10.5% of all students who study abroad report having a physical, sensory, learning, psychological, and/or medical disability. (2020 IIE Open Doors Report)

Why Study Abroad?
Studying abroad offers students with disabilities the unique opportunity to gain a new perspective about your identity, share your experience with people in other countries, and learn about the experiences of other people within the global context. Learn new ways to advocate for people with disabilities.

“It is so important that you advocate for yourself. I made sure the program and faculty knew that I was deaf and exactly how I communicate and function. They were able to offer me a transcriber so I could focus on having the experience of a lifetime instead of stressing over accommodations.”

Giselle N. ‘21 (pictured on front cover) Semester at Sea
Questions to ask when selecting a program:
• What support systems will I need in order to be successful?
• What resources does my program/university abroad provide?
• How is the learning environment different? Are class assignments and assessment different?
• Do I prefer a specific type of housing (dorm, homestay, apartment, shared/single room)?
• How accessible are the program facilities, public transportation, and public spaces in my host country?
• Will my disability prevent me from participating in certain excursions because of inaccessibility?
• What are the cultural attitudes toward people with disabilities in my host country?
• Will I need access to medication or other medical services? Are they available in my host country?

The Center for Global Education can help you find answers to these questions!

More resources and information available at:
DiversityAbroad.com
MIUSA.org

As a young independent woman living with a physical disability, this experience abroad, hardships and obstacles included, showed me just how capable and resilient I am. A disability should never prevent you from enjoying the experience of a lifetime. As long as you are forthcoming about your needs, your study abroad advisors will help you find a program that will be willing to work with your needs and find reasonable accommodations. Have faith in yourself ...

Makenna S. ‘18 (pictured left)
Seville, Spain

Special Considerations
• Each country will vary in their perception of individuals with physical, sensory, learning, psychological, and/or medical disabilities.
• The Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act are not enforceable outside of the U.S.

Please note that you are still subject to your host country’s laws, even if you feel they are discriminatory.

Tips for Students with Disabilities Abroad
• Disclose your disability needs to program staff early, so possible accommodations can be made in advance.
• Other cultures may provide disability accommodations in a different way—be flexible and open to different ways of accommodating in your host country.
• Research ahead of time your destination to understand how your disability may affect your experience and what to expect.
• Think about how you will answer questions about your disability in your host country language—look up key vocabulary words ahead of time.