Adult Learners and Veterans

As an adult learner you may have work, family, or other obligations that “traditional” students do not have. The may create barriers for an international experience. However, we encourage you to come and speak with the Study Abroad staff about programs that might be viable for you. Often short-term programs, faculty-led programs, or other summer abroad options can work. Adult students often have a certain advantage on programs as you have more life experience from which to draw on and gain deeper insight into the culture and politics of a country, thus, a better opportunity of developing your cross-cultural skills.

Students funding their UNC education through Veterans Benefits should note that these funds may be used for a study abroad experience as long as you meet the standards the VA has set for the Post-9/11 GI Bill.

Perhaps a study “away” opportunity through National Student Exchange would be a good option for you as it can decrease extra costs associated with having to bring a family overseas with you. Whether you choose a study “away” or an abroad experience, we highly encourage you to begin your planning early. Some of the additional requirements and expenses may include passports for family members, childcare obligations, housing restrictions, employment leave, and liability concerns.

The CIE study abroad staff is here to help you through the process of choosing the best program for you based on length, housing, academics, location, etc.

Questions to Consider:

- Would a short-term program work best or can I spend a whole semester abroad?
- Do I need a program with accommodations for my family?
- Do I have work, home, and/or family obligations that prevent me from studying abroad for an extended period of time?
- Will there be other adult students in my program? Does that matter to me?
- How do people in my host country view adult learners?
- What skills do I want to gain or improve while I’m abroad?

Resources

Diversityabroad.com provides resources and tips to adult learners who wish to study abroad.

“No Age Limits for Study Abroad in France,” written by an adult study abroad participant about her experience in France.

“Education Abroad for Adult Students,” published by NAFSA provides insight on adult learners and study abroad.

AIFS Student Guide to Study Abroad & Career Development

UNC’s Office of Veterans Services can provide advising, support, and help understanding the policies regarding study abroad.

Scholarships

Scholarships.com provides explains ways to find money for adult learners.