

Harvard Study Abroad Program in Santiago, Chile: Specific Opportunities for Concentrators Interested in the Social Sciences

Harvard's David Rockefeller Center for Latin American Studies ([DRCLAS](#)) Regional Office and the Harvard Office of International Programs ([OIP](#)) offer an excellent study abroad opportunity for *Harvard anthropology, government, sociology, social studies, and women studies concentrators* especially those interested in learning more about Latin American political and social issues, cultural anthropology and rural development, gender and indigenous studies, and immigration and international relations.

There are important social debates in Chile currently in the headlines: recent decisions that remove immunity from General Augusto Pinochet for human rights abuses to increasingly active demands coming from indigenous groups. At the same time, Chile is a stable democracy with one of the strongest economies in Latin America. It has recently signed free trade agreements with the United States, European Union, and numerous Asian countries.

For many, Chile has served as a fascinating laboratory for economic and political development, in a story that is complex, richly textured and still debated. The past few decades' economic, cultural, and social developments have created a increasingly modern country, yet with many aspects of a more traditional society. The capital of Chile, Santiago, where Harvard students are based, is conveniently located one hour west of the Andes Mountains and one hour east of the Pacific Ocean.

Harvard student enrolled in the Harvard program can choose from hundreds of courses at Chile's two leading universities, the *Universidad de Chile* (UC) and the *Pontificia Universidad Católica* (PUC). The two universities allow Harvard students to take undergraduate courses, as well as graduate courses.

Pontificia Universidad Católica (PUC)

The Catholic University is a private university with partial public support and four urban campuses throughout Santiago, the *Pontificia Universidad Católica* is considered one of the leading universities in Chile. PUC has more than 2,300 courses to choose from and also produces a separate course guide [for classes of special interest to international students](#). It was founded by the Catholic Church, but does not discriminate on the basis of religion, age, sex, or ethnic origin. PUC created Chile's first academic unit in Chile dedicated to [Political Science](#). Of special interest to those studying [Social Sciences](#). For more information about [Studying at PUC](#).

"Before coming to Chile I had actually taken courses on Latin American politics at Harvard, but in Chile at the Catholic University I was able to learn from Chilean professors and speak to Chilean students who had unique perspectives on the issues we explored in class."

- Lewis Smith, Government concentrator, fall 03

Universidad de Chile (UCH)

University of Chile is the country's oldest and largest public institution of higher education and has more than 23,000 students at its 13 campuses that are located in downtown Santiago. The University of Chile is known for its research programs, and it produces over 50% of all scientific and technological publications in the country. As a large public institution, the Universidad de Chile has a diverse student body, and a wide range of programs and initiatives in the humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences. Programs of particular interest to Harvard students include Architecture and Urbanism, Philosophy and Humanities, Law, [Political Sciences](#), International Relations, Social Sciences, International Studies, Forestry, Sciences, and Medicine. For information about the Institute of Political Science see: [School of Government and Public Policy](#), and the [Institute for International Studies](#).

"I really enjoyed the classes that I took at the University of Chile. It was great to get a different perspective on Latin American politics, in particular the perspective from and within Latin America. I also had the opportunity to write a lot of papers in Spanish and this vastly improved my academic Spanish. The grading process was very similar to Harvard in that some classes were graded hard and others easy."

- [Thomas Sean McKean](#), Government concentrator, spring 04

Concentrators interested in the Social Sciences enrolling at Universidad Católica, may find the following courses particularly interesting:

Southern Cone Politics in Latin America (ICP5121)

Política en el Cono Sur de América Latina is aimed at students interested in Latin American politics, particularly focused on Chile, Argentina, Uruguay, and Paraguay. This class is also allows students to develop a specific project on one of the countries mentioned above. Some of the subjects covered in this class are: authoritarianism in the southern cone, democracy and democratization, military autonomy and merging democracies in South America. Professor Alfredo Rehren is a political scientist whose current work focuses on issues of corruption in Latin America. He was a visiting researcher at Harvard during the 2003-2004 academic year.

Formation and Development of the Latin American Culture (SOL 113)

Formación y Desarrollo de la Sociedad Latinoamericana familiarizes students with the modernization and development of Latin America using sociological interpretations. Chile serves as the primary example. This course will illustrate the process of change and social transformation in Latin America by analyzing the main economic policies, social trends, and cultural phenomena. A leading figure in Latin American sociology, Professor Guillermo Wormald Delpiano received his doctorate in Sociology from Sussex University in Britain.

"This Master's level seminar on Latin American politics was quite tough with five papers and two presentations in the semester. But I feel like I learned more from that class because we would always have good discussions about the readings and would get to hear everyone's perspective".

- [Thomas Sean McKean](#), Government concentrator, spring 04.

Latin-American Culture and Society (PSB 408)

Cultura y Sociedad Latinoamericana works to help students understand the main political, economical, social, and cultural phenomena tied to the formation and development of Latin American societies. The course helps students develop a critical perspective on Chile's national development processes, and its relation and interdependence within the development of Latin American countries. This class is taught Professor Jorge Carlos Gissi Bustos who has a doctorate in Social Sciences from Gregorian University in Italy.

"This course in Latin American history and culture was an excellent addition to my program. I can also see it being useful for Sociology, Economics, Anthropology concentrators or any concentration which focuses on people and cultures."

- [Robert Ford](#), History concentrator, spring 04.

Introduction to Comparative Politics (EAE285A)

The goal of *Introducción a la Política Comparada* is to provide students the tools needed for political analysis. Until not that very long ago, the main subject of comparative politics was the birth, breakdowns, and survival of a democracy. Lately, however, a big portion of regimes have maintained a level of democratic stability. This situation has led political researchers to ask new and subtle questions about the pre conditions for the consolidation of democracy, analyzing new characteristics for a democratic framework.

International Political System (ICP3301)

Sistema Político Internacional provides student with basic tools to understand the characteristics of the current international system, and know the essential elements of this system, the type of players involved, its structure, and ways that power can be expressed. This class will analyze in a critical way and from a Latin American perspective each one of these topics in depth.

Subjects on Chile and Latin America 20th century (IHT0106)

Temas de Chile y América siglo XX provides student with a view of different regimes that have governed Chile from 1891 through 1973. The class identifies differences between the rhetoric and the reality of the governments. The influence of the different political parties and the impact they had on the different regimes will also be covered in this course.

Precolombian Cultures (IHI1201)

Culturas Precolombinas is an introductory course on pre-Colombian culture in Latin America, which aims to identify the main American cultural areas, while drawing a parallel with the European Paleolithic period. Emphasis will be on the idea of the “height culture” in the Andean zone, Mesoamerica, and the Chilean aborigine culture. This course will also give students the tools to understand basic concepts of cultural anthropology and its relationship with different current aborigine cultures.

Chilean Anthropology (IHA 0011)

Antropología Chilena provides students with the tools to understand the logic and functioning of cultural elements of different societies, focusing specifically on indigenous Chilean cultures, their permanence along time and space, and their relationship with the non-indigenous world. This course will sensitize students to the indigenous world in Chile, from its past to the present, using an anthropologic and ethno historic analysis.

Concentrators interested in the Social Sciences enrolling at Universidad de Chile may find the following courses particularly interesting:

Contemporary International Conflicts (EGELE516)

Conflictos Internacionales Contemporáneos provides the students with a general outline of the international conflicts which have had an impact on the development of international relations since the creation of the UN, and explores the understanding of these conflicts from a Latin American perspective. This class is taught by Professor A.M. Maklouf.

Latin American Politics (EGELE515)

Política Latino Americana analyzes Latin American society using a multi-disciplinary perspective. The interactions of the ideology of Latin American structures are analyzed along the processes of systematic changes. This class is taught by Professor Raimundo Heredia.

Rural Anthropology (SAN504)

Antropología Rural studies the anthropological approach to rural populations and how rural Latin American space has suffered in the past. Particular attention will be given to the Chilean situation and the experience of working in rural communities. This class is taught by Professor Milka Castro.

Anthropology and Development (SAN808)

Antropología y Desarrollo studies the concept of ethnic development. Anthropology will be applied to the Latin American and Chilean context with special attention to the processes of economical and social development. This class is taught by Professor Roberto Hernandez.

The Political Economy of Chile and the World (EGELE518)

Política Económica de Chile y el Mundo analyzes the political and economical situation of Chile and around the world. It concentrates on the major economic and political transformations in the last few decades. This class is taught by Professor Hugo Fazio.

State and Politics in the 21st century (FG0025)

Estado y Política en el siglo 21 is aimed at getting students involved in the current debate over the big transformations that the State and Politics are facing in the 21st century. Different views, causes, and consequences related to this change are studied. Because of the nature of this class, many faculty from different disciplines lecture in this class. This class is taught by Professor Eduardo Araya.

Theory and Chilean Social Structure (EGSOG201)

Teoría Sociológica y Estructura Social de Chile covers the study of conceptualization, interpretation and analysis of social structures, and policies and in the process help students understand the complex nature of social reality in Chile. This class is taught by Professor A. Meneses

The modernization of the role of woman in the literary work of Chilean writer Marta Brunet

La modernización del rol de la mujer en la narrativa escrita por Marta Brunet examines the change experienced in the role of the woman from end of the 19th-century until the 1960s. It covers the change of the Catholic model that supported a passive role centered on the figure of the wife and mother, to the emergence of a world that demands the active participation of women in all aspects of modern life. This class is taught by Professor Eduardo Araya.

Theoretical Introduction to the Studies of Gender

Introducción teórica acerca de los Estudios del Género studies material and symbolic dimensions of gender in Latin American society.

This class is taught by Professor Kemy Oyarzún.

Orientation Program

The Harvard Study Abroad Program begins in Santiago, Chile on February 21st, 2005 for the spring semester (Harvard) and mid-July for the fall semester (Harvard) with a two-week Orientation Program for all Harvard students. This program includes an intensive Chilean Spanish language program and an experiential learning program focused on Chilean culture, history, and politics. During the Orientation Program, Harvard students will spend the mornings in the classroom and many afternoons and evenings visiting a variety of community, cultural, governmental, and international institutions, many of which will be possibilities for internships during the academic year. Without exception, students (including those who are native speakers of Spanish) have found the two-week Orientation Program of great value.

"I think the orientation program really helped us transition more easily into University life in Chile, and make the transition successfully after the first two week when we started meeting Chilean students in our regular classes."

- *Kaija Romero, Comparative Study of Religion concentrator, spring 04*

"The orientation was extremely useful, especially considering that Chilean Spanish is very different from the rest of the world. The field trips were especially valuable, like the trip to the población La Victoria, because it showed an extremely poor side of Santiago that I wouldn't have seen otherwise. I also thought the day trip to Isla Negra was very interesting because it gave us a chance to see a part of Chile outside of Santiago and also learn about Chilean poet Pablo Neruda, a key figure in helping understand Chilean identity".

- *Adam Kramer, History concentrator, spring 04.*

The Academic Semester in Chile

After the Harvard Orientation Program, Harvard students enroll in regular Chilean university courses at undergraduate or graduate levels. While there are a few courses that are primarily for international students, the great majority of classes, particularly upper level courses, will be with Chilean students. Students participating in the Harvard Program will have course names listed on their Harvard transcripts as Pass/Fail.

"Studying abroad in Chile was an amazing experience. I had the opportunity to take great classes that are generally not offered to Harvard undergrads while getting practical experience as a marketing intern in a national company. My home stay experience only added to this; I stayed with a wonderful, supportive family with whom I am still in contact."

- [Laura Troyani](#), Sociology concentrator, spring 04

Internships and other opportunities of particular interest to government and social studies concentrators

Harvard College students have done internships and research projects (many while on the study abroad program) at organizations such as the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean ([ECLAC](#)), the United Nations Development Program ([UNDP](#)), [CONAMA](#) (Chile's equivalent of the Environmental Protection Agency), Radio Tierra (a radio station that emphasizes freedom of expression), private foundations, non-profit organizations, and other cultural, social, and international organizations.

"My internship in microfinance with Banco Estado was an amazing opportunity to experience Chile in a nonacademic environment. The internship was in a field specific to Latin America that I knew little about, so it also offered me a chance to learn hands on about something completely new to me. I was also particularly inspired by my boss, who was incredibly passionate and dedicated to his work and had a vested interest in integrating me as a full member of the team."

- [Eric Price](#), Economics concentrator, spring 04

Housing opportunities with Chilean host families

To enhance the cultural and linguistic experience, Harvard students are strongly encouraged to live with local families in Chile. The DRCLAS Regional Office works closely with a local housing coordinator to facilitate home stay opportunities. In the host family home or apartment, students will receive room and board, three meals a day, and laundry privileges. The host family coordinator works to make good matches that include opportunities to express preferences (such as smoking/non-smoking, pets/no pets, children/no children, etc.). Typically, these are Chilean families who have experience housing international students.

"For me, living with a host family was one of the best ways to experience the culture of Chile. My host mother was a very interesting woman from whom I learned a great deal about many aspects of life. Also, she combined very well the qualities of a concerned mother with a sensibility for my need of independence and personal space. This was very important to me, and allowed me to feel remarkably comfortable in such a distinct environment."

- [Eric Price](#), Economics concentrator, spring 04

Applying to the Program

There is a very straightforward and simple application process to apply for Harvard's study abroad program in Santiago, Chile.

Students interested in participating in the program should register at the [Office of International Programs](#) by completing the Harvard Study Abroad application. At that time, Harvard students must indicate their interest in which Chilean university they are interested in attending (available on the individual university web pages or at the OIP), as well as put together a tentative list of courses that they plan to take. This plan of study needs to be approved by the Office of International Programs. This plan of study forms part of the application.

"I would strongly suggest the Study Abroad model used by DRCLAS to all Harvard students considering studying abroad. Because the program was Harvard administered, and because of recent changes, my semester here in Chile has fitted in seamlessly with my time at Harvard. I would be hard-pressed to imagine a more smooth overall process. Applying in the first place was remarkably simple. Once I arrived in Chile, the Orientation Program was tremendously coordinated, balancing language instruction with cultural activities very thoughtfully."

- [David Lizoain](#), Economics concentrator, spring 03

Students should also submit the following information as part of their application:

- One-page essay on objectives of participating in the Chile Study Abroad Program
- Tentative list of courses for program of study
- Demonstration of good command of the Spanish language (such as advanced Spanish course at Harvard, or letter from instructor)
- Academic transcripts from Harvard University
- Resumé
- Copy of passport identification page
- Four passport photos
- Completed housing form
- Proof of Health Insurance

Once accepted into the program, students will receive a comprehensive package from Santiago with additional information about the program.

Getting more information:

For more information about the Harvard College Study Abroad Program in Santiago, Chile, please contact the Santiago Student Program Coordinator, Marta Mella at mella@fas.harvard.edu, phone: 011 (56-2) 290-0305, or fax: 011 (56-2) 290-0310.

At Harvard University, you can also speak with Leslie Hill, Office of International Programs at hill2@fas.harvard.edu, phone: 495-7675 or Erin Goodman, DRCLAS Student Program Coordinator, egoodman@fas.harvard.edu, phone: 496-9153.

Also see [Harvard Study Abroad Program in Chile](#) and for additional general information [DRCLAS Regional Office](#).

The following College Students have indicated they would be willing to give feedback on their experiences in the Study Abroad Program in Chile:

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You can also find additional information about other concentrations, including: Economics, Humanities, and Sciences.

Frequently asked questions: