list of approved HR/HT courses.

NOTE: all study abroad credits will post as RESIDENT CREDIT – not transfer credit – so students can spend one or both of their last terms abroad and still be “in residence”. This could be useful for majors wanting to fulfill major JR/SR coursework abroad in their final year at KU.
Frequently in this scenario the student is seeking course approval from abroad for reasons outside their control as mentioned above.

Getting approval via email can be challenging for both the student and the advisor, so the OSA advises students to meet with advisors in those departments from which they MIGHT need to request email approval from abroad so that there can be agreement prior to departure on how that process should take place (expectations are set) and to facilitate the process.

Even though this can be challenging, it is still in a student’s best interest to get approval at this stage rather than upon return to KU. By having information on foreign credit approvals while still abroad, the student is better prepared for enrollment while abroad for their semester of return to KU.

Procedurally, if a faculty advisor emails a student approval, the program coordinator in OSA can use this email as the official approval in lieu of a signature form.
Sample instructions on the foreign credit approval process given to students while abroad.
Students who were unable to get their courses approved prior to or during their study abroad program (or had courses conditionally approved) will be required to get their courses approved after they return.

Once the OSA receives the student’s transcript, a Credit Worksheet will be created. The student will then bring this form to the appropriate Faculty/Departmental Advisor for approval. This method can be beneficial for Advisors because they are able to talk with the student about the course content, see the student’s improvement in the language level, or see coursework the student completed while abroad.

However, it can also be a more stressful process to a student, who is more anxious to get approval for courses they can no longer change as they have been completed.
The Credit Worksheet, unlike the pre-program Academic Plan & Approval Form, is prepared by the OSA staff AFTER the foreign transcript is received. Therefore, all credit, level, and grade conversions have been done by OSA staff directly. Any questions regarding these items at this stage should be sent to the OSA by phone or email rather than through the student.

Typically, lines needing to be completed by advisors are highlighted by the OSA staff to simplify the process as much as possible.
In this sample, some of the more common questions faculty advisors may have are again addressed in the red notes.
Occasionally, the OSA will send requests out to departments for credit approval. These requests are generally sent with a note from the specific OSA Program Coordinator detailing the rationale and purpose behind the OSA request. The contact information for the OSA Program Coordinator should be on that note should the advisor have any questions.
Sample forms sent by OSA staff when requesting approval for a specific foreign course.
Credit Equivalency Lists

Lists are used by students as guides for selecting programs. They are not a guarantee of credit approvals for a student.

“Credit allotment is subject to the discretion of the department faculty advisor. These equivalences have been used for previous students abroad and may be used as a guide in course selection and aid in establishing course equivalencies. These equivalencies do not grant an automatic pre-approval to future students. You must get each of your courses approved by the appropriate advisor.”

Credit Equivalency Lists are created for KU-administered study abroad programs only. These lists are posted on the KU program website or provided to students by the OSA Program Coordinator.

These lists are only useful IF they can be used by students, which means they must accurately reflect the departmental approvals. Therefore, if you approve a course for just one student, such as a major needing specific credit, that is an irregularity or exception to the normal approval that would be given, please let the OSA know that this is an exception so we can keep it off the list for all other students.

Additionally, if you see a course on the list that is an error, please let us know so we can fix it. It is very important to us that this list be as useful a tool as possible, as it will simplify the process for the OSA staff, KU students and KU faculty advisors.
Sample Credit Approval Forms

Included:

- Faculty Advisor List for 2012-13
- Academic Plan & Approval Forms
- Grade Posting Step-by-Step guide
- Credit Worksheets
- Credit Worksheet Instructions
- OSA Approval Request blank form
- Sample Credit Equivalency List

Please look through the provided materials and let us know if you have any questions.
Thank you for supporting KU students who are studying abroad!