

# Université Libre de Bruxelles

fall / spring / academic year



anthropology / arabic language / archaeology / art history / belgian studies / business / communications / cultural studies / economics / film studies / french language / french literatures / history / information science / internship / labor relations / languages / literature / management / philosophy / political science / religious studies / sociology



## program snapshot

- Enroll in French-taught courses in the humanities; take classes with Belgian and other European students; join a university club
- Integrate into the university environment with the help of student mentors
- Participate in field trips to EU institutions, excursions within Belgium and to France, the Netherlands, and Germany
- Visit places such as the UN International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia in the Hague, NATO, and the Museum of Fine Arts

## what you'll learn

The Advanced Liberal Arts program has three goals: to provide opportunities for students to fully immerse themselves in a European university while taking classes in French; to offer insight into Belgium and Brussels' unique political, cultural, and linguistic situation in Europe; and to enable students to improve their French language skills.

## thoughts from abroad

Bruxelles est une ville que j'adore. C'est l'endroit où l'Europe du nord rencontre l'Europe du sud, où les cultures latines se mélangent avec les traditions anglo-saxonnes et germaniques. Bruxelles s'affirme chaque jour davantage comme capitale de l'Europe. On y trouve différentes institutions européennes, mais aussi l'OTAN et beaucoup de ngo's et entreprises internationales. Mais la ville accueille également des communautés du bassin méditerranéen, de l'Europe de l'Est, de l'Afrique, et de l'Amérique latine. Cette présence multiculturelle se reflète dans le foisonnement de langues, restaurants, festivals, et activités culturelles qui animent les différents quartiers de la ville. C'est une ville idéale pour connaître l'Europe!

— Michelangelo van Meerten, Resident Director

### About the Resident Director

Dr. Michelangelo van Meerten holds a Ph.D. in Economics from the University of Groningen in the Netherlands. He joined CIEE in 2001 as a professor of European Integration for the CIEE Study Center and became the Resident Director in the fall of 2002. Dr. van Meerten has researched and lectured in the field of economics and economic history in Groningen, the Netherlands; Leuven, Louvain-la-Neuve, and Brussels, Belgium; Krakow, Poland; and Barcelona and Madrid, Spain. Michelangelo speaks six Western European languages fluently and has traveled extensively in Europe. His interests and research areas include the history and development of the European continent, transport and communications, European integration, politics, film, and culture.

### About the Resident Coordinator

Emily Miller earned her B.A. in Political Science and Journalism from Beloit College in Wisconsin in 2007. There she studied French and spent a semester in Brussels on the CIEE program. Most recently, she worked as an English teacher in China and as an Americorps VISTA volunteer in Chicago. Emily assists the Resident Director with academic, administrative, and day-to-day matters.



## about brussels

Brussels has emerged as the "Capital of Europe" in political and economic terms. As the headquarters of the European Union, it is at the forefront of European integration and EU policy. Brussels is also very international; its diversity is reflected in its neighborhoods, restaurants, and languages. While French is the dominant language, Dutch (Flemish) and English are widely spoken.

## academics

### Academic Program

The CIEE Study Center in Brussels, Belgium, was established in 1994 and began its pilot program at the ULB in 2006. The CIEE Advanced Liberal Arts program opened its doors in spring 2009.

The Advanced Liberal Arts program is specifically designed for students with upper-level French language skills who want the challenge of direct matriculation within a European university. The program is particularly well-suited for those with an interest in language, literature, philosophy, history, political science, and business and economics.

### Academic Culture

ULB, like other European universities, offers three-year undergraduate degrees, organized into different faculties. The CIEE Advanced Liberal Arts program is located at the Faculty of Philosophy and Letters, the Faculty of Political and Social Sciences, and the Solvay Brussels School for Economics and Management.

The academic culture of ULB courses follows a traditional European model. Students attend lectures for a semester or year and usually take a single exam at the end of the course to determine their grade. Papers are usually not required for these courses, making the final oral exam that much more important. Some courses may also include presentations or written assignments.

Class size at ULB varies, but is generally much larger than typical U.S. courses. The teaching method at ULB is primarily lecture-style. Students are advised that due to possible changes in the courses offered each term they should be flexible in course selection. Fall semester ULB courses extend into January, and spring semester courses extend into June. Professors may be willing to administer the final exam earlier than the officially scheduled date, allowing fall students to depart mid- to

late December and spring students to depart in late May to early June, but CIEE cannot be responsible for arranging or guaranteeing early exams.

### Nature of Classes

Students take regular university courses with Belgian students and a limited number of other international students.

### CIEE Community Language Commitment

Students take part in the CIEE Community Language Commitment by speaking French at all times (except in emergencies). This fosters a learning community that will contribute to both French language proficiency and understanding of Belgian society. Students are also encouraged to participate in bi-weekly conversation tables, organized by CIEE with ULB students at a local café.

### Grading System

Grades are based on a numerical system of 1–20, with a 10 considered a passing grade. Course grades are usually based on a single, final oral exam.



## where you'll study

The French-language Université Libre de Bruxelles (ULB) was founded in 1834 as an alternative to the Catholic or state universities in Leuven, Gent, and Liège. It now has a student population of 24,000 and is the largest university in Brussels. ULB has several campuses in different areas of the city. The main campus where the Faculty of Philosophy and Letters, the Faculty of Political and Social Sciences, and the Solvay Brussels School for Economics and Management, the library, and University administration are located is known as the Solbosch campus and is located in southeast Brussels.

**living****Housing and Meals**

Housing is included in the program fee. CIEE housing is a combination of individual rooms with or without other CIEE students sharing common spaces with landlords and/or European families in a boarding situation. Housing is mainly located in the southeast of central Brussels. An excellent public transportation system makes it easy to commute. All housing placements are made on site at the beginning of the semester.

Meals are not included in the program fee and are the responsibility of the student. Students have access to cooking facilities in order to prepare their own meals and may take meals in University cafeterias and restaurants in the area.

**Online Pre-Departure and On-Site Orientations**

Students begin their study abroad experience in Brussels before leaving home—by participating in a CIEE Online Pre-Departure Orientation. Meeting with students online, the Resident Director shares information about the program and site, highlighting issues that alumni have said are important, and giving students time to ask questions before leaving home. The online orientation allows students to connect with others in the group, reflect on what they want to get out of the program, and learn what others in the group would like to accomplish. The CIEE goal for the pre-departure orientation is simple: to help students understand more about the program and site, as well as their goals for the program, so that they arrive to the program well-informed and return home having made significant progress toward their goals.

Prior to the start of each semester, there is a mandatory three-day orientation organized and conducted by CIEE at a hostel in downtown Brussels. The orientation introduces students to Belgium and Brussels; provides practical information about the host country, daily life, the academic program, housing, cultural and educational differences; and enables participants and staff to get to know one another while participating in structured and informal activities that could include visits to museums, walking tours, and group meals. Ongoing support is provided on an individual and group basis throughout the program.

**Internet**

Students have access to an on-campus computer laboratory as well as computers in the ULB library. Students open an email account at the ULB which gives them access to computers on campus as well as access to a number of online forums. Wireless connections in the home are as common in Brussels as in the U.S. All participants have Internet connections at their housing; however, the availability of bandwidth may be more restricted than in the U.S. Students are encouraged to bring wireless-enabled laptops or use the computer labs or one of the numerous cyber cafés in Brussels.

**culture****Cultural Activities and Field Trips**

Extracurricular activities and occasional group excursions are organized throughout the semester. Day trips may include Bruges, Luxembourg, Ypres, Bastogne, and Aachen as well as weekend excursions to France and Germany. Day trips to the UN International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia in The Hague, NATO, European Parliament and Commission in Brussels, and the European Investment Bank or the European Court of Justice in Luxembourg may occur. Visits to the Brussels Museum of Fine Arts, and regular visits to French and European films complete program activities. Participants also have access to sports facilities at the ULB and may participate in student clubs and activities.

**Mentoring Program**

CIEE and the ULB collaborate on a mentoring program for CIEE students. Mentors are available to help students integrate into the University environment and serve as contacts in their classes. The ULB has a very highly developed student network in the classroom as well as online. Mentors serve as a bridge to this network as well as to all aspects of student life.

**eligibility**

- Overall GPA 2.75
- 6 semesters of college-level French or equivalent

**duration****Fall**

19 weeks: early September—mid-December or late January

**Spring**

20 weeks: late January—late May or late June

**Academic Year**

39 weeks: early September—late May or late June

**costs****CIEE Fees**

Fall 2011: \$15,400

Spring 2012: available 8/15/11

Academic Year 2011–12: \$29,300

The CIEE program fees for 2011–12 include an optional on-site meet and greet, full-time leadership and support, tuition, housing, orientation, cultural activities, local excursions, field trips, pre-departure advising, and a CIEE iNext travel card which includes insurance and other travel benefits.

**Estimated Additional Costs (Fall 2011)**

Transportation (round-trip based on U.S. East Coast departure)	\$ 1,350
Personal Expenses	\$ 2,450
Meals	\$ 2,250
Books and Supplies	\$ 240
Local Transportation	\$ 500
Visa Fee	\$ 235
Potential Travel to Consulate for Visa	\$ 400
<b>Total Estimated Additional Costs</b>	<b>\$ 7,425</b>

Check our website for current fees.

**internship**

CIEE offers a limited number of for-credit and unpaid internship opportunities to juniors and seniors. CIEE participants may apply for available slots. However, because internships are competitive, there is no guarantee that students will be assigned an internship. Interested students must submit a résumé and cover letter to CIEE. All internships require an interview with the sponsor of the internship once on site.

Students should be prepared for a workload of 150 hours over the course of the semester. There will be a mid-term meeting with, and report given to, the academic advisor, and/or Resident Director. Participants must receive approval from their home institution to enroll in an internship. Registration for internships takes place only after arrival in Brussels and after the student has been accepted by the institution, organization, or company offering the internship.



## coursework

### Program Requirements

All students take at least six courses, including the CIEE/ULB core course. At least three courses should be chosen from the courses offered within one Faculty of specialization (either the Faculty of Philosophy and Letters, the Faculty of Political and Social Sciences, or the Solvay Brussels School for Economics and Management). Two other courses can be chosen from the course offering of that same Faculty or from one of the other two Faculties. The number of ULB courses that each student takes may vary a bit, as ULB courses can range in credit from 3–10 ECTS each. However, a typical course load consists of 6 courses of 5 ECTS each. All participants are required to enroll in the equivalent of 15 U.S. credits (30 ECTS).

### Credit

Total recommended credit for a semester is 15 semester/22.5 quarter hours. Total recommended credit for the academic year is 30 semester/45 quarter hours.

Course contact hours vary, but average 24 contact hours for ULB courses. The CIEE/ULB core course is 40 hours each semester. Recommended credit is 3 U.S. credits for the CIEE courses and 1 U.S. credit per 2 ECTS credits earned.

### Language of Instruction

French

### Faculty

The core course is taught by a member of the ULB faculty in conjunction with the CIEE Resident Director. Regular university courses are taught by faculty from the Université Libre de Bruxelles.

## a student's story

I think my favorite thing about living in Brussels has been the diversity of people I've met. There are a ton of Erasmus students from all over Europe who study at ULB. Going to the activities organized by the student group has been one of the coolest experiences yet. I've made friends with students from Bulgaria, Slovenia, Spain, Portugal, and Ireland. I even made friends with the cashier at the grocery store down the street! He's Lebanese, and we had a whole conversation (in French!) about U.S. foreign policy. I've found that Belgians are generally very friendly, which makes it a wonderful and welcoming environment for language learners.

Brussels is a really interesting city, and I loved getting to know it. I accomplished everything I wanted to during my time in Belgium. My French has improved, but what's more is that I've gained an appreciation for a wonderful, fascinating country that is far too often overlooked. I've grown to love Belgium, and I'll truly miss it when my time here is over.

— Heidi Getz, Georgetown University

## courses

### Required Core Course

*Students must take the semester core course below. The core courses are regular ULB courses focusing on Belgian history supplemented by seminars and site visits led by the CIEE Resident Director.*

### Fall

#### HIST 3001 BULB

##### History of the Contemporary Period

This course is intended to provide a better understanding of the culture, economy, politics, and history of Belgium as well as the different identities of its inhabitants. It supplies a fuller appreciation of the relations Belgium has with the rest of the world and in particular with its neighboring countries. By the end of the course, students grasp the complex evolution of the different cultures that coexist on the Belgian territory and gain a better understanding of the process of European integration at large. In addition to regular course hours, supplemental lectures and additional written assignments are required.

### Spring

#### HIST 3002 BULB

##### Political History of Contemporary Belgium

Students learn about the origin of the formation of the Belgian state and its evolution. The extreme importance of the three fracture lines that have traversed Belgian society from its origins: the philosophical, social, and linguistic cleavage are explored in depth. In addition to regular course hours, supplemental lectures and additional written assignments are required.

### CIEE Elective Course—Fall and Spring

#### INSH 3003 BULB

##### Internship

With permission from their home institution, qualified students may apply for an internship for credit while in Brussels. After acceptance to the program, interested students must submit a résumé and cover letter to apply for a limited number of internship placements. Once on site, students will interview with sponsoring organizations or companies and if selected, students should be prepared for a workload of 150 hours over the course of the semester. There will be a mid-term meeting with the academic advisor and/or CIEE Resident Director and students will submit a final research paper, using their internship experience to make inferences about relevant issues in the field.

### ULB French Language Courses

*For students who wish to improve their language skills to better follow their regular university courses at the ULB, courses are offered in advanced grammar and composition. Please visit the website for information.*

### ULB Courses at the Faculty of Philosophy and Letters, the Faculty of Political and Social Sciences, and the Solvay Brussels School for Economics and Management

*Following are examples of course areas offered at ULB. Additional courses in the social sciences may be added. The ULB course areas listed are representative of courses available each year, but CIEE cannot guarantee specific courses are offered each semester. Go to the webpages of the Faculty of Philosophy and Letters at [www.ulb.ac.be/facs/philo](http://www.ulb.ac.be/facs/philo), the Faculty of Political and Social Sciences at [www.soco-ulb.be](http://www.soco-ulb.be), and the Solvay Brussels School for Economics and Management at [www.solvay.edu](http://www.solvay.edu) for additional course information.*

Ancient Languages and Literature, Anthropology, Archaeology, Art History, Belgian Studies, Business, Communications, Economics, Film Studies, French Language and Literature, Germanic Language and Literature, History, Information Science, Labor Relations, Management, Modern Languages and Literature, Philosophy, Political Science, Religion Studies, Romance Languages, and Literature, Sociology