

STEM Communications for Engineers

WALES

Summer 2019



Study Abroad Program Guide

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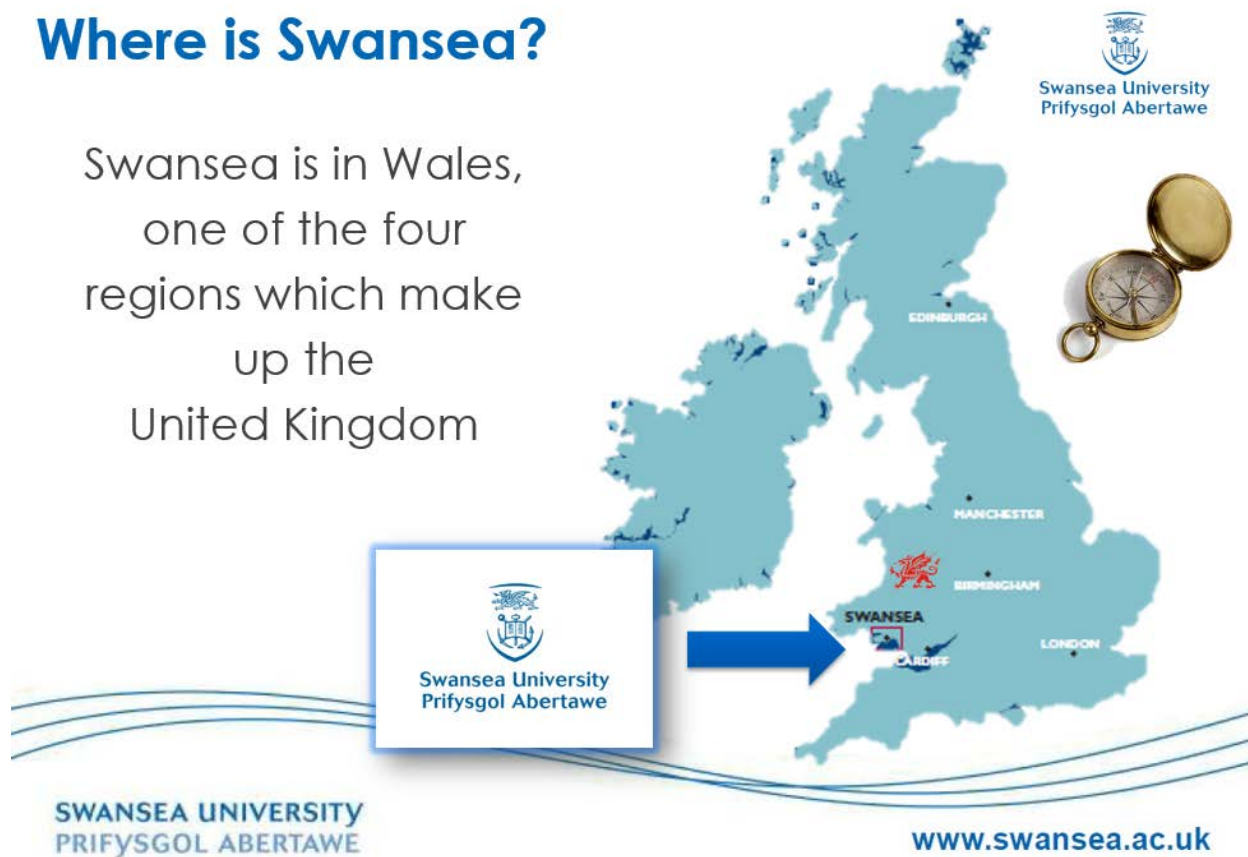
DESTINATION: WALES

From Wikipedia

Wales is a country in southwest Great Britain known for its rugged coastline, mountainous national parks, distinctive Welsh language and Celtic culture. Cardiff, the capital, is a refined coastal city with a nightlife scene and a medieval castle with ornate Gothic Revival interiors. In the northwest, Snowdonia National Park has lakes, glacial landforms, hiking trails and a railway up to the peak of Snowdon.

Where is Swansea?

Swansea is in Wales,
one of the four
regions which make
up the
United Kingdom



Swansea is a city and county on the south coast of Wales. The National Waterfront Museum, in a renovated warehouse with a slate-and-glass extension, features coal-industry artefacts. Swansea Museum's collection includes maritime paintings, plus boats in Swansea Marina. The Dylan Thomas Centre commemorates the 20th-century writer with hands-on displays. Swansea Market offers local produce, crafts and other goods.

SWANSEA UNIVERSITY

From Wikipedia & Swansea University website



[Swansea University](#) is a public research university located in Swansea, Wales, United Kingdom. It was originally chartered as University College of Swansea in 1920, as the 4th college of the University of Wales. In 1996, it changed its name to the University of Wales Swansea, following structural changes within the University of Wales. The title of Swansea University was formally adopted on 1 September 2007 when the University of Wales became a non-membership confederal institution and the former members became universities in their own right.

Swansea University has 7 colleges spread across its two campuses which are located on the coastline of Swansea Bay. The Singleton Park Campus is set in the grounds of Singleton Park to the west of Swansea city centre. The £450 million Bay Campus, which opened in September 2015, is located adjacent to Jersey Marine Beach to the east of Swansea city centre which is in the Neath Port Talbot Area.

It is the third largest university in Wales in terms of number of students. It currently offers about 330 undergraduate courses and 120 post-graduate courses to 19,160 undergraduate and postgraduate students. The University community thrives on exploration and discovery, and offers the right balance of excellent teaching and research, matched by an enviable quality of life.

Its stunning waterfront campus makes it a desirable location for students and staff from around the world and its multicultural community provides a global perspective, enabling those who join it to develop skills and knowledge that set them on successful and enriching careers.

SPECIAL NOTES REGARDING OUR DESTINATION

Climate

The climate in Swansea is warm and temperate. Swansea has a significant amount of rainfall during the year. This is true even for the driest month. July is the warmest month of the year. The temperature in July averages 16.8 °C or 62 °F. Currently, temperatures for July 2019 are shown as an average high of 67 °F and an average low of 57 °F.

Currency

The currency in Wales (and the rest of the UK) is the British Pound. Rates fluctuate, so before departing consult a currency exchange website to check rates. You do NOT need to exchange currency here in the US, as you will likely be paying hefty fees if you do. There will be change bureaus at Heathrow Airport. You can also change money at banks in town. Check with your bank to see if it partners with banks in the UK. For instance, Bank of America partners with Barclays, which means that you will not get charged a transaction fee for withdrawing money. There is a Barclays in Swansea. The Office of Study Abroad Programs uses the currency converter found at <https://www.oanda.com/currency/converter/> which is currently showing on May 31, 2019, that 1 USD = 0.79 GBP and 1 GBP = 1.26 USD.

Food

Modified from Wikipedia

Welsh cuisine encompasses the cooking traditions and practices associated with the country of Wales and the Welsh people. While there are a large number of dishes that can be considered Welsh due to their ingredients and/or history, dishes such as cawl, Welsh rarebit, laverbread, Welsh cakes, bara brith and the Glamorgan sausage have all been regarded as symbols of Welsh food. Some variation in dishes exists across the country, with notable differences existing in the Gower Peninsula, an historically isolated rural area which developed self-sufficiency in food production.

While some culinary practices and dishes have been imported from its British neighbors, uniquely Welsh cuisine grew principally from the lives of Welsh working people, largely as a result of their isolation from outside culinary influences and the need to produce food based on the limited ingredients they could produce or afford. Welsh Celts and their more recent Welsh descendants originally practiced transhumance, moving their cattle to higher elevations in the summer and back to their home base in the winter. Once they settled to homesteads, a family would have generally eaten meat from a pig primarily, keeping a cow for dairy products.

Sheep farming is practiced extensively in Wales, with lamb and mutton being the meats most traditionally associated with the country. Beef and dairy cattle are also raised widely, and there is a strong fishing culture. Fisheries and commercial fishing are common, which explains why seafood features widely in Welsh cuisine.

Vegetables, beyond cabbages and leeks, were historically rare and the leek became a significant component of many dishes. It has been a national symbol of Wales for at least 400 years and Shakespeare refers to the Welsh custom of wearing a leek in *Henry V*.

Since the 1970s, the number of restaurants and gastropubs in Wales has increased significantly and there are currently five Michelin starred restaurants located in the country.

Local Transportation

There is a bus that departs the Bay Campus every 10 minutes for Swansea. You can also easily reach it by bike. The University has bike rentals on campus. We will be utilizing mainly buses and trains for day trips.

Alcohol

All participants in the program will be of legal drinking age while in the UK. **It is absolutely mandatory that every participant behave responsibly in choices involving alcohol, as the abuse of alcohol endangers not only the individual, but the other participants as well. Alcohol abuse is grounds for immediate dismissal from the program, at the discretion of the Program Director.**

USEFUL WEBSITES

Official Site of Wales: <https://www.wales.com/en-us>

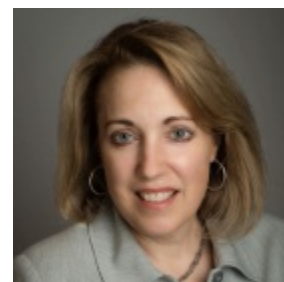
US Department of State, United Kingdom Information:

<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel/International-Travel-Country-Information-Pages/UnitedKingdom.html>

Official London Tourism Page: <https://www.visitlondon.com/>

PROGRAM DIRECTOR

Professor Kris O'Donnell is an Assistant Professor of Practice in the Department of Engineering Education. She has been a faculty member since August 2016. She earned a B.A. degree in Communication from UB and completed her M.A. in Journalism from the University of Texas at Austin.



Professor O'Donnell has traveled extensively throughout Europe. She's also made numerous trips to Thailand for volunteer work and has worked as a volunteer in Zambia in southern Africa. She also spent part of her senior year of college in London where she studied British broadcasting.

Contact information

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ACADEMIC PROGRAM

While the course will focus on all the required elements of EAS 360: STEM Communications, modifications will be made to incorporate opportunities available to us in Wales. We will tour the engineering facilities on campus, talk to engineering faculty and make day trips to historic sites in Wales. You will also have an opportunity to interact with the local community. All these activities will be incorporated into the assignments and all aspects of the course will be handled through UBLearn

Assignments

At the beginning of the course, students will receive a daily schedule of activities. Prior to departure from the United States, students will also receive a course syllabus outlining assignments and required readings. There will be four (4) homework assignments, one (1) group project, shorter individual reports and oral presentations. While the course has been modified, students will still be meeting the 5,000 word requirement for the course.

Grading and Conduct

Students will receive a grade letter for the course. Conduct will affect the overall grade, hopefully in a positive way. While abroad, UB students are ambassadors to our university and our country, and will be held to high standards and to all university regulations.

PROGRAM ITINERARY

You will receive a detailed itinerary for our trip in the coming weeks. It will also be available in UBLearn, which we will be using extensively. Our program itinerary will include a blend of site-visits and time in the classroom. As this is a writing-intensive course, we will be in the classroom every day, Monday-Friday, from 9am to 12:30pm.

ARRIVAL & DEPARTURE INFORMATION

Arrivals: The program begins on Saturday, July 6, 2019. All students are required to arrive in Swansea by 3pm that day. Following your successful passage through immigration and customs, the Program Director will meet you at a terminal to be determined as the travel date gets closer. We will then take a train to Paddington Station in London. From there, we will take a train directly to Swansea. The travel time by train is approximately 3½ hours. Check-in is 2pm and we will arrive between 2pm and 3pm.

Departures: The last day of the program is July 22, 2019. We will be staying in London at this point and can take the Tube easily to Heathrow Airport for flights home.

ACCOMMODATIONS

Accommodations will be on-site in the student dorms at Swansea University. Each student will have his or her own room, bathroom and shower. Towels and linens are provided, as is a daily cleaning service. Accommodations include complimentary Wi-Fi, a common room – located ground floor of the Gruffydd building with 24/7 access via key card. It includes sofas, table, chairs, a television and pool table.

We will have complimentary use of the gym. There is also a coin-operated Launderette (including ironing boards) located between the Llansteffan and Caridgan buildings. You will

receive a campus map via email. All lodging and meals will be provided during the trip and are included in the program fee.

While in London, we will be staying in South Kensington at [Premier Inn at Earl's Court](#). The hotel is conveniently located near the Tube and has easy access to Heathrow Airport.

MEALS

The overwhelming majority of our meals will be eaten as a group, so students will not need to worry about incurred expenses. Students participating in this program will receive three meals a day (breakfast, lunch and dinner) at Swansea University and arrangements will be made for special diets such as vegan, vegetarian, etc.

EXCURSIONS

Excursions are planned to highlight tourism and cultural opportunities in Wales. This includes, but is not limited to, visiting ancient abbeys, castles and other historic sites. We will also visit the Tower of London, Trafalgar Square, Big Ben and Houses of Parliament while in London. In addition, you will have free time to explore the city on your own. Most costs for excursions—including transportation and entry fees—are included in the program fee. Students will have to purchase round trip train tickets from Heathrow to London Paddington Station to Swansea and back. Instructions will be forthcoming.

PASSPORTS AND VISAS

Program participants must have a valid passport and are responsible for checking the **expiration date to ensure that it is no less than six months after the day we leave the UK.**

US citizens will NOT be required to apply for a visa to participate in this program. The Office of Study Abroad Programs will provide instructions for students from other countries if they are required to apply for a visa in order to travel to the United Kingdom and participate in this program.

KEEP YOUR IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS AND ITEMS SAFE

Carry all important documents such as money, credit cards, passport, and plane tickets with you in your carry-on bag. One of the best ways to keep these items safe from harm is to purchase a holder that you wear under your clothes. These are available from most luggage stores, AAA, etc. and come in two styles: with a string to wear around neck or with a strap to wear around your waist.

Make two photocopies of your passport and leave one at home with someone you can easily contact should you lose your passport. Hide the other copy in your luggage, separate from your passport. In addition, scan and/or copy all bank/credit cards you carry and leave a copy at home with someone, and upload a pdf that you could easily retrieve online if needed. In the unfortunate event you were to lose your passport and/or bank/credit cards, you will be then able to retrieve the information and contact the appropriate companies.

LIVING SAFELY WALES

While the UK is generally safe, it is always wise to be mindful of your surroundings. Make sure

you secure your passport and money. Be especially mindful in London. While violent crime is rare, pickpockets will try to take advantage of tourists, and July is the busy season on London.

Avoid areas of demonstrations and be careful within the vicinity of demonstrations. They may be taking place while we are in London. Even demonstrations intended to be peaceful can turn confrontational and possibly escalate to violence. Stay current with media coverage of local events and be aware of your surroundings. Avoid showing signs of affluence and carrying large sums of cash.

You are strongly encouraged to sign up for the U.S. Department of State [Smart Traveler Enrollment Program \(STEP\)](#) to receive up-to-date safety and security information and help them reach you in case of an emergency abroad, whether natural disaster, civil unrest or a family emergency. This will also help family and friends get in touch with you in an emergency.

ADVICE ON MONEY, PHONE, ETC.

Money

US currency is accepted at select locations, although exchange rates may not be favorable. Local currency can be withdrawn at ATM machines just as in the US. Alternatively, you may exchange US currency at money exchange bureaus or even select hotels. Both exchange bureaus and ATMs are located in every airport terminal. The Program Director recommends having US\$100 - US\$200 for spending money. Meals, admission fees, and other necessary expenses are included in the program fee, so cash will only be needed for souvenirs and other minor personal expenses.

It is recommended that students bring a credit card as a safety precaution, but the Program Director does not anticipate that participants will need to use it extensively (if at all).

Personal Electronics

You will need a laptop for class. In England, the electricity runs on 220-240 volts, which is not what we use in the USA. Additionally, they use a different kind of electrical outlet. Therefore, you will need two things. First, find out if your laptop and personal electronics have a built-in converter that makes them safe to use with 220-240 volts (otherwise, they will fry upon connection). If the answer is yes, you are OK, if the answer is no, then you need to purchase an electricity converter. Second, you will need to buy an electrical outlet adapter for the UK. Outlet adapters are available at AAA, Wal-Mart, Target and most electronics stores for less than \$10. Electricity converters, however, are more expensive.

Phones

You are able to use your American cellphone in Great Britain for some carriers. However, this can lead to a very high bill and roaming fees. Contact your US provider and find out what they offer for international service. This is usually the most expensive option and you likely will not have a local number in the United Kingdom, which may discourage calls/texts from any British friends you make along the way.

Wi-Fi is available in many places, and apps such as WhatsApp and Line can be used to communicate with family/friends back home in the United States. Skype, textPlus and FaceTime are also useful tools to keep in touch, which enable you to call and/or text whenever you are online (but not at other times). Calls to online phones or computers using the same service are free, and may include video; direct calls to most phones (i.e. you must be online, but may call direct to any phone) cost about 2 cents per minute. You won't be reachable unless you are online, but can pay extra to set up a voicemail box if you wish. Lastly, you can purchase (a) phone card(s) to make international calls. You can also buy a local pay as you go phone upon arrival.

If you have an *unlocked, GSM-capable* phone, *tri-band* or *quad-band*, you can buy an inexpensive local SIM card and service in the United Kingdom. This will result in a normal, functioning cell phone with a British telephone number that will make/receive calls and/or text messages throughout most of the world (calling rates may be higher outside of the United Kingdom, depending on which service you buy). A huge advantage of this approach is that your British friends can call/text you easily at any time.

Time

The UK is 5 hours ahead of New York.

12 PM in Buffalo, NY = 5 PM in the UK

Water

Tap water is fine to drink everywhere in the United Kingdom. Save money by using a refillable water bottle, instead of purchasing water or other drinks. If and/or when buying bottled water, always make sure that the cap is sealed to avoid any possible contaminated water.

PACKING INFORMATION & LIST

Guiding Principles:

- Travel light and only bring only what is necessary.
- Plan on carrying the luggage with you on board to ensure you and your luggage arrive together.
- Check with your airline for baggage allowances and carry on regulations (particularly in terms of fluids).
- Bring clothing that says UB! A shirt, a hat, etc., so you can take photos for the Office of Study Abroad Programs proudly displaying our colors and logo that can be used for the website and other promotional materials.

Suggested Clothing List:

- 3-4 pairs of long pants (khaki slacks and jeans) or casual skirts
- 1-2 pairs of functional walking shorts (not so common in Europe but good when it's warm)
- 4-5 shirts – 2 short-sleeved casual shirts and 2 long-sleeved shirt for dressier/cooler use
- 1-2 sweaters, nice but functional for everyday use when cool
- Functional rain/wind jacket - should be light and fold very small

- 2-3 pairs of shoes - running shoes and 1-2 pairs of casual shoes that are good for walking
- 2-3 pajamas
- At least one outfit of professional attire

Additional Items:

- Umbrella
- Sunscreen
- A hat if you would like additional protection from the sun
- Toiletries
- Medications that you take on a regular basis
- Small flashlight
- Water bottle
- Earplugs if you are sensitive to noise when sleeping
- Your preferred remedy for motion sickness, if needed (we will traverse many winding roads)

Other Necessities:

- Journal
- Day Pack
- UB Health Insurance Card / Information
- Important addresses and phone numbers for contacting relatives, if necessary.
- Prescription medication in original container carried on plane with you.

IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION

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Police/Fire/Ambulance emergencies in London: 999

(the equivalent of 911 in the US; all calls are free)