

2024-2025 Financial Aid FAQ -- Study Trips

What does it cost?

Study trips are faculty-led classes, and tuition fees are payable for the credits as for any other class (i.e., undergraduate/post-bacc rate is \$1,848 per credit hour; graduate rate is \$1,926 per credit hour). Financial Aid and merit scholarships can be applied as usual towards tuition fees to those who are eligible.

In addition, a **program fee** covering the costs of items such as accommodation, ground transport, some meals, some admissions, is payable. Each trip has a different program fee covering different items. Program fees do not usually cover airfare so be sure to budget for this additional expense. An estimated Program Fee amount is used when calculating financial aid eligibility and may differ from the actual fee if updated later. Eligible students can apply for alternative/private loans towards the program fee, and the other expected costs of the trip not covered by the program fee. Graduate and dependent FAFSA applicants can also apply for additional Federal Direct PLUS loans. Ask the Student Financial Services office about this. Program fees listed as "TBA" will be updated as costs are finalized.

How can I afford it?

Because special financial aid consideration is given for study trips, students not normally eligible for funds in some cases can receive assistance toward tuition fees. Other eligible students have received more than they expected. Also, many have been eligible for private loans towards the program fee as well as toward the extra costs (e.g., meals, etc.) not covered by the program fee. Graduate and dependent FAFSA applicants can also apply for additional Federal Direct PLUS loans. To find out more, submit an online financial aid application by completing pre-registration in Self-Service.

How will I know how much financial aid/grants/loans I'll get—so I know if I can afford to sign up on the first day of registration?

When you complete pre-registration, you are automatically applying for financial aid. If you do this by October 1, 2024, for winter 2025, the Student Financial Services office will calculate and send you a financial aid package in time for you to make your decisions before sign-up. Those not eligible for grants will be notified of Federal Direct PLUS loan and alternative/private loan eligibility.

Can I still apply for study trip financial aid after the financial aid priority date?

Absolutely. The priority date is only the deadline to have an answer before the first day to register for the study trip. Applications submitted after that date will be processed as they are received.

What is the deposit for?

It is an advance on the cost of the class to reserve your space and will be credited to your account as the first payment. Study Trip deposit counts the total program fee, it is not an "additional" cost. The rest of the trip will be charged as usual when summer or winter interim bills are issued.

How can I pay the deposit?

A **nonrefundable \$525 deposit** is required within 24 hours of your registration. Payment can be made by wire transfer, credit/debit card (all major credit cards accepted – but a 2.95% processing fee is charged) or by electronic check (ACH – No additional processing fee is charged) via Transact which is accessed through the Financial Account > Make a Payment section of Self-Service. The deposit does not automatically appear as a charge in your student account. Here's how to make your deposit:

To Access Transact:

1. Log into SAIC Self-service at saic.edu/selfservice
2. Under Student Homepage choose > Financial Account > Make a Payment

Once you are in Transact go to:

3. Your Account > Make a Payment or ARTICard Deposit
 4. Select "Study Trip Deposit", choose the amount and term then select "Add to Shopping Cart"
 5. Select "Checkout" and complete your payment by choosing your method of payment. The payment will be credited to your student account when all final steps are completed as instructed. Please note that Wire Transfers require that you instruct your banking institution to transfer funds after you complete the Transact steps.
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1. You may also pay by paper check or money order in US currency at the SAIC Bursar's office, Sharp Building, 37 South Wabash Avenue, suite 245 or the Student Financial Services office, Sullivan Center, 36 South Wabash Avenue, room 1200.
 2. Important: Do not pay your deposit before you have successfully registered for the class because study trip deposits are non-refundable.

Can I rely on my financial aid package for the deposit?

No. The money will not be available by sign-up day so you must have another source of funding for the deposit.

Is the deposit refundable?

No. It will be used to pay for trip reservations etc. However, if a trip is canceled by SAIC because of low enrollment numbers required to run the trip, deposits will be refunded.

I don't understand the itemized program fee amounts for the study trip on my student account.

For Internal Revenue Service (IRS) reporting purposes and to maximize potential student/parent educational tax benefits, your study trip charges are broken down into categories consisting of tuition and program fees. The program fees may be subdivided into one or more of the following. The total of items one and two should equal the basic program Fee:

1. Trip Program Fee-Travel Related: Covers items such as lodging, included meals and travel expenses.
2. Trip Program Fee-Course Related: Covers expenses tied to course instruction such as faculty expenses, instructional costs, space rental, and required course activity fees.
3. Trip-Supplementary Travel: Will appear on your bill if you have opted for a group airfare, if a single room option is selected (if applicable), and/or if items such as a travel visa were procured by SAIC on your behalf.

How can I receive financial aid and/or merit scholarship for the winter semester?

Students, if eligible, can apply for financial aid during the online pre-registration process.

Am I eligible for Federal Direct Stafford loans during the winter term, if I am already receiving them for fall and spring?

No. Students receiving Stafford loans during the fall and spring semesters are not eligible for these loans in the winter term.

Can my parent apply for a Federal Direct Parent PLUS loan?

Parents of dependent students enrolled in 6 or more credit hours can apply for a Federal Direct Parent PLUS loan for the winter semester.

Can graduate students apply for a winter Federal Direct Graduate PLUS loan?

Graduate students enrolled in 3 or more credit hours can apply for a Federal Direct Graduate PLUS loan.

Once enrolled, when am I required to pay my outstanding balance?

Payment in full or payment arrangements must be made before your study trip begins.

Do I need to notify Student Financial Services if I decide to change my trip?

Yes, if you plan to change your trip please notify our office at saic.sfs@saic.edu because your winter award may require an adjustment. Please include your full name, student ID number, the name of the new trip, and the amount of credit hours you will be enrolled in.

If I have a credit balance reflected on my account, when should I expect a refund?

Eligible students will receive their refund one week before they are expected to leave for their trip. Please remember to enroll for Direct Deposit Refund on Transact (via Self-Service), in order for the funds to be directly deposited into your bank account