

BA American and Canadian Studies Year Abroad



At Birmingham we offer you the opportunity to spend a year in the United States as part of your degree – either studying at an American or Canadian Partner University or undertaking an internship (work placement) at an American Company.

- [BA American and Canadian Studies with year abroad \(undergraduate/courses/acs/american-canadian-abroad.aspx\)](#)

The year abroad is a valuable opportunity to participate fully in American or Canadian life. Those who choose University study are able to pick from a greater variety of courses and modes of assessment than are offered in British universities. American and Canadian Studies at Birmingham is the only centre of its kind to offer integrated work placements. Students who take the internship will benefit from work experience with the British American Business Council, an organisation dedicated to promoting transatlantic business exchanges or with a company that is a client of the BABC.

Study abroad

Students are able to study at one of the Universities with which Birmingham has established an exchange agreement. These agreements are reviewed and renewed periodically; they currently include:

USA

- [Iowa State](http://www.iastate.edu) - Ames
- [Berry College](http://www.berry.edu) - Atlanta
- [Birmingham Southern College](http://www.bsc.edu) - Birmingham, AL
- [University of Virginia](http://www.virginia.edu) - Charlottesville
- [University of Illinois at Chicago](http://www.uic.edu) - Chicago
- [Pitzer College](http://www.pitzer.edu) - Claremont
- [University of North Texas](http://www.unt.edu) - Denton
- [University of Minnesota](http://www.d.umn.edu) - Duluth
- [University of Iowa](http://www.uiowa.edu) - Iowa
- [University of Wyoming](http://www.uwyo.edu) - Laramie
- [New Mexico State University](http://www.nmsu.edu) - Las Cruces
- [University of Kansas](http://www.ku.edu) - Lawrence [[2013 student report](http://capitollettersbham.wordpress.com/2013/12/02/a-year-abroad-in-kansas/)]
- [Bellarmino University](http://www.bellarmino.edu) - Louisville
- [Marquette University](http://www.marquette.edu) - Milwaukee
- [University of Wisconsin](http://www4.uwm.edu) - Milwaukee
- [Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey](http://www.rutgers.edu) - New Brunswick
- [University of Cincinnati](http://www.uc.edu) - Ohio
- [University of Mississippi](http://www.olemiss.edu) - Oxford [[2013 student report](http://capitollettersbham.wordpress.com/2014/01/08/joe-kerry-on-ole-miss/)]
- [University of Pittsburgh](http://www.pitt.edu) - Pittsburgh
- [University of Connecticut](http://www.uconn.edu) - Storrs [[2013 student report](http://capitollettersbham.wordpress.com/2013/11/27/university-of-connecticut-available-on-u21/)]
- [Arizona State University](http://www.asu.edu) (ASU) - Tempe
- [University of Alabama](http://www.ua.edu) - Tuscaloosa

Canada

- [Simon Fraser University](http://www.sfu.ca) - Burnaby, Vancouver
- [University of Guelph](http://www.uoguelph.ca) - Guelph
- [Dalhousie University](http://www.dal.ca) - Halifax [[2013 student report](http://capitollettersbham.wordpress.com/2013/12/02/halifax-lovin/)]
- [McGill University](http://www.mcgill.ca) - Montreal
- [Universite du Quebec a Montreal](http://www.uqam.ca) - Montreal
- [Trent University](http://www.trentu.ca) - Ontario [[2013 student report](http://capitollettersbham.wordpress.com/2013/12/02/trent-university/)]
- [University of Ottawa](http://www.uottawa.ca) - Ottawa [[2013 student report](http://capitollettersbham.wordpress.com/2013/11/27/university-of-ottawa/)]
- [Université Laval](http://www.ulaval.ca) - Quebec City

- **University of New Brunswick** (<http://www.unb.ca/>) - Saint John [[2013 student report](http://capitollettersbham.wordpress.com/2013/12/02/new-brunswick-fredericton-university/) (<http://capitollettersbham.wordpress.com/2013/12/02/new-brunswick-fredericton-university/>)]
- **University of Saskatchewan** (<http://www.usask.ca/>) - Saskatoon
- **University of Toronto** (<http://www.utoronto.com/>) - Toronto
- **University of British Columbia** (<http://www.ubc.ca/>) - Vancouver
- **University of Waterloo** (<http://uwaterloo.ca/>) - Waterloo



View [ACS Year Abroad Exchange Partners](https://maps.google.co.uk/maps/ms?msid=208960017502175983685.00049d04a8d14120789f9&msa=0&ie=UTF8&t=m&ll=45.089036,-93.867187&spn=43.358139,89.648438&z=3&source=embed) (<https://maps.google.co.uk/maps/ms?msid=208960017502175983685.00049d04a8d14120789f9&msa=0&ie=UTF8&t=m&ll=45.089036,-93.867187&spn=43.358139,89.648438&z=3&source=embed>) in a larger map

Student blog

For a taste of the experience of Study Abroad, take a look at this blog written by one of our current students who spend the year at the University of Virginia:

<http://talontourblog.wordpress.com/> (http://talontourblog.wordpress.com)

Study Abroad and employability

As well as providing cultural and academic enrichment, Study Abroad equips our students with invaluable skills and experience that give them a real boost in the job market:

'Both my degree in American and Canadian Studies and my year spent studying abroad have been invaluable assets in my efforts to secure a permanent job in New York City as Assistant Director of Global Partnerships at the Association of Executive Search Consultants and BlueSteps.com. The academic component equipped me well for a career in strategic development and marketing, and my knowledge of other cultures on both a personal and professional level is an exceptional asset in an international business environment'

Jennifer Blackford (American and Canadian Studies with year abroad graduate)

'As well as enabling my degree to be academically rich and varied, the year abroad element of my ACS degree has been central to my career development. Four years after graduating from University of Birmingham I am the Director of a London programme for a US university, facilitating study abroad programmes for American students in London. I get to manage an academic centre in London, map out organization strategy, present at International conferences, as well as share my enthusiasm for the life-changing experience of studying abroad!'

Katie Hignett (American and Canadian Studies with year abroad graduate)

Internships

In an increasingly competitive global employment market, real-world experience is crucial to graduates attaining successful jobs. At Birmingham we offer a unique opportunity for a limited number of students to gain vital commercial experience in the United States as part of their American Studies degree. Interested students apply via a competitive application process to undertake an internship (a work placement) working with the British American Business Council (the BABC) in the US or a company who have membership of the BABC. Currently, these internships are located in Chicago [[read student report](http://capitollettersbham.wordpress.com/2014/01/08/an-intern-in-chicago-by-jo-goldhawk/) (<http://capitollettersbham.wordpress.com/2014/01/08/an-intern-in-chicago-by-jo-goldhawk/>)], San Francisco [[read student report](http://capitollettersbham.wordpress.com/2014/01/08/babc-intern-hannah-keen-talks-san-francisco/) (<http://capitollettersbham.wordpress.com/2014/01/08/babc-intern-hannah-keen-talks-san-francisco/>)], New York City [[read student report](http://capitollettersbham.wordpress.com/2014/01/08/new-york-new-york-interning-in-the-big-apple-by-sophie-cowling/) (<http://capitollettersbham.wordpress.com/2014/01/08/new-york-new-york-interning-in-the-big-apple-by-sophie-cowling/>)] and Seattle, and, we are working to broaden the programme to create additional placements in future years. The internship scheme provides an invaluable opportunity for students to develop their professional and transferable skills, and benefit from mentoring from colleagues.

Adobe Flash Player or QuickTime is required for video playback. [Get the latest Flash Player](#) [Get the latest version of QuickTime](#)

Graduate Lisa Taylor, who interned with the BABC in Chicago, and subsequently returned to the US to work for Think London (now London & Partners) in New York City, said: "The skills and experience I gained during my internship year have definitely influenced and shaped my career. It was a fantastic opportunity to gain exposure in an international and commercial environment; the learning and skills I developed during that time helped me secure a job with Think London in a tough job market after graduation, and have subsequently helped me progress in my career."

Ruth Berchowitz, Events and Sponsorships Director, British American Business, New York, said: "Interns become an integral member of the events team here at British American Business, providing vital administrative and practical support for our comprehensive programme of 45-55 events here in New York annually. We have seen individuals grow hugely in confidence, developing new skills and expertise to equip them for a successful professional future."

Eluned Jones, Director of Employability at the University of Birmingham, said: "Here at Birmingham we recognise the great importance of offering our students access to a range of global opportunities to experience commercial environments firsthand. The excellent BABC internship programme is just one of a number of internship programmes developed enabling students from across the University to obtain invaluable real-world work experience."

Professor Dick Ellis, who manages the scheme in American and Canadian Studies, commented: "We are delighted to work with the BABC to provide our students with such beneficial work experience in the US market. Feedback we have received from both interns and employers highlights the continued value of the programme. Our continuing contacts with our graduates show they are securing employment swiftly and advantageously as a result of taking part in this programme."

Funding and assessment

While students are responsible for financing the year abroad, they will be eligible for the same loan/grants as are available to them in the UK. No tuition fees are payable to the host university either in the United States or Canada. The exact costs for the year will vary depending upon campus choice and the sterling-dollar exchange rate. This does not hold true for students opting for the internship.

Students must pass all second year courses with a mark of at least 50% to be eligible for study abroad. During the year abroad, Birmingham students must achieve a satisfactory performance in all modules (maintaining a GPA of 2.67 or above, equivalent to Birmingham mark of 40) and all students, including ACS/History and ACS/English Joint Honours students on four year programmes, must begin research for the compulsory dissertation.

Further information

[Formal Year Abroad Information \(/Documents/college-artslaw/acs/AmericanandCanadianStudiesYearAbroadInformation.pdf\)](#)

[Guide to Independent Study \(/Documents/college-artslaw/acs/independentstudy2011.pdf\)](#)

For further information please contact:

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"Global businesses are increasingly seeking graduates who have a global awareness. They value those who have the initiative to study overseas as part of their learning. Such study helps them to be more culturally aware, more able to work in multicultural teams and more able to move around the world as part of their career."

Royal Society by the Council for Industry and Higher Education

"This research is a wake up call for students and parents. You'll get further in life if you travel overseas to study or gain work experience. In today's turbulent times it is more important than ever for every graduate to demonstrate an international dimension to their thinking, and there is no better way to demonstrate this than to study or work for a period overseas." **Will Archer, Director of i-graduate**

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