

CHID Prague: Discovering Central Europe - Autumn

Prague, Czech Republic

Program Terms: Autumn Quarter

Homepage: [Click to visit](#)

Dates / Deadlines:

There are currently no active application cycles for this program.

Fact Sheet:

Primary Language(s) of Instruction:	English	Foreign Language Required:	None
Courses available in English?:	Yes	Minimum Class Standing:	Sophomore
Field of Interest:	History, International Studies, Political Science & Public Affairs, Russian & East European Studies	Affiliated Department:	CHID
Program Type:	Faculty-led Program		

Program Description:

CHID Prague: Discovering Central Europe - Autumn

Location: Prague, Czech Republic

Department: CHID

Dates: September 30 - December 7, 2013

Program Fee: \$4,900

Credits: 15

Program Director: Vera Sokolova (CHID)

Study Abroad Advisor: Lauren Easterling

Application Deadline:

Information Session(s): Thursday, January 31, C-101 Padelford, Thursday, February 7, C-101 Padelford



PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

A medieval cultural capital located in the heart of Europe, yet for decades locked seemingly far away behind the Iron Curtain, Prague has a magical flair like no other. Relatively spared from natural disasters and war, Prague boasts magnificent architecture preserved from its distant past, and is the home to world class

theatres (think Mozart), labyrinthine cobble-stoned streets (think Kafka), and tucked-away bars, gardens and cafés where you can contemplate the meaning of it all. One of the things that makes Prague special is its contradictions: it's both big as well as cozy, it's rich as well as poor, both "Eastern" and "Western", quiet and wild, and really old yet unmistakably reconfigured by the communist regime (1948-1989) as well as the capitalist system that replaced it.

The Prague Program, which is the oldest CHID study abroad program at UW (since 1996), is all about immersing yourself in Prague and the other great Central European cities – **Vienna, Krakow, Budapest and Berlin**, where we will go on 4-day trips each – in order to develop a complex understanding of the dynamic historical, cultural and political life of Central Europe as a whole. The program itself is strongly anchored in the philosophy of CHID: it combines academically rigorous seminar-style courses, international field trips aimed at provoking personal reflection and exploration, and cultural events that transform our program into a living community. We focus on key issues that resonate well beyond Central Europe: the tragedy of the Holocaust, the nature and impact of the communist system, the hopes and tensions of the European Union, and how coming to terms with the past is reflected in the cultural and art scene we witness today.

We also reflect on the very meaning of Central Europe. Does Central Europe even exist? The question has for over a century occupied European intellectuals like Walter Benjamin or Milan Kundera, and continued to be reframed by the World Wars, a divided Europe during the Cold War, and the contemporary European integration. We travel to Vienna, Krakow, Budapest and Berlin to explore the commonality and diversity of Central Europe and to see how, as Christa Wolf expressed it, today is the last day of the past.

The Prague program is intensive both academically and experientially, often at the same time. The classes directly connect, for example, with our talks with journalists at Radio Free Europe in Prague or diplomats at the U.S. mission to the OSCE (Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe) in Vienna. We discuss class readings with activists at the European Roma Rights Center in Budapest as well as with lawyers from the Transparency International in Prague. We visit women's rights activists in Krakow, local artists in Prague, and "green" squatters in the famous wagon commune Schwarzerkanal in Berlin. What might seem abstract at one moment becomes crystal clear the next when we walk through Auschwitz, visit a Stasi prison, witness street demonstrations, or explore the remnants of the Berlin wall.

Thus, to a large degree, the site, or rather the sites ARE the academic content of the program. But we do all of this with a heavy dose of fun: we go biking in Berlin and Krakow (possibly elsewhere), experience Budapest's Turkish baths, explore Vienna's Habsburg palaces, and see opera and ballet in Prague's beautiful theaters. We also encourage students to go on short-term trips to other wonderful places in the Czech Republic during the three-day weekends. Through this immersion, we hope that students in the program not only critically explore the intersections of rich and complex Central European history, society, and politics, but also, in the process, become themselves transformed by the places, people and ideas they encounter.

We believe for this immersion experience it's absolutely crucial that the students don't feel like tourists but instead live the same way regular Prague residents do. During the Prague program our students thus live in rented private residential apartments, centrally located in the heart of Prague. 4-5 students share two-bedroom apartments, all with fully equipped kitchens, bathrooms with showers or bathtubs, washing machines, living rooms with TV/SAT, and free internet. (The location of our classroom is within 20 minutes by walk or a short tram ride from all student apartments.)

The program fee covers most expenses connected with the international field trips (travel, housing, museums and other entrance fees, all breakfasts and a few group meals, etc.), student accommodation in the above-described apartments, 3-month public transportation pass in Prague, tickets to selected cultural events (opera, ballet, concerts, museums), and reading packs for all three classes.

For more information, please visit our program website: www.chidprague.cz.

LOCATION:

Prague, Czech Republic

Site(s):

To a large degree, the site, or rather the sites ARE the academic content of the program. In addition to the three core classes the program includes four 3 to 4-day international trips to **Vienna and Bratislava, Krakow, Budapest and Berlin**. These field trips are highly academic and complement the courses by allowing the students to examine the transformations of Central Europe through direct experience and engagement with some of the most important and influential cities of the region. During these field trips, we visit historically relevant sites, museums, have guided lectures and talks by local experts and NGOs, visit national parliaments and universities. The courses will also be supplemented by visits to important Prague historical and cultural sites, visits by Czech NGO activists, exhibitions and other current cultural events in

Prague.

Housing:

The students reside in residential apartments rented by the program in various sites around the city center. They stay in groups of 4-5 with other members of the program, but their neighbors are other residents of Prague, so our students get a true feel for domestic life in the city.



ACADEMICS

Pre-Requisites/Language Requirements:

Students from all disciplines can and have participated successfully. The program is especially attractive to students of European politics, international relations, sociology, law and justice, post-communist studies, European history, economics, communications, art history, and business. On previous programs, however, we also had students majoring in chemistry, music, pre-med and pre-law or computer engineering.

Credits:

15 CREDITS

Courses:

Democracy and Development in Central and Eastern Europe - POL SCI 495 (5 credits)

This class examines the interaction between democratization and the politics of economic development in Central and Eastern Europe. After the collapse of communism, democratic and economic reforms took place simultaneously and rapidly, leading to a host of urgent problems and consequences their designers did not always predict, such as increases in economic inequality, unemployment and an increased sense of insecurity by large segments of post-communist societies. These phenomena have, in turn, provided a base of support for reinvigorated communist parties and nationalist movements, as well as provoked disillusionment with the democratic process. In exploring the complex intersections of recent social, political and economic transformation, we will pay particular attention to the role of civil society and membership in the European Union in shaping the democratic futures of post-communist societies. An integral part of our class are visits of and from important Czech NGOs.

Memory and Representation as a Part of Knowledge Production - CHID 390 (5 credits)

This CHID 390 colloquium is a reading and discussion course that will focus on the theoretical and practical problems of memory and representing the past as a part of the process of knowledge production. We will explore how historians, politicians, intellectuals, artists, as well as "ordinary" people transform memories (both individual and International Programs & Exchanges • Office of Global Affairs - 6 - collective) into a source of knowledge of the present that may serve a variety of (often competing) intellectual, political, social, and economic power purposes. Central Europe has a vast reservoir of topics and actual physical sites to examine how specific constructions of the past are formed and shape life today: conceptualizations of the Holocaust, disagreements over the nature and justice of ethnic expulsions after WWII, understanding of the Roma (gypsies) and their culture, and national struggles against both Nazism and Communism are just some of the many issues we will explore. Given the many sharply contesting historical and ideological narratives, which are continuously produced, used and abused in the region, the Prague Program with its four international trips to Vienna, Krakow, Budapest and Berlin is the ideal context in which to examine these questions. In the classroom, we will look at a variety of texts – theoretical essays, memoirs, popular media, and literary texts that reveal and problematize a range of ways of remembering (and forgetting, for that matter). We will complement these readings and their discussions by hands-on explorations of

relevant cultural and historical sites in Prague but mainly during our trips. As with other CHID 390 courses, we employ three interconnected critical practices: reading, talking, and writing, all of which will work together to create and sustain a learning community in Prague, one in which all of us will gain an enhanced ability to "think out loud" and develop thoughts and ideas through productive and supportive discussions.

Contemporary Czech Culture, Art, Music and Literature: Urban Semiotics - CHID 471C (5 credits)

The course will acquaint students with contemporary Czech art scene, its "roots" and transformations from three different perspectives. First, the course will pursue how Czech art and music are connected with activism, minority groups and mainstream culture. Second, focus will be placed on how to "read" contemporary urban performances, literature and works of art. How and why do performances address and fascinate their readers? What value-hierarchies and culture-changing signs do they produce? Third, the course will familiarize students with the notions of performance art, digital media, counterculture, mass culture and show their impact on Czech individuals and society. The course will elucidate the transitions in Czech art scene after 1989, together with their socio-historical context. It will explore different understandings of post-communist movements as represented in the performances by Czech artists. Czech art perspectives will be confronted with Western literary and cultural criticism.

PROGRAM LEADERS

Vera Sokolova, Department of CHID

verasokolova@email.cz



PROGRAM EXPENSES

Estimated Cost:

\$4,900 This does not include the Study Abroad Fee (\$300), airfare, food (about \$34/day), Study Abroad Insurance (\$37/month) and personal spending money.

Average Airplane Ticket Price:

\$1,200 - \$1,400* roundtrip *Subject to when & where you buy your ticket

Payment Schedule

Program fees will be posted to your MyUW student account and can be paid the same way that you pay tuition and other fees. A \$350 non-refundable program deposit and \$300 non-refundable Study Abroad Fee will be charged to your MyUW Account once your signed contract has been received by the Study Abroad Office.

Payment Type	Payment Amount	Payment Due Date
Non-Refundable Program Deposit	\$350	Charged Upon Receipt of Contract

Non-Refundable Study Abroad Fee	\$300	10/11/2013
Program Fee Balance	\$4,550	10/11/2013
TOTAL FEES CHARGED	\$5,200	

Orientation

To be eligible to study abroad, all contracted program participants must attend an in-person pre-departure orientation facilitated by the Study Abroad Office.

Once you have signed a contract, you must register for this general orientation through your online study abroad account in order to attend a scheduled session. Once you get to this stage in the process, you can visit the [Orientation Section](#) of our website to view the current orientation schedule.

Orientation must be completed prior to the Exploration Seminar enrollment deadline of July 1st.

In addition to the general orientation, you must also attend the program-specific orientations offered by your program directors. Those currently applying for a program need not sign up for the orientation session. However, be sure to look at the top of this page for info sessions for the programs to which you are applying.

Financial Aid and Scholarships:

Most forms of financial aid can be applied to study abroad. You can verify that your financial aid award will apply to your program costs by contacting the Financial Aid Office. Financial aid or scholarships awarded as tuition waivers or tuition exemptions may not apply so you will need to verify that these funds are eligible for use with study abroad by contacting the funding office.

Please remember that financial aid and most scholarships will be disbursed according to the UW academic calendar (at the beginning of the quarter). If your program starts before the start of the UW quarter, your financial aid will not be available to you until after you have left the country. If your program starts after the first day of the quarter, your financial aid will be disbursed on the first day of the program. In either of these cases, you will have to finance any upfront costs such as airfare and health insurance and the start of your time abroad on your own. Please take this into consideration when you plan your foreign study.

Please visit the [Finances section](#) of our website to learn more about disbursement, revising your aid package, short-term loans and scholarships.

Application Process

The application includes a Personal Statement, 3 short answer questions, 2 Faculty recommendations and electronic signature documents related to University policies and expectations for study abroad. Following the on-line application process students may be contacted by the Program Director for an in-person interview. Once admissions decisions have been regarding your application, you will be notified by the study abroad system via email.

Withdrawals

The \$350 program deposit and \$300 Study Abroad Fee are **non-refundable**. Students withdrawing from a program will be responsible for paying a percentage of the program fee depending on the date of withdrawal. More details about the withdrawal policy will be included in your payment contract. No part of the program fee is refundable once the program has begun. The date of withdrawal is considered the date (business day) a withdrawal form is received by the Study Abroad Office. Notice of withdrawal from the program must be made in writing, completing the following steps:

1. Provide notice in writing to the program director that you will no longer be participating in the program for which you have signed a contract and accepted a slot.
2. Submit a signed withdrawal form to the Study Abroad Office, 459 Schmitz Hall.

Please visit the [Withdrawals section](#) of our website for more information.