

Q & A for Non-Luther (Itinerant) Study Abroad Programs

Please share this information with your parents!

How will I be charged at Luther College for my semester abroad?

Except for ACM study away programs, your only charge at Luther should be an off-campus fee (itinerant fee). For the 2019-20 academic year, that fee is \$440.

Your off-campus fee of \$440 will show on your Luther billing for the semester you're abroad. (Any balances still owed for past terms need to be paid to Luther prior to the term when you'll go abroad. This would include such things as shortfalls on work credit plans, parking fines, etc.)

For other than ACM courses, you will be billed by, and will pay, your program directly for all charges after financial aid, other than the itinerant fee. You'll want to pay close attention to your program's required payment dates.

What types of financial aid are available for Luther-approved (itinerant) programs?

Luther scholarships and grants are not available for your study abroad program, nor is Iowa Tuition Grant. However, if you're eligible for Federal Pell Grant, that can be used for your study abroad program, as can outside scholarships, church portions of EPIC Grant, Federal Stafford Loans, private-lender student loans and Federal Parent Loans (PLUS Loans).

Can I still pay for the study abroad program through a monthly payment arrangement with Luther College?

No. Unfortunately, this is not an option for the non-Luther study abroad programs. Those programs normally expect payment prior to the beginning of Luther's term, or early in the semester for any portion committed by Luther to be sent from your financial aid.

Some study abroad programs have monthly payment arrangements available. You would need to check with your program for such possibilities.

You and your family may need to consider using a Federal Parent PLUS Loan or one of several private-lender loan options to assist with any remaining program charges, to obtain spending money for the period abroad, or to provide for reimbursement of airfare costs. Please contact the Financial Aid Office to obtain information on those options.

What do I need to do to be sure that funds are applied to my student account at Luther for payment to my program and/or for refund to me?

You have the responsibility to complete paperwork with the Luther College Financial Aid Office—both in order for you to be eligible to receive federal loans and grants and in order for Luther to commit financial aid funds to your program as partial or full payment.

You should ask outside sources of funding, such as scholarship donors, churches, etc., to submit scholarship/grant checks directly to the Luther College Financial Aid Office prior to the beginning of the semester abroad and to make them payable to Luther College. If that is not possible, let the Financial Aid Office know that we should not include that funding as part of what Luther will send the program from your financial aid or, in the case of co-payable checks or checks made out to the student only, let us know who has power of attorney to sign for you. Exclusion of those outside funds would mean that you would pay more to your program and be reimbursed when those funds are received by Luther.

Because of differences in eligibility for financial aid, the forms needed by the Financial Aid Office will differ. **You will be contacted by the Financial Aid Office mid-semester prior to your study for the needed documents.** Those may include all or some of the following forms:

- **The Study Abroad Consortium/Contractual Agreement**
If required, return this form to the Financial Aid. We will exchange the form with your program. This form will be required if you will use any federal financial aid.
- **The Authorization to Pay Direct**
This is your written permission for the college to send payment to your program from your net financial aid in U.S. dollars as partial or full payment of your charges.

You will need to obtain information from your program, including:

To whom the check should be made payable,

The mailing address, and

Program contact information

- **The Application for Itinerant/Off-Campus Residency Status** is a multi-office form that must be routed for signatures from various offices and individuals on campus and returned to the Center for Global Learning. (When all processes are complete in the Center for Global Learning, the form will be forwarded to the Registrar's Office for them to complete registration for you.)

When a Financial Aid Office representative signs your form, ask the signer to make a copy for your file.

- **The Study Abroad Questionnaire.** The form should be returned to the Financial Aid Office.

How does the Luther College Financial Aid Office know what I owe my program?

Billings from your itinerant program are NOT sent to Luther College, (since you'll pay the program rather than Luther) so we don't know unless you share that information with us. Your study abroad program will likely provide that information to you via a student portal on the program's website. You should give a copy of that billing to the Financial Aid Office prior to the payment due date for your program.

How and when does Luther notify my program of available funding from my Luther account?

Your program has set dates when payment is due. It's important that we notify your program of available financial aid funding prior to that date. Otherwise, your program will expect full payment from you or your parent on that date.

The Luther College Financial Aid Office has a "Guarantee of Payment" form that can be emailed or faxed to your program indicating the amount of funding expected to be available from Luther College and the estimated date we expect to send those funds. Increasingly, however, programs have their own forms they wish us to use. (Again, become familiar with your program's requirements regarding notification of expected payment by Luther to the program. Some programs ask the student to upload the completed form.

You would pay your program directly (by the due date set by your program) for any portion of the program fee that will not be covered by your financial aid. Note: Even if financial aid would cover the full cost, some programs require an upfront "good-faith" payment.

If you're aware that you are unable to pay the balance of program fees after eligible financial aid, you should start application for a private educational loan or Federal Direct Parent PLUS Loan at least six weeks before payment is due to your program. The Luther College Financial Aid Office cannot commit funding from such loans as available for program payment unless the loan is fully approved and scheduled for disbursement.

What if I need more assistance to cover the program costs or to help with incidental expenses, non-covered housing, airfare reimbursement, etc.?

The Federal PLUS Loan would be an option for a parent. In addition, there are a number of sources of private educational loans available. Links to some of those options can be found on our website <http://finaid.luther.edu> under "Current Students, then "Loans." Most of those private student loans will require a co-signer.

Borrowing without a co-signer, even if one is not required, usually means the student will be charged higher interest. Apply early, allowing at least six weeks for full approval of such a loan.

If you're applying for a private-lender student loan, please notify the Financial Aid Office which loan was applied for, how much was requested, and what period of attendance was used on the loan application. (We can then watch for the certification and check on the status of the loan if necessary.)

When are funds normally sent to the program?

We normally tell the program that they can expect the funding from Luther to be mailed about the third week of Luther's semester. Although the funds may be sent prior to that date, that gives Luther some time in the event of delayed funds transmittals, etc., to sort out problems.

We can only send payment as funds are available. If outside scholarship or church funding is delayed, and if it's needed as part of the payment to your program, that portion of payment will be late in being sent to your program. Some programs are uncomfortable with those delays. We appreciate your help in soliciting the funds from those agencies prior to the date you leave for your program abroad.

If I've borrowed extra to help with living/traveling expenses while abroad, how and when will I receive those excess funds?

Again, a refund cannot be made to you unless funding has actually been received at Luther and applied to your Luther account. When a commitment has been made to send payment to your program, available funds will first be sent to your program. Funds in excess of our commitment to your program will be refunded to you. **If you complete bank account information on my.luther.edu under "Direct Deposit of Non-Payroll Checks," refunds will be deposited directly into the bank account you've designated.**

We would hope your extra funds could be released to you by the third week in the Luther semester. ***You'll need to have personal funds available to provide for your needs until that point.*** You will also need to arrange and pay for your own airfare if it not included in your program fee.

Are there occasions when I would be required to pay the program fees myself and would not be able to use financial aid to defer payment?

Yes. Some programs will require at least partial payment before financial aid funds are available, even with a commitment of funding. Read your materials from your program carefully. You will also find that individual *foreign institutions* will not accept a Luther check in U.S. Dollars. In those cases, you will need to arrange external funding to make payment as they require. Any financial aid excess would be refunded to you by about the third week of the semester.

How will I know whether everything is in order for payment to my program?

You should check with the Financial Aid Office at two points--once prior to the date payment is due to your program (the date established by the program itself) and once prior to leaving the U.S.

On the first date, you should be sure:

- 1) that the Financial Aid Office has a current copy of your program billing
- 2) that the program has been notified of your available financial aid toward program costs, and
- 3) that the Financial Aid Office has received all necessary forms and all private-lender loans are in fully-approved status.

Prior to leaving the U.S. you might want to re-confirm that everything is in order. Occasionally, something will change in the financial aid picture and additional follow-up is required.

What if I have questions on program payment or my refund once I'm abroad?

We encourage you to ask any questions you may have. Just send an email to Kathy Kerber in the Financial Aid Office at kerberka@luther.edu. We'll be glad to check on any issues for you. The Financial Aid Office and Office for Financial Services work closely together to assist you in the financial processes.

If I apply for scholarships, either from my program or other outside sources, and am offered a scholarship, what should I do?

When reporting scholarships, please let us know whether funds will be sent to Luther, sent to you, or will simply reduce the balance due at the program. Scholarships awarded directly by your study abroad program normally will simply reduce the balance due to the program. (You must still report these as part of your financial resources for the semester, **as they must, by law, be incorporated into your financial aid.** Occasionally loan types and amounts will be affected.)

What should my timeline be for completion of a FAFSA for the year I'm studying abroad? What other processes do I need to be aware of?

If the FAFSA is for aid for the year during which you'll be studying abroad, you should definitely target a filing date prior to March for the FAFSA. If you're abroad, your FAFSA for the following year may need to be filed during the semester you're abroad. Again, you should attempt to file before March.

What is a Power of Attorney, and why should I have one?

Some scholarship checks and some private loan checks are sent either in the name of the student or co-payable to the student and Luther College. Someone would need to endorse those checks on your behalf in order for them to be applied to your student account as needed. There is normally a standard form available at attorneys' offices on which you can indicate what you want the person you designate as Power of Attorney to be able to do for you. When you give someone Power of Attorney, your signature will normally need to be notarized. *If you do give someone Power of Attorney to sign checks on your behalf, be sure to send a photocopy of that Power of Attorney to the Office for Financial Services.* (That tells them where to send any checks requiring endorsement.)