



Five College Center for the Study of World Languages

Conversation Preparation Guides

Title: Study Abroad Orientation

Topic: Study Abroad

Level: Intermediate-Advanced

Practice on Your Own

Imagine you are on a study abroad program in a country where the language is spoken. You are in your host country at a state university. You will be there for six months studying and doing research that is related to your major back home. It is your orientation and you are meeting with the professor who will be your advisor and will teach one of your courses, as well as meeting students who are studying the same major as you. Plan your conversation in terms of what the professor and the students will ask you, what you will tell them and the questions you might want to ask them.

- Read the material available on the topic and also listen to audio recordings. If you do not know much about the university system in the country/ies where the language is spoken, you can look for more information online.
- The questions the professor will ask might include: What is your home university? What year are you doing? What is your major and what is your minor? Why did you choose to study this particular field? Why did you choose this university for your study abroad? How will this university contribute to your major, and what will be your contribution to the host institution?
- You will want to find out from the professor the following: What is the time for this class? Does the course require exams? What is the homework procedure – daily or weekly? What is the policy about exams? What are the rules and regulations about lateness and missing classes? Prepare to ask these questions, as well as any others you think of.
- The questions from the students might be: What courses do you take at your home university? Which classes do you enjoy most and which ones don't you enjoy much and why? What is the size of your classes? What are the methods of instruction in classes? How did you learn this language? What are your future goals? Prepare answers to these questions.
- Prepare to role play two conversations, one with the professor and another with one of the students in your class.
- Practice these questions and conversations in the language that you are learning.

Practice in Conversation Session

- Be prepared to tell your conversation partner and fellow students which university you are at in your host country and the subjects you are studying in the language you are learning. Your conversation partner and fellow students may follow up with questions, asking you why you chose this particular university, the size of the university and the number of schools/departments it has, etc.

Online at: langmedia.fivecolleges.edu

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- Be prepared to role play two situations.
 - In one conversation your conversation partner will be your new professor in the host country and you will interact with him/her. After culturally appropriate greetings, let the professor ask you questions and respond appropriately. In turn, you too ask the professor questions and let him/her respond. Then switch roles and repeat the conversation.
 - In the second situation, your conversation partner will be a student at the host university and you will interact with him/her. You greet one another appropriately, and as you interact in your conversation, your role play partner will ask questions and you will respond as you practiced. Then change roles and repeat the conversation.
- After the role plays, have a follow-up conversation. Talk about the similarities and differences between the colleges in the two countries, subjects offered, methods of teaching, class sizes, exams and semester time. Discuss this in the language you are learning to enhance your fluency and also add to your vocabulary.