

Vesalius College 🏠 📱

business / communications / european studies / french language / international relations / internship / marketing / political science / statistics



program snapshot

- Choice of courses in business, communications, and international relations, among others—taught in English; for-credit internship
- Many opportunities to become fully immersed in Belgian and European culture and society, including day excursions to such places as Bruges and the caves of Han; educational activities, such as attending French films and visiting local museums; and an excursion to another country, such as France, The Netherlands, or Germany

what you'll learn

The Business, Language, and Culture summer program is designed to give students insight into Belgium and Brussels' unique political and cultural situation in Europe through courses in business, communications, international relations, and/or an internship, among other activities.

thoughts from abroad

Brussels has been my home for the last 20 years. I consider myself a European citizen to the core. For me, Brussels is the perfect place to experience Europe. It is at the crossroads of the northern Anglo-Saxon, Germanic, and southern Latin cultures. Apart from its official status as the bilingual capital city of Belgium, Brussels is in many respects the capital of the European Union, hosting many European and international institutions. Brussels also houses a wide variety of communities from the Mediterranean area, Central and Eastern Europe, and Africa. It is a very multicultural city with many languages and traditions living in harmony. One of the secrets of the city is its reputation for the quality of its gastronomy and cultural institutions. I'm looking forward to sharing the experience of discovering Brussels and Europe with you.

— 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 and Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium; 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. Because of this, Brussels does not necessarily provide the language immersion one might get in another less multilingual location. For the same reason, students feel quickly at home.

academics**Academic Program**

Established in 1994, the CIEE Study Center in Brussels moved into its current location at its host institution, Vesalius College, in 2002. Vesalius College is unique among academic institutions in Brussels in that it is the only institution that offers a selection of courses taught in English at the undergraduate level. Students participating in the summer program have the opportunity to live in the "Capital of Europe," while studying business, communications, and international relations, and potentially undertaking a for-credit internship.

Academic Culture

Like other European universities, Vesalius College has been restructured to offer three-year undergraduate degrees. These fall into three main areas: business, communications, and international relations.

Normally, Belgian students follow a set curriculum in their area of specialization and have few elective choices. However, Vesalius College differs from most Belgian universities in that it offers students greater freedom to take elective courses. Classes are often small, averaging fewer than 20 students. Summer classes at Vesalius are intensive, meeting eight hours per week for six weeks. Classes meet either for two hours per day, four days per week, or for four hours per day, twice per week.

Vesalius College aspires to offer a similar teaching approach to U.S. colleges. But in reality, its teaching style can be quite different because most of its professors and students are products of a European educational system. So while there may be more student-teacher interaction at Vesalius College than at a regular Belgian educational institution, there will likely be less than that which U.S. students are accustomed.

Nature of Classes

Students take classes with CIEE and other international students. Of the approximately 350 students who attend Vesalius, 30% are Belgian nationals, 10% are from the United States, and the remainder are from more than 60 other countries, including Sweden, Norway, Italy, Bulgaria, and Poland.

Grading System

Final grades are given by Vesalius professors and follow the U.S. system of letter grades, based on a 4-point scale, i.e., A = 4.0, A- = 3.7, etc. Course grades are based on a combination of factors and assignments, including attendance and participation, research papers, presentations, mid-terms, and final examinations.

**where you'll study**

Vesalius College, the international English-language college in Brussels, is a small independent, academic institution and a partner of the Dutch-speaking Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB). Vesalius College has a student body of approximately 350, the majority of which are international. It is located next to VUB in an area southeast of central Brussels.

living

Housing and Meals

Housing is included in the program fee. There are a limited number of homestays available with families from a variety of linguistic backgrounds. In addition, a second housing option offers students a combination of independent rooms with or without other students and shared common spaces with landlords. Housing is mainly located in southeast Brussels. An excellent public transportation system makes it easy to commute to Vesalius College. All housing placements are made on site at the beginning of the program.

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

Orientation

Prior to the start of classes, there is a mandatory two-day orientation organized and conducted by the Resident Director. The orientation introduces students to Belgium and Brussels, as well as provides practical information about the host country, daily life, the academic program, housing, and cultural and educational differences. It also enables participants and staff to get to know one another while participating in structured and informal activities, including walking tours and group meals. Vesalius College also offers a one-day program of academic orientation and social activities prior to the courses starting. CIEE students participate in both orientation programs. Ongoing support is provided on an individual and group basis throughout the program.

Internet

Students have access to a small computer laboratory at Vesalius College for a limited number of hours each week. Internet connections in the home are far less common in Brussels than in the U.S. Participants should expect to use the computer labs or one of the numerous Internet cafés in Brussels. Students are encouraged to bring wireless-enabled laptops.

eligibility

- Overall GPA 2.75

culture

Cultural Activities and Field Trips

Extracurricular activities and group excursions are organized throughout the program. Day trips may include visits to Bruges and the caves of Han. There may also be an overnight trip to France, the Netherlands, or Germany. Viewings of French and European films and visits to cultural events complete the program's activities.

duration

6 weeks: late May–early July

internship

Vesalius College offers for-credit unpaid internship opportunities to juniors and seniors, with participants being awarded a letter grade upon completion. CIEE participants may apply for available slots. However, internships are competitive, so there is no guarantee that students will receive a placement. Interested students should submit a résumé and cover letter with their course registration form after admission to the program. All internships require interviews with the sponsor of the internship. While foreign language skills may be an asset, lack of such skills is not an impediment to obtaining an internship in Brussels.

Students should be prepared for a workload of 150 hours over the course of the summer. There is a mid-term meeting with, and report given to, the supervising professor. Participants should verify whether their home institution will grant credit for the internship. Registration for an internship takes place only after arrival in Brussels and only after the student has been accepted by the institution, organization, or company offering the internship.

costs

CIEE Fees

Summer 2009: \$6,500
Summer 2010: available 12/15/09

The CIEE fees for 2010 include an optional on-site airport meet and greet, full-time leadership and support, tuition, housing, orientation, cultural activities, local excursions, a field trip outside of Brussels (to France, the Netherlands, or Germany), a comprehensive student handbook, pre-departure advising, and a CIEE iNext travel card, which provides insurance and other travel benefits.

Estimated Additional Costs (Summer 2009)

Transportation (round-trip based on U.S. East Coast departure)	\$ 1,250
Personal Expenses	\$ 1,000
Meals	\$ 750
Books and Supplies	\$ 80
Local Transportation	\$ 140
Total Estimated Additional Costs	\$ 3,220

Check our website for current fees.



coursework

Program Requirements

All students take two courses or one course plus the internship.

Credit

Total recommended credit for the summer is 6 semester/9 quarter hours.

Course contact hours are 45 hours and recommended credit is 3 semester/4.5 quarter hours, unless otherwise indicated. The Internship has 150 contact hours and recommended credit is 3 semester/4.5 quarter hours.

Language of Instruction

English

Faculty

Courses are taught by faculty from Vesalius College and the Vrije Universiteit Brussel.

courses

Vesalius College Courses

Below are examples of Vesalius College courses. Other courses in the areas of business, communications, and international relations may be added. Actual courses will be available in the CIEE enrollment materials.

Business in Europe
Difference, Diversity, and Migration in the New Europe
European Business Law
European Portfolio Management
The European Union in the World
French Language
Internship
Introduction to Statistics
Lobbying in the EU
Marketing Research in Europe
Mathematics for Business and Economics
Modernism and After: A Belgian and European Perspective
Nations and Ethnicity: Political Conflicts in Europe
Politics and Policies of the European Information Society

