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# Special Learning Opportunities

Individualized Courses, Alternative Credit, Experiential Learning, Study at Other Institutions

*Many students will desire educational experiences that extend beyond the regular courses of the university. The university thus offers various individually-initiated learning experiences to its students.*

*Such opportunities are of many sorts. They include Independent Study, Contract Learning, and Directed Study; study at a nearby university through cross-registration; study abroad; and receiving credit through a variety of standardized examinations.*

## Special Course Opportunities

### Directed Study

Students who wish to take a regular university course in a term when it is not offered may seek to do so through a Directed Study option. However, students must understand that, because the appropriate faculty must be available and approvals must be granted, the option of Directed Study for a particular course is not always available.

In Directed Study, the faculty member must agree to provide the student with close supervision, in achieving the *same* course objectives that would have been accomplished had the student taken the course on a regular class basis. Permission for Directed Study must be obtained from the subject/course faculty member, the student's department chairperson, and the college dean, after consultation with the faculty advisor.

Forms for enrolling in Directed Study are available at the Registrar's Office. Directed Study courses will be so designated on the student's transcript, displaying the title of the course undertaken. Directed Study courses are offered at each course level, 1xx, 2xx, 3xx, and 4xx, in order to match the level of the course of record.

### Independent Study

Independent Study, which is faculty-supervised research or readings into areas of study outside the current curriculum, offers students the opportunity to investigate a research topic or readings independently, under the close supervision of a faculty member. Independent Study will only be approved for research into areas of study that do not duplicate the University's current curriculum of courses.

The student will be responsible for meeting the requirements of the Independent Study

as outlined and approved, and the faculty sponsor will assume responsibility for coordinating the Independent Study, evaluating its results, and determining an appropriate grade.

Upper Division students may request to do Independent Study, upon recommendation of a faculty sponsor and approval of the student's department chairperson and college dean. *Twelve semester credits is the maximum of Independent Study allowed for an undergraduate academic career.* The student must submit a written proposal and outline of the program of study to be undertaken, which, if approved by the sponsor and the department chairperson, will become a guide for evaluating the student's performance and accomplishment.

Forms for enrolling in Independent Study are available at the Registrar's Office. Independent Study courses will be so designated on the student's transcript, displaying an annotation of the topic undertaken.

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## Internships, Practicums, and Experiential Learning

Students in any major may arrange for an external learning experience. Most departments list the course Experiential Learning for their majors; it offers lower-division work experience at an elective level. Some of the university's majors offer upper-division internship or practicum opportunities for students. There is considerable variety in the types of experience provided and the levels and amounts of credit.

### Experiential Learning

Experiential Learning provides an opportunity for practical application of academic training while earning academic credit.

Under the direction of a faculty sponsor, arrangements are made to work under the immediate supervision of a supervisor at a work site, which may be located on or off campus. The range of project types and settings is almost limitless, creating exciting ways to enrich one's academic studies, to test a tentative career choice, and to gain valuable experience.

The program is administered through the Career Resource Center, where students obtain assistance in finding a faculty sponsor and a work setting and in completing the required forms.

The Experiential Learning contract is an agreement to undertake a significant academic learning experience:

- Participating students maintain a log or journal of experiences. They also receive assessments from the individual they are working for, the supervisor at the work site.

- In all cases, the student must submit a work of writing and reflection to the faculty sponsor. Such a document might, for example, include the following: a) how objectives were met, b) how personal improvement has been stimulated, c) how the internship experience has related to the student's academic experience, and d) how the internship could be improved for students who pursue similar projects in the future. The exact assignment is determined by the sponsoring faculty member.

- The faculty sponsor evaluates the project and assigns either a CR or NC grade.

Students wishing to participate must submit a contract proposal and receive the required approvals. The Career Resource Center

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assists students in making these arrangements.

- Students must propose a contract and receive an initial approval *before* the deadline for registration.
- By another deadline, the student must submit a formal written proposal to the faculty sponsor that both specifies the goals and objectives of the internship and details the activities and academic work to be performed.
- By the same deadline, the student must obtain approvals from the faculty sponsor, his/her department chairperson, and her/his college dean.

The following are some of the academic limitations and definitions:

- Students must be at least sophomores to participate.
- Although the typical internship contract would earn three credits, internships proposing a greater/lesser number of credit hours are also possible. Experiential Learning credits are part of the normal student credit load and subject to university policy with regard to credit hour limitations.
- Experiential Learning courses may not be used to fulfill distribution or general education requirements but serve as free electives and may be accepted toward the requirements of some majors.
- Experiential Learning credits are lower-division credits.
- Students on academic probation are not eligible for Experiential Learning, unless ineligibility is waived by their college dean.
- The work assignment is to comprise at least 45 clock hours per academic credit, for the semester.
- Supervision of students doing projects under the Experiential Learning program shall in all cases exclude individuals who are themselves undergraduate degree candidates; and a faculty member cannot serve as both supervisor and sponsor.

Students in the College of Business are offered a junior-level Internship course in lieu of Experiential Learning. They may contact the Career Resource Center for assistance.

### **General Limitation on Internship Credit**

No more than 1/8th of the graduation credits required for the student's major may be earned in optional internships, including Experiential Learning. Thus, a student in a 120 credit program could apply up to 15 credits in such studies toward the degree.

### **Internships, Clinical Experiences, and Practicums in the Majors**

In some of the university's majors, students are required to have an upper-division internship, practicum, or clinical experience; in some others, an optional course is offered. These studies range from an experience nearby in a course the student takes along with other on-campus courses that semester, to a semester or even a year in an extensive experience which may be well away from campus. Consult the requirements section for your major to learn of these opportunities.

### **Cooperative Education in Engineering**

The College of Engineering offers cooperative education experiences to qualified students. Students in the program alternate a semester/summer in coursework with a semester/summer on the job full time. Please consult the front of the catalogue section on the College of Engineering.

### **Internships Away from Campus through Affiliated Programs—The Washington Center; Disney**

Some programs that may be available to UMass Dartmouth students, like those of The Washington Center or Disney Enterprises, offer a full semester at an internship site. The university has formulated procedures whereby the student can maintain an appropriate enrollment status to participate in such internship programs.

Financial arrangements, enrollment status, and credit that can be earned vary, depending on the program. The Washington Center program provides financial assistance in the form of tuition waivers and some scholarship support, and offers means of earning UMass

Dartmouth credit while participating. Disney internships differ depending whether one undertakes an initial or a second experience, as these vary in how UMass recognizes the academic experience.

More can be learned about these opportunities from advisors in the student's major field or at the Career Resource Center, which serves as the contact point for the many arrangements that the students need to make.

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## Study Abroad

The university encourages its students to study abroad. A number of exchange agreements have been established to facilitate study abroad, together with procedures for academic advisement, registration, and planning personal finances. In addition, a wide variety of programs are available, both of short duration and for a semester or a year.

### Opportunities

The university has formal exchange agreements with the University of Grenoble (France), the Lycée du Grésivaudan at Meylan (just outside Grenoble), Nottingham Trent University (England), the Baden-Württemberg Universities (Germany), Centro de Arte e Comunicação (Lisbon, Portugal); Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, the Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Industries Textiles of the Université de Haute Alsace (France), and Minho University (Portugal). We are also a member of a consortium of art schools—SACI—in Florence, Italy. Programs at these schools allow students to pursue studies in or related to their UMass Dartmouth major fields.

These exchange agreements also bring students from these many countries to study at UMass Dartmouth.

The exchange programs listed above present only one way for UMass Dartmouth students to study abroad. A large pool of additional exchange opportunities is made available to our students through the Massachusetts Consortium on International Education (MaCIE), which includes all public colleges and universities in the state. Through MaCIE, our students can choose from the study abroad opportunities offered by other public higher education institutions in Massachusetts. In addition, there are informal opportunities for study and travel during the academic year and summer.

For example, in a recent summer, the College of Visual and Performing Arts offered a design, painting, and drawing workshop in La Napoule, France (near the French Riviera). The Overseas Study Program in the College of Business sponsors a yearly trip to another country to explore an area of interest in international business. The Center for Portuguese Studies offers yearly summer study trips to Portugal.

The following people can provide more

information about these programs and related opportunities.

*General assistance with study abroad*—John Carroll, Academic Advising Center

*Baden-Württemberg, and its affiliated universities: The Universities of Heidelberg, Mannheim, Freiburg, Ulm, Stuttgart, Konstanz, Tübingen, Hohenheim, and Karlsruhe*—Joseph Bronstad, Department of Foreign Literature and Languages; Richard Golen, Assistant Dean, Charlton college of Business

*Centro de Arte*—Memory Holloway, Department of Art History; Susan Hamlet, Department of Visual Design

*University of Grenoble*—Richard Baker, Department of Accounting

*France*—Lewis Kamm, Department of Foreign Literature and Languages

*United Kingdom*—Peter Owens, Department of English

*Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Industries Textiles; Minho University (Portugal)*—Kenneth Langley, Department of Textile Sciences

*Duncan of Jordanstone College, University of Dundee*—Michael Taylor, Department of Art History

*Australia and New Zealand*—Kathleen Suchon, Department of Management

*Ireland*—John Carroll, Academic Advising Center, Political Science Department

*Portugal*—Victor Mendes, Department of Portuguese

*Latin America and Spain*—John Twomey, Department of Foreign Literature and Languages

### Policies and Procedures

The Office of the Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs/Graduate Studies provides general oversight over exchange programs. The Academic Advising Center assists students in making a choice of study abroad site, in making academic plans, and with visa and travel arrangements.

Financial aid may be obtained, if the student is eligible and pursuing the study abroad

experience to earn credits toward degree requirements. Students should contact their Financial Aid counselor. Furthermore, a special scholarship, the Mary Louise Walsh Fund for International Study, makes assistance available in the form of grants to undergraduates and graduating seniors.

Students who wish to study abroad while remaining in active student status may be listed as in Study on Exchange status (sometimes called Study Away or Study Abroad). This status allows students to remain in current, registered status while they pursue full-time studies at another higher-education institution, which is usually located in another country. They may thus remain matriculated students and continue to qualify for their financial aid benefits. A modest fee is charged for Study on Exchange status. Forms may be obtained in the Academic Advising Center.

Students seeking to study abroad must first plan with their faculty advisors the program of study that they intend to pursue at the other institution and receive departmental approval of this study plan.

Credits completed while a student is in Study on Exchange status will be displayed on the transcript with grades shown and will be considered for financial aid qualitative requirements. Grades earned in study abroad, converted to UMass Dartmouth equivalents, will be included in calculating the student's GPA and cumulative grade record.

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## Receiving Credit Through Standardized Examinations

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### CLEP Examinations

The University has approved the use of the College Level Examination Program (CLEP). The CLEP exams are offered by the College Entrance Examination Board. The program enables those who have reached the college level of education outside the university to demonstrate their achievement and to use the test results for college credit and/or placement.

The equivalency of CLEP examinations to this university's courses shall be determined by the department that teaches that subject matter. CLEP credits may not be used to duplicate or replace credits for coursework taken here or elsewhere. The Office of the University Registrar maintains a current list of CLEP examinations accepted for credit; we advise current students to consult us before deciding to take CLEP tests.

CLEP credits are defined as transfer credits and will not be reflected in an individual's grade point average. *No more than 30 credits earned by CLEP Examination may be used to satisfy degree requirements.*

Two types of CLEP examinations are offered:

#### *Subject Examinations*

One semester's course credits (usually 3) or two semesters' course credits (usually 6) may be awarded for a score at or above 50, as reported on the CLEP score report. Such credits are generally used to satisfy university distribution requirements or may be used as elective credits.

#### *General Examinations*

Credit is *not* awarded at UMass Dartmouth for the CLEP General Examinations.

### Advanced Placement—AP Credit

Advanced placement and/or college credit are awarded to entering freshman students presenting Advanced Placement Examination grades of three or higher (four for credit in Psychology) in most AP fields. AP courses taught in high schools are college-level courses, and the students' mastery of the content is validated by the AP Examination series administered by the College Board. Such course credits may be used to satisfy degree requirements, general education requirements, or will allow students to place into a more advanced initial course.

### Advanced Placement—Dual Enrollment Credit

Some freshman students enter the university with college credit already earned, from courses taken at a college or university while they were in high school, many through the Massachusetts Dual Enrollment program.

### Proficiency Challenge Examinations

Students transferring to the major in nursing, as well as certain other programs, may be asked to verify proficiency in some subjects taken earlier, through challenge examinations. Some examinations are departmentally administered, while others are provided through the CLEP program, mentioned above. Refer to the departmental sections in the *General Catalogue*; details will also be provided by the departments.

### Military Service Training

For Military Service School training, credit may be awarded according to the recommendations contained in the most recent Guide to the Evaluation of Educational Experience in the Armed Services of the American Council on Education. These credits cannot be applied to the student's major field of studies. Additional information is available at the Office of Admissions.

### Credit for Validated Prior Learning

The Division of Continuing Education offers credit for validated prior learning to those who have become regular, registered students. This program provides university academic credit for students in most majors who, through occupational or other experiences, have achieved the equivalent of college-level knowledge. Their prior learning is documented through a one-semester workshop and then evaluated for credit. For further information, consult the Division of Continuing Education.

### SACHEM Cross-Registration

UMass Dartmouth students may cross-register for courses at other SACHEM (Southeastern Association for Cooperation in Higher Education in Massachusetts) institutions on a space-available, prior-approval basis. Likewise, students at these other institutions may cross-register for courses at UMass Dartmouth. Institutions involved in the program, in addition to UMass Dartmouth, are:

Bridgewater State College

Bristol Community College

Cape Cod Community College

Dean College

Massachusetts Maritime Academy

Massasoit Community College

Stonehill College

Wheaton College.

Tuition and fees established by the "away" institution are suspended, provided that the matriculated student is a degree-seeking student at the home institution and carries and pays for a full-time load there. Further information and appropriate forms may be obtained in the Registrar's Office.