Frequently Asked Questions
First-Semester-Abroad (FSA) Programs
Fall 2015
Office of Off-Campus Study (OCS)
207-859-4500
offcamp@colby.edu

1. What are Colby in Dijon and Colby in Salamanca?
Colby in Dijon and Colby in Salamanca are programs designed to give you a language-intensive experience of cross-cultural study in France or Spain respectively. You will be part of a group of approximately 20 first-year Colby students and several juniors studying abroad in Dijon or Salamanca. For more information please visit colby.edu/go/fsa.

2. What are the approximate dates of the programs?
These dates are tentative until final group travel arrangements are made. You will receive a detailed final schedule. Colby in Salamanca students are scheduled to depart for Salamanca on Aug. 29 and leave from Salamanca Dec. 17. Colby in Dijon students are scheduled to depart for Dijon on Aug. 26 and leave from Dijon on Dec. 13.

3. I don’t really feel confident in my language skills. How important are they?
The Salamanca and Dijon programs are designed to accommodate students at various levels of language competence—even students who have very limited language skills. Your commitment to learn is vastly more important than the level of your language skill before you leave.

If you have taken two years of high school French or Spanish, the Dijon and Salamanca programs are perfectly appropriate for you. If you’ve taken advanced courses like AP French or Spanish, you will also find the Dijon and Salamanca programs challenging, as you will be placed in advanced courses based on your language skills.

4. Can I choose the courses I will be taking abroad?
In general, the first-year programs abroad have a fixed curriculum, which means that your course options are more limited than they will be on the Waterville campus. Based on the language placement test you take upon arrival, you will be placed in the section appropriate to your language level.

In Salamanca your courses will include
• Intensive Spanish (at your level)
• Spanish and Latin American literature, Spanish art history, Spanish culture, Spanish and Latin American cinema or the Arab world in the Hispanic world (at your level)
• Seminar on contemporary Spain

In Dijon your courses will include
• French language (at your level)
• French history
• Portrait of a City: Dijon (art history)
• Contemporary France seminar (offered in English and French)

5. What if I have a learning difference?
The programs can accommodate learning differences to the extent that local regulations allow this. You should be aware that you need to obtain permission for accommodations from the Dean of Students Office over the summer, prior to the start of the semester. Also, we can only make accommodations within the constraints of the host culture. Please be in touch with the director, Jon Weiss (Dijon) or Julia Piera Abad (Salamanca), if you have further questions.
6. Who, besides other Colby first-year students, will be in my courses?
You will attend language courses with students from around the world who are also interested in learning French or Spanish. Colby also runs junior-level programs in these locations, and some of the juniors may be in your courses. The first-year seminar in Salamanca will be for Colby first-year students only. In Dijon, the history, art history, and contemporary France courses are offered to Colby students only, both first-years and juniors.

7. What Colby graduation requirements will I satisfy with my program abroad?
• Colby in Dijon: If you successfully complete the intermediate language course, you will satisfy Colby’s language requirement. You will also satisfy the arts, historical studies, social science, and international diversity requirements.
• Colby in Salamanca: If you successfully complete the intermediate language course, you will satisfy Colby’s language requirement. You will also satisfy the social science, literature, and international diversity requirements, and depending on which courses you take, you may also satisfy the historical studies or arts requirement.

You will begin on campus in January with a number of requirements already fulfilled, and you’ll have three and a half years to satisfy the others.

8. Will the courses count in my Colby grade point average?
Yes, your grades in the courses taken on these programs will count toward your Colby grade point average and will appear on your Colby transcript.

9. Can I study abroad again as a junior?
Yes. These FSA programs, in some cases, may not satisfy the study-abroad requirement for majors that require it.

10. Can I change my program?
The Admissions Committee placed you in a program according to your academic background and interests. Occasionally it is possible to change programs, but to be fair to all students we have to wait until after May 1 to make any changes. We are committed to small classes and close collaboration with resident directors, so we do not want either program to become too large. If you are interested in changing programs, please send us an essay by May 1 (offcamp@colby.edu) explaining why the program you would prefer is more academically appropriate for you. Since we cannot guarantee any program changes before May 1, you will need to make your decision to attend next fall based on the program to which you were originally admitted.

11. With whom will I be living?
In order to facilitate language learning, there is one student per host family. The resident director matches students to host families using a housing preferences form that will be sent to you during the summer. We hope to be able to provide you with the name and address of your host family in early August.

12. What will a typical day be like?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Salamanca</th>
<th>Dijon</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>❖ 8 a.m.—Wake up, eat breakfast with family, walk to school</td>
<td>❖ 7:30 a.m.—Wake up, have breakfast with or without family depending on schedule, get ready for school</td>
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<tr>
<td>❖ 9 a.m.—Spanish grammar class</td>
<td>❖ Morning—French language classes</td>
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<tr>
<td>❖ 11 a.m.—Conversation class</td>
<td>❖ Noon—Lunch at the university café or in town with friends</td>
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<tr>
<td>❖ Noon—Break. Go to Colby Center and hang out with friends.</td>
<td>❖ Afternoon—Attend classes (history, art history, French language, seminar on contemporary France) on Monday and Wednesday and either Tuesday or Thursday. If no classes are scheduled, spend time shopping, relaxing in a café, and doing homework.</td>
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<tr>
<td>❖ 1 p.m.—Elective class</td>
<td>❖ 2 p.m.—Walk home for lunch with family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>❖ 2 p.m.—Walk home for lunch with family</td>
<td>❖ 3 p.m.—Siesta time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>❖ 3 p.m.—Siesta time</td>
<td>❖ 5 p.m.—Attend class (seminar on contemporary Spain), workshops, and cultural experiences (cooking class, salsa class, creative writing,</td>
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13. What is the tuition and what is included?
Fees for the program are equivalent to the Colby comprehensive fee for one semester. All program courses and activities, round-trip travel between the U.S. gateway city and Salamanca or Dijon, food and lodging, health insurance, and all group excursions are included. Personal travel and expenses are not included.

14. Will I be required to come to Colby before I leave for my program abroad?
No, you will not be required. A Colby staff member will be at the airport and will accompany the group on the flight overseas, and the resident director of your program will meet you upon arrival in France or Spain.

15. How will I get from home to my program and back?
Transportation is provided and arranged by Colby from a gateway airport (usually Boston, JFK, or Newark) for both Salamanca and Dijon depending on flight availability. You will be responsible for your own transportation to that airport. Upon arrival in France or Spain, ground transportation is provided to the program sites by coach. You will receive more details from OCS during the summer months.

16. What travel documents will I need?
A passport is required. Your passport must be valid for at least six months after your return date. If you do not already have a passport, we urge you to get one ASAP. The processing time for new passports could take a while, so apply online today: travel.state.gov/passport/passport_1738.html.

A student visa is also required, but you will receive more information about the visa application process from OCS in May. Please be aware that visa regulations can be complicated and applications can take a long time. You will be encouraged to begin the process as soon as you receive the information from OCS. Please note: You cannot apply for a visa without a valid passport and documentation you will receive from Colby.

17. What about fall vacation breaks?
Each program has breaks during which you may travel or your family may visit you. We will send you specific information on these dates during the summer, which should give you and your family adequate time to plan travel. Because Thanksgiving is not a holiday in France or Spain, you will not have time off and are asked not to plan any travel or visits at that time.

18. Should I take my computer?
Computers are necessary for both programs. Please make sure your laptop or tablet is compatible with European voltage (220V).

19. Will I have e-mail, Internet, and cell phone access?
Access to e-mail and the Internet from your host family’s home may be limited, but most university buildings, Colby facilities, and many public places have wireless Internet access. This means you may have less time to e-mail friends and family than you may be accustomed to.
Cell phone service is readily available everywhere in Europe, and you will receive country-specific information during the summer regarding the most economical way to communicate by cell phone.

20. What about safety?
Living in large cities like Dijon and Salamanca requires greater attention to safety than living on Colby’s Waterville campus. Safety is of great concern to Colby. Your resident director will give you advice when you arrive on site, will review safety information and procedures on an ongoing basis, and will keep the OCS office informed of any potential risks. We make every possible effort to ensure that your home stay is located in a safe neighborhood and that you are properly prepared for the realities of living in a large city. We urge you to discuss any concerns with your resident director.

Recent international terrorist events remind us all that vigilance and awareness are especially critical in large urban centers and transportation hubs. You must keep in mind that terrorist activity is unpredictable and that guaranteeing the safety of anyone—local citizen or international visitor—is simply not possible. You and your family will, however, want to inform yourselves to the best of your ability before you go.

21. When do I find out about my room and roommate(s) for Jan Plan and spring semester at Colby?
In October you will complete an online housing preference form provided by the Office of Campus Life. This questionnaire will be used to match you with another first-year-student roommate. More information regarding housing at Colby can be found in your myColby Class of 2019 portal. If you have specific housing questions, please e-mail housing@colby.edu.

22. How will I register for Jan Plan and spring semester courses at Colby?
Selection of January courses will take place in mid-October, and selection of spring courses will take place in early November. The Registrar’s Office will provide information via e-mail about selecting courses online. You are encouraged to consult with your academic advisor at Colby and your resident director abroad when planning your course selection.

23. I am nervous about going so far away. What if I feel homesick?
This is absolutely normal and to be expected. Just as the transition to college is harder for some than others, adjusting to life in another country can be challenging. Homesickness when you are far away from friends and family and trying to speak a different language can be very real and difficult to deal with. For most students the first two weeks are typically the hardest, but it will get easier if you try to focus on adjusting to your new life, making new friends, and staying busy. Remember that you are not alone—reach out to someone in your group or the resident director. Of course you will keep in touch with friends and family at home, but calling too often may have negative effects on your experience abroad. Try to restrict calls home to once or twice a week, rather than every day (or multiple times a day). You can catch up on news via e-mail.

24. How can I find out more about the cities of Dijon and Salamanca?
We recommend the following websites for general information on the cities.
Dijon: dijon.fr/english-version10-262/
Salamanca: salamanca.es/es, salamancaemocion.es

25. Should I come to Colby as soon as my program is over in mid-December?
No. You will be required to come to Colby Sunday, Jan. 3, 2016—the day before the beginning of Jan Plan. You’ll participate in an orientation program for all FSA students and then begin your Jan Plan course the next day.

26. Will I participate in orientation?
Yes, you will participate in winter COOT (Colby Outdoor Orientation Trips) in January, along with other FSAs, other incoming students, and other Colby students. Winter COOT trips take place during the second weekend of January. You’ll also take part in C2IT (Colby Community Involvement Trips), the civic engagement component of first-year orientation, during the third weekend of January. In November the Office of Campus Life will contact you about registering for winter COOT. More information on COOT is available at colby.edu/coot.
27. What connection will I have to students on campus?
You will be introduced to LINK, a student group that connects FSA students to the Colby community. LINK leaders and members help FSA students transition to life at Colby through extensive communication and various activities. This process begins as soon as you choose to enroll at Colby and continues through the spring of the following year. LINK students lived where you are about to live and studied in the same classrooms—and they’ll be available to answer your questions before departure, while you are abroad, and when you arrive in Maine.

28. Who else can I speak to about the FSA experience and the transition to campus life?
Please feel free to contact any of the students listed below to discuss questions or concerns you may have.

**Student Assistants in OCS**
Molly Nash ’15 (Salamanca ’11)
Cam Copeland ’16 (Dijon ’12)
Lainey Battiston ’17 (Salamanca ’13)
Deanne Human ’17 (Dijon ’13)
Cate Johnson ’17 (Dijon ’13)
To reach the students above, call 207-859-4500 or e-mail offcamp@colby.edu.

**Class of 2018 FSA students**

**Dijon**
Clare Stephens, clare.stephens@colby.edu
Gabriella Deconti, gabriella.deconti@colby.edu
Riley Meidell, riley.meidell@colby.edu
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