

## **TIPS for Journalism students planning to Study Abroad**

The journalism major is an upper division major with one of the smallest number of required units at Chico State. It is best experienced in Chico for four semesters in a row during your junior and senior years. Students who wish to study abroad need to carefully plan and begin their planning as early as possible. Here are the recommendations of the journalism faculty:

- 1) **WHAT SHOULD I STUDY ABROAD?** Students should plan on taking courses in their minor, foreign languages, area studies, GE, or the theme, especially Theme C, which will allow you to "build" your own theme with study abroad courses. It is also a great chance to accumulate electives outside the major that apply toward graduation.
  
- 2) **WHAT ABOUT JOURNALISM COURSES?** The journalism department will judge course equivalents for the major on a case-by-case basis. We often will need to review syllabi, textbooks and assignments before approving study abroad courses that might be included in the major. In general, the department may OK courses that are electives in Groups A, B, or C. However, it is unlikely that courses in the major core or option cores will be approved. In fact, very few students take journalism courses when they go abroad.
  
- 3) **HOW DO I GET A JOURNALISM COURSE ACCEPTED FOR TRANSFER?** First, do your homework. At minimum, you need to collect course titles and catalog descriptions. Compare these to the titles and descriptions of courses in the journalism department. It may really help to make your case if you can find course syllabi on The Web or by working with study abroad advisers. Some students have also requested syllabi from abroad through e-mail. In the past, the department has found that course syllabi do the best job of describing the content of a course. Once you have your materials, match a specific course abroad with one at Chico. Avoid compiling a list of many courses that remotely sound as if they have something to do with journalism. Once you are ready, you should meet with the chair of the journalism department, who will need to approve any course transfer. To approve a course, the chair will need assurance that the course is truly equivalent to the Chico experience. Typically, without that assurance, the course will not be accepted for transfer.
  
- 4) **WHEN SHOULD I GO?** The department encourages students to go before their junior years or as a "last semester" abroad. Going overseas in the middle of the sequence of required courses hinders your progression and accumulation of skills and opportunities for student leadership. Once a student begins the major core by taking "Writing for the Mass Media," the student should stay in Chico until he or she finishes the capstone practicum: for PR students, that is JOUR 445; for News-Editorial students that is JOUR 329, the lab newspaper.

## TIPS FOR FINDING JOURNALISM COURSES TO BE TRANSFERED

The reality is that students rarely can find journalism courses to transfer in the major. In part this due to the fact that journalism is rarely taught at the university level in Europe. Also, our program focuses on U.S. standards for journalism and public relations. World standards, however, vary greatly and may not be equivalent.

The following countries tend to have journalism courses similar to Chico State: Australia, India, and New Zealand. Universities that may have some courses include Griffith University, NMMU, and Deakin University.

In choosing courses, you will find feature writing, which can substitute for magazine writing, multimedia courses, and international communication. The key is to assure that your assignments and readings deal with journalism and mass communication.

Other issues may affect the approval process. For example, a course approved for a PR student may not be a suitable equivalent for a news-editorial major or vice versa. A student's progression in the major or internship or other media experiences may also affect the approval process.

Note that classes that focus on interpersonal or intrapersonal or speech communication will not be accepted as transfers for the journalism major.

**IMPORTANT:** All journalism students who travel abroad still must contact their advisers by e-mail for mandatory academic advising and schedule approval. Students who are abroad and do not contact their advisers will have holds placed on their records, and they will not be able to register for classes.