Message from the Director

It was in the Austrian capital city of Vienna that I started my journey in international education, having signed up to spend my junior year of college as an exchange student in Vienna. Though I had been pining to make it to Vienna for all of my freshman and sophomore years, I quickly became disillusioned, having found myself on a program with virtually no direction or guidance, only a hefty bill and some brochures I had taken with me, marketing materials that had only a few months earlier seemed to make everything look like it would be money well spent. It was only a matter of a few weeks until I was looking for a way out of Vienna.

In short, I didn’t get Vienna. But that was not entirely my fault, for no one was there to even point me in a general direction.

That experience serves as the backdrop to how I direct the Vienna program now. I provide all of my students here with every opportunity to get Vienna. It starts with my orientation sessions on your first days in Vienna, which serve to help get you physically oriented and comfortable in your new surroundings. On top of that, you will jump right into learning (or improving on your) German, five days a week. Additionally, all BCA Vienna students are required to participate in HIS 205, which is a tremendous opportunity to learn about Vienna in its historical and contemporary contexts. Now, with the BCA Vienna semester program, students will get to take things a step further by delving deep into questions surrounding the conditio humana, taking PHIL 300: Exploring the Human Condition in Vienna and also completing an Independent Study Project revolving around their individual, scholarly exploration of the human condition. Not sure what your independent study project should be about? I, along with BCA instructors for HIS 205 and PHIL 350, will be there to help guide and advise you on that and any other issues or questions that arise. Of course, you’ll still be expected to do your work on your own, but we’re there to assist you and help you get the most out of your study abroad experience, and of course to help you get Vienna.

Thank you for your interest in BCA Vienna, and I look forward to your participation in the program.

Sincerely,

Kristopher Riggs

Resident Director, BCA Vienna

Kristopher Riggs has directed BCA’s Marburg program since 2001, and since 2008 his duties have also stretched into developing and overseeing BCA’s activities in Vienna. The city he didn’t get to enjoy as a junior abroad has evolved not only into a sort of home away from home, but also into his source for creative inspiration. An avid photo designer, Kris never gets tired of taking in Vienna’s cultural scene.

COVER IMAGE

Vienna’s beautiful Schloß Belvedere, which is also home to some of Austria’s most famous paintings, including originals by Gustav Klimt (The Kiss) and Egon Schiele (Fräulein Beer, Tod und Mädchen).
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.

Vienna is home to the United Nations, which houses organizations such as the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), which conducts inspections for the application of nuclear safeguards and civilian nuclear programs, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), the United Nations Higher Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), to name a few.
About the Program

If ever there were a city that could fittingly be described as the place for exploring the human condition, from a philosophical, artistic, political or psychological perspective, that city would likely be Vienna. This program serves to educate our students in a way that helps them better understand their individual role in the world around them, with BCA adding a significant component to their undergraduate education. The Vienna program strongly focuses on questions examining the problems associated with being a human being and the nature of the human being.
VIENNA OPERA HOUSE
This is the view one has of the Vienna Opera House from the IKI Wien classrooms located across the way.
Student Learning

BCA Vienna provides the perfect environment for engaging in deeper insights into major questions of the human condition while also providing students with intensive German language and German-related studies.

BCA Vienna students take a full semester course load of 17 semester credit hours. Upon successful completion of the Vienna program, BCA Vienna students should be able to:

- Speak and write German at a level of A2 or higher on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) scale.
- Understand and appreciate the history, culture and social aspects of Austrian history and its place in the European Union today.
- Understand and appreciate contributions made by prominent Austrian historical figures to the ongoing dialogue on the human condition.
- Take their acquired skills in adapting to a new and foreign environment and apply them in other settings, both in private life and in future employment.

Internationales Kulturinstitut Wien (IKI Wien)

Attend the prestigious Internationales Kulturinstitut Wien language school located in the historical center of Vienna. IKI Wien is at the doorstep of all the cultural wonders of the city including museums, opera houses, art galleries, restaurants and government offices. In addition to completing excellent German language instruction, BCA students meet people from all over the world while attending classes at IKI Wien.

“Studying in Vienna was a great opportunity to learn in a city unique from any other city in the world. When I first arrived, it was difficult to simply order coffee because my German skills were mostly based on reading and writing, but by the time I left, I was comfortable ordering and conversing with just about anyone on topics as complicated as international politics. Vienna made me an international individual.”

Nick Lewellen, University of Tulsa
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

HIS 205: Crossroads of Europe (3 credits)
This survey course serves as students’ primary source for gaining historical and cultural orientation in Vienna. It covers the history of Vienna from Roman times to its present day role in the European Union.

PHIL 300: Exploring the Human Condition in Vienna (3 credits)
This course serves as the academic backbone to the program by examining multiple aspects of the human condition by making direct or indirect reference to key Viennese figures such as Sigmund Freud, Gustav Klimt, Arthur Schnitzler and Moritz Schlick.

GER 202 (8 credits)
There is no German proficiency requirement to enroll in the BCA Vienna program, and students of all proficiency levels will enroll for German language instruction at our partner language school, the Internationales Kulturinstitut Vienna. Students with some prior knowledge of German will take a language placement exam upon acceptance to the program to determine the appropriate level of language course. All language courses are offered in accordance with the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). Students enroll in GER 202 for their first two months in Vienna.

Independent Study Project (3 credits)
The independent research project will be overseen by the resident director and, where applicable, BCA course instructors for HIS 205 and PHIL 300.

During the orientation period upon arrival in Vienna, students will begin the process of choosing their specific topic for the independent research project, which can be completed either as a written project (10-12 pages) or a multimedia project (minimum of 15 minutes with ongoing narration).

Though the specific topics can vary from student to student, the title of the research project is Conditio Humana, and should revolve around their individual, scholarly exploration of the human condition.

Students are encouraged to identify and delve into their individual preferred perspective for exploring and researching the human condition via a philosophical, political, theological, sociological or psychological approach.

The sign in front of the Freud Museum in Vienna’s 9th district. It contains many of Dr. Freud’s personal belongings, including the world-famous couch on which his patients sat and told of their problems.
Living in Vienna

Situated on the Danube River and just to the north of the Balkan Peninsula, Vienna is Southeast Europe’s melting pot, Europe’s gateway between North and South, East and West. Especially during the late 19th century and well into the 20th century, Vienna was the stage for major intellectual developments and political events, including the founding of psychoanalysis by neurologist Dr. Sigmund Freud.

What remains of this cultural peak period—known as the Fin de siècle Vienna or the Wiener Moderne—has, to some extent, become definitive for Vienna itself: the coffee house culture, the countless theaters, world class museums (not only for art) and operas, and some of Europe’s finest architecture, particularly in Vienna’s first district.

Housing and Student Life

The BCA resident director will coordinate student housing in student dormitories so that BCA students will have the opportunity to live with local students. All dormitories include cooking, bathing, bedding, Internet access and laundry facilities. Students typically prepare their own meals, especially in the evening.

BCA Vienna students live and study side-by-side with local and other international students, affording them a great opportunity to meet lots of other students, both Austrian and from other countries.

Transportation

Vienna boasts one of the world’s best public transportation systems. For the duration of the semester in Vienna, students will need to purchase a monthly public transportation pass, which is valid for all buses, subways and trams in the city for approximately 50 EUR.

“My time in Vienna was amazing. My only regret is that my month in Vienna went far too quickly. There is always something to do in a city, and Vienna is no exception. There are countless small shops and restaurants, museums, and parks to explore. Coming from a small town and a small college, Vienna was an entirely new experience for me.”

Zach Mitchell, Elizabethtown College

EDUCATIONAL EXCURSIONS

Students travel to Bratislava, Slovakia’s capital city, as part of the HIS 205 course, which helps students gain a more broad understanding of Vienna.
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 Vienna Quick Facts
Dates of Study:
• Fall Semester: Early September to late December
• Spring Semester: Early January to late April

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

Language of Instruction: English with some German instruction
Host University: IKI Wien
Housing: Student dormitories

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