

## PSU -

- Webinar 101. Questions in dialogue box. Recordings available.
- City school. 27k students
- Courses are run through Ed Abroad and approved by each department. Equivalencies are assigned by the department.
  - International required
  - Tied to PSU's calendar
  - Credit transfers - history and advice
- Limitations of a deferral
  - No credit / no matriculation
  - Reapplying versus deferral
- Limitations of coming in as a transfer student
  - Potential limits for financial aid
  - Credit thresholds
  - Not all merit aid is guaranteed - college-by-college
- ADVICE:
  - Be honest, tell students to be honest with admissions folks
  - 1 semester of credit
  - Credit equivalencies matter and help
  - Wait until courses have PSU equivalencies before offering them to students. July 1 target.
    - Currently about 1/3 of courses are approved.
- Financial Aid
- Non-Financial Aid

### What are the relevant deadlines?

GYA must submit a complete list of students to be enrolled four weeks prior to the start of the Portland State University term. For any students who cancel their enrollment after the provided due date GYA will be charged a \$100 cancellation fee. For each additional student enrollment after the provided due date, GYA will be charged a \$100 rush fee.

Fall 2018 - PSU Classes start 9/24/18

Fall 2019 - PSU Classes start 9/23/19

Winter 2018 - 1/7

Winter 2019 - 1/6

Spring 2018 - 4/1

Spring 2019 - 3/30

GYA reg date = August 27th or pay add'l \$100

August 26th

December 10th

December 9th

March 4th

March 2nd

### Will the courses transfer?

The only way to know is to transfer. That said, many institutions are creating rubrics for course equivalencies based on what has been successfully equated+transferred in the past. In an ideal world, students will take the GYA course credit title (eg., ANTH 103) and ask for "pre-approval equivalency" from their receiving institution. With a track record this can be fairly easy. At many smaller institutions these equivalencies may not yet be in place, making it incumbent on the student to try and drive the process typically through the registrar's office. IF students get challenges, they can always try and call the Ed Abroad office at Portland State University to hear from an actual administrator at the college that everything is on the up-and-up. It's worth noting, that credits from Harvard do not always find a home at every institution as there are a variety of complexities involved, namely whether there's a course covering similar learning outcomes at the receiving institution.

Credits transferred towards General Education Requirements are less helpful than those as counting towards a major, however, all courses that are transferred count towards a student's diploma, and may

be listed as equivalent to everything from an A/P course, to an IB course, to a dual/joint-enrolled program.

### **Can students get a guarantee of credit transfer?**

Unfortunately, most colleges do not offer a guarantee until you've actually fully transferred the credits. While this is largely, in my experience, driven by the business office, every effort should be made to understand that this is setting precedent for the college and many do not have a strong rubric for transferring experiential credits. In this way, the fact that the credits come from Portland State University and are on an actual and official PSU transcript helps because as a major state institution, it garners less attention.

### **Who do I contact at PSU?**

GYA's directorial contact their is Ron Witczak, Executive Director, Office of International Affairs, International Affairs. Jen Hamlow, then Hannah Fischer, then Skye Clifford are the hierarchy for this endeavor. Skye should be your first line of approach AFTER connecting with GYA directly.

### **What does the student have to do?**

1. Apply to your gap year organization. If they don't get in, there's no point in the extra work.
2. Once you accept them, the student should have access to the course descriptions and a write up for costs, the expectations for work, and a clear communication of the complexities of credit transfer. You might refer students to a relevant FAQ page on the GYA website and require that they acknowledge having read this page.
3. Student goes to <https://vikingsabroad.pdx.edu/> and registers as a "NON-PSU STUDENT". No fees are collected yet. The student selects when they will be abroad, the name of the program (eg, Pacific Discovery), and some basic biographical information. The student needs this login to access their transcript at the end. Aside from this step and getting the transcript, for almost all students they will do all correspondence directly with your organization to keep the relationship.
4. Student reports to you which courses they elect to take - (4 weeks prior to PSU term to save \$\$).
  - Students can add/change/drop any individual courses at any time and we want to convey a sense of formality - so you should log changes internally. Students may be charged a \$100 penalty if they drop all PSU courses after you submit your roster, or, a \$100 "rush fee" if they elect to take courses after the roster is submitted.
5. Student pays you \$1,700 flat fee for as little as 4, or as many as 18 credits per term.
6. Student completes all the course requirements on program and papers on return.
7. Student submits their journal and all papers to the GYA PO Box by the relevant dates: June 20/ January 20th.
8. Grading instructor assesses and gives grades to PSU.
9. Student goes into Vikings Abroad to order an official transcript.

### **What do we have to do as an organization?**

1. Be accurate in your communication with students and encourage integrity in communicating with colleges.
2. Help students register on time to "rush fees" of \$100/student.
3. Collect \$1,700 per student (plus any relevant late fees).
4. Submit your roster of registered students to [ethan@gapyearassociation.org](mailto:ethan@gapyearassociation.org) by at least 4 weeks prior to the start of the term (see below). We need to see as a simple excel document:
  - Student's full name
  - Student's DOB
  - Semester/term (fall '19)
  - Region (South Africa)
  - Name of your organization
5. Make sure that students only see courses for programs that satisfy the relevant hours in the course description.

6. At the end of the program, submit a letter from the appropriate organizational representative verifying that “all hours as required in the course descriptions have been satisfied by the following students.” This can be a simple letter on a piece of organizational stationery.
7. At the end of the term (December and May), PSU shares a final roster with GYA who shares it with you. You pay GYA for all of your students that term after a reconciliation has taken place.

### **What are “place holder courses”?**

All students are pre-registered at PSU’s side with two “place holder courses” - INTL 399 x 2. Each represents 6 credits allowing students to eventually access financial aid as a full time student. Once the instructor of record sends the completed grades to PSU at the end of the program, the new grades are updated. IF a student orders a transcript early, it will show INTL 399 courses x 2, and be an ineffective transcript. They must wait until the official grades are processed.

### **How long does it take for grades to process?**

Once the Instructor of Record pushes the grades to PSU, it takes them as long as 6 weeks - although typically only 2 weeks to process. If a rush is needed for ongoing transfer or a progress report, the student should contact [ethan@gapyearassociation.org](mailto:ethan@gapyearassociation.org) to see about a special case.

### **What happens if a student gets bad grades on their course? Is there a re-write option?**

All re-writes are the discretion of the grading instructor and must be pursued privately between the student and the grading instructor. Extensions, and exceptions must also be cleared by the instructor of record.

### **How long do students have to complete coursework?**

Students technically have a full year to complete coursework. Extensions are at the discretion of the grading instructor and must be individually asked for. If students do not ask for an extension and do not submit coursework, they will still be charged full fees. The official deadline is June 20 / January 20th for submission of papers.

### **What happens if a student doesn’t complete their presentation on program but the course description requires it?**

This must be explained to the grading instructor. Typically, they have allowed a student to do their required presentation on return to a group of adults. The grading instructor may require proof this has been done by means of a letter or recording, at their discretion.

### **Who pays? What does it cost?**

The student pays you \$1,700 (plus any late/rush fees). You then pay GYA at the end of the term once the roster has been fully reconciled on all parts.

### **What are Quarter-Credits?**

PSU operates as most State institutions do, on a quarter-credit basis. This means that three-quarters (Fall, Winter, Spring) usually count as a full academic year. Typical quarter-credit to semester credit ratio = 1.5:1.

### **What does the transcript look like when it’s complete?**

It is an official PSU transcript showing the term, and the actual course equivalencies assigned by PSU.

### **Will this interfere with a student’s deferral plans?**

Potentially. Many students are applying for admissions then deferring, and in the majority of cases the terms for deferral may include no credits, a limit on the number of credits earned, and/or not matriculating at another institution. We advise that students communicate clearly and directly with their admissions officer in every case.

It is the student and their parents decision as to whether credits are earned, however.

We advise trying to limit credits to no more than a semester (18 credits from PSU) in order to have the most possible leverage available at your receiving institution, while acknowledging that they may still enforce some limits.

We suggest students either:

- Try and negotiate with their institution to make an exception for a high-quality gap year, citing GYA and external metrics for the amazing outcomes. Make the case that a gap year was needed, will propel the student through academia in less time to greater effect, and that a semester of credit was required to make the cost pencil out.
  - In many cases students are receiving more in merit-aid as a result of their gap year
- Consider not applying and deferring, but still put together all of their application materials for easier submission while on their gap year.
- Consider canceling their deferral and re-applying to their receiving institution.
- Acceptance to any institution can never be guaranteed and students are **STRONGLY** discouraged from accepting admissions to multiple universities: they do talk and it can end badly!

### **What do I have to do on program to ensure the credits are solid?**

Make sure the contact hours match on your program what are outlined in the course descriptions (ie., volunteer hours). Your staff shouldn't have to coach students on their coursework although it tends to support credit completion and also learning outcomes. Students are largely independent learners, with support of staff and peers, and a grading instructor back home.

There are some reporting requirements - ie, if a student is kicked off program, but those are currently being pushed through PSU and we won't have a detailed list for some time.

### **Who is responsible for wire transfer fees and forex?**

You are responsible for transferring GYA \$1,700 per student (plus any late/rush fees). GYA is okay to absorb the inbound wire transfer fees.

### **What if a student loses their journal or doesn't do daily entries?**

These need to be navigated with the grading instructor. In some cases it may be easy to come up with an alternative (other types of documentation on program), but in most cases a lost journal will unfortunately affect the student grade by approximately 10-20%. We of course understand that students are supposed to journal every day, but that there will be times journaling every day isn't possible so back-filling a few days at a time is understood. What is NOT okay is back-filling more than a few days, a month, or the entire semester - this will adversely affect the grade.

### **What is the difference between a matriculated student and a non-matriculated student?**

Matriculated students matter in deferral terms sometimes. At PSU, a student is not a full-enrolled / matriculated student unless they are taking FAFSA. This would mean they have applied to PSU and fully been admitted and packaged with a financial aid award. If a student is **ONLY** taking college credit through PSU, they are not counted as "matriculated".

### **What happens if a student doesn't complete all the requirements but already paid?**

The student can cancel their coursework at any time and, after the deadline, be charged by GYA (for PSU) a flat fee of \$100. GYA does not take an admin fee for these circumstances.

### **Are all courses available to be offered on all program locations?**

The courses are designed to be fairly universal, with the obvious exception of Spanish. As long as the contact hours are relevant for your regions, you should offer those courses to your students.

**Can I offer these to my non-gap year students?**

No. Organizations were accredited for their specific gap year programs based on the GYA Standards. Programs that don't fully adhere to GYA standards represent an untenable risk to PSU's liability and academic integrity.

Students must be on program for a minimum of 2+ months. A high school diploma is not required. US Citizenship is not required.

**Can we add courses to the PSU roster?**

Not at this time. Likely starting in 2019/2020 this may be an option. All courses submitted must be made available to all GYA Accredited Members as GYA is not able to manage each organizational account separately at this time.

**Can we hire our own grading instructors?**

Not at this time. Starting in 2019/2020 this may be an option.