Transcript Evaluation Guidelines
2015
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Introduction

ISEP is pleased to present the revised 2015 edition of the ISEP Transcript Evaluation Guidelines (TEG). The following information regarding the academic systems of the countries within the ISEP Network has been compiled to assist ISEP Coordinators and transcript evaluators with translating grades/marks and transfer credits of students who have done work abroad. The ISEP TEG may also help coordinators evaluate the transcripts of incoming international exchange students.

Many European member institutions now use the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS), which awards credits based on estimated student workload (see page 4). It is worth noting that many non-US institutions have a different approach to grading than most US institutions. For example, Spanish and French institutions are known for their strict grading standards. A student who consistently receives A’s in the US is unlikely to return from a French institution with marks of 16 and above, which are considered very high and not readily awarded by French professors.

While the ISEP TEG may serve as a helpful resource, it is ultimately up to each institution to decide how to transfer credits earned by students abroad. Please keep in mind that students studying at a university in a foreign country are coping with different methods of instruction, different types of assignments, and different standards of assessment. If they are taking regular academic classes taught in a foreign language, the challenge is even greater. Because of differences in grade expectations, credits, and course numbering (when available), transcript evaluators should aim to be flexible whenever possible.

In offering these guidelines, ISEP welcomes any suggestions and comments you may have that will assist us in serving you better. We also ask that you acknowledge ISEP as the source of information if you distribute these guidelines to other staff members on your campus.

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The Transcript Process

Many countries approach course registration and the recording and reporting of grades in different ways. In the United States, registration and recording of grades are centralized, and transcripts are usually issued at the end of every semester. In other countries, registration is a less formal process, and transcripts for fall semester students may not be issued until the end of the academic year.

Transferring credits from one educational system to another is a complex process that requires the cooperation of the ISEP coordinators at the home and host institutions, the ISEP participant, and ISEP Central.

1. The home institution ISEP coordinator:
   - Helps the student appreciate differences between the educational systems at home and abroad.
   - Assists students in selecting sites appropriate to their academic goals.
   - Advises students about getting pre-approval for courses to be taken abroad.
   - Reminds students of their responsibility for knowing and following procedures at their home and host institutions.
   - Assists students in getting credit upon their return for work done abroad.

2. The host institution ISEP coordinator:
   - Advises students in selecting courses that meet their needs (as defined in the Course Request List) within the context of the host academic system.
   - Informs ISEP participants of any special host institution procedures they must follow to receive a transcript.
   - Ensures that a transcript is issued within the time frame established in #17 of the Institutional Information Sheet (IIS).
   - Sends the original transcript to ISEP Central or notifies ISEP if the transcript is being withheld. Please note: Transcripts should NOT be issued directly to students or their home institutions without prior ISEP approval.
   - Assists students in completing the Host Institution Enrollment Form included in the student’s PPAF packet.

The transcript should include the following:
- Name and official seal of host institution or signature of university staff member
- Year of student attendance
- Course title or type of class for non-US institutions (i.e., lecture, seminar)
- Duration of course (i.e., semester, year)
- Hours of class (either per week or total) or credit unit
- Grade
- Explanation of credit units or grading system
3. ISEP participant:

Before Departure
- Familiarizes him or herself with the host institution’s academic system.
- Reads and understands note #17 (Transcript Issuance) on the host institution’s Institutional Information Sheet (IIS) (Please note: Some schools have specific requirements that students must complete before departure in order to receive a transcript; these will be outlined in #17 of the IIS).
- Gets approval from the home institution for courses to be taken abroad, including courses added or dropped throughout the semester/year.

While Abroad
- Knows the names of the host institution’s professors and how to contact them
- Identifies themselves to professors early in the semester, explaining that they are an international student on an ISEP program.
- Verifies that they are on the professor’s class list.
- Stays through the end of the program abroad, making sure that all work is completed and that finals are taken (There is no guarantee of credit if a student leaves early).
- If the student makes special arrangements with a professor for an exam (i.e., substituting a written paper for the final exam), he or she should obtain the agreement in writing from the professor, give a copy to the host ISEP Coordinator, and bring a copy home.
- Hands in final papers at the correct location and to the correct person.
- Makes copies of any papers before handing them in.
- Completes any school requirements for obtaining a transcript, such as a “transcript request form” found under the Transcript Issuance section in #17 of the IIS.
- Brings back course descriptions, syllabi, reading lists, notebooks, and all assignments completed for a class (anything that can help clarify the course content and workload if a question regarding credit arises).
- For US students abroad: Completes the Host Institution Enrollment Form and gives it to the host ISEP Coordinator as soon as final decisions about course selection are made. This form is often required for US students receiving financial aid, and in countries where registration is not a formal, centralized process, it may also be the only written record of courses taken. The form should include the following information:
  - Title and duration (i.e., semester, academic year) of all courses taken
  - Number of hours per week
  - Names of professors

4. ISEP Central:

- Forwards the transcript to the home ISEP Coordinator as soon as possible and keeps a copy on file (at most times of the year this is done within three days of receiving the transcript unless there is a hold on the student’s file).
- Runs regular checks of transcripts received and requests outstanding transcripts from institutions.
- Provides information about academic systems and suggestions for the conversion of grades for exchange students.
• Provides contact assistance to students requesting additional copies of transcripts or students who need to contact their host ISEP Coordinator with transcript questions

Please Note: If a participant arranges with a professor to substitute another assignment for a scheduled exam, this arrangement should be made in writing and a copy must be given to the host ISEP Coordinator. If a student leaves before the completion of the scheduled program period, ISEP cannot guarantee that he or she will receive a transcript.
European Credit Transfer System (ECTS)

The ECTS system has been developed as a part of the intra-European exchange system to allow European students to transfer credits taken in another European country to their home university. Many transcripts from European member institutions list ECTS grades and credits in addition to or in place of local grades and credits.

ISEP recommends using the local grade if available when converting to an American grade using the country information provided in this guide. ECTS grades rank students on a statistical basis in comparison with other students with passing grades. Because of this, ECTS grades may occasionally be lower than the actual grade “earned.”

European students are usually expected to earn 30 ECTS credits per semester and 60 ECTS credits per academic year. Unlike the US credit system, which measures classroom hours for credit, the ECTS considers the total student “workload” per class or degree program. “Workload,” as defined by the ECTS, includes the expected amount of time needed for students to achieve designated learning outcomes through all aspects of the course.

Contrary to the US system, ECTS credits include more than just contact hours with professors; they account not only for lectures and seminars, but also projects, practical work, self-study and examinations.

Another notable difference between US universities and certain European institutions is the weighting of credits for courses depending upon the degree program a given student is following. A course may bear more ECTS credits if it constitutes an integral part of the degree program that one student is pursuing, whereas another student taking it as an elective may receive fewer ECTS credits for the exact same course. Because US students do not belong to particular degree programs at these European institutions, it may be difficult for them to obtain the “full” semester requirement of 30 ECTS credits.

US institutions should consider the many structural differences of credit policy, which vary even between European institutions, when determining credit equivalencies. US students are often expected to maintain 15 credit hours per semester to be on track for timely graduation — this has given rise to the formula of converting ECTS credits to US credits on a 2:1 ratio. Thus, many universities have implemented the policy of converting each ECTS credit to 0.5 US semester credit hours or 26–28 hours of effective work (total classroom contact hours plus time spent outside of class on course assignments and research). ISEP recognizes that this is becoming a widespread formula in the US because of its ease of conversion. However, the practice of dividing ECTS credits by two to convert to US credits is not a panacea for all credit transfer situations.

ISEP encourages coordinators to be flexible whenever possible to account for the difficulties inherent in completing a program in a different country and language. Many US students might find a course load of 30 ECTS credits to be too demanding depending on their fields of study and their language ability. When contact hours are provided (in addition to the ECTS) and would result in a favorable conversion for a student, ISEP encourages the coordinator to use them.

ISEP strongly recommends that home ISEP Coordinators advise participants about how ECTS credits
translate and approximately how many ECTS credits they should be expected to obtain during their program. For more information on the ECTS, please visit http://ec.europa.eu/education/tools/docs/ects-guide_en.pdf.
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1. Whom do I contact with questions about transcripts?

Please direct all inquiries to your designated ISEP Program Assistant. They will answer your inquiries or follow up with the host institution and get back to you.

Stephanie Muraca, at smuraca@isep.org or 703-504-9980
Katie Trencheny, at ktrencheny@isep.org or 703-504-9966

2. When will my student receive his/her transcript?

Check #17 of the host Institution Information Sheet (IIS) on Transcript Issuance for details about when the school expects to send their transcripts to ISEP. Please note that some schools require students to complete “transcript request forms” or to turn in other papers before a transcript will be sent. These requirements will also be listed on the IIS and failure to comply with these requirements may cause a delay in receiving the transcript. Students who are studying abroad in their final semester should pay particular attention to the IIS before accepting their program, as transcripts from some schools may be released late, thereby delaying their graduation plans.

3. How do I transfer the grade/credit from a host country’s transcript?

These guidelines are intended to be a helpful resource in transferring work done abroad back to a student’s home institution. Some schools will choose to work with a third party service that evaluates transcripts for them, while others may have their own internal guidelines. Because courses and grades will rarely match up exactly between a home and host institution, ISEP asks that coordinators be flexible when possible. If you have a specific question that is not answered here, please feel free to contact your program assistant, who can then forward your question along to the host institution for a response.

4. My student’s transcript is in the host language. Will it be translated by the host university or ISEP?

Unless the university courses are taught in English, the transcripts will be provided in the host language. Host institutions are neither asked nor required to translate the transcripts. ISEP does not offer a translating option. We suggest having a professor familiar with the host language translate the transcript or, if nothing else, a translation agency can also be used.

5. One of the grades on my student’s transcript is incorrect. Can you fix this?

Per the terms of the Transcript Responsibilities Page in the PPAF packet, ISEP will not intervene in a grade dispute. Students should contact the professor of the course(s) in question and work these issues out directly. If the professor is not responsive, the student will need to contact the host ISEP Coordinator directly, but ISEP will help to facilitate communication between the two parties when needed.
6. How can a student receive additional transcripts (for graduate school, transferring students, etc.)?

ISEP students are provided with the first official copy of their transcript at no charge. Students who need additional official copies will need to request them from their host ISEP coordinator. These additional transcripts may be subject to an internal university processing fee. If students anticipate the need for additional transcripts while abroad, they should speak with their host ISEP coordinator, as it is much easier to obtain extra copies while still on site.

Program Assistants at ISEP Central can provide contact information for the host ISEP coordinator and can also confirm for the host coordinator when a transcript can be released directly to a student. If a student only requires an unofficial copy (sometimes requested by potential employers), ISEP can accommodate this request if a copy of the transcript is still available. On rare occasions, a host institution may provide ISEP with two official copies of a transcript. In that case, ISEP may still have one available to send to a student. Please contact your designated Program Assistant if you would like to check on this.

7. A student urgently needs a transcript. Can I send it to them directly?

ISEP policy requires that ALL transcripts be sent through ISEP Central and not directly to a student or the student’s home institution. In rare cases in which the need is very urgent, please contact the Program Assistant. (S)he will check to see that the student has no outstanding financial obligations to ISEP and may then be able to approve the request. The host institution will still be required to send an official copy of the transcript to ISEP Central in addition to sending one directly to the student.

8. A student attended an ISEP program in 1999. Can ISEP provide a copy of this transcript?

Unfortunately, no. ISEP keeps copies of all transcripts received for up to five years. Within the five-year period, ISEP is happy to provide additional unofficial copies. However, after five years, transcript copies are destroyed in accordance with ISEP policy. Requests for transcripts beyond that will need to be made to the host institution. Students who are considering the possibility of graduate school within a few years of their ISEP program may want to request additional transcripts sooner rather than later.

9. What is a Host Institution Enrollment Form, is it mandatory, and where should the student send it?

Part 1 of this form provides a space to list all courses the student is officially enrolled in at the host site. It should be completed on-site with the host coordinator and then sent back to the home coordinator (not to ISEP). In countries where registration is not a formal, centralized process, this may be the student’s only written record of courses taken. At the end of the program, the student should complete Part 2 of the same form and have professors sign off for all courses actually completed at the host institution. A copy should be left for the host coordinator, and a copy carried back to the home university. Although not required by ISEP, this form is designed to assist those students who must provide proof of their enrollment/course completion at their home universities or for financial aid purposes. The host Coordinator may also use this record to issue transcripts, or to cross-check issued transcripts for errors, so it is also a key resource for avoiding transcript discrepancies.
10. My student’s transcript is on hold; how do I pay?

If a student owes money to the host institution, please contact the host ISEP Coordinator for details on how to make a payment. If the student owes ISEP, please complete and return the Student Payment Form (available online). Once the payment is processed by our Finance Department, the Program Assistant will release the transcript. If you believe the hold is an error and payment has already been made, please contact Samantha Batchelor, ISEP Senior Staff Accountant. She can be reached at sbatchelor@isep.org and can check the payment details.
ARGENTINA

Higher Education
The first one or two years are devoted to the study of basic subjects. The total program of study usually lasts four to six years and leads to a *licenciatura* or to a professional title. Some universities award a *bachillerato universitario* after four years.

Lecturing is the principal method of instruction.

Academic Calendar
The academic year is divided into two terms. Argentina’s academic calendar is on the southern hemisphere schedule, with classes usually beginning in March and ending in December.

**Number of classes a typical student takes per term:** 4–6

**Number of hours per week a typical student spends in class**
- Universidad Blas Pascal: 20–30
- Universidad Católica de Córdoba: 20
- Universidad de Palermo: 15
- Universidad del Salvador: 20

**Number of weeks per term**
- Universidad Blas Pascal: 15
- Universidad Católica de Córdoba: 15
- Universidad de Palermo: 16
- Universidad del Salvador: 14

Grading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Argentine Grade</th>
<th>U.S. equivalent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10 (Sobresaliente)</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 (Distinguido)</td>
<td>A-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-8 (Muy Bueno)</td>
<td>B+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-6 (Bueno)</td>
<td>B-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 (Aprobado)</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-3 (Insuficiente/Reprobado)</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Argentine universities tend to have stricter grading standards than do those in the United States; thus, a mark of 10 is rarely awarded.

Credit Equivalent

To assist in determining the appropriate number of credits, transcripts from ISEP institutions in Argentina usually include the weekly contact hours, total contact hours (per semester), or credits.
AUSTRALIA

Higher Education

Most Australian bachelor’s degrees take three years to complete. Because Australian students complete their general education requirements in high school, they have already decided on a major when they begin university and start taking courses within their selected major immediately. Students who receive high grades may be invited to complete a fourth, or honours, year during which they work on a major research project or thesis. If Australian students decide to pursue a double major, their bachelor’s degree program may be extended to four or five years. Academic fields such as law, engineering, medicine, and dentistry can take up to six years to complete. If a student then goes on to pursue a master’s degree, it typically takes one to two years to complete, depending on the academic field chosen.

Academic Calendar

The academic year is based on the Southern Hemisphere calendar, with classes normally beginning in February or early March and ending with an examination period in November. The second semester typically begins in late July. The academic year may be broken into semesters or trimesters, depending on the university.

Grading

Grade scales vary at Australian universities and there is little, if any, grade inflation. The following is a general guideline for the most commonly used grading system and terminology:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Australian Grade</th>
<th>U.S. equivalent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7 (High distinction, 100 - 80%)</td>
<td>A+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 (Distinction, 79 - 70%)</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 (Credit, 69 - 60%)</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 (Pass, 59 - 50%)</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 (Conceded pass)</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/2 (Fail, below 50%)</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Grades are usually offered as qualitative assessments and are recorded on transcripts as high distinction, distinction, credit, pass, and fail. This system represents a mixture of the pass/fail system and a numerically graded system. Most institutions also provide a number to represent the qualitative descriptions, with high distinction reflected as an 80-100%, for example.

It is important to note that in Australia, instead of beginning with 100% in a course, students begin with 0% and earn points for correct answers. Therefore, earning 75% is actually a very good grade.

Course Load and Credit Equivalency

Units (the equivalent of classes) are given credit points. These credit points are not equivalent to US credits and vary by institution. A normal course load for an Australian student is three to four units (classes) per semester. Many Australian schools provide an explanation of credits on the back of their transcripts.

Current ISEP member schools commonly use two systems of credits. One system awards 3 credits per course, meaning students can be expected to earn 12 credits per semester. The other awards 1 credit per course, meaning students can be expected to earn 4 credits per semester.

Because Australians start specializing in their majors early on, a unit (or course) with a seemingly low level or number may actually be equivalent content to a mid-level course in the United States.
AUSTRIA

Higher Education

The four ISEP universities in Austria offer Bachelor’s and Master’s programs. The first degree programs (3 to 4 years) lead to Bachelor’s degrees, while the second degree programs (1 to 2 years) lead to Master’s degrees. Unified, undivided long-term Master’s programs (5 to 6 years) are offered in some fields of study and ECTS credits allow diplomas and grades to be easily convertible.

Like many European institutions, Austrian institutions do not differentiate between 100, 200, and 300 + level courses. Students attend courses based on their progression in their field of study. Individual arrangements with professors must be made to ensure proper accreditation.

Students do not typically graduate upon completion of their Bachelor credits but instead go straight on to obtain their Master’s. Therefore, international students in their fourth year of studies with the appropriate amount of credits may be considered as “Graduate” students for ISEP exchange programs.

Academic Year

The academic year consists of two semesters: winter term runs from October to January and summer term from March to June. There is a one month semester vacation in February and a three month summer vacation (July-September).

Transcripts from Austrian institutions are not automatically issued, and students will have to follow the steps outlined in their IIS and Country Handbook to obtain a transcript from the international office. Please note that ISEP cannot intervene on behalf of students who have not completed the process outlined by their host institution.

Registration and Credit Issues

Courses for the upcoming academic year may not be available until shortly before the year starts, so students and advisors are encouraged to use previous years’ catalogues as a basis for choosing courses.

Students are also encouraged to be flexible in their requirements.

Number of classes a typical student takes per term: 6-8
Number of hours per week a typical student spends in class: 12-16 hours
Number of weeks per term: 15

Grading

Austrian Grade | U.S. equivalent
--- | ---
1 (Sehr gut) | A/A-
2 (Gut) | B+/B
3 (Befriedigen) | C+/C
4 (Genugend) | F
5 (Nicht genugend) |

The equivalent to a US “D” does not exist. An individual grade (note) is awarded for a class, thesis or part of a large exam. An overall grade (Gesamtnote) is awarded for multi-part exams.

Credit Equivalent

A full workload for an international student is an average of 6 courses in a semester of 15 weeks, with 12 hours of lecture per week. Registrars are encouraged to look at contact hours to evaluate credit.
BELGIUM

Higher Education

Higher education in Belgium is organized by its two main communities: the Flemish community and the French community. Most universities teach in either Flemish or French. Although Artevelde University College is a Flemish institution, its international programs open to ISEP students are taught in English. Vesalius College was founded in conjunction with Vrije Universiteit and Boston University in order to build a university with English as its language of instruction. Additionally, Vesalius College is partially based on the U.S. higher education system.

Degrees

In accordance with the Bologna Declaration, Artevelde University College and Vesalius College offer three-year European bachelor’s degrees and calculate coursework in ECTS (European Credit Transfer System) credits (see page 4). One academic year corresponds to 60 ECTS credits.

Academic Calendar

Artevelde University College Full Year: September - June
Semester 1: September - January
Semester 2: February - June

Vesalius College
Full Year: August - May Semester 1: August - December Semester 2: January - May

Number of hours students spend in the classroom:
12-18

Number of weeks per term: 16-18

Students at Vesalius College enroll in 4-5 courses per term and are in class 12-15 hours per week. A term at Vesalius College is 15 weeks.

Full-time students should register for at least 24 ECTS credits. A normal semester course load is 24-30 ECTS.

Grading

Artevelde University College
18-20 (90-100%)
16-17 (80-89%)
14-15 (70-79%)
10-13 (50-69%)
0-9 (below 50%)

Vesalius Grade U.S. Grade
A (81-100%) A/B+
B (69-80%) B-/C+
C (58-68%) C-/D+
D (50-57%) D F
(below 50%) F

Many institutions use a formula to convert ECTS credits to local credits, but ISEP recommends that the home institution also take into account the total number of hours in the classroom. It is ultimately the home institution policy that determines how the credit will transfer.

Number of classes a typical student takes per term: Varies
Minimum: 6
Maximum: 10
BOLIVIA

Higher Education

After four or five years of higher education, the “licenciatura” degree is achieved. One or two additional years are required for the “maestria,” and two or three more for the “doctorado.” For the “doctorado,” oral examinations and a thesis are required. Papers may be assigned during the semester, but term projects and final exams carry the most weight in assigning grades.

Academic Calendar

The academic year runs on Southern Hemisphere schedule. The first semester is from the first week in February to June, and the second semester is from the first week in August to December.

Grading and Credits

Grading System (Varies by School)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bolivia Equivalent</th>
<th>Recommended US Equivalent</th>
<th>U.S. Equivalent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Excelente</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>90 to 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bueno</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regular</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deficiente</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malo</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>59 to 1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Grades at Universidad Privada Boliviana are assigned on a scale of 0-100. 60 is considered to be the lowest passing grade. The American grade of D may not factor into this equivalence, unless it is considered a passing grade at the home institution.

The number of hours of instruction per week and credits are listed on transcripts. At Universidad Privada Boliviana, most courses include 48 hours of instruction, but this may vary with other universities.

For the case of transferring to the US credit system (where 48 hours equals three credits).

The Bolivia school year runs from February to November and summer vacation is in December and January (these being the two hottest months of the year).
BOTSWANA

Higher Education

In order to qualify for undergraduate degree and diploma programs at the University of Botswana, students need a General Certificate of Secondary Education (BGCSE), or the equivalent with a grade of C or better in English Language. The BGSCE is a three-year program that follows seven years of primary education and two years of junior secondary school. English is the official language in Botswana.

The academic programs at the University of Botswana are divided into faculties and departments. A student must complete four years of study for a bachelor's degree. The exceptions to this are professional programs such as medicine, law, and engineering, which often require additional years. Masters and MPhil degrees in most fields are done over two years (full time) and require course work and a thesis. Doctoral programs range in length from three to four years and require a thesis/dissertation. Botswana has a number of public and private non-degree colleges that offer three-year diplomas in various fields including education, health, and information and technology.

The usual course load for full-time students is five courses or 15 credits. Classes are a mixture of lecture and seminar, and students write term papers more than they take exams. University of Botswana uses the A-E grading scale.

Academic Calendar

Similar to the North American calendar, University of Botswana academic year is divided into two semesters. The first semester runs from August to December, and the second from January to May.

Number of classes a typical student takes per term: 5-6

Number of hours per week a typical student spends in class: 15 – 20

Number of weeks per term: 14

Credit Equivalent

University of Botswana credits are equivalent to US credits. Three hours of class work per week for 14 weeks is equal to three US credits.

Grading

Performance in a course is assessed on a percentage scale, a letter grade, and a 5-point scale. The grading system in Botswana is far more stringent than in the US. It is extremely difficult for a University of Botswana student to obtain an A.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Botswana Grade</th>
<th>Grade Point</th>
<th>Equates to</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100-80%</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>79.9-75%</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>B+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>74.9-70%</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>69.9–65%</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>B-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>64.9 – 60%</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>C+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59.9 – 55%</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54.9 – 50%</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>C-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49.9 – 45%</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>D+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44.9 – 40%</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39.9 – 35%</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>D-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34.9 or below</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
BRAZIL

Higher Education

All university students take a basic cycle of studies in either humanities or science. Following the basic cycle, students enter the professional cycle of undergraduate courses. Little time is allowed for electives in other fields, and diversified study is generally not encouraged.

Academic Calendar

The academic school year normally runs from February to November/December. The year is divided into two semesters. Some institutions, especially those that have large enrollments and are located in urban areas, offer three shifts of classes each day—in the morning or afternoon.

Number of classes a typical student takes per term: 7

Number of hours per week a typical student spends in class: 16-20

Number of weeks per term: 18-19

Grading

Grading scales may even vary within each institution, and grading is fairly severe. Top grades are awarded to few students, and the failure rate in a given course can be high. In a 10–0 system, 10 is the highest and 0 is the lowest.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Brazilian Grade</th>
<th>U.S. equivalent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9.0 - 10.0 (excelente)</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.0 - 8.9 (bom-good)</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.0 - 6.9 (regular)</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.0 - 4.9 (insuficiente)</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0 - 2.9 (deficient)</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Credit Equivalent

Transcripts from ISEP members in Brazil give the number of hours spent in class per week and semester which assists home universities in determining the number of credits for each class.
BULGARIA

Higher Education

Bulgaria has 43 universities and other institutions of higher education as well as 45 colleges and technical schools. (College refers to semi-higher-learning institutions for nursing, paramedical training, teaching, and technical education). The Bulgarian educational system features the re-established private schools, which receive no financial support from the state budget. Most notable among these is the American University of Bulgaria in Blagoevgrad, which is an American liberal arts college with a strong business school.

The American University of Bulgaria is modeled after the American University system, so students can expect a similar model to that of the US. Classes will follow a MWF or TR schedule.

Academic Calendar
Full Year: August – May Semester 1:
August - December Semester 2:
January - May

Number of classes a typical student takes per term: 4-5

Students must be enrolled as full time students (12 credit hours per semester).

Number of hours per week a typical student spends in class: 15

Number of weeks per term: 15

Grading
Please note that the American University in Bulgaria uses the American system of credits and grading along the 4.0 grading scale.

U.S. Grading Scale (which is equal to AUBG):
A = 4.0
B = 3.0
C = 2.0
D = 1.0
F = 0.0

These scores will be calculated cumulatively at the end of every semester and at any other time when new grades are reported. These grades form the student’s GPA.
CANADA

Higher Education
As Canada is officially a bilingual, multicultural country with two major cultural traditions, two systems of higher education have developed. One was originally patterned on the early French system, with most institutions under the direction of Roman Catholic order. In the other system, instruction is given in English, and the institutions are controlled by a variety of groups. A small, third group of institutions offers instruction in both French and English.

Under the Canadian Constitution, the provinces are generally responsible for education, except for federally sponsored schools for Indian and Inuit students. The federal government also assists provincial financing of primary education (elementary level), and provides grants for research projects in institutions of higher education. Provincial autonomy has resulted in the development of distinctive educational systems in each province.
There are, however, certain similarities.

The Canadian system of higher education appears to be a mix of the US and British systems. A bachelor’s degree from a Canadian university is usually awarded after three or four years of study, depending on the level of high school completed at the time of admission. “Honours” bachelor’s degrees, which are more specialized than the general “pass” degrees, require an additional year of study.

Academic Calendar
The Canadian system, like the US system, has two semesters. The fall semester runs from approximately September to December. The spring semester begins in January and ends in late April. Please note: Canadians refer to spring semester as winter term.

Grading
The system of grading in Canadian universities is comparable to that found in the United States.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Canadian Grade</th>
<th>U.S. equivalent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A (80-100%)</td>
<td>A/B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B (70-79%)</td>
<td>B-/C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C (60-69%)</td>
<td>C-/D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D (50-59%)</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F (49% or below)</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Course Load and Credit Equivalency
A full load for a typical Canadian student is five courses per term. However, if exchange students wish to take only four courses per term, it is sometimes permitted. Each course generally equates to a three-credit course in the US system. European students will receive 24-30 ECTS for the four to five courses they take in Canada. Depending on the home university, it is sometimes possible for visiting European students to receive 30 ECTS for taking four Canadian courses.
CHILE

Higher Education
For admission to one of the traditional universities, students take a national test and apply through a centralized process. Private universities were created after 1980 and do not receive direct public funding. Each private institution defines its admission process. Undergraduate programs are 8-12 semesters in length, leading to a degree of licenciado or a professional title.

Academic Calendar
Universities work on a semester basis. Chile follows the Southern Hemisphere calendar in which the first semester runs from March to July and the second from July to December.

Number of classes a typical student takes per term:
Pontificia Universidad Católica de Valparaíso: 4-5
Universidad Católica del Norte: 3-5

Number of hours per week a typical student spends in class:
Pontificia Universidad Católica de Valparaíso: 20-22
Universidad Católica del Norte: 18-20

Number of weeks per term:
Pontificia Universidad Católica de Valparaíso and Universidad Católica del Norte: 17

Grading
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chilean Grade</th>
<th>U.S. equivalent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6.0-7 (muy bueno)</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.0-5.9 (bueno)</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.0-4.9 (suficiente)</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-3.9 (insuficiente)</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Credit Equivalent
Credits are sometimes listed on Chile’s transcripts. However, the transcripts also give the number of contact hours to assist with determining the appropriate number of credits.

Note: Transcripts from UCN-Antofagasta do not list hours or credits. Please contact the ISEP Coordinator at UCN-Antofagasta to verify the correct number of hours/credits for each class.

In addition, 15 in-class contact hours are equal to one credit at most US institutions; students should enroll in 225 hours of classes for 15 US credits. To earn 12 US credits, students must enroll in 180 hours of class.
CHINA

Higher Education

High school students must pass the National College Entrance Exam to be admitted into a university or college. Universities and colleges in China are divided into three categories by the entrance exam score range. JUFE (Jiangxi University of Finance and Economics) enrolls students among the highest score range. Higher Education consists of four years in China.

Degrees

Students have to obtain the required credits, pass the graduation dissertation, and complete at least a half-year internship (in the final year) to obtain a bachelor’s degree. For a master’s and doctorate, more rigorous academic work is required, and students must get a certain number of academic papers published before graduation.

Academic Calendar

There are two semesters per academic year. The Fall semester is September to January of the following year. The Spring semester is February to June. Coursework is assessed by attendance, homework, a mid-term exam (optional), class participation, and a final exam (which usually accounts for 60-70% of the grade).

Grading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chinese Grade</th>
<th>U.S. Equivalent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>90 – 100</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80 – 89</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70 – 79</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 – 69 (pass)</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under 60</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Credit Equivalent

The credit equals the number of teaching hours per week (usually between 12 and 18). For example, if the course is 2 teaching hours per week, it equals 2 credits. Class credits usually range from 2-4.

Number of classes a typical student takes per term: Typically, local students enroll in between 4 to 6 courses (equivalent to 12 to 18 units) to be considered a full-time student.

Number of hours per week a typical student spends in class: 12-18

Number of weeks per term: 13
COLOMBIA

Higher Education
At university level, the first 1-2 years are devoted to the study of basic subjects. The total program of study lasts five years and leads to a licenciatura, or a professional title. Following the licenciatura, the title of Especialista is granted after one year, and a Master’s degree is granted after two more years of study in certain universities. The doctorado, the highest degree, is usually awarded 2-3 years after the licenciatura upon submission of a thesis.

Academic Calendar
Universities work on a semester basis. Colombia is in the Southern Hemisphere, so the first semester runs from January to May and the second semester is from July to November.

Number of classes typical student takes per term: Universidad ICESI: 5-6

Number of hours per week typical student spends in class: Universidad ICESI: 15-20

Number of weeks per term: Universidad ICESI: 16

Grading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ICESI Grade</th>
<th>U.S. Equivalent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.5 – 5.0</td>
<td>A (Excellent)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.0 – 4.49</td>
<td>B (Very Good)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5 – 3.99</td>
<td>C (Satisfactory)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.0 – 3.49</td>
<td>D (Sufficient)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.0 – 2.9</td>
<td>F (Fail)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The student may fail the course with a grade of 0.5 if their absences exceed 20% of the total number of course hours.

Credit Equivalent
The credit system in Colombia is established by the Ministry of Education. One credit is equal to 48 hours for 16 weeks. That means that in a week, one credit is equal to three hours per week: one hour for class and two hours for independent work and study completed by the student.

Courses at ICESI can have a total of two, three, or four credits. These depend on the weekly schedule, and the hours necessary for individual work outside of class. The majority of the classes are worth three credits.
COSTA RICA

Higher Education

Upon completion of secondary schooling, students obtain the bachillerato in either sciences or humanities. A student can then take the entrance examination for one of three types of higher education institutions: universities, teacher training institutions, or international institutions for education (in public administration and agricultural sciences).

At the higher education level, there are academic programs of two or three years. These offer options such as health, fine arts, media, business, industry, agriculture, and sciences and letters. The final level of higher education prepares students for professional careers. Institutions offer some 1,500 different degree programs, including diplomado, bachelor’s, licenciatura, masters, and doctorate degrees.

After two to six years of study, the licenciado title is awarded. For medicine and dentistry, the title of doctor is given after seven years. In education, the degree of bachillerato en ciencias de la educación is awarded after the first two years of study. A final examination and thesis are required for all degrees.

Academic Calendar

Costa Rica follows the Southern Hemisphere calendar. The academic year runs from February to November.

Number of classes a typical student takes per term: 5

Number of hours per week a typical student spends in class: 15

Number of weeks per term: 17

Grading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Costa Rican Grade</th>
<th>U.S. Equivalent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9-10 (90-100)</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 (80-89)</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 (70-79)</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-6 (or 0-69)</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Credit Equivalent

Credits are listed on the Universidad Nacional transcript. Each credit is equal to 15 contact hours (a three-credit class has a total of 45 contact hours, for example).
CZECH REPUBLIC

Education System
Education in the Czech Republic is compulsory from the age of 6 to 15. Students can continue by completing a 4 year secondary school (gymnárium), a 2 to 4 year vocational school, or apprenticeship training. After completing gymnárium or vocational school, students who wish to attend university must pass the maturita (school-leaving) exam.

There are private and public institutions of higher education. All higher education institutions provide accredited study programs that are assessed by the Accreditation Commission. Entrance requirements for Czech universities are quite strict and very competitive. Applicants must successfully complete discipline-related entrance exams.

Like many European institutions, Czech institutions do not differentiate between 100, 200, and 300+ level courses. Students attend courses based on their progression in their field of study. Individual arrangements with professors must be made to ensure proper accreditation.

In the Czech Republic, Bachelor’s degree programs typically last 3 years and lead to second degree (1 to 2 years) Master’s programs. Unified, undivided long-term Master’s programs (5 to 6 years) are offered in some fields of study and ECTS credits allow diplomas and grades to be easily convertible.

Students do not typically graduate upon completion of their Bachelors credits, but instead go straight on to obtain their Master’s. Therefore, international students in their fourth year of studies with the appropriate amount of credits may be considered as “Graduate” students for ISEP exchange programs.

Academic Year
The academic year is divided into two semesters. The fall semester is from September to December, and the spring semester is from February to May.

Grading
Czech higher education institutions use a 4 point grading scale.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Czech grades</th>
<th>EU/U.S. grades</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vyborny</td>
<td>A/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vyborny minus</td>
<td>B/B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vel’mi dobry</td>
<td>C/C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vel’mi dobry</td>
<td>D/C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dobry</td>
<td>E/D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nevyhověl</td>
<td>F/F</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 ECTS credit = approximately .5 US credits. However, Registrars are encouraged to consider contact hours as well to help determine credit received.
DENMARK

Higher Education

Denmark has a degree structure similar to the Anglo-American system with bachelor’s, master’s (candidatus), and PhD degrees. All university study programs are research based, and degrees are awarded at undergraduate and postgraduate levels. A university course normally consists of a three-year bachelor’s program, followed by a two-year course leading to a master’s degree. Three years of supervised postgraduate studies after the master’s degree lead to a PhD degree.

Academic Calendar

The academic year is divided into two terms: the fall semester is from September to January, and the spring semester is from February to June. Exams are generally given in November, December, January, May, and June.

Number of classes a typical student takes per term: 6-7 (23-35 ECTS)

Number of hours per week a typical student spends in class: 12-14

Number of weeks per term: 8-10, followed by supervised project work and exams

Credit Equivalent

Students are strongly advised to consult home institutions about the transfer of academic credits for their studies in Denmark. The Danish institution will normally issue a certificate or transcript showing the courses attended and/or tests/examinations passed. All Danish institutions of higher education must use the ECTS and have transparent procedures for credit transfer and recognition of qualifications. A typical full-time load at a Danish university is 30 ECTS credits for one semester and 60 ECTS points for two semesters. The course load for one academic year, 60 credits, equals 1,600 hours of work. International students are required to enroll in a minimum of 28 ECTS points. The maximum number of ECTS points permitted each semester is 35.

Grading

Since 2007, grading has been done on the 7-point scale, compatible with the ECTS scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Danish grades</th>
<th>ECTS equiv.</th>
<th>US equiv.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>B+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>C+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>00</td>
<td>Fx</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-3</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some courses may only be assessed as Passed/Not passed, with no further grading. Examinations and projects are considered “Passed” if the student earns a “Pass” or an ECTS grade of at least E.
ECUADOR

Higher Education

Ecuador’s higher education system has been undergoing significant changes over the years. The National Constitution of 2008 and the Higher Education Law of 2010 (LOES) have changed the way Ecuador’s universities are funded, administered, and accredited. The importance of research was elevated and drastic modifications were made to the academic qualifications and employment conditions of full-time faculty. The higher education system has two types of institutions: public and private (Van Hoof, 2013)

There are three levels of higher education: Associate degrees (Technical Schools like community colleges); Bachelor’s degrees and Engineering degrees (Universities and Polytechnic Institutions); Graduate Schools (Universities and Polytechnic Institutions). Graduate schools offer three kinds of titles: Specialization; Master and Ph.D. Due to new academic official rules, the academic period has two regular semesters and one intensive semester, starting in February and finishing in December.

Academic Calendar

Universities in Ecuador work on a semester basis. The country is in the Southern Hemisphere – the academic calendar consists of one extraordinary (or intensive) semester at the beginning of the year, and two ordinary semesters. The intensive semester runs from mid-January to early April; the second semester (regular) runs from mid-April to early August and the third semester (regular) runs from early September to Mid-December (ends just before the holidays).

Number of classes a typical student takes per term: 5 classes per term.

Number of hours per week a typical student spends in class: 17.50 hours per week.

Number of weeks per term: Regular semester 17 weeks; Intensive semester 9 weeks.

Grading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Over 10</th>
<th>Letters (Equivalence with US)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9,80 to 10,00</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9,40 to 9,70</td>
<td>A-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9,20 to 9,30</td>
<td>B+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9,00 to 9,10</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8,70 to 8,90</td>
<td>B-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8,50 to 8,60</td>
<td>C+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8,30 to 8,40</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8,00 to 8,20</td>
<td>C-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7,80 to 7,90</td>
<td>D+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7,50 to 7,70</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,00 to 7,44</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Credit Equivalent

The credit system in Ecuador is established by the Secretariat of Higher Education, Science and Technology (SENESCYT in Spanish). According to the law of Higher Education passed in 2008, 1 credit in a classroom-based course is equal to 16 effective hours and at least 16 hours pertaining to the student’s independent work.

Courses may then have a total of two, three or four credits, depending on their weekly schedule, and hours necessary for individual work outside the class. However, it is common that courses have 3 credits, each one bearing a 48-hour workload throughout the semester.
ESTONIA

Higher Education

Higher education in Estonia is divided into two parallel sectors: applied higher education (diploma studies) and academic higher education (bachelor’s, master’s, and doctoral studies). In addition, Estonia has the following two types of higher educational institutions: a) public and private universities and b) public and private institutions of applied higher education.

The University of Tartu is one of six public universities in Estonia. About 50,000 students study at Estonian universities, and the principle language of instruction is Estonian. However, some courses are taught in Russian, German, or English. The universities are autonomous to the extent determined by the law of universities. This means that universities have the right to independently determine their academic and organizational structure, the content of teaching and research work, the course curricula, and the requirements for admission and graduation.

Academic Calendar

The academic year is from August to June. The fall semester is from August to January, and the spring semester is from February to June.

Number of weeks per term: 16

Number of classes a typical student takes per term: 4-6

Number of hours per week a typical student spends in class: 20

Credit Equivalent

The system of credits in use (ECTS) is a cumulative calculation of credit points based on the workload of a student. It is a student-centered credit system to measure the workload required to achieve the objectives of a curriculum. One credit point corresponds to 26 hours of study performed by a student (including lectures, seminars, practice, homework, independent work, and assessment of learning outcomes). ECTS credits are allocated to course units and are awarded to students who successfully complete the course.

Grading Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Estonian Grade</th>
<th>U.S. Equivalent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A – Excellent</td>
<td>A (91-100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B – Very good</td>
<td>B+ (81-90%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C – Good</td>
<td>B (71-80%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D – Sufficient</td>
<td>C+ (61-70%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E – Poor</td>
<td>C (51-60%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FX – Fail</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F – Fail</td>
<td>F (0-50%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
FIJI

Education System

In Fiji, the educational system consists of six years of primary schooling, which is free but not obligatory. Private schools with religious affiliation abound. In many elementary schools, the first four years are taught in different languages (i.e., Fijian, Hindi, Chinese, Rotuman, or English). At higher levels, English becomes the language of instruction.

After two years of junior secondary school and four years of secondary school, students may pursue their first degree program. Candidates study for three years for a bachelor’s degree of arts, commerce, or sciences (B.A., B.Com, or B.Sc.) and one more year for the Graduate Certificate of Education. Most higher educational institutions in Fiji are technical institutes and teacher training colleges. University of the South Pacific is one of three universities in Fiji and one of the only major universities in the South Pacific.

Academic Calendar

Fiji is a Southern Hemisphere site, so the academic year runs from February to November.

Grading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fijian Grade</th>
<th>U.S. equivalent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Course Load and Credit Equivalency

Fiji does not assign a credit value to courses. In general, courses meet three to four hours per week. The following information may help determine a credit value. (Please note that these are only guidelines, and actual amounts may vary.)

Number of classes a typical student takes per term: 3-4

Number of hours per week a typical student spends in class:
- Non-science, 1st year students - 16
- Non-science, 2nd year students - 12
- Science, 1st and 2nd year students - 21

Number of weeks per term: 14
FINLAND

Higher Education
The Finnish higher education system consists of two complementary sectors: universities and polytechnics (universities of applied sciences). Universities conduct scientific research and then provide instruction and postgraduate education based on it. Polytechnics train professionals in response to labor market needs and conduct R&D, which supports instruction and promotes regional development in particular.

The university sector currently enrolls roughly 160,000 students. There are 14 universities in Finland, and 7 of them take part in ISEP programs.

At the moment there are 27 polytechnics. These institutions are mainly multidisciplinary and serve approximately 130,000 students.

Finnish universities award Bachelor’s degrees (kandidaatin Finnish, kandidatin Swedish), Master’s degrees (maisteri/magister), and Doctoral degrees (tohtori/doctor). It is also possible to obtain a Licentiate’s degree (lisensiaatti/licentiat) prior to the Doctoral degree, and is currently fairly common among students.

It takes a minimum of three years to complete a Bachelor’s degree and five years for a Master’s degree. Advanced degrees can be completed in two years for the licentiate or four years for the Doctoral. A thesis is required at each level.

Academic Year

The academic year is from August/September to May. The fall semester is from August/September to December, and the spring semester is from January to May.

Number of weeks per semester: 14-21

Number of classes a typical student takes per term: 6-8 (approx. 20-30 ECTS credits).

Number of hours per week a typical student spends in class: 10-30

Credit Equivalent
All courses are measured in Finnish credits, and each one is equivalent to one ECTS credit.

A fulltime study load is 30 credits for a semester and 60 for an academic year. One Finnish credit equals 27-28 hours of work, and exchange students are required to complete 20-30 Finnish credits per semester.

Individual courses at Finnish universities may carry one to several credits. They may also last the whole semester or, very often, for much shorter periods during the term. Shorter courses are usually intensive courses and there are lectures 2-3 times a week.

Credit transfer
1 US undergraduate credit = 2 Finnish credits (2 ECTS credits). 1 US graduate credit = 2.5-3 Finnish credits (2.5-3 ECTS credits).

Grading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Finnish grade</th>
<th>ECTS grade</th>
<th>US grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A+, A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>A-, B+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>B, B-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>C+, D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>FX/F</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>Pass</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This grading system corresponds to the ECTS (see page 4 for details). Some courses are only graded on a pass or fail basis.
FRANCE

Higher Education

The higher education system in France has complied with the Bologna Process and moved to the LMD system. The LMD system — licence (bachelor), master, and doctorat — is based on the number of semesters completed after leaving secondary school. The ECTS equivalent is as follows.

- Licence = 6 semesters = 180 ECTS (Baccalauréat + 3 years)
- Master = 10 semesters = 300 ECTS (Baccalauréat + 5 years)
- Doctorat = 16 semesters (Baccalauréat + 8 years)

A local student attending university full time takes 30 ECTS credits per semester. French students enter university with a clear idea of what they want to study and follow a highly-structured curriculum specific to the degree they are pursuing. There is little room for electives, liberal arts, and general education courses. Due to students following this highly structured curriculum, course descriptions are not often provided.

The level of the course is indicated by the degree level (licence, master, doctorat) and the year in which the course is taught. For example:

L1 = first year of a bachelor’s degree
L2 = second year of a bachelor’s degree
L3 = final year of a bachelor’s degree

SM1 = Semester 1
SM2 = Semester 2

Courses are considered unités d’enseignement or UE. You may see this code on a French transcript. Courses have different components. Cours magistraux (CM) are the lecture components of a course and travaux dirigés (TD) or travaux pratiques (TP) are the smaller group seminars for the class. Courses may be listed dividing the two parts and the hours per week of each. For example, the following description in bold can be translated into the subsequently listed bullet points:

L1 semestre 1
UEF « Histoire moderne » / ECTS : 6
Initiation à l’histoire moderne (1h30 CM + 2h TD)

- L1 semestre 1 = 1st year of the licence (bachelor’s degree),
  semester 1
- UEF: Unité d’enseignement fondamentaux or a required course for
  the degree
- Modern History for 6 ECTS credits
- Introduction to Modern History
- 1h30 CM = 1 hour 30 minutes per week of cours magistraux or lecture
- 2h TD = 2 hours per week of travaux dirigés or study section

Students must give the host ISEP coordinator a list of classes and professors so that the host institution can retrieve the grades and create an official transcript for the student. Transcripts are usually not available until a few months after the end of semester exams.

Academic Calendar

In France the academic year begins in September/October and ends in May/June. The exact start and end dates vary depending on the institution and the program. Different academic departments, or facultés, often have different start and end dates as well.

Grading

Generally, the highest grades awarded by French professors are a 14 or 15. Grades of 9 or 10 are satisfactory. Students work to pass a course rather than to earn a high grade. French students need an overall average of 10/20 to pass the year.

Grading varies greatly from subject to subject. In mathematics, a student may receive a 20/20 upon
completing a problem correctly, whereas a 12/20 on an essay is a very good grade. International students may be given a little more flexibility in this area. ISEP France generally regards an 8 as a passing grade for ISEP students who take regular university courses with local students.

This is solely a recommendation; individual home institutions may decide to hold their students to the same standards as the French.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>French Grade</th>
<th>Suggested US Equivalent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14 - 20</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 - 13</td>
<td>B+ / A-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 - 11</td>
<td>B- / B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 - 9</td>
<td>C-/ C/C+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 - 7.9</td>
<td>D-/ D/D+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below 7</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Credit Equivalents**

France operates on the ECTS credit system. ECTS credits take into account the total student workload per class or degree program. 30 ECTS credits is equivalent to a full semester for French students. ISEP students may not be expected to take as many credits. The transfer of credits and credit equivalency depends on the home institution’s credit transfer policies (see page 4 for details).
GERMANY

Higher Education

Students should be self-disciplined and budget study time throughout the semester. Talk to other students or professors if you have troubles knowing what the learning outcomes of a course are.

Assessment is based on oral and written reports in seminars for which the student receives a Schein, or certificate. (A grade can be requested).

In Germany, Bachelor degree programs typically last 3 years, while second degree programs (1 to 2 years) lead to Master’s degrees. Unified, undivided long-term Master’s programs (5-6 years) are offered in some fields of study, and ECTS credits allow diplomas and grades to be easily convertible.

Like many European institutions, German institutions do not differentiate between 100, 200, and 300+ level courses.

Students attend courses based on their progression in their field of study. Individual arrangements with professors must be made to ensure proper accreditation.

Students do not typically graduate upon completion of their Bachelor's credits, by instead go straight to obtain their Master's. Therefore, international students in their fourth year of studies with the appropriate amount of credits may be considered as “Graduate” students for ISEP exchange programs.

Academic Year

The academic year begins in mid-October and ends in mid-July. It consists of two semesters, winter semester and summer semester. There is a one month semester vacation in February and one in the summer.

Transcript Issuance

Transcripts are not automatically issued, and students will have to follow the steps outlined in their IIS and Country Handbook to obtain a transcript from the international office. Please note that ISEP cannot intervene on behalf of students who have not completed the process outlined by their host institution.

Registration & Credit

Courses for the upcoming academic year may not be available until shortly before the year starts and students and advisors are encouraged to use previous year’s catalogues as a basis for choosing courses. Students are also encouraged to be flexible in requirements.

Grading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>German Grade</th>
<th>U.S. Equivalent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 - 1.5 (Sehr gut)</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.6 - 2.5 (gut)</td>
<td>A/B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.6 - 3.5 (befriedigend)</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.6 - 4.9 (ausreichend)</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.0 – 6.0</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(nicht ausreichend/ Nicht bestanden)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Unbenotet = not graded
Bestanden = Passed
Teilgenommen = Regularly attended

Credit Equivalent

A full workload varies between 4-6 classes per semester, or 10-16 hours per week.

A full course load entails 60 ECTS (or “Leistungspunkte” (LP)) credits a year or 30 per semester.

For certain fields of study, it is typical for students to receive average to mediocre grades.
Depending on the field of study, these grades may seem as good to very good grades by German standards.

The equivalent to the U.S. “D” does not exist. Students receiving a 3.0 or above are generally regarded as having an A or B average in the U.S equivalent. Anything between 4.1-4.9 is considered good academic standing. Registrars are encouraged to look at credit and contact hours to determine credit received.
GHANA

Higher Education

The University of Ghana, founded in 1948, is the oldest and largest public university in Ghana. Most courses are offered in the lecture format. 100 and 200 level courses are for general requirements, 300 and 400 level courses are for students majoring in the particular subject.

Academic Calendar

The University calendar consists of two 16-week semesters with a 6-week break in between. The ISEP program in Ghana includes one week of orientation at the beginning of each semester, followed by two semesters, each containing 13 teaching weeks, 1 week for revision and 2 weeks of exams.

Number of classes a typical student takes per term: 5

Number of hours per week a typical student spends in class: 15

Number of weeks per term: 16

Grading

Letter grades from Ghana are equivalent to US letter grades. Other letter grades such as I, Y, X, and Z may be issued to denote an incomplete or other special notice. The University of Ghana provides explanations regarding all letter grades on the back of their transcripts.

Credit Equivalents

Credits listed for international students on a transcript from the University of Ghana are equivalent to US credits. Ghanaian students follow a structured curriculum specific to the degree they are pursuing. The actual number of hours in class varies according to the department or subject and the amount of work expected of students outside of class. One course credit is defined per week for a semester as one of the following: one-hour lecture, one-hour tutorial, one practical session of two to three hours, or six hours of fieldwork.

University of Ghana

Grade/Percentage/Description/Credits A
(80-100) outstanding (4.0)
B+ (75-79) very good (3.5)
B (70-74) Fairly good (3.0)
C+ (65-69) good (2.5)
C (60-64 average (2.0)
D+ (55-59) below average (1.0)
D (50-54) marginal pass (1.0)
E (45-49) unsatisfactory (0.5)
F (0-44) fail (0)

Each grade is assigned an equivalent Grade Point (GP) as indicated above. The number of grade points earned by a student for each course completed is computed as the product of the number of credits for the course and the grade point equivalent of the grade obtained in that course.

The student’s Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA) is calculated by dividing the total number of grade points obtained, up to any specific time, by the total number for credits of all courses for which the student has registered up to that time.

The Final Grade Point Average (FGPA) is the CGPA for all courses under consideration calculated up to the end of a student’s academic program.
HONG KONG

Higher Education

Hong Kong returned to the People’s Republic of China and became a Special Administrative Region on July 1, 1997, after one and a half centuries of British rule. The formation and evolution of higher education in Hong Kong has been quite unlike that in China. Hong Kong’s colleges and universities operate separately from those within the jurisdiction of China’s State Education Commission. In addition, they are financed by Hong Kong’s University Grants Committee. Coursework includes lectures, seminars, tutorials, laboratory work, fieldwork, examinations, and research projects.

Academic Calendar

The academic year is divided into two terms: September to December and January to May. Examinations are scheduled in December and early May.

Number of classes a typical student takes per term:
4 - 6 (12 - 18 credits/units)

Number of hours per week a typical student spends in class: 12 – 18

Number of weeks per term:
13 first term, 15 second term

Grading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chinese Grade</th>
<th>U.S. equivalent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A/Excellent</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-/Very Good</td>
<td>A-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B/Good</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C/Fair</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D/Pass</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F/Fail</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: +/- grades can be transferred equivalently if used at home university.

Credit Equivalent

At The Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK), one unit is roughly equivalent to one hour of instruction per week. In general, most three-unit courses are composed of three hours of lecture, or two hours of lecture and one hour of tutorial per week.

A full workload for a semester is about 12 to 18 credits/units. A student with a workload of 12 credits will have an average of 12 hours of lecture per week.

ISEP participants are evaluated according to the standards of each academic department at CUHK.
HUNGARY

Higher Education

After high school, students may attend one of Hungary’s fifteen universities, five medical schools or 49 institutions of higher education (including nine technical institutes).

The arts and sciences universities offer a five-year curriculum which is not divided into graduate and undergraduate levels. Students graduating from these institutions receive accreditation as secondary school teachers in addition to their subject degree (B.A.). Master’s degrees are awarded pending successful exams in three subjects as well as a foreign language and the research and defense of a dissertation. Like many European institutions, Hungarian institutions do not differentiate between 100, 200, and 300+ level courses.

Students attend courses based on their progression in their field of study. Individual arrangements with professors must be made to ensure proper accreditation.

Students do not typically graduate upon completion of their Bachelors credits, but instead go straight on to obtain their Master’s. Therefore, international students in their fourth year of studies with the appropriate amount of credits may be considered as “Graduate” students for ISEP exchange programs.

Academic Calendar

The academic calendar is usually divided into two semesters: September to December and February to May.

Number of classes a typical student takes per term:
10 (one major); 15 (two majors)

Number of hours per week typical student spends in class:
20-25 (one major); 35 (two majors)

Number of weeks per term: 14

Grading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hungarian Grade</th>
<th>U.S. equivalent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5 (Jéles)</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 (Jó)</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 (Közepes)</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 (Elégséges)</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 (Elégtelen)</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Credit Equivalent

A full workload is 60 ECTS credits an academic year. Registrars are encouraged to look at credit and contact hours to help determine credit received.
INDONESIA

Higher Education

Higher Education in Indonesia includes universities and colleges that offer undergraduate and some graduate/post graduate programs.

In order to apply to higher education institutions, a student must complete 12 years of primary and secondary school. The latter may be completed at a technical institution, and students must receive a secondary school-leaving certificate. Admission depends upon grades and qualifying exams.

Academic Calendar

The academic calendar is divided into two semesters; Odd Semester (September – February) and Even Semester (February – July). Some universities also have Compact Semester (July – August). The course work is assessed through assignments and exams.

Number of classes a typical student takes per term: 4-6

Number of hours per week a typical student spends in class: 12-18

Number of weeks per semester: 17

Degrees

It takes four years (146 credits) to obtain a bachelor degree (Sarjana). For a master’s degree, the program is two years, and a minimum of three years is required for doctoral programs.
INDIA

Higher Education
In order to apply to higher education institutions, an Indian student must complete 12 years of primary and secondary school. India follows the 10+2 (high school) +3 (bachelor’s) +2 (master’s) system.

Academic Calendar
The Indian academic year begins in late July and ends with exams in April. Semesters run from July to November and December to April. University of Hyderabad also offers a summer program which typically begins in early June and ends in late July.

Degrees
Colleges and universities offer BA degrees after either three or four years of study. To obtain an MA degree takes an additional two years; a Ph.D. can take anywhere from 2 to 5 years with the completion of a compulsory internship and a dissertation.

Grading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indian Grade</th>
<th>U.S. equivalent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Indian grades are essentially the same as US grades. If +/- grades are assigned at the home institution, the +/- grade received in India should be transferred equivalently.

Number of classes a typical student takes per term: 3-4

Number of hours per week a typical student spends in class: 12-16

Number of weeks per term: 16-18

Credit Equivalents
Each course is equivalent to four credit hours, which amounts to four hours of time spent in the classroom per week.

Four credits in a semester course equates to 60 hours spent in the classroom.
ITALY

Higher Education

Before entering the university, Italian students take the esame di maturità (graduation exam).

University classes in Italy tend to be large as a result of a liberalized admissions policy. Italian students often enroll in many courses and then take exams in only a few of them. Most students study independently for exams.

Degrees

The undergraduate degree, or laurea triennale, is completed in three years, after the student receives 180 ECTS, and provides a solid foundation in the core subjects. The graduate degree, or laurea specificistica/magistrale, is awarded after two additional years and has a total of 120 ECTS.

Credits

ECTS credits are allocated to each course and represent the student workload required to achieve learning outcomes or course value within a degree curriculum (a core curriculum course usually weighs more than an elective course). One credit corresponds to a workload of about 25 hours, and the yearly workload for an average study course corresponds to about 60 credits. Some Italian universities use a different credit system, the CFU (Creditto Formativo Universitario). One CFU corresponds to one ECTS.

Academic Calendar

Full year: September/October – June/July
Semester 1: September/October - February
Semester 2: February – June/July

(These calendar dates can vary from institution to institution so please refer to the academic calendar specific to that school.)

Number of classes a typical student takes per term: 4-5 (24-30 CFU)

Number of hours a student spends in the classroom: 6-8 hours of lecture per class

Number of weeks per term: approx. 26 for full year courses, about 14 for semester courses

Grading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Italian grade</th>
<th>U.S. equivalent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>29-30 (excellent)</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27-28 (very good)</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24-26 (good)</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-23 (satisfactory)</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;18 (not passed)</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Italian grading system ranges from 18/30 to 30/30. The highest mark (30/30) is with distinction. All the exams under 18/30 are considered as “not passing” and may not be registered on the final transcript of records.

Note: Courses through the International Curriculum at Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore award credits according to the US academic system.

Coursework is assessed by the year-end examination (esame di profitto). Other exams and course assignments may be required.
JAPAN

Higher Education
Japanese universities offer four-year bachelor’s degrees and six-year medical degrees. Japanese universities require at least 124 credits for graduation.

Academic Calendar
The Japanese academic calendar runs from April to March, the first semester from April to September and the second from October to March. These include three major vacation periods (winter, spring, and summer), and each term consists of 15 weeks.
Special arrangements at Chukyo allow students to finish exams in December. Kansai Gaidai, Nanzan, Nihon-Mishima, Ritsumeikan, Toyo, and Rikkyo have special calendars that follow the U.S. academic calendar.

Summary of Course Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University</th>
<th>Classes/Term</th>
<th>hrs/Week</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chukyo</td>
<td>10 - 15</td>
<td>18 - 24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KGU</td>
<td>4 - 5</td>
<td>14 - 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nanzan</td>
<td>6 - 7</td>
<td>18 - 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ritsumeikan</td>
<td>5 - 8</td>
<td>12 - 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nihon</td>
<td>6 - 7</td>
<td>10 - 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TIU</td>
<td>3 - 4</td>
<td>12 - 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toyo</td>
<td>10 - 12</td>
<td>15 - 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rikkyo</td>
<td>7 - 12</td>
<td>10 - 18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Grading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Japanese grade</th>
<th>U.S. equivalent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>S/A+</td>
<td>90+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>80-90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>70-79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>60-69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F/D</td>
<td>59-40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F/E</td>
<td>39-0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Credit Equivalent

Chukyo, Toyo, Ritsumeikan, and Rikkyo: One credit equals 15 hours of class per semester. Most regular courses are assigned two credits (30 hours). Some language, physical education, and laboratory courses are only assigned one credit, although they may meet for 30 hours. Language courses require at least 15 hours per week and earn up to six credits.

Rikkyo: Japanese language courses from J0 to J3 levels meet three to five times a week for 90 minutes each. All J0-J3 level courses must be taken as a unit. In the J4- J8 levels, courses can be taken individually.

Kansai Gaidai and Nanzan: Japanese language courses meet three to five times a week for 50 minutes. Lecture courses meet for 90 minutes once or twice per week.

Transcripts

Chukyo, Ritsumeikan, Toyo, and Rikkyo: Issued through a centralized office, but students must apply through the international or academic affairs office.

Kansai Gaidai and Nanzan: Issued by international office’s academic officer.

Chukyo University = Chukyo
Nanzan University = Nanzan
Nihon University-Mishima Campus = Nihon Kansai
Gaidai University = KGU Ritsumeikan University =
Ritsumeikan Tokyo International University = TIU
Toyo University = Toyo
Rikkyo University = Rikkyo
KOREA

Higher Education

Higher education in Korea includes universities and colleges that offer undergraduate and some graduate programs, as well as two-year junior colleges, and technical vocational schools. In order to apply to higher education institutions, a Korean student must complete 12 years of primary and secondary school (the latter may be completed at a technical institution) and receive a secondary school-leaving certificate. Admission depends upon grades and qualifying exams.

Degrees

Colleges and universities offer BA degrees after four years of study, and two additional years in the same subject earn a master’s degree. With the addition of three more years, a doctorate is awarded.

Academic Calendar

The regular academic year, which runs from March to December, has two terms and only offers courses taught in Korean. Special programs taught in English run on an August to June academic year. Coursework is assessed through exams, essays, and class participation.

Grading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Korean Grade</th>
<th>U.S. equivalent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+/A0/A-</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+/B0/B-</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+/C0/C-</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+/D0/D-</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Korean grades are essentially the same as US grades. If +/- grades are assigned at the home institution, the +/- grade received in Korea should be transferred equivalently. (Note: some Korean institutions do not assign “minus” grades.)

Credit Equivalent

Korean credits are equivalent to US credits. Three hours of class work per week for 16 weeks is equal to three US credits. Eight hours of class lecture per week for six weeks (summer session) is equivalent to three US credits.

Number of classes a typical student takes per term: 4-6

Number of hours per week a typical student spends in class: 12-18

Number of weeks per term: 16
LATVIA

Higher Education
Academic higher education is divided into two stages in Latvia. At the end of the first stage (which can last three or four years), an academic degree and a bakalaurs (bachelor’s) diploma are awarded. If a three-year program is completed, this is not considered to be a completion of higher education. Rather, it is viewed as preparation for a one- or two-year professional training program or a continued academic education.

At the end of the second stage, which takes about two years to complete, the academic degree of magistrs (master’s degree) and a diploma are awarded. A bakalaurs degree is a prerequisite for admission to a magistrs program. Students who complete the three-year bakalaurs program may enter the magistrs program at the same institution, or they may continue the bakalaurs program at another institution. Generally, there is little movement between institutions.

The academic year begins in September and ends in late June or mid-July. Generally, it comprises 40 weeks of lectures, seminars, and practical work, which is usually divided into two semesters.

Academic Year
The academic year in Latvia is from September to June. Fall semester is from September to January, and spring semester is from February to June.

Number of classes a typical student takes per term: 3-4

Number of hours per week a typical student spends in class: 20-25

Number of weeks per term: 15-16

Credit Equivalent
The Latvian credit system refers to an average of 40 hours a week, leading to 40 credits per year. One Latvian credit equals 1.5 ECTS credits.

Grading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Latvian grades</th>
<th>ECTS equiv.</th>
<th>U.S. equiv.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9-10</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>B+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>C+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-5</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-3</td>
<td>Fail</td>
<td>Fail</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LITHUANIA

Higher Education
There are two types of higher education institutions in Lithuania - universities and colleges, which are divided into state and non-state institutions.

College
Colleges only provide undergraduate study, and are focused on practical activities. They are aimed at acquiring a professional bachelor’s degree and/or a professional qualification. This results in a professional Bachelor diploma or higher education diploma, and takes 3-4 years.

University
The education system at Lithuanian universities is organized into three cycles – undergraduate (Bachelor), Master and specialized professional studies, and Doctoral, post-graduate and residency studies.

Academic Calendar
The academic year is divided into two semesters. They run from September to December/January, and February to June. There is a one month semester break during January, and a 2 month summer vacation. Exams are generally given in December, January and June.

Number of classes a typical student takes per term: 5-7 (30 ECTS credits)
Number of hours per week a typical student spends in class: 20-23

Number of weeks per term: 16

Grading
Two evaluation systems have run side by side at Vilnius University since 1993; a ten-point system and a pass/fail system. For examinations, a grade of 5 and higher is a passing, and 4 and lower is a failing grade. The courses that do not end with examinations use the pass/fail system to test if a student has earned the credits allocated to the class. They pass when they prove that they learned more than 50% of required knowledge.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lithuanian Grade</th>
<th>U.S. equivalent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10 (Excellent)</td>
<td>A+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 (Very good)</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 (Good)</td>
<td>B+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 (Highly satisfactory)</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 (Satisfactory)</td>
<td>C+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 (Sufficient)</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-4 (Fail)</td>
<td>D-F</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Credit Equivalent
Vilnius University uses the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS), which fosters the ability to study abroad. Students must take a workload of 60 ECTS for the whole academic year, or 30 ECTS credits for one semester. Classes consist of lecture courses that end with a final examination or pass/fail evaluation. Depending on the field of study, the lectures may also be supplemented by seminars, practical and laboratory work, and written and oral assignments. A lecture or a seminar lasts 90 minutes, i.e. 2 academic hours.
MALAYSIA

Primary and Secondary Education
Primary education is a period of 6 years, and secondary education is a period of 5 years (3 years of lower secondary school and 2 years of upper secondary school). This makes 11 years of free education.
The admission age to the first year of primary education is seven. Primary schooling is mandatory for all children between the ages of 7 and 12.

Post-secondary Education
Upon completion of secondary education, students can opt to pursue 1 to 2 years of postsecondary education. This is the university entrance preparatory course. In total, the 12 years of school education serves as the basic entry requirement into Year One of a bachelor’s degree program in higher educational institutions.

Tertiary Education
At tertiary education level, institutions of higher learning offer courses. These lead to the awards of certificate, diploma, first degree and higher degree qualifications (academic and professional fields). The duration of study for a basic bachelor’s degree program is 4 years, and the courses of study at this level are provided by both the public and private education sectors.

Degrees
A student must complete four years of study for a bachelor’s degree. The exceptions to this are professional programs such as medicine, law and engineering, which often require additional years.

Master’s and Doctoral programs range in length from 2 to 3 years and require coursework and a thesis/dissertation. Malaysia has a number of public and private institutions that offer 2 to 2.5 year diploma programs in various fields of study.

Academic Calendar
The academic year is divided into two semesters: September to January and February to June. Students will be assessed throughout the semester in the form of daily work (essays, quizzes, presentation and participation in class), as well as projects/term papers, and practical work (laboratory work, fieldwork, clinical procedures and drawing practice).

Number of classes a typical student takes per semester: 5 – 8 classes

Number of hours per week typical student spends in class: 15 – 18 hours

Number of weeks per term: 17 weeks

Grading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Malaysian Grade</th>
<th>U.S. Equivalent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+ / A / A-</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+ / B / B-</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+ / C / C-</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+ / D / D-</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Malaysian grades are essentially the same as U.S. grades. Some Malaysian institutions do not assign +/- grades.
Note: +/- grades can be transferred equivalently if used at the home university.

Credit Equivalent
Malaysian credits are equivalent to US credits. Three hours of lecture (face to face) per week is equal to three US credits.
MALTA

Higher Education
Higher education is offered at the undergraduate and post-graduate levels at the University of Malta. It is publicly funded and open to all those who have the requisite qualifications. Over the past few years, the University has reviewed its structures in order to be in line with the Bologna process and the European Higher Education Area. Conscious of its public role, the University strives to create courses that are relevant and timely in response to the needs of the country. The supreme governing bodies of the University are the Council and the Senate.

Degrees
The majority of first-degree programs generally take three years for the honors courses. Before the end of the course, students are generally required to submit a dissertation. A master’s degree program generally requires between one and two years of full-time study.

Credit Equivalency
The European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) is allocated to each course in order to represent the student workload required to achieve the expected learning outcomes. The yearly workload for an average academic year corresponds to about 60 ECTS.

Academic Year
Full year: September/October – June
SM 1: September/October – February
SM 2: February – June

Students cannot depart before the end of exams, which go into February and June.

Number of ECTS credits a typical student takes per term: 24-30 ECTS*

*Visiting students need to check with their home university about credit requirements well before departure abroad.

Number of hours student generally spends in the classroom:
1-2 hours per class

Number of weeks per term: Approximately 14 weeks and 2 to 4 weeks of an examination period

Grading
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Maltese Grade</th>
<th>U.S. Equivalent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>80-100 (A+,A)</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70-79 (B+, B)</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55-69 (C+, C)</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-54 (D+, D)</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;44 (F)</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Progress is usually assessed through written assignments, tests and exams. An A-F grading scale applies. The teaching method combines teacher/student contact through lectures and tutorials, with an emphasis on independent study.
MEXICO

Higher Education
After three to five years of higher education, a bachelor’s level degree is earned. In the technical sciences, the title of arquitecto or ingeniero is awarded.

Similarly, the licenciatura degree is achieved for studies in humanities, social sciences, or law. One or two additional years are required for the maestria, and two or three more for the doctorado. For the latter, oral examinations and a thesis are required. Papers may be assigned during the semester, but term projects and final exams carry the most weight in assigning grades.

Academic Calendar
The academic year is from early August to May. First semester is from early August to December, and second semester is from early January to May.

Grading and Credits
Grading systems vary among the Mexican members of the ISEP Network. Failing grades may not be included on transcripts. AC (or A/C) is considered to be a passing mark in the pass/fail system.

Universidad La Salle (La Salle) and Instituto Tecnológico y de Estudios Superiores de Occidente (ITESO)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>La Salle/ITESO grade</th>
<th>U.S. equivalent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9-10</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>C-/D+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-5</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Grades at La Salle and ITESO are assigned on a scale of 0-10. Six is considered to be the lowest passing grade. The American grade of D may not factor into this equivalence, unless it is considered a passing grade at the home institution. The number of hours of instruction per week and credits are listed on transcripts. Eight ITESO credits are normally translated to three US credits. At La Salle, most courses include 60 hours of instruction, but this may vary.

Universidad Regiomontana (UR), Universidad de Monterrey (UDEM), and Instituto Tecnológico y de Estudios Superiores de Monterrey (ITESM)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UR/UDEM/ITESM grade</th>
<th>U.S. equivalent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>90-100</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80-89</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70-79</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-69</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At UR, UDEM, and ITESM, 70 is the lowest passing grade.

Two columns appear on the UR transcript. “F/S” indicates the number of instructional hours a week, including lab hours. The “C” column indicates the credits UR awards, which indicate the number of weekly hours the average student dedicates to that class.

Most courses are assigned six UDEM credits, which are equal to three US credits, except for recreational courses such as yoga and dance, which are assigned three UDEM credits.

At ITESM, units are the hours per week a student is expected to work in order to complete a course. These hours include both classroom instruction and homework.
Grades at U. Guanajuato are assigned on a scale of 0-10. Seven is considered the lowest passing grade. At U. Guanajuato, theoretical courses are assigned two credits for each hour that the class meets per week (for example, two hours of class weekly is equal to four credits). Practical and lab courses are assigned one credit for each hour that the class meets per week (two hours of class weekly is equal to two credits).

**Universidad Popular Autónoma del Estado de Puebla (UPAEP)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>USA</th>
<th>MEXICO</th>
<th>STD</th>
<th>UPAEP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>REP</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>REP</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Grades at UPAEP are assigned on a scale of 0-10. Seven is considered the lowest passing grade. Again, the American grade of D may not factor into this equivalence, unless it is considered a passing grade at your institution.

UPAEP offers the following explanation for credit equivalency:

At UPAEP credits are granted according to the number of hours the course is taught weekly and the number of hours the student must work independently. For example, if classes taught three hours a week, it totals 48 instructional hours and 48 independent work hours a semester (independent hours are always the same as the instructional hours). These credits are according to a 16-week semester. If you take the number of hours per week (48 + 48 = 96) and divide that by the number of weeks (16), it equals six credits.

For the case of transferring to the US credit system (where 48 hours equals three credits), students receive credit for either the in-class hours or the independent work hours. In other words, students will be receiving double the credits considered in the US system.
MOROCCO

Higher Education
In Morocco, university education is offered at 14 universities which have a combined total of 49 faculties and schools. Three main types of universities have been established in Morocco:

- Public institutions which were set up immediately after independence and throughout the 1970s;
- Newer universities established during the 1980s in response to the burgeoning demand for higher education opportunities;
- The private not-for-profit university of which Al Akhawayn is currently the only example.

At most universities, the language of instruction in the humanities and social sciences is Arabic, while French is the language of instruction in scientific subjects. Curriculums in all fields are, for the most part, standardized by the Ministry of Higher Education.

Al Akhawayn University is an English speaking institution and all courses are taught in English. Students will officially register for classes during orientation, as there is a special procedure for exchange students. Upon arrival the Director will advise students on course selection and will sign add/drop forms.

Degrees
Admission to postsecondary institutions is only open to baccalauréat holders, and many schools and faculties require that students also pass an entrance examination. Most institutions or faculties will also require that students have the minimum grades necessary for their proposed majors. Furthermore, some institutions will only accept students who have obtained their baccalauréat in the year of application for registration.

Academic Calendar
Academic year: late August to mid-May
Semester 1: late August to December
Semester 2: mid-January to mid-May

Number of classes a typical student takes per term: 5 (Each class generally equals 3 credit hours)

Number of hours a typical student spends in the classroom: 15-17 hours of lecture per week

Number of weeks per term: 30 for full year courses, and about 15 per semester

Grading
At Al Akhawayn, grades are based on the four-point GPA system according to demonstrated performance and skill levels. It is similar to that in the US.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Moroccan Grade</th>
<th>U.S. equivalent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A 90-100 (4.0)</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B 80-89 (3.0)</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C 70-79 (2.0)</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D 60-69 (1.0)</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F below 60 (0.0)</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A - Indicates that excellent achievement has been demonstrated
B - Indicates high achievement
C - Indicates acceptable performance
D - Indicates the lowest passing grade (at AUI, and usually requires the student to repeat the course)
F - Indicates failure either on a letter grade basis or on a Pass/Fail basis
NETHERLANDS

Higher Education
When students in Holland finish secondary school, they can continue their education at an institution of higher education. Holland has two main types of higher education: universities (universiteiten) and universities of applied sciences (hogescholen). Universities focus on the independent practice of research-oriented work in an academic or professional setting. The universities of applied sciences are more practically oriented, preparing students directly for specific careers. Students are equally challenged at the two schools; it is simply a difference in what they are studying.

Degrees
The bachelor’s program at a university requires three years of full-time study (180 credits). Depending on the discipline, a master’s program will last one to two years (60-120 credits).

Academic Year
The Netherlands’ academic year consists of two semesters with a total of 42 weeks. Some schools in the Netherlands also divide their semesters into two to three periods in which students are requested to take at least once course per period. The first semester runs from August to December and the second from January to May.
The standard workload for full-time students is 60 credit points per academic year (1,680 hours of study), or 30 credit points per semester (840 hours of study). Workload includes not only class time, but also individual study expressed in the ECTS, in which one credit point equals 28 hours of fulltime study.

Number of classes a typical student takes per term: 4-5 classes
Minimum: 24 ECTS (generally 4 courses)
Maximum: 30 ECTS (generally 5 courses)

Number of hours a typical student spends in the classroom: 20

Number of weeks per term: 13-20 weeks
(depending on the institution)

Grading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dutch grade</th>
<th>U.S. equivalent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8.5-10 (outstanding)</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.5-8.4 (very good)</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.5-7.4 (good)</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-6.4 (satisfactory)</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-5.9 (fail)</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Marks exceeding 9 are very rare. Educators uniformly comment on the great difficulty in obtaining a 9 or 10 and the respectability of getting a 6. (Some grade equivalency scales equate a 6 to a C – it is up to the home institution to award credit as they see fit.) There is also agreement that an 8 represents a high level of achievement, while grades 6 and 7 generally account for the majority of passing grades of awarded.
NEW ZEALAND

Education System
There are essentially four types of higher education institutions in New Zealand: universities, institutes of technology and polytechnics (ITPs), wānanga (Māori centres of tertiary teaching and learning), and private training establishments (PTEs). There are eight state-funded universities in New Zealand, which offer a wide range of courses leading to both undergraduate and postgraduate degrees. Undergraduate degrees take three to four years to complete. However, bachelor’s degrees in some special fields take much longer.

Academic Year
The academic year is based on the Southern Hemisphere calendar. It normally begins at the end of February and ends with an examination period in mid-November.

Grading
In New Zealand, grading scales differ slightly between institutions but are typically based on the letter scale with A+ as the highest grade and F as the lowest. Grades continue down on a scale: A+, A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, with C- being the lowest passing grade. A C is equivalent to 50% or slightly above. Failing grades are D, E, and F, with Q given for failing to meet mandatory course requirements (this notation may differ between universities).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>New Zealand Grade</th>
<th>New Zealand Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+, A, A-</td>
<td>80 - 100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+, B, B-</td>
<td>65 - 79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+, C, C-</td>
<td>50 - 64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>40 - 49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>0 - 39%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Course Load and Credit Equivalency
Most institutions assign each class (called papers in New Zealand) a credit/point value, which varies between each institution. At the university level, students usually take four papers per semester.

The number of credits a paper is worth is made up of the number of contact hours, time spent in private study, group work, labs, etc. Many business and humanity papers consist of three hours in lecture and one in tutorial. Science and creative arts papers have a laboratory or practical component that are usually three hours; this is in addition to time spent in lectures.

Because New Zealanders usually start specializing in their majors during the early part of their undergraduate career, a course (or paper) with a seemingly lower level or number may actually be equivalent in content to a mid-level course in the United States. Likewise, mid-level courses in New Zealand could equate to a very advanced course in the United States.
NICARAGUA

Higher Education
Undergraduate degrees are classified by *carrera* (major) and may last four to five years. Degrees in medicine and dentistry usually take longer to complete. Students do not take many electives outside of their field and begin intensive study in their major during their first semester at a university. Undergraduate courses are taken at the *pregrado* level. Postgraduate study is *postgrado* and master’s is *maestría*.

Academic Calendar
Nicaraguan universities observe the Southern Hemisphere academic calendar. The academic year runs from early March to late November. The first semester is from early March to June, while the second semester runs from early August to early December.

Grading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nicaraguan grade</th>
<th>US equivalent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>90-100</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80-89</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70-79</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-69</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students are given grades on a scale of 0 - 100. The minimum passing grade for undergraduate students and students doing a postgraduate program is 70. The minimum passing grade for a masters level student is an 80.

Credit Equivalent
At Universidad Americana, students spend 16 hours in class for every one credit they receive for classes taught in both English and Spanish. A full course load is four to five classes per semester. Students spend 18-20 hours in lecture per week.
NORWAY

Higher Education
Higher education in Norway is mainly offered at state institutions, notably universities, university colleges, and art and science colleges. Although there are as many as 26 private higher education institutions with recognized study programs, the overwhelming majority of Norwegian students (90%) attend public state institutions. In 2001, Norway introduced a new degree structure: an undergraduate bachelor degree in three years, a master's degree in two years, and a PhD in three years.

Academic Year
The academic year is divided into two terms: the fall semester—from mid-August to December—and the spring semester—from January to June. Exams are generally in November/December and May/June.

Number of weeks per term: 19-23
Number of classes a typical student takes per term: 3-4 (30 ECTS)
Number of hours per week a typical student spends in class: 15-20

Credit Equivalent
Students are strongly advised to consult their home institutions about the transfer of academic credits for their studies in Norway. The Norwegian institution will normally issue a certificate or transcript showing the courses attended and/or tests/examinations passed. Courses are measured in studiepoeng corresponding with the ECTS. The full-time workload for one full academic year is 60 studiepoeng/ECTS credits (30 ECTS per semester).

Grading
Grades for undergraduate and postgraduate examinations are awarded according to a graded scale from A (best) to F (fail), with E as the minimum pass grade. A pass/fail mark is given for some examinations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ECTS grades</th>
<th>U.S. equivalents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>B+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>C+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FX</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
POLAND

Higher Education

Students that go to basic vocational school or technical secondary school during their high school years have the option of continuing on to supplementary general secondary school (uczelnia jace liceum ogolnokształcące) or supplementary technical secondary school (technikum uzupełniające).

Specialized secondary school, general secondary school, and technical secondary school attendees may elect to go to one of the many academic schools (szkoły wyższe). The academic schools are divided by field of study and are similar to undergraduate institutions in the United States.

Like many European institutions, Polish institutions do not differentiate between 100, 200, and 300+ level courses.

Students attend courses based on their progression in their field of study. Individual arrangements with professors must be made to ensure proper accreditation.

Students do not typically graduate upon completion of their Bachelor's credits, but instead go straight on to obtain their Master's. Therefore, international students in their fourth year of studies with the appropriate amount of credits may be considered as "Graduate" students for ISEP exchange programs.

Academic Calendar

The academic year is split into two semesters; the first semester is from October to January, and the second is from mid-February to the end of June.

Number of classes a typical student takes per term: 4-7

Number of hours per week a typical student spends in class: 10-20

Number of weeks per term: 17

Grading

University-level education uses numeric grades from 2 to 5 with half-point intervals. 2.0 is a failing grade, the lowest passing grade is 3.0, and the highest mark achievable is 5.0. There is no 2.5 grade. 5.5 is sometimes given as an "exceeds expectation" grade but for all official purposes is equivalent to 5.0. Some courses may be taken on a pass/fail basis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Polish Grade (ECTS)</th>
<th>U.S. Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5 (70-100%)</td>
<td>A/A+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5 (60-69%)</td>
<td>B/B+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.0 (50-59%)</td>
<td>C/B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5 (40-49%)</td>
<td>D/C+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.0 (35-39%)</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; 3 (10-34%)</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CREDIT EQUIVALENCY

University of Wroclaw lists credits on their transcripts as ECTS credits. Please see the ECTS section (page 4) for more information on transferring ECTS credits to a US university. Registrars are encouraged to look at credit and contact hours to help determine credit received.
PORTUGAL

Higher Education
Students are admitted to a university directly into their field of study from high school. They begin intensive study in their field in their first year and take few elective courses. To comply with the guidelines regulating the European Higher Education Area, course levels are divided into three cycles.

The first cycle is designated for study to obtain a licenciatura (bachelor's degree) and takes three to four years to complete. The second and third cycles are dedicated to graduate study, mestrado (master's degree) and doutoramento (doctorate degree), respectively.

Academic year
Although individual faculties will begin courses at different times in the semester, the academic year runs from September to July. The first semester runs from late September to mid-February, and the second semester runs from mid-February to July.

Grading
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Portuguese grade</th>
<th>U.S. equivalent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18-20 (excellent)</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-17 (very good)</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14-15 (good)</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-13 (sufficient)</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-9 (non-passing)</td>
<td>D/F</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Grades in Portugal are distributed on a scale of 0-20, with 10 being the lowest passing grade.

Credit Equivalent
Credits are assigned in ECTS. A typical Portuguese student will take five classes per term and spend 25 hours in class per week. Terms last approximately 15 weeks.
SOUTH AFRICA

Education System

Most undergraduate degrees consist of three years of study with the exception of professional programs such as medicine, law, engineering, and architecture. Admission into a graduate program in South Africa requires completion of an Honours Program. To gain admission to these programs (which are generally one year in length), a pass rate of 68% in the final year of a three-year degree is required. Places in the Honours Program are limited and competition is keen. Honours degrees may include options from more than one discipline.

Master’s degrees in most fields consist of a dissertation/thesis, depending on the program. Programs range in length from one to two years.

The South African grading system is far more stringent than the US system. It is extremely difficult for a South African student, either on the high school or tertiary level, to obtain an A.

Academic Year

South Africa follows the Southern Hemisphere calendar. When applying for an academic year program, students will find it beneficial to begin their studies during the US second term, as this will correspond with the Southern Hemisphere academic year. The South African academic year generally runs from February to December.

Grading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UJ grades</th>
<th>Approximate Equivalents:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In the US</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90 - 100% Passed with distinction</td>
<td>A+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75 - 89% Passed with distinction</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70 - 74% Passed</td>
<td>B+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 - 69% Passed</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 - 59% Passed</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45 - 49% Supplementary exam</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0 - 44% Fail</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Credit Equivalents

Study Abroad and Exchange students at the University of Johannesburg (UJ) may take up to a maximum of four courses/modules per semester. UJ uses the NQF Credit system. A typical course is worth 6, 8, 12, 18, 24 or 36 NQF Credits. Study Abroad and exchange students are advised to select courses starting with 18 NQF credits. One NQF credit equals 0.222 semester credits (multiply the number of NQF credits by 0.222 and round it off to the nearest credit). The usual full load for study abroad and exchange students is 72 NQF Credits, which would be an equivalent of 16 U.S. credits. This is considered a full academic load, equivalent to that of a qualification seeking student. One (1) NQF credit represents roughly 10 notional hours of work. South African Universities do not use the Grade Point Average (GPA) system as in the U.S.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NQF Credits</th>
<th>% of Load</th>
<th>U.S. Credit Hrs.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>8.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SPAIN

Higher Education

ISEP member institutions in Spain are now compliant with the guidelines set forth by the Bologna Process of the European Higher Education Area. After four years of study, students earn a grado equivalent to a bachelor’s degree. Technical undergraduate degrees such as ingeniero or arquitecto are also awarded at this level. Graduate programs are designated as maestria (masters) or doctorado (doctorate).

Academic Year

The academic year is divided into two semesters (semestres or cuatrimestres) that run from September to February and February to June. Courses may be taught on either a semester or year-long basis.

Universidad de Murcia’s ISEP-Direct Language and Culture Program follows the US academic calendar, with semesters from September to December and January to May.

Grading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spanish Grade</th>
<th>US Equivalent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10 (matricula de honor)</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9–9.9 (sobresaliente)</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7–8.9 (notable)</td>
<td>B+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5–6.9 (aprobado)</td>
<td>B-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0–4.9 (suspenso)</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

No presentado: student dropped course or did not take final exam

Apto- This grade is similar to “pass” in a pass/fail system.

A score of 9 or 10 is considered excellent, 7 or 8 is very good, and 6 is average. Aprobado is the minimum passing grade in the Spanish system. Spanish professors rarely award a 10; students generally receive grades between 6 and 8. Spanish professors are tough in their grading in comparison to the United States, especially in technical fields such as architecture where it is not uncommon that over 50% of students in a class fail.

Students may need to obtain professors’ signatures on enrollment cards (fichas) prior to departure. Host ISEP Coordinators will work with students to explain this process if it exists for the student’s university.

Credit Equivalent

As universities assign credits to classes differently, a full workload varies across institutions. Some Spanish universities use ECTS, whereas some have their own system. Normally, an explanation of the credit hours is provided on a transcript. To see a typical course load at a particular university, consult the institution’s IIS. An average of 15 to 25 hours per week is spent in class lectures.
SWEDEN

Higher Education
Slightly more than 40% of young people in Sweden go on to higher education within five years of completing their upper secondary schooling.

The degree of selectivity in higher education institutions depends on the program of study. Admission is based on upper secondary grades as well as the results of the national university aptitude test. Having a good command of English is required for all applicants, and working experience is also taken into account. About 130,000 students take the aptitude test every year, and annual first-time enrollments total about 83,000.

Academic year
The academic year generally goes from August to June and is divided into two 20 week terms (fall semester from August to December/January; spring semester from January to June). Students take one course at a time for 5 or 10 weeks. Each week of full time study is equivalent to 1.5 points, and one academic year usually consists of 40 points.

Number of weeks per semester: 20
Number of classes a student typically takes per term: 4 courses, or 30 credits
Number of hours per week a student typically spends in class: It varies from 10-15 hours

Grading
Swedish grades
VG - VälGodkänd (Passed with distinction)
G - Godkänd (Passed)
U - Underkänd (Fail)

The Swedish grading scale does not lend itself to US grade equivalents. Väl Godkänd is rarely obtained and is only awarded 10% of the time. Failing grades are not reported on transcripts, but students may retake a final exam until they pass.

Because a translation between Swedish and US grades is lacking, it is up to the home institution to award credit as they see fit. One method is to compare the Swedish grade descriptions with those of the ECTS, and then ECTS with US.

ECTS Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ECTS</th>
<th>US Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Excellent – outstanding</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
with only minor errors..................A
| B    | Very Good – above average but with some errors...............B+ |
| C    | Good – sound work but with notable errors..........................B |
| D    | Satisfactory – fair but with significant shortcomings...............C+ |
| E    | Sufficient – performance meets minimum criteria...............C |
| FX   | Fail – some work required before credit is awarded..................F |
SWITZERLAND

Higher Education

The universities in Switzerland have been instituting reforms in degree programs in accordance with the Bologna Declaration. This is a two-cycle (undergraduate / postgraduate) system and has the following qualifications and structure:

Bachelor’s degree: 180 European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) credits or three years of full-time study.

Master’s degree: 90–120 ECTS credits or 1.5–2 years of full-time study beyond the Bachelor’s degree. Access to a Master’s degree program requires the successful completion of the Bachelor’s degree.

Like many European institutions, Swiss institutions do not differentiate between 100, 200, and 300+ level courses. Students attend courses based on how far they have advanced in their field of study. Individual arrangements with professors must be made to ensure proper accreditation.

Students do not typically graduate upon completion of their Bachelors credits, but instead go straight on to obtain their Master’s. Therefore, international students in their fourth year of studies with the appropriate amount of credits may be considered as “Graduate” students for ISEP exchange programs.

Academic Calendar

The Swiss academic year is divided into two semesters: mid-October to late February and early March to mid-July.

Grading

Grade averages between 5.5 and 6 are very rare; an average of a 6 is almost impossible. In exams, quarter steps are usually used to indicate grades between integer grades: e.g., 5.25. Anything above a 4 is considered a passing grade.

Swiss Grade       US Grade
5.5 - 6           A
4.5 - 5.4         B
4.0 - 4.4         C
< 4              F

*From World Education Services

Credit Equivalent

Swiss institutions use the ECTS system. Although the ECTS system considers 30 ECTS a full-semester course load, the same is not required for exchange students. Many students aim to enroll in 24 ECTS. Exchange students attending classes in a Swiss institution will be expected to spend an average of 20–25 hours in class per week, and take between 6–8 courses per semester.

Transcript evaluators are advised to use the contact hour for credit transfer instead of the ECTS credits. ISEP members are expected to indicate the number of contact hours for each course on their transcripts.

For certain fields of study, it is typical for students to receive average to mediocre grades. Depending on the field of study, these grades may be seen as good to very good grade by Swiss standards.

Transcript Issuance

Transcripts are not automatically issued and students will have to follow the steps outlined in their IIS and Country Handbook to obtain a transcript from the international office. Please note that ISEP cannot intervene on behalf of students who have not completed the process outlined by their host institution.
TAIWAN

Higher Education

There are four basic classifications for higher education in Taiwan: universities, including research institutes or graduate level programs; colleges, which at the undergraduate level represent the major subdivisions in universities; junior colleges, including both two and three-year schools. The universities in Taiwan offer four-year bachelor’s degrees and six-year or seven-year medical degrees.

Degrees

In order to apply to higher education institutions, a Taiwanese student must complete 12 years of primary and secondary school (the latter may be completed at a technical institution) and receive a certificate of senior high school. Admission depends upon grades and qualifying exams. If admitted to a university or college, a student must then choose a major and be accepted by an individual department, where places are often limited.

Academic Calendar

The academic calendar in Taiwan is September to June, dividing the year into two semesters lasting from September to January and from February to June.

Grading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Taiwanese Grade</th>
<th>U.S. equivalent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>80 – 100</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70 – 79</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 – 69</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0 – 59</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Credit Equivalent

One credit is equivalent to 18 contact hours of class. A period of the credit is an hour long (classes meet once a week). There are 18 weeks in one academic year.

Therefore, exchange student will receive 3 credits per class (3 hours x 18 weeks = 54 hours) after completing one academic year.

Number of classes a typical student takes per term:
Most students in Taiwan take approximately 8 to 10 classes and receive 24 credits in one academic year while exchange students generally take less number of classes, and receive fewer credits.

Number of hours per week a typical student spends in class: 8-10

Number of weeks per term: 9
THAILAND

Higher Education
After 12 years of primary and secondary education, students obtain a secondary school-leaving certificate. They then take a national entrance exam to be eligible for admission to institutions of higher education.

Academic Calendar
The Thai academic year begins in mid-June and ends with exams in March. Semesters run from June to October and November to March.

The academic year for courses taught in English (except SIIT and postgraduate programs) begins in August and ends in May. Semesters run from August to December and January to May.

Degrees
A bachelor’s degree usually takes four years to complete, but an additional one to two years may be required for certain fields. Graduate education leads to a master’s degree after one to two years of study and a thesis presentation. A doctorate is awarded after an additional two years of graduate study.

Grading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Thai grade</th>
<th>U.S. equivalent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Credit Equivalent
Thai credits are equivalent to US credits. An average course load is about 15-18 credits. Students must be enrolled in a minimum of 12 credits in order to be considered full time.
TURKEY

Higher Education
The current system in Turkey consists of both public universities and private foundation universities. Public universities are heavily subsidized by the state and therefore charge very low tuition fees. They are responsible for the majority of tertiary enrollment in Turkey. The Turkish Council of Higher Education (YÖK) oversees and accredits both public and private universities.

Okan University is accredited by the Council of Higher Education (YÖK). Okan currently offers 52 undergraduate programs, 26 graduate programs and 3 Ph.D. programs. These fall under 5 faculties and 2 graduate institutes. Yasar University, an English speaking institution, offers over 60 degree programs at the undergraduate and postgraduate level.

Academic Calendar

Full Year: mid September – mid June
Semester 1: mid September – mid January
Semester 2: mid February – mid June

Number of classes a typical student takes per term: 4-5 classes

Number of hours per week a typical student spends in class: 10-12 hours

Number of weeks per term: 12 weeks

Grading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Turkish Grade</th>
<th>U.S.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AA (90-100)</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BA (85-89)</td>
<td>B+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BB (80-84)</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CB (75-79)</td>
<td>C+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CC (70-74)</td>
<td>C-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DC (65-69)</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DD (60-64)</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FD (50-59)</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FF (&lt;49)</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Credit Equivalent
1 ECTS credit is approximately 0.5 U.S. credits (see page 4 for further information).
UNITED ARAB EMIRATES (UAE)

Higher Education

The current system consists of both a public and private sector. UAE citizens have the choice of attending a public university free of charge or a private university that will usually be modeled after an international system of education. In addition to other international entities, the UAE Ministry of Education and Higher Technology oversees and accredits both public and private universities.

The American University of Sharjah (AUS) is accredited by the Commission on Higher Education of the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools and by the UAE Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research. AUS offers 26 accredited majors and 42 minors at the undergraduate level, as well as 13 master’s degree programs.

Academic Calendar

Because it is based on the lunar calendar, the Islamic holiday of Ramadan causes the academic calendar to shift from year to year. Typically, Ramadan shifts three weeks earlier each year, sometimes causing the academic year to start and end later. It is best to refer to the academic calendar posted on the AUS website for each academic year.

AUS is based on the American university system and is very similar in grading and credit equivalency.

Number of classes a typical student takes per term: 4-5 classes (3-4 credit hours each)
Minimum: 12 credit hours Maximum: 19 credit hours

Number of hours per week a typical student spends in class: 12-16 hours per week

Number of weeks per term: 16 weeks

Grading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UAE grade</th>
<th>U.S. equivalent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A, A- (excellent)</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+, B, B- (good)</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+, C, C- (satisfactory)</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D (poor)</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F (fail)</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Credit Equivalent

The grade point average (GPA) is based on a 4-point scale. The minimum passing grade for any course at AUS is C-. Each class is three to four credit hours, and one credit hour is 50 minutes of class time. A student taking four classes will have 12 contact hours per week for a full load.
UNITED KINGDOM

Higher Education

While the higher education systems in England, Wales, and Northern Ireland are similar, the Scottish system is quite different.

After taking the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE), students in England, Wales, and Northern Ireland may leave secondary schooling. They may choose to continue their education at vocational or technical colleges, or they may take a higher level of secondary school examination known as AS-Levels after an additional year of study. Following two years of study, students may take A-Level (short for Advanced Level) examinations, which are required for university entrance in the United Kingdom.

Scotland has its own qualification framework. After seven years of primary education and four years of compulsory secondary education, students aged 15 -16 may take the Scottish Certificate of Education (SCE). The SCE is recognized throughout the United Kingdom as the equivalent to GCE A-levels and is usually the entry qualification for university.

Undergraduate degrees take three years to complete in England, Wales, and Northern Ireland, whereas at Scottish universities they last four years. At the graduate level, a master’s degree is normally earned in a single year, a research master’s degree in two years, and a doctoral degree in three years.

Grading

The percentage range for each class varies from institution to institution. Individual modules on the transcript sometimes carry only the percentage mark.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree class</th>
<th>% mark</th>
<th>U.S.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First</td>
<td>70-100</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upper Second</td>
<td>60-69</td>
<td>A-/B+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower Second</td>
<td>50-59</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third</td>
<td>40-49</td>
<td>B-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>39-30</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fail</td>
<td>less than 30</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Important note: In the UK system, it is often more difficult to obtain the higher grade designations than in the US system. Though a grade may appear low according to a home university’s grade scale; it may actually reflect very good performance on the UK scale.

Grades are given as percentages rather than letter grades. Forty percent is the minimum passing grade and high percentages are rarely awarded. A grade of 70% or higher is considered “with distinction.” In general, percentages increase from 40 rather than decrease from 100.

Course Load

A typical course load in the United Kingdom will vary from three to six modules (or classes) per term, depending on how many credits each module is worth. The number of hours in class per week will vary by institution. In addition to lectures, students may also be required to sign up for tutorials or lab work. For specific details on a particular host institution, please read the Academic Notes section of the Institutional Information Sheet (IIS).
Please note:

- Credits in the UK system are not equivalent to US credits.

- A full time student in the United Kingdom will normally carry 60 credits/semester, which is usually equivalent to 15 US credits/semester or 30 ECTS credits/semester.

The idea of an undergraduate being “undeclared” in their major may be very strange to people in the United Kingdom. UK students tend to specialize in their field of study early; sometimes they may even start specializing in their majors during the final year of high school. General education or basic courses are not as common at UK universities because they have already been covered at the GCSE level. Many faculties assume that a university student has a basic understanding of the concepts that will be addressed in the course, so it is common for third-year American students to take first-year and second-year courses at a UK university. The curriculum in these courses is not considered introductory or lower level.

It may be more difficult to enroll in multiple modules across differing departments in the United Kingdom. Instead, students may need to focus on choosing classes between one or two departments.
URUGUAY

Higher Education
Access to higher education in Uruguay only depends on presentation of a bachillerato, which indicates completion of 12 years of study (6 years primary + 4 yearshigh school + 2 years preparatory cycle).
The university is composed of facultades, analogous to academic departments in the US system. Facultades, however, tend to be fairly autonomous in their administration.
Degrees offered include the licenciado (4 years of study) and ingeniero (5 years of study).

Grading
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Uruguayan grade</th>
<th>U.S. equivalent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>S (sobresaliente)</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MB (muy bueno)</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BMB (bueno muy bueno)</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B (bueno)</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R (regular)</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D (deficiente)</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Uruguayan universities tend to be more severe in their grading than in US universities, and a grade of S (sobresaliente) is awarded less frequently. The grade of B (bueno) is the lowest possible passing grade.

Credit Equivalents
There is no system of credits used in Uruguay. A full workload per semester for international students is four to five courses. Courses from the regular curriculum average about 45 hours per semester. Spanish language for foreign students is more intensive and is 67.5 hours per semester.

Academic Calendar
Uruguay follows the Southern Hemisphere calendar. The academic year runs from March to December. Semester 1 is from March to July; Semester 2 is from August to December.

Number of classes a typical student takes per term: 5-7
Number of hours per week a typical student spends in class: 20-25
Number of weeks per term: 15-16
UNITED STATES

Education System

Higher education in the US follows the completion of high school (secondary school) when students receive their high school diploma (certificate of completion). There are several types of higher education in the United States.

University/College

Universities and Colleges are very similar and are the most common type of institutions that students attend following high school. These schools award undergraduate degrees and some also provide a graduate school option. They offer a variety of majors ranging from the arts to engineering to sciences.

Graduate level schools can also include studies such as medical school and law school. These are not an option through ISEP.

Academic Calendar

The US academic calendar is generally divided into two semesters.

Fall Semester: August/September – December/January

Spring Semester: January – May/June

Certain universities operate on a quarter calendar:

Western Washington University and California State University, East Bay. Please see each school’s membership directory pages for academic calendar information. Other Universities offer a January or May-term. These are month-

long periods of study where students can complete one university course. If the university offers this, it will be noted in the IIS.

Classes a student typically takes per semester: 4-5

Hours spent in Class per week: 12-15

Number of weeks per semester: 12-16

In the US, full-time status generally consists of at least four semester-long courses which is equivalent to 12 US credits. One credit usually equals 15 classroom hours, and most classes are 3 credits. If a class has more credits it means that it meets more frequently.

1 US credit is generally equal to 0.5 ECTS credits. However, this varies from school to school, so checking the back of the transcript can be helpful.
VIETNAM

Higher Education
The admission to higher education institutions (including colleges and universities) for Vietnamese students is based on their result of the annual National University Entrance Examination, which is critically competitive.

College programs usually take three years. Undergraduate programs take four to six years. In particular, it takes six years for students studying medical and dental sciences; five years for students of industrial engineering and four years for the majority of other undergraduate degrees in Vietnam.

Master programs take two years for bachelor’s degrees holders.

Doctorate programs take four years for bachelor’s degrees holders and three years for master degrees holders.

Degrees
Graduates are awarded with College Diplomas (college programs); Bachelor Degrees (undergraduate programs); Master Degrees (master programs) and Doctorate Degrees (doctorate programs).

The Minister of Education and Training is responsible for awarding Doctorate Degrees to students, and Rectors or Presidents of the universities are responsible for awarding master, bachelor degrees and college diplomas to the students.

Academic Calendar
Full year: September/ October – June Semester 1: September/ October – January Semester 2: January – June

IU Grading System
International University (IU) grades are equivalent to U.S grades but differ from others Vietnamese universities.

IU Assessment
The course assessment includes:
• Assignment and class participation: 20-40%
• Mid-term exam: 20 - 30%
• Final exam: 40 - 60%

The assignments can be of individual/ group assignment; of class participation. The mid-term and final exam can be a written/ test or presentation.

IU Credit system
The measurement of a credit is determined by the class’s contact hour. The actual amount of a single semester credit hour is often calculated as follows:
• Each credit represents 15 hours of contact hour per week plus 2 hours of student self-study
• Each contact hour is 45 minutes spending time in the classroom
• Normally each course is awarded 3 credits.
Full Time Academic Load

The minimum workload is 12 credit points (approx. 4 courses) per semester.

The maximum workload is 28 credit points (approx. 8 courses) per semester.

Number of classes an IU student typically takes per semester:
4 – 8 (approx. 12 – 24 credits)

Number of hours per week an IU student typically spends in class:
16 – 32

Number of weeks per semester at IU: 15 – 18