



## Mills College Study Abroad Policy

This policy outlines the requirements and process for students to participate in Mills Study Abroad. Mills Study Abroad refers to the participation of Mills students in academic, credit-bearing, institutionally sponsored programs outside of the United States for the summer, J-Term, academic semester, or full academic year. It includes:

- Mills-approved study abroad programs (See [Appendix 1](#)): A student enrolls in the program and pays the program's tuition.
- Mills international exchange programs (See [Appendix 2](#)): A student enrolls at one of Mills' international exchange partner institutions and pays Mills' tuition.

This policy *does not* cover:

- Mills Faculty/staff Led Programs
- Domestic Exchange

As both an academic and co-curricular process, Mills Study Abroad uses a specific set of academic, admission, and registration requirements that must be followed. Questions should be directed to [studyabroad@mills.edu](mailto:studyabroad@mills.edu). Governance of the Mills Study Abroad Policy and its associated processes is detailed in [Appendix 3](#).

### Participating in a Mills-affiliated program

Mills students can participate in Mills Study Abroad through the programs listed on the [Mills Study Abroad Programs web page](#). Mills-affiliated programs are defined as either a Mills-approved Study Abroad program or a Mills International Exchange program (See [Appendix 1](#) and [Appendix 2](#)). Students participating in a Mills-affiliated program are subject to the Mills College Study Abroad Policy.

### Participating in a non-Mills-sponsored (independent) Program

Students interested in attending any programs not listed on the [Mills Study Abroad Programs web page](#) must take a leave of absence from Mills in order to participate. They will not be eligible to use any federal or institutional aid for any program attended while on a leave of absence. While not subject to the Mills Study Abroad Policy, students on an independent study abroad program who wish to receive transfer credit for work completed on the program should submit an official transcript to the Mills Records office. The transcript should be translated to U.S. academic equivalents in order to be reviewed for transfer credit.

### Eligibility for Mills Study Abroad

To be eligible for any Mills Study Abroad program, a student must meet the following eligibility criteria:

- Completed the equivalent of at least one year of full time college coursework (24 credits) by the start of the program
- Have attended Mills at least one semester by the start of the program
- Must complete their final semester at Mills. Students may study abroad in the semester prior to their final semester.
- Possess at least a 2.5 GPA at the undergraduate level
- Not on academic probation or under sanctions for student misconduct at any point from application review to the end of the program
- Have no outstanding incomplete grades on their transcript
- Have all financial obligations to the college met

Students who want to participate in Mills Study Abroad but who do not meet all eligibility criteria can submit a petition to the Academic Standing Committee prior to applying to Mills Study Abroad. Students will be notified by email of their decision.

*Please note:* A program may possess additional requirements or prerequisites in addition to the minimum eligibility criteria listed above. These may include but are not limited to:

- Proficiency and/or previous coursework in a language other than English
- Major GPA of 3.0 or higher

Students are responsible for verifying any additional eligibility criteria that may exist for their desired program(s).

International students are eligible to participate in Mills Study Abroad as long as they can obtain the necessary visa for the program country.

### **Mills Study Abroad Approval**

In order to participate in Mills Study Abroad, a student must apply for institutional approval by completing the [Mills Study Abroad Application](#). Students are advised to initiate the planning process a year or more in advance of the start date of their desired term abroad.

Each student interested in Mills Study Abroad must complete the following four steps:

**Step One:** Students meet with the Assistant Director of International Scholars and Global Learning to discuss eligibility requirements, their interest in Mills Study Abroad, program offerings, and program fit.

**Step Two:** Eligible students meet with Major/Program Advisor(s) to discuss program course selection, semester of study, and which Major/Minor/Elective requirements they may satisfy while on Mills Study Abroad. Major/Program Advisor(s) are responsible for completing and signing the [Study Abroad Academic Planning Form](#) with the Student. Approval for courses fulfilling Mills Core Requirements will require approval and signature from the Registrar.

**Step Three:** Students meet with Financial Aid and Student Accounts to discuss the transfer of their financial aid package and payment of program fees during Mills Study Abroad. A representative from Mills

Financial Aid and a representative from Mills Student Accounts is responsible for completing and signing the [Study Abroad Financial Aid Form](#) with the student.

**Step Four:** Students finalize the Mills College Study Abroad Application and submit the completed application, [Study Abroad Financial Aid Form](#), and [Study Abroad Academic Planning Form](#) in-person or electronically to the Assistant Director of International Scholars and Global Learning with the required supporting documents. For students applying to multiple programs for the same term, students may submit one Mills Study Abroad Application.

Special attention should be paid to application due dates for each semester which can be found on the [Mills website](#). Students submitting a Mills Study Abroad Application after the official due date run the risk of having their application rejected. All applications are reviewed by the Assistant Director of International Scholars and Global Learning prior to submission to the Registrar for final process. It is the student's responsibility to ensure all information on their application is complete and accurate.

Mills Study Abroad Applications are reviewed to ensure compliance with Mills eligibility requirements. Approval for study abroad is offered on the condition that the student continues to meet all eligibility requirements for participation after their approval. In some limited circumstances, Mills College may need to rescind the admission of any student who is discovered not to meet the above requirements after being admitted.

### **Notification of Approval**

Applicants will be notified by email of a decision no later than two weeks after the application deadline for the semester to which they apply. Students who submit a Mills Study Abroad application and do not receive institutional approval can submit an appeal to the Academic Standing Committee. Adjudication of these requests by the Academic Standing Committee may take up to two additional weeks. Students who do not receive approval to participate in Mills Study Abroad may also re-apply in a later semester by submitting a new Mills Study Abroad Application at that time.

### **Program Application**

Students must also apply directly to their program(s) of choice in addition to completing the Mills Study Abroad Application. This application may have a different deadline than the Mills Study Abroad application. Students are responsible for meeting this additional application deadline, submitting any required application materials, and paying any application fee. Students will be notified directly by the program of an admissions decision. As some programs may become full prior to their stated application deadline, students are encouraged to submit program applications and a Mills Study Abroad application early. Additional application processes pertaining only to Mills International Exchange Programs are detailed in Appendix 2.

### **Admission and Confirmation**

Students are considered admitted to Mills Study Abroad when they have:

- received Mills institutional approval to participate in Mills Study Abroad

- applied and been accepted to a Mills eligible program

Admitted students will receive email notification detailing next steps and important documents to be signed, scanned, and submitted. To confirm their participation in Mills Study Abroad, students must submit the following documents to the Assistant Director of International Scholars and Global Learning:

- [Intent to Participate Form](#)
- [Study Abroad Assumption of Risk Form](#)

These documents must be submitted to [studyabroad@mills.edu](mailto:studyabroad@mills.edu) by the following deadlines:

- **November 1** for J-Term and Spring Semester
- **April 1** for Summer, Fall Semester, and Full Academic Year

Students are additionally responsible for confirming their participation in the program by the program's stated deadline. For programs that require a program deposit, the student is responsible for the cost of the deposit.

### **Program Dates and Components**

All program dates are set in advance. Students are expected to participate in all program components for the entire length of the program. Failure to fully partake in all aspects of the program, including orientation, coursework, and other program activities, may result in dismissal from the program

### **Program Preparation**

Students are required to attend a Mills College Pre-Departure session on campus the semester prior to their Mills Study Abroad program which will contain essential information related to logistics, health, safety, and student expectations abroad.

They are also required to attend any program-specific pre-departure sessions as mandated by their program. If a student is unable to attend their program-specific pre-departure sessions for any reason, it is their responsibility to notify the program staff to ensure that the information and materials covered during these sessions are received and acknowledged according to the individual program's policy.

### **Travel Documents: Passport and Visa**

A valid passport is required to travel to all international program destinations. An entry visa may be required for travel to the program location, depending on a student's citizenship and length of stay.

It is the student's responsibility to prepare any travel documents (i.e., passport, visa, etc.), pay any related fees, and complete the steps that are necessary to enter their program location(s). Mills College is not responsible for ensuring a student has the appropriate visa or documentation. Inability to obtain the appropriate travel documentation to participate in the program may not be considered as a basis for a refund of program-related fees.

When traveling overseas, a student's passport must be valid for the duration of the program and for at least six months beyond their travel dates; otherwise, their passport should be renewed before the program starts.

Passport renewal can be a lengthy process, so it is important to start the process as early as possible. Students can obtain further information about the process and the costs here: [US Passport Information](#).

Visa requirements can be obtained from the embassy or consulate of that country. There may be different requirements for U.S. citizens and non-U.S. citizens. It is important for students to obtain information pertinent to their citizenship status and to begin the visa application process as soon as possible to avoid delays.

### **Academic and Other Accommodations**

Mills students are encouraged to share any accommodations (physical, academic, etc.) that they may need while abroad as early as possible. Some accommodations available on the Mills campus may not transfer to the Mills Study Abroad context. Mills College will work with students to provide reasonable accommodations to the extent possible given the realities of the country to which they will be traveling and the time at which the accommodation request is made. For any formal accommodations, students must reach out to Student Access and Support Services and their program directly, as accommodations are determined by an individual assessment of each student.

### **Housing**

Students work with their specific program to secure housing for their stay. If a student intends to arrive earlier or stay later than the official program dates, they may need to make supplemental housing arrangements and be prepared to pay an additional cost.

Students must follow all of the housing rules and regulations of their location. Failure to do so may result in dismissal from the program or conduct actions from Mills. Housing for each program will have its unique set of rules that will need to be followed. Students are encouraged to check with program staff concerning housing details for their program.

In addition, students will be responsible for paying for any damages, repairs, or replacements, if necessary, that occur in their housing abroad. Students are advised to review all housing agreements from other programs/schools in detail to ensure they are aware of dates, costs and requirements.

### **Program Tuition and Fees**

Program tuition and fees vary by program type and location. In most cases, students will be responsible for covering personal expenses (airfare, local transportation, meals, etc.). For more information on what is included in a specific program fee and what is not, students should refer to program web pages or contact program staff directly.

### **Financial Aid and Scholarships**

It is the student's responsibility to confirm directly with Mills Financial Aid how their aid package will transfer towards the payment of Mills Study Abroad program tuition and fees. Federal and/or state sources of financial aid will be adjusted according to the costs of the program in keeping with federal and state

regulations. Students intending to participate in Mills Study Abroad who receive federal and/or state aid are advised to submit their [FAFSA application](#) as early as possible.

Students are encouraged to research and apply for external scholarships to fund their Mills Study Abroad tuition, fees, and related expenses. Students are responsible for verifying the conditions of a scholarship award with the scholarship administrator or donor directly. For scholarships that require a certification of eligibility, Mills Financial Aid will provide this to students upon request.

### **Payment**

Payment for Mills Study Abroad program tuition and fees is processed through Mills Student Accounts. For information related to payment for a Mills-approved Study Abroad Program, see [Appendix 1](#). For information related to payment for a Mills International Exchange program, see [Appendix 2](#). Additional information on making payments can be found in [Inside Mills](#).

### **Health Insurance**

Students are required to provide proof of international health insurance that covers the duration of their program prior to their departure abroad. If a student participates in a program that does not include international health insurance coverage, the student is responsible for purchasing health insurance that will cover them in their country of study for the duration of the program. Many programs may have their own mandatory insurance requirements which students should verify directly with their program. Mills students enrolled at one of Mills International Exchange Partners (See [Appendix 2](#)) also have access to emergency medical coverage abroad at no additional cost. Students are automatically registered for this coverage through Mills College and do not need to take action to initiate this process.

### **Vaccinations**

Some countries may require certain vaccinations or health clearances for visa or entry purposes. Participation in the program is contingent upon a student obtaining the required visa. Failure to obtain a visa based on a failure to obtain necessary vaccinations is not a basis for a refund of program-related fees. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention detail vaccination requirements and other traveler's health information. Students should work directly with their health care and insurance provider to obtain necessary vaccinations prior to their departure abroad. The [Mills Vera Whole Health Center](#) can provide vaccinations for students unable to obtain them directly through their health care provider.

### **Program Duration**

Students may spend up to one year participating in Mills Study Abroad. Spending more than one academic year abroad will require the student to take a leave of absence. Students participating in Mills Study Abroad may also wish to extend their Study Abroad for an additional semester. Certain programs may have the option to extend. It is the student's responsibility to verify with program staff if this option exists. Students who have this option must notify the Assistant Director of International Scholars and Global Learning and their Major Advisor of their request to extend their program. This request is subject to review by the Registrar and Major Advisor for formal approval. Should an extension require the student to extend the

length of their visa in their country of study, the student is responsible for carrying out the visa extension process.

### **Program Dismissal**

Failure to uphold requirements set by the Mills Code of Conduct as detailed in the [Student Handbook](#), Study Abroad Student Agreement, program policies, and Program staff may result in immediate dismissal from the program. The student will also be reported to the Mills College Student Conduct Officer. This may lead to further sanctions as deemed appropriate by the College. If a student is dismissed, they will be removed from program courses and may be responsible for all program-related expenses as well as travel home.

### **Program Withdrawal**

Situations occur that may prevent a student from attending or completing their Mills Study Abroad program. Students who choose to withdraw from a Mills Study Abroad program must formally notify their program staff and the Assistant Director of International Scholars and Global Learning.

The decision to withdraw is not considered a formal request until the student submits a Study Abroad Cancellation Form to [studyabroad@mills.edu](mailto:studyabroad@mills.edu). An incomplete or missing Study Abroad Cancellation Form does not qualify as an official cancellation of Mills Study Abroad. Students who withdraw from a Fall or Spring semester of Mills Study Abroad prior to the start date of the upcoming academic term will not be able to complete registration for Mills classes until they submit a completed Study Abroad Cancellation Form.

Withdrawals are considered final and cannot be reversed. It is the student's responsibility to verify their program's cancellation/withdrawal policy. Withdrawal can have financial consequences for the student which may include, depending on the program's policy:

- Loss of any program deposit
- Depending on the time of withdrawal:
  - Partial refund of tuition and fees
  - No refund of tuition and fees
- Payment of travel expenses to return home

### **Academic Standing and Course Credit**

Students participating in Mills Study Abroad during an academic semester (Fall, Spring or, Fall and Spring) will be registered in a 12 credit placeholder by the Mills Records office. They must take the equivalent of a full course load (at least 12 credits for UG and 9 for GR students) each semester they participate in Mills study abroad. Students' full-time enrollment in study abroad is reported to the [National Student Clearinghouse \(NSC\)](#). This process will automatically defer any accrued student loans during a student's participation in Mills Study Abroad.

An official transcript of any coursework completed on Mills Study Abroad is required. Any academic credit earned while participating in Mills Study Abroad is subject to the [Mills Transfer Credit Policy](#). While

transfer credit is not calculated in the student's Mills GPA, students' courses during Mills Study Abroad are still subject to the [Mills Academic Standing Policy](#).

Students may decide to make changes to their Mills Study Abroad courses once they are abroad. Changes involving courses approved for Major/Minor requirements should be communicated to the student's Major/Program Advisor. Any changes to courses fulfilling core requirements should be communicated to [records@mills.edu](mailto:records@mills.edu).

### **Program Evaluation**

Upon returning to Mills, all students who have participated in Mills Study Abroad are required to submit a Program Evaluation to [studyabroad@mills.edu](mailto:studyabroad@mills.edu).



## **Appendix 1: Mills-Approved Study Abroad Programs**

Mills students can enroll in study abroad programs run by study abroad providers or universities with which Mills has a formal agreement. Mills-approved Study Abroad programs are detailed on the [Mills Study Abroad webpage](#).

### **Available Financial Aid**

Mills students studying abroad during the Fall, Spring, or Full academic year can apply their federal and/or state financial aid award to pay for program tuition and fees. Students receiving institutional aid (Mills merit and need-based scholarships) may not use this aid to pay for Mills Study Abroad. Summer study abroad students can apply to receive federal and/or state financial aid for a summer program abroad by completing the Mills College Summer Financial Aid Application. J-Term study abroad students cannot use any institutional, federal, or state aid to pay for program tuition and fees.

### **Program Payment**

In accordance with [Mills Payment Policy](#), students participating in Mills Study Abroad will be billed for their semester abroad by Mills Student Accounts upon receipt of a program invoice directly from the program. Payment is due no earlier than the Mills Semester due date and 30 days from when the student receives a bill from Mills Student Accounts. Should there be any delay on the part of the program in sending the bill to Mills Student Accounts, the student will always have at least 30 days to make their payment.

## **Appendix 2: Mills International Exchange Programs**

International exchange programs offer Mills students the opportunity to directly enroll at a foreign institution with which Mills has an exchange agreement and pay Mills tuition during the academic year (Fall and Spring semesters). Institutions are listed on the [Mills Study Abroad webpage](#).

### **Available Financial Aid**

Mills students are eligible to use all federal, state, and Mills aid for which they qualify. Students are financially responsible for room, board, and any additional fees required by the host institution.

### **Application Process**

Students applying for an international exchange must complete the Mills Study Abroad Application and supporting documents. Once the Mills Study Abroad application is completed, students interested in the exchange programs will be reviewed separately. Two students per semester may be nominated for each program. Once a student receives a nomination from Mills, they will then be notified by the host institution to complete additional application materials.

### **Waitlist for Mills International Exchange Programs**

If an international exchange program becomes full, a waitlist of all eligible applicants will be created in the order in which applications were received. Mills College reserves sole discretion to manage program waitlists. If placed on a waitlist, the student will be notified via email and must reply with their intention to remain on the waitlist. If an opening occurs in the program, the first student on the waitlist will be notified via email. If this student receives an offer for a place in the program, they will have 48 business hours to accept the offer. If the student does not respond within 48 business hours, they will be placed at the bottom of the waitlist, and the next student on the list will be offered a spot instead.

#### Program Payment

In accordance with [Mills Payment Policy](#), students participating in an international exchange program are billed for Mills tuition and fees. Students are responsible for making payment in accordance with the regular semester payment deadline of August 1, for the Fall or January 2, for the Spring.

## Appendix 3: Governance of the Mills Study Abroad Policy

The Mills Study Abroad policy is governed by Mills Student Life and Academic Affairs.

- The Provost reviews any changes to the Mills Study Abroad Policy and approves Mills Study Abroad partnership agreements.
- The Study Abroad Committee provides oversight for curriculum in Mills Study Abroad and advises students on country-specific information as needed.
- Major/Minor advisors evaluate transfer credit for application to major, minor, and elective credit equivalencies.
- The Registrar facilitates Mills Study Abroad registration, approves courses taken for Core Requirements, and transfers academic credit earned through participation in Mills Study Abroad.
- The Academic Standing Committee (ASC) adjudicates Mills Study Abroad eligibility and admissions appeals.
- The Assistant Director of International Scholars and Global Learning oversees Mills Study Abroad student advising, application review, student preparation, and student support and conduct abroad, under the supervision of the Vice President of Student Life & Dean of Students.
- The Vice President of Student Life & Dean of Students adjudicates student conduct violations abroad and provides general oversight to all aspects of Mills Study Abroad.