Chennai ♦ India
Message from the Director

I am glad you are considering journeying halfway across the world to a country that is known variously as a land of mysticism, spirituality, and gurus, a growing economic power, a society steeped in traditions or a country where gennext is charging ahead. Whatever the time you spend in India—a few weeks, months or years—you will constantly find new sights, sounds, smells, and tastes that trigger your curiosity and thoughts.

As a BCA student in India, you will meet with people from different backgrounds, religions, languages, convictions and ideas. In Chennai, you will see the old and new rubbing shoulders. Your conversations will span wide topics spurred by what you hear and see. Your excursions as part of your study will take you to other parts of India, giving you a chance to explore the immense diversity of landscapes, food, culture, people and much more that India has to offer.

As your Resident Director, I look forward to being a part of these explorations with you. Being Indian and having managed a study abroad program in India, I have had the pleasure of not only talking and walking India with students but also of seeing India through new eyes, with new questions and alternate perspectives.

I do hope you will take the plunge and join me in the process of discovery and learning in India. There will be moments of questioning, struggles with new situations and times when you miss all that is familiar, but, there will be many more moments of friendship, delight, wonder, achievement, excitement, inspiration, fun, and the sheer pleasure of being in a new environment. The India program will provide you with an incredible and memorable experience, even if at times it all seems a bit of madness!

So read on and get going with your endless list of what, why, where, how and the many more questions that we shall answer together.

See you soon in India!

Sincerely,
Anupama Pai
Resident Director, BCA Chennai

Anupama Pai uses her comprehensive experience in her native land of India to lead students on an amazing journey of discovery and learning. Having worked with students for many years, Anu understands how to help American students make the most of their time in India. Anu speaks several languages and has a special interest in environmental and gender issues.
Local to Global: Connecting to Ideas that Matter

Since 1962, BCA Study Abroad has been committed to helping students understand the complexities of the contemporary world by providing challenging academic programs and cross-cultural learning in locations around the globe.

From this start, BCA focused its educational mission on engaging students with ideas that matter.

As educators, we are convinced that no genuine understanding of global issues can be gained without a strong intellectual grounding in the histories, societies and cultures of the region in which our students pursue their studies. Furthermore, we believe that student learning depends heavily on meaningful direct contact with local people whose lives are entwined with and affected by the issues we aim to understand.

By design, a significant component of BCA’s study abroad programs, both through traditional classroom education and in-field learning, is grasping the historical, social and cultural context of the big questions of the human condition.

Through this model, BCA strives to convey a more comprehensive and precise understanding of the world to the students who participate in our programs.
CELEBRATING HOLI

“A festival celebrating mischief, affection, childlike playfulness and color, Holi spans a three-day period, with special traditions assigned to each day. On the last day of the festival people take to the streets and ‘play colors.’ Bright colors represent joy and affection, so throwing brightly-colored powder and pigmented water at one another represents spreading these sentiments. Traditionally, all types of people are welcome to participate in Holi celebrations, regardless of social or economic standing. There is much dancing and singing and general rowdiness, and the evenings are reserved for visiting family and bringing sweets to loved ones.”

Kelly Reed, Bethel College
About the Program

Our Chennai program is a rich combination of challenging university academics, once-in-a-lifetime educational excursions and individualized learning opportunities. Few programs in the world can offer the diversity of experience that BCA Chennai does; every semester students have the opportunity to study and experience firsthand the most important themes of our time: social justice through the lenses of human rights, poverty, gender issues, public health and education, environmental sustainability, cultural identity and democratization.

Near Madras Christian College is West Tambaram, where students can shop in the marketplace and see piles of coconuts, huge sacks of different rice, beans, and vibrant spices, wildly colored powders for Hindu pooja, bangles in every color, bhindis and fashion jewelry, combs and plasticware, steel cookware and more.
Madras Christian College was founded in 1837 by Scottish missionaries. The College is known as much for its academic standing and leadership building as it is for social commitment. It is one of the oldest institutes of higher education in the Indian subcontinent and is affiliated to the University of Madras, although it is autonomous. In fact, the college was among the first institutions in India to be granted autonomy in 1978. Ranked among the Top Ten Liberal Arts and Science Colleges in India, MCC has a rating of A+ (equivalent to 90-95%) by the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC). The college has 16 departments that offer undergraduate and postgraduate courses in various disciplines, such as liberal arts, humanities, science and business.
Student Learning

If a college professor were to dream up the perfect site for studying the most serious issues confronting our world, one couldn’t do better than imagine the country of India. Few places provide such a rich array of experiences.

BCA Chennai students enroll in courses in The Department of Social Work, The Department of History, or The Department of Political Science. All students who enroll in BCA Chennai complete a field experience. Worth up to a maximum of 6 credits, it is offered by MCC’s Department of Social Work and is super-vised by a professor (MSW), who will handle your bi-weekly reviews, reflection paper, assessments, reports, etc.

Below is just a sampling of the array of courses offered. For more recommended courses or to search for yourself, visit our website at www.BCAstudyabroad.org.

Social Work Track: Required and Recommended Courses

Since its inception in 1989, The Department of Social Work has remained relevant to the changing roles of social work around the world. With this in mind, the department offers courses such as International Social Work, Development Economics, Medical Social Work, Human Rights, etc. Students will choose any two courses that are on offer at the Department of Social Work for the I MA and II MA classes during the semester.

Required Course: Field Placement (6 credits)

This is an opportunity to get beyond the classroom and fully integrate into Indian society. Students engage with a local agency and complete 200 hours of field work during the semester.

International Social Work (3 credits)

Students gain knowledge on the international dimensions of social work through examining cross-cultural responses to global issues, understand interdependence across borders and study international relief and development practices.

Community Organization and Social Action (3 credits)

Students develop an understanding of the concepts related to working with communities in the Indian context, the concept and principles of social action as a method of social work. They also gain knowledge of various approaches, skills and techniques of working with communities as well as knowledge about the various methods and strategies of social action.

Human Rights and Advocacy (3 credits)

This course helps students understand human rights as a tool in social work and develop knowledge to deal with social problems. It will also sensitize students to the human rights of individuals and communities and how to fight for and uphold them.

Recommended Courses for All Other Majors

Students along this track can choose any two courses that are offered at the Departments of History and Political Science for the I MA and II MA classes during the semester. The selection of these courses is contingent on the absence of conflict in class schedules for the selected courses. They will also have the opportunity for field placement.

Gender in Indian History (4 credits)

Students examine perspectives on gender, social issues, legislation, women’s movements and current gender issues.

Studies in Human Rights (4 credits)

Students learn concepts and perspectives on human rights, covenants, issues in India, legislation and policies and women’s and children’s rights.

Politics and Governance in India (5 credits)

Students will gain an understanding of the nature and issues involved in the political process of India—political legacies, traditional forces, party systems, problems and challenges to Indian democracy.

International Relations (4 credits)

This course teaches students the theoretical perspective of international relations and the seminal theories and concepts contending the international system.

FALL 2013 NEW PROGRAM TRACK: SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN INDIA

In partnership with MCC, BCA will offer a new track focused on sustainable development in India. Interdisciplinary in nature, the track will give students unique opportunities to learn from experts in several different fields, such as environment economics, development economics, gender and development, human rights, non-profit management, social entrepreneurship, and other factors that impact sustainable development in India. Through a mix of various learning strategies, including a field placement experience, students will learn first-hand how India is dealing with the challenges that come with transforming into a global economic powerhouse.
FROM THE CLASSROOM TO THE WORLD

“As a student in the MSW department, I had many opportunities that I would not have been able to experience in the U.S. Doing a field placement at a local non-governmental organization gave me first hand experience with community development and has helped prepare me for a career in international social work. Taking classes about social work theory from a non-western perspective has helped broaden my own perspective. Attending and helping to organize academic conferences enabled me to learn from experts in the field and from other conference attendees. These learning experiences and the interpersonal experiences all added up to a semester that continues to impact me in positive and meaningful ways.”

J. J. Krehbiel, Bridgewater College
BCA Signature Courses

BCA’s Signature Courses focus student learning on intellectual development, cross-cultural awareness and trans-disciplinary study, both through traditional classroom learning and in-field experience. Much of this learning depends heavily on meaningful direct contact with local people whose lives are entwined with and affected by the issues we explore.

Required Courses

**Conversational Tamil**
Mandatory Tamil language tutorial for BCA students.

**Exploring Indian Culture and Society (3 credits)**
This course provides students with a foundation to understand the complexities and unique features of the Indian culture and social systems. Common topics covered include:
- Traditional organization of the Indian community
- Religious diversity in India
- The Indian Constitution as a “Social Document”
- The political process
- Gender dimensions in society
- Key figures in Indian political and social movements

Field Placements

BCA Chennai students complete field placements with local Non-Government Organization (NGO), non-profit or community-based organizations in the city of Chennai. The field placement opportunity is a valuable experience for social work and non-social work majors alike and offers an inside view of how non-profit organizations respond to the socio-economic challenges facing Indian society. Examples of field placement agencies include:

**Family Life Institute (FLI):**
Founded in 1971 as part of the aim to realize the College objective of “social relevance”, this service unit of MCC has grown from an initial focus on the displaced community of Mappedu (which was adjacent to the campus) to providing several services to the many localities that have developed in the area. A primary school, medical clinic, tailoring classes and community development activities with the local women are the main thrust of the Center. [http://www.mcc.edu.in/mcc2010/index.php/units/155/554](http://www.mcc.edu.in/mcc2010/index.php/units/155/554)

**Indian Community Welfare Organisation (ICWO):**
Established in 1994, this registered voluntary organization works out of concern for marginalized and exploited women in difficult circumstances in India. They work with commercial sex workers and their clients, the transgender community and in the field of STD/HIV/AIDS prevention. A more recent initiative has been interventions with the large homeless community in central Chennai to improve overall socio-economic conditions. [http://icwoindia.org/index.html](http://icwoindia.org/index.html)

Women In Need (WIN) Foundation:
Women In Need (WIN) Foundation is an initiative formed and registered in 2003, founded by a group of women activists with the aim to achieve comprehensive empowerment of women and children in the most vulnerable sections of the local community. WIN Foundation provides educational support, runs child development centers and works with the local tribal communities on development projects. [http://www.winfoundation.webs.com/](http://www.winfoundation.webs.com/)

“As a student in the MSW department, I had many opportunities that I would not have been able to experience if I had stayed in the US. Doing a field placement at a local non-governmental organization gave me firsthand experience with community development and has helped to prepare me for a career in international social work. Taking classes about social work theory from a non-western perspective has broadened my own perspective. Also, attending and helping to organize academic conferences enabled me to learn from experts in the field and from other conference attendees. These learning experiences and the interpersonal experiences I gained all add up to a semester that continues to impact me in positive and meaningful ways.”

J. J. Krehbiel, Bridgewater College
Living in Chennai

Formerly known as Madras, Chennai is a 367-year-old city on the Coromandel coast of the Bay of Bengal. It is India’s fourth largest city and a major center for computer technology, hardware manufacturing, and healthcare industries.

Madras was one of the first outposts of British East India Company. The British built Fort St. George (today the legislative and administrative seat of the state), which was completed on St. George’s day in 1640 (April 23rd) and so was named after the patron saint. George Town then developed into the modern city of Madras. Thomas, one of the twelve apostles of Jesus Christ, is associated with Chennai. He is said to have come to India as an evangelist and died in what is now Chennai. Two suburbs, Santhome and St. Thomas Mount, are named in his memory.

Chennai is an important center for Carnatic music and hosts a large cultural event, the annual Madras Music Season, which includes performances by hundreds of artists. The Tamil film industry, one of the largest film industries in India, is based in the city; the soundtracks of the films dominate its music scene. The city also has a vibrant theatre scene and is an important center for the Bharatanatyam, a classical dance form.

Living and traveling through the city, students experience first-hand the rapidly changing face of Indian society and economy, and the challenges that these pose.

Housing and Student Life

BCA students live on campus in student housing, in air-conditioned rooms that are furnished with a single bed, closet, desk and chair. Women are housed in Martin and Margaret Hall, while men are housed in Thomas Hall. Madras Christian College attracts students from all over the world. This diverse student body adds to your intercultural experience and provides more opportunities for you to learn. There are several clubs and student organizations at the college that BCA students can join based on their interests.

Local Transportation

Students use the many forms of local transportation available at their doorstep—suburban train, share autos, buses—to travel to their placement sites or across the city with their friends and explore Chennai’s offerings.

“Studying with BCA in India at Madras Christian College was a life-changing experience—from the friends I made, to the classes I took through the MSW department, and my internship at the SOS Children’s Village—every day was new and exciting. ... The most memorable experience I had was dancing in rain puddles in the courtyard of Martin Hall to the song ‘Sheila Ki Jawani’ with my close friends from the hall. Everyone was singing and dancing, the energy was something I have never felt before. At that moment, dancing barefoot in the rain with the biggest smile on my face, thinking to myself this would always be my home in India.”

Bethany Sinn, Elizabethtown College

EDUCATIONAL EXCURSIONS

Unique academic excursions, which require students to submit a one to two page reflection paper, grant students a range of opportunities to learn about India’s rich culture, history and traditions. Sites include:

- **Delhi**: India’s capital and home to one of the world’s largest mosques
- **The City of Agra**: learn the history of the world famous Taj Mahal and its unique architecture
- **Wyanad**: a tribal area where you can observe and learn about life among one of the indigenous tribes of India
- **Hyderabad**: a glimpse into history of the main southern Muslim kingdom and its modern day metamorphosis
- **Mamalapuram**: a UNESCO heritage site
- **Pondicherry**: a former French colony
Mission Statement
Rooted in the values of peace and justice, BCA Study Abroad promotes international understanding, awareness of global citizenship and academic scholarship through educational exchange.

BCA Chennai Quick Facts
Dates of Study:
The end dates for each semester vary depending on whether the student is applying for Track 1: Social Work or Track 2: All Other Majors as well as their field placement assignment.
• Fall Semester: Late June to mid-November
• Spring Semester: Early January to mid-April

Application Deadlines:
• Fall Semester: April 1
• Spring Semester: October 15

Language of Instruction: English
Host University: Madras Christian College
Housing: Student housing at Madras Christian College

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BCA’s Comprehensive Fee covers:
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Netherlands: The Hague
New Zealand: Dunedin
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Spain: Valladolid, Barcelona
Spain: Greece: Athens
India: Chennai
Ireland: Dublin/Derry

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