



Transcript Evaluation Guidelines 2010

Introduction

ISEP is pleased to present the revised 2010 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 US ISEP Coordinators in evaluating the transcripts of US students who have done work abroad. However, the ISEP TEG may also help US Coordinators evaluate the transcripts of incoming international exchange students as well as help transcript evaluators translate grades/marks and transfer credits from international to US institutions.

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; grades of 16 and above 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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Table of Contents

The Transcript Process -----	1-3
European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) -----	4
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) -----	5-6

Guidelines by Country

Argentina -----	7
Australia -----	8
Austria -----	9
Belgium -----	10
Botswana -----	11
Brazil -----	12
Bulgaria -----	13
Canada -----	14
Chile -----	15
China -----	16
Columbia -----	17
Costa Rica -----	18
Czech Republic -----	19
Denmark -----	20
Estonia -----	21
Fiji -----	22
Finland -----	23
France -----	24-25
Germany -----	26
Ghana -----	27
Hong Kong -----	28
Hungary -----	29
Iceland -----	30
Indonesia -----	31
India -----	32
Italy -----	33
Japan -----	34
Korea -----	35
Latvia -----	36
Lithuania -----	37
Malaysia -----	38
Malta -----	39

Mexico -----	40-41
Morocco -----	42
Netherlands -----	43
New Zealand -----	44
Nicaragua -----	45
Norway -----	46
Poland -----	47
Portugal -----	48
South Africa -----	49
Spain -----	50
Sweden -----	51
Switzerland -----	52
Taiwan -----	53
Thailand -----	54
Turkey -----	55
United Arab Emirates-----	56
United Kingdom -----	57-58
Uruguay -----	59

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 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 #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)

Since the last TEG update in 2005, the use of ECTS has become more widespread throughout the European member institutions. 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 will now list ECTS grades and credits in addition to 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.”

Unlike the US credit system, which measures classroom hours for credit, the ECTS takes into account the total student workload per class or degree program. European students are usually expected to earn 30 ECTS credits per semester and 60 ECTS credits per academic year. 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, 1 ECTS credit could be considered equivalent 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). However, even this standard should be applied with flexibility, as many European countries do not base their academic systems on the same contact-hour principle that the US standard does.

ISEP recognizes that this is becoming a widespread formula in the US because of its ease of conversion. However, 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.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1. Whom do I contact with questions about transcripts? Please direct all inquiries to ISEP's Transcript Manager, Joyce Rein, at jrein@isep.org or 703-504-9980. She will answer your inquiries or follow up with the host institution and get back to you.

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 the Transcripts Manager, 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.

The Transcripts Manager 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 the Transcripts Manager 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 Transcripts Manager. He or she 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 seven years. Within the seven-year period, ISEP is happy to provide additional unofficial copies. However, after seven 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 Transcripts Manager will release the transcript. If you believe the hold is an error and payment has already been made, please contact Samantha Gross, ISEP Senior Staff Accountant. She can be reached at sgross@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

<u>Argentine Grade</u>	<u>US Equivalent</u>
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10 (<i>Sobresaliente</i>)	A
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9 (<i>Distinguido</i>)	A-
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7-8 (<i>Muy Bueno</i>)	B+
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5-6 (<i>Bueno</i>)	B-
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4 (<i>Aprobado</i>)	C
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0-3 (<i>Insuficiente/Reprobado</i>)	F
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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 honor's, 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:

<u>Australian Grade</u>	<u>US Equivalent</u>
7 (High distinction, 100 - 80%)	A+
6 (Distinction, 79 - 70%)	A
5 (Credit, 69 - 60%)	B

4 (Pass , 59 - 50%)	C
3 (Conceded pass)	D
1/2 (Fail, below 50%)	F

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 in content to a mid-level course in the United States.

AUSTRIA

Higher Education

Austria has 21 Universities and numerous *fachhochschulen* (technical/professional institutions). Subjects may be compulsory (*plichtfaecher*), elective (*freifaecher*) or choice (*wahlfaecher*), the latter being subjects selected by students within existing general guidelines. Registration is informal.

Academic Calendar

The academic year begins on October 1 and ends on September 30. It consists of two semesters: the first runs from the beginning of October to the end of January (winter semester) and the second runs from the beginning of March to the end of June (summer semester). There is a one-month semester vacation in February and a three-month summer vacation from July to September.

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

<u>Austrian Grade</u>	<u>US Equivalent</u>
1 (<i>sehr gut</i>)	A
2 (<i>gut</i>)	A-/B+
3 (<i>befriedigend</i>)	B
4 (<i>genuegend</i>)	C+/C
5 (<i>nicht genuegend</i>)	F

The equivalent to the US D does not exist. An individual note (grade) is awarded for a class, thesis, or part of a large exam.

Austrian universities award credit based on the ECTS credit transfer system. Transcripts may show both local and ECTS grades.

Credit Equivalent

A full workload for an international student is an average of six courses in a semester of 15 weeks, with 12 hours of lectures per week.

Please see the section on ECTS (page 4) for further information about converting ECTS.

BELGIUM

Higher Education

Higher education in Belgium is organized by its two main communities: the Flemish and the French. Most universities teach in either Flemish or French. However, 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. Vesalius College is partially based on the American higher education system.

Degrees

In accordance with the Bologna declaration, Vesalius College offers three-year European bachelor's degrees and calculates coursework in ECTS credits (see page 4). One academic year corresponds to 60 ECTS credits, which is equivalent to 1500-1800 hours of study.

Academic Calendar

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

Number of classes a typical student takes per term: 5

Minimum: 4
Maximum: 5

Number of hours students spend in the classroom: 3 hours/class/week

Number of weeks per term: 15

Grading

<u>Vesalius Grade</u>	<u>US Equivalent</u>
A (81-100%)	A-/B+
B (69-80%)	B-/C+
C (58-68%)	C-/D+
D (50-57%)	D
F (below 50%)	F

Many US universities regard two ECTS credits as equivalent to one US credit, but this is ultimately determined by each individual university.

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 BGCSE 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.

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

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 March 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, afternoon, and evening.

Number of classes a typical student takes per term: 7

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

Number of weeks per term: 20

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.

<u>Brazilian Grade</u>	<u>US Equivalent</u>
9.0 - 10 (<i>excelente</i>)	A
7.0 - 8.9 (<i>bom - good</i>)	A
5.0 - 6.9 (<i>regular</i>)	B
3.0 - 4.9 (<i>insuficiente</i>)	C
0 - 2.9 (<i>deficiente</i>)	F

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). A new feature in the Bulgarian educational system is the recently 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, an American liberal arts college with a strong business school.

Academic Calendar

Based on the North American system, the academic year runs from August to April.

Number of classes a typical student takes per term: 4

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

Number of weeks per term: 12

Grading

Please note that the American University in Bulgaria uses the American system of credits and grading.

US Grading Scale:

A = Excellent
B = Good
C = Fair
D = Unsatisfactory
F = Failing

<u>Bulgarian grade</u>	<u>US Equivalent</u>
5 -6	A
4	B
3	C
2	F

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. "Honors" 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.

<u>Canadian Grade</u>	<u>US Equivalent</u>
A (80-100%)	A/B
B (70-79%)	B-/C
C (60-69%)	C-/D
D (50-59%)	F
F (49% or below)	F

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

<u>Chilean Grade</u>	<u>US Equivalent</u>
6.0-7 (<i>muy bueno</i>)	A
5.0-5.9 (<i>bueno</i>)	B
4.0-4.9 (<i>suficiente</i>)	C
0-3.9 (<i>insuficiente</i>)	F

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. JUFU (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 do at least a half year's internship (in the last 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 for one academic year. Fall semester is from September to January of the following year. Spring semester is from February to June. Course work is assessed by attendance in class, homework, a mid-term exam (optional), class participation and a final exam (which usually accounts for 60-70% of the grade).

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) in order 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: Courses run

for approximately 13 weeks.

Grading

<u>Chinese Grading</u>	<u>US Equivalent</u>
90 - 100	A
80 - 89	B
70 - 79	C
60 - 69 (pass)	D
Under 60	F

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.

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

<u>ICESI Grade</u>	<u>US Equivalent</u>
4.5 - 5.0	A (Excellent)
4.0 - 4.49	B (Very Good)
3.5 - 3.99	C (Satisfactory)
3.0 - 3.49	D (Sufficient)
0.0 - 2.9	F (Fail)

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: 5-7

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

Number of weeks per term: 18

Grading

<u>Costa Rican Grade</u>	<u>US Equivalent</u>
9-10 (90-100)	A
8 (80-89)	B
7 (70-79)	C
0-6 (or 0-69)	F

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

Higher Education

After completing gymnasium or vocational school, students who wish to attend university must pass the *maturita* (leaving-school) exam.

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-relation entrance exams.

Academic Calendar

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.

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

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

Number of weeks per term: 13

Grading

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

<u>Czech grades</u>	<u>EU/US grades</u>
<i>Vyborny</i>	A/A
<i>Vyborny minus</i>	B/B+
<i>Vel'mi dobry</i>	C/B
<i>Vel'mi dobry</i>	D/C+
<i>Dobry</i>	E/C
<i>Nevyhovel</i>	F/F

Masaryk University subscribes to the system of ECTS. Thus, 1 ECTS credit is approximately 0.5 US credits (see page 4 for further information).

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:

<u>Danish grades</u>	<u>ECTS equiv.</u>	<u>US equiv.</u>
12	A	A
10	B	B+
7	C	B
4	D	C+
02	E	C
00	Fx	F
-3	F	F

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.

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: 20

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

<u>Estonian Grade</u>	<u>US Equivalent</u>
A - Excellent	A (91-100%)
B - Very good	B+ (81-90%)
C - Good	B (71-80%)
D - Sufficient	C+ (61-70%)
E - Poor	C (51-60%)
FX - Fail	F
F - Fail	F (0-50%)

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

<u>Fijian Grade</u>	<u>US Equivalent</u>
A	A
B	B
C	C
F	F

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

In Finland, higher education is divided into two sectors: polytechnics and universities. In the early 1990s, higher education underwent a radical restructuring, resulting in the polytechnic sector. Polytechnics were formed by upgrading and merging previously existing institutions that offered vocational higher education. By 2000, there were about 30 polytechnic institutions—mostly multidisciplinary—serving approximately 75,000 students. In general, degree courses at polytechnics focus on a given area of professional expertise and require three and a half to four years to complete. In addition to polytechnics, there are 20 universities in Finland, including multi-faculty universities, technological, economics/business, and arts institutions. The university sector currently enrolls roughly 147,000 students.

Finnish universities award *kandidaatti/kandidat*, *maister/magister*, and *tohtori/doktor* degrees that correspond to US bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees. It is usually also possible to obtain a *lisensiaatti* degree prior to the doctoral degree. It takes a minimum of three years to complete a *kandidaatti* degree or five years for a *maisteri* degree. Advanced degrees can be completed in two years (for the *lisensiaatti*) or four years (for the *tohtori*). A thesis is usually 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: 4-8 (approx. 15 - 30 ECTS credits)

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

Credit Equivalent

All courses are measured in credits (*studiepoäng/sp*). Credits are allocated to course units, and they describe the workload required to complete the course/module. One credit (*studiepoäng*) is equivalent to one ECTS credit. A full-time study load for a semester is 30 credits (60 credits for one academic year). The course load for one academic year (60 credits) equals 1,600 hours of work (1 credit equals 25-28 hours of work).

Individual courses at a Finnish university may carry one to several credits. They may also last the whole semester or, very often, for much shorter periods during the term.

Grading

Finnish grade	ECTS equiv.	US equiv.
5	A	A
4	B	B+
3	C	B
2	D	C+
1	E	C
0	FX/ F	F
HYV	Pass	Pass

This grading system corresponds to the ECTS (see page 4 for details). Some courses are only graded on a pass (HYV) 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 bachelors degree

L2 = second year of a bachelors degree

L3 = final year of a bachelors 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/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* (bachelors), 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
- 2 h TD = 2 hours per week of *travaux dirigés* or study section

Students must give the ISEP host Coordinator a list of classes and professors so that they 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 departments, or *faculties*, 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. This is solely a recommendation; individual home institutions may decide to hold their students to the same standards as the French.

French Grade
14 - 20

*Suggested US
Equivalent*
A

12 - 13

10 - 11

8 - 9

7 - 7.9

Below 7

B+ /A-

B-/ B

C-/C/C+

D-/D/D+

F

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

The German higher education system is based on the principle of *Lehrfreiheit und Lernfreiheit* (freedom to teach and freedom to learn). Independent, self-directed study is heavily emphasized and is designed to encourage self-motivation and promote discussion.

Subjects may be compulsory (*pflichtfaecher*), elective (*freifaecher*), or choice (*wahlfaecher*), the latter being subjects selected by students within existing general guidelines.

Like many European institutions, German institutions do not differentiate between 100, 200, or 300+ level courses, and students attend courses based on their field of study progressions.

Assessment is based on oral and written reports in seminars, for which the student receives a *schein*, or certificate (a grade can also be requested). German universities do NOT issue a record of academic study while on an ISEP exchange. Exchange students must inform their professors which kind of credit they will need to gain from an individual course at the start of the semester.

Academic Calendar

The academic year, consisting of two semesters (winter and summer), begins in mid-October and ends in mid-July. There is a one month semester vacation in February as well as a summer vacation (typically July to September).

Number of classes a typical student takes per term: 4-8

Number of hours per week a typical student spends in class: 8-16

Number of weeks per term: 14

Grading

<u>German Grade</u>	<u>US Equivalent</u>
1-1.5 (<i>sehr gut</i>)	A
1.6-2.5 (<i>gut</i>)	B
2.6-3.5 (<i>befriedigend</i>)	C
3.6-4.0 (<i>ausreichend</i>)	D
4.1-6.0 (<i>nicht bestanden</i>)	F

Unbenotet= not graded

Bestanden= passed

Teilgenommen= regularly attended

Credit Equivalents

A full course load entails 60 ECTS credits per year (30 ECTS credits per semester).

TRANSCRIPTS IN GERMANY ARE NOT AUTOMATICALLY ISSUED!

General guidelines for obtaining transcripts are below, but students should consult their individual IIS for more information.

ISEP students must note each lecture taken on a timetable form at the beginning of the semester. Students should collect and keep all written work done in the semester. Students then collect *scheine*, or certificates, to receive credits for each class/seminar and submit them to the host ISEP Coordinator, who will forward necessary documents to ISEP Central.

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 field work.

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

<u>Chinese Grade</u>	<u>US equivalent</u>
A/Excellent	A
A-/Very Good	A-
B/Good	B
C/Fair	C
D/Pass	D
F/Fail	F

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

The degree system was introduced in Hungary after the Bologna Process went into effect in 2006. First-degree programs (3-4 years) lead to bachelor's degrees, while second-degree programs (1-2 years) lead to master's degrees. Unified, undivided long-term master's programs (5-6 years) are offered in some fields of study (i.e., human medicine, dentistry, pharmacy, veterinary medicine, architecture, law, and a few programs of art education).

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 a typical student spends in class: 20-25 (one major); 35 (two majors)

Number of weeks per term: 14

Grading

<u>Hungarian Grade</u>	<u>US Equivalent</u>
5 (<i>jeles</i>)	A
4 (<i>jó</i>)	B
3 (<i>közepes</i>)	C
2 (<i>elégséges</i>)	D
1 (<i>elégtelen</i>)	F

Credit Equivalents

Hungarian Universities use ECTS in grading. Hungarian credits are equivalent to US credits. A full workload is 60 ECTS credits an academic year (30 per semester).

At the beginning of the semester, students receive a form on which they collect grades and signatures from professors at the end of the semester. The ISEP Coordinator will issue an official transcript on the basis of this form.

ICELAND

Higher Education

There is no general legislation covering higher education as a whole in Iceland. Constitutionally, each higher education institution is directly responsible to the Minister of Culture and Education. Most higher education institutions are run by the state. Three, however, are operated by private parties in cooperation with the state. In addition, there are two types of higher education institutions in Iceland: universities and colleges. Universities have research responsibilities and offer more than one program of study. Colleges offer specialized training courses at the higher education level, but generally do not carry out research. College teaching, however, is based on the results of university research.

Academic Calendar

The academic year usually starts in September and ends in May. The first semester starts either in late August or early September and ends in December. The second semester starts in early January and ends in late May.

Number of classes a typical student takes per term: 3 - 5

Number of hours per week a typical student spends in class: 14 - 20

Number of weeks per term: 13

Grading

<u>Icelandic grade</u>	<u>ECTS grade</u>	<u>US grade</u>
10	A	A
8-9	B	B+
7	C	B
6	D	C+
5	E	C

Credit Equivalents

- 1 Icelandic credit = 2 ECTS credits
- 60 ECTS credits are considered a full workload for an academic year (30 credits each semester).

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.

Grading

	<u>Indonesian Grade</u>	<u>US Equivalent</u>
A	(91-100)	A
A-	(86-90)	B+/A
B+	(81-85)	B+
B	(76-80)	B/B+
B-	(71-75)	B
C+	(66-70)	C+
C	(61-65)	C
D	(50-60)	C
E	(<50)	F
F	(non-attendance)	F

Credit Equivalent

One credit is equal to a 50 minute class session per week (for 13 weeks). Most regular classes carry at least two credits.

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

<u>Indian Grade</u>	<u>US Equivalent</u>
A	A
B	B
C	C
D	D
F	F

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

There are more than 50 laurea-granting institutions of higher learning in Italy; the majority is state supported.

Before entering the university, Italian students take the *esame di maturità*.

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 university system is organized into four different stages. 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 specialistica/magistrale*, is awarded after two years and a total of 120 ECTS. A specialized master's degree and the doctoral programs are options for students who want more specialized training.

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. In the Italian system, one CFU (*Credito Formativo Universitario*) corresponds to 1 ECTS.

Academic Calendar

Full year: October - July

Semester 1: October - February

Semester 2: February - July

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

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

Number of classes a typical student takes per term: 3-4 (24-30 CFU)

Number of hours a student spends in the classroom: 6-8 hours of lecture per class (18-24 hours for 3 classes)

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

Grading

<u>Italian grade</u>	<u>US equivalent</u>
28-30 (excellent)	A
25-27 (very good)	B
21-24 (good)	C
18-20 (satisfactory)	C-
<18 (not passed)	F

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 thus are not registered on the final transcript of records.

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 APU, Ritsumeikan and Toyo have special calendars that follow the U.S. academic calendar.

Summary of Course Information

<u>Universities</u>	<u># classes/term</u>	<u># hours/week</u>
APU	8 - 10	14 - 18
Chukyo/Toyo	8 - 10	15 - 20
KG/Nanzan	3 - 5	14 - 18
Ritsumeikan	3 - 8	12 -16.5
Nihon-Mish	5-10	15

Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University = APU
Chukyo University = Chukyo
Toyo University = Toyo
Kansai Gaidi University = KG
Nanzan University = Nanzan
Ritsumeikan University = Ritsumeikan
Nihon University – Mishima = Nihon-Mish

Grading

<u>Japanese grade</u>	<u>US equivalent</u>
S/A+	90+
A	80-90
B	70-79
C	60-69
F/D	59-40
F/E	39-0

Credit Equivalents

Chukyo, Toyo, and Ritsumeikan: 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.

APU: Most lecture courses (foundation and major subjects) operate on a quarter system. Note regarding APU language courses: Beginning courses are four credits; advanced courses are two credits.

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

APU, Chukyo, Ritsumeikan, and Toyo: Issued through a centralized office, but students must apply through the international office.

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

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.

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.

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.

Grading

<u>Korean Grade</u>	<u>US Equivalent</u>
A+ / A0 / A-	A
B+ / B0 / B-	B
C+ / C0 / C-	C
D+ / D0 / D-	D
F	F

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 *bakalaura* (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 *bakalaura* degree is a prerequisite for admission to a *magistrs* program. Students who complete the three-year *bakalaura* program may enter the *magistrs* program at the same institution, or they may continue the *bakalaura* 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 May. Fall semester is from September to December, and spring semester is from February to May.

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

<u>Latvian grades</u>	<u>ECTS equiv.</u>	<u>US equiv.</u>
9-10	A	A
8	B	B+
7	C	B
6	D	C+
4-5	E	C
1-3	Fail	Fail

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 January and February to July. 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.

<u>Lithuanian Grade</u>	<u>U.S. Equivalent</u>
10 (Excellent)	A+
9 (Very good)	A
8 (Good)	B+
7 (Highly satisfactory)	B
6 (Satisfactory)	C+
5 (Sufficient)	C
1-4 (Fail)	D-F

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

Higher Education

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

<u>Malaysian Grade</u>	<u>U.S. Equivalent</u>
A+ / A / A-	A
B+ / B / B-	B
C+ / C / C-	C
D+ / D / D-	D
F	F

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

<u>Maltese Grade</u>	<u>US Equivalent</u>
80-100 (A+,A)	A
70-79 (B+, B)	B
55-69 (C+,C)	C
45-54 (D+, D)	D
>44 (F)	F

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 *maestría*, 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. 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)

<u>La Salle/ITESO grade</u>	<u>US equivalent</u>
9-10	A
8	B
7	C
6	C-/D+
1-5	F

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)

<u>UR/UDEM/ ITESM grade</u>	<u>US equivalent</u>
90-100	A
80-89	B
70-79	C
0-69	F

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.

Universidad de Guanajuato(U. Guanajuato)

<u>U. Guanajuato</u>	<u>US equivalent</u>
9-10	A
8	B
7	C
0-6	F

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)

<u>USA</u>	<u>MEXICO</u>	<u>STD</u>	<u>UPAEP</u>
A+	100		
A	95	A	10
A-	90		
B+	89		
B	85	B	9
B-	80		
C+	79		
C	75	C	8
C-	70		
D+	69		
D	65	D	7
D-	60		
	59		
F	REP	F	REP

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 class is taught for 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

University education is offered at 14 universities encompassing a combined total of 49 faculties and schools. Three main types of universities have been established in Morocco: public institutions set up immediately after independence and through the 1970s; newer universities established during the 1980s in response to the burgeoning demand for higher education opportunities; and the private not-for-profit university of which Al Akhawayn is currently the only example.

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 minimum grades in 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 (usually each class 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.

<u>Moroccan Grade</u>	<u>U.S. Equivalent</u>
A 90-100 (4.0)	A
B 80-89 (3.0)	B
C 70-79 (2.0)	C
D 60-69 (1.0)	D
F below 60 (0.0)	F

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.

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. 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 full-time study.

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

Minimum: 24 ECTS (4 courses)

Maximum: 30 ECTS (5 courses)

Number of hours a student spends studying for classes: 840 hours of study per semester

Number of weeks per term: 18-19 weeks (depending on the institution)

Grading

<u>Dutch grade</u>	<u>US equivalent</u>
8.5-10 (outstanding)	A
7.5-8.4 (very good)	B
6.5-7.4 (good)	C
6-6.4 (satisfactory)	D
0-5.9 (fail)	F

Marks exceeding 9 are hardly ever given. Educators uniformly comment on the great difficulty in obtaining a 9 or 10 and the respectability of getting a 6. 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 awarded.

NEW ZEALAND

Education System

There are essentially four types of schools in New Zealand's tertiary education system: 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, 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).

<u>New Zealand Grade</u>	<u>New Zealand Percentage</u>
A+, A, A-	80 - 100%
B+, B, B-	65 - 79%
C+, C, C-	50 - 64%
D	40 - 49%
E	0 - 39%

Course Load and Credit Equivalency

Most institutions assign each class (called *paper* in NZ) 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 *maestria*.

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

<u>Nicaraguan grade</u>	<u>US equivalent</u>
90-100	A
80-89	B
70-79	C
0-69	F

Students are given grades on a scale of 0-100. The minimum passing grade for undergraduate students and students doing a post graduate 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.

<u>ECTS grades</u>	<u>US equivalents</u>
A	A
B	B+
C	B
D	C+
E	C
FX	F
F	F

POLAND

Higher Education

Students that went to basic vocational school or technical secondary school during their high school years have the option of continuing on to supplementary general secondary school (*uzupełniające liceum ogólnokształcące*) 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 (*szkoly wyższe*). The academic schools are divided by field of study and similar to undergraduate institutions in the United States. General secondary school students may also choose to attend post secondary school (*szkola policealna*).

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.

Academic Calendar

The first semester begins in October and ends in 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.

<u>Polish Grade</u>	<u>ECTS</u>	<u>US Grade</u>
5 (70-100%)	A	A
4.5 (60-69%)	B	B+
4.0 (50-59%)	C	B
3.5 (40-49%)	D	C+
3.0 (35-39%)	E	C
> 3 (10-34%)	F	F

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.

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

<u>Portuguese grade</u>	<u>US equivalent</u>
18-20 (excellent)	A
16-17 (very good)	A
14-15 (good)	B
10-13 (sufficient)	C
1-9 (non-passing)	D/F

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

<u>South African grades</u>	<u>US equivalent</u>
75-100 (pass w/ distinction)	A
70-74 (pass)	A-
60-69 (pass)	B
50-59 (pass)	C
49 or below	F

Credit Equivalents

The University of Stellenbosch provides a transcript supplement with each transcript that lists course level and US credit equivalents. Most courses are worth three US credits hours. However, some common courses are worth one or four credit hours.

SPAIN

Higher Education

The higher education system in Spain is undergoing major changes. Some ISEP member universities are adapting degrees compliant with the guidelines set forth by the Bologna Process in order to be a part of the European Higher Education Area.

Universities designate course levels in *ciclos* (cycles). Courses taken in the *primer and segundo ciclos* are generally undergraduate courses, although many courses in the *segundo ciclo* are at a very advanced level. Some courses at the *segundo ciclo* may be the equivalent of a master's or graduate-level course in other countries.

Universities offer two types of undergraduate degrees. Students may complete the *primer ciclo* and obtain a three-year technical degree, a *diplomado*. Students who complete the *primer and segundo ciclo*, which may take four to five years, earn a *grado* or *licenciatura*, 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 *maestría* (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

<u>Spanish grade</u>	<u>US equivalent</u>
10 (<i>matricula de honor</i>)	A
9-9.9 (<i>sobresaliente</i>)	A
7-8.9 (<i>notable</i>)	B+
5-6.9 (<i>aprobado</i>)	B-
0-4.9 (<i>suspense</i>)	F
<i>No presentado</i>	student dropped course

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 universities are severe 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 terms of higher education institutions depends on the program of study. Admission is based on upper secondary grades and the results of the national university aptitude test. A command of English is required for all applicants. 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 is divided into two 20-week terms. Students take one course at a time for 5 or 10 weeks. Each week of full-time study is equivalent to one point. One academic year normally consists of 40 points.

Number of weeks per semester: 16-20

Number of classes a typical student takes per term: 4 courses or 30 ECTS / Swedish credit points

Number of hours per week a typical student spends in class: varies from 10-15

Grading

<u>Swedish grades</u>	<u>ECTS equiv.</u>	<u>US equiv.</u>
MVG (pass with great distinction)	A	A
VG (pass with distinction)	B	B+
G (pass)	E	C
U (fail)	F	F

In engineering departments, the following scale may be used:

- 5 (pass with great distinction)
- 4 (pass with distinction)
- 3 (pass)
- U (fail)

International students may request to have their Swedish grade converted into an A - F scale according to the ECTS.

Failing grades are not recorded.

SWITZERLAND

Higher Education

The universities in Switzerland are undergoing reforms in degree programs to be in accordance with the Bologna Declaration. This is a two-cycle (undergraduate / postgraduate) system.

Bachelor's degree: 180 ECTS credits or three years of full-time study.

Master's degree: 90-120 ECTS credits or one and a half to two years of full-time study beyond the bachelor's degree.

Doctoral degree: 180 ECTS credits or three years of full-time study beyond the master's degree.

The universities also offer an additional postgraduate degree called master of advanced studies (MAS). It requires a minimum of 60 ECTS credits or one year of full-time study. The MAS does not give access to doctoral level programs.

Academic Calendar

The Swiss academic year is divided into two semesters: the first semester lasts from mid-October to late February; the second semester lasts from 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: 5.25 for example. To pass a year, the overall result needs to be sufficient (anything above a 4 is considered a passing grade).

<u>Swiss grade</u>	<u>US equivalent</u>
5.5 - 6	A
5.0 - 5.4	A- / B+
4.5 - 4.9	B
4.0 - 4.4	C
< 4	F

Credit Equivalents

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. 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 six and eight courses per semester.

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

TAIWAN

Higher Education

There are four basic classifications for the 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 from September to June, dividing the year into two semesters lasting from mid-September to mid-January and from mid-February to mid-June.

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: Courses run for approximately 9 weeks.

Grading

<u>Taiwanese Grading</u>	<u>US Equivalent</u>
80 - 100	A
70 - 79	B
60 - 69	C
0 - 59	F

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.

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

<u>Thai grade</u>	<u>US equivalent</u>
A	A
B	B
C	C
D	D
F	F

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.

Academic Calendar

Classes are typically held from mid-September to mid-January for the fall semester, and from the first week of February to the last week of May for the Spring Semester.

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

<u>Turkish Grade</u>	<u>U.S. Equivalent</u>
AA (90-100)	A
BA (85-89)	B+
BB (80-84)	B
CB (75-79)	C+
CC (70-74)	C-
DC (65-69)	F
DD (60-64)	F
FD (50-59)	F

FF (<49)

F

Credit Equivalent

Okan University subscribes to the ECTS system. Thus, 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

<u>UAE grade</u>	<u>US equivalent</u>
A, A- (excellent)	A
B+, B, B- (good)	B
C+, C, C- (satisfactory)	C
D (poor)	D
F (fail)	F

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 carry only the percentage mark.

<u>Degree class</u>	<u>% mark</u>	<u>US</u>
First	70-100	A
Upper Second	60-69	A-/B+
Lower Second	50-59	B
Third	40-49	B-
Pass	39-30	C
Fail	less than 30	F

The pass mark is 40% at most UK institutions. The lower end of the scale may vary.

Important note: In the UK system, it is often more difficult to obtain the higher grade designations than in the US system. Don't panic if you are usually a high-achieving student but receive a grade that appears low according to your 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.

A typical British course load will vary from three to six modules (or classes) per term. Most visiting students will take three or four modules per term. 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 and 120/year, which is usually equivalent to 15 US credits or 30 ECTS credits/semester; 60/year.

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.

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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 years high 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).

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

Grading

<u>Uruguayan grade</u>	<u>US equivalent</u>
S (<i>sobresaliente</i>)	A
MB (<i>muy bueno</i>)	B
BMB (<i>bueno muy bueno</i>)	B
B (<i>bueno</i>)	C
R (<i>regular</i>)	D
D (<i>deficiente</i>)	F

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.