International and Study Abroad Programs

Short-Term Study Abroad Programs Handbook
Fordham’s Office of International and Study Abroad Programs (ISAP) wishes you well as you embark on a culturally and academically enriching journey. This handbook will answer questions you may have as you prepare.

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Travel Documents

- Passport
- Visa, if required
- Plane tickets
- Acceptance Letters for Immigration Authorities, if required
- Insurance card
- Credit card, Debit card or cash
- Names and phone numbers of emergency
- Contacts
- Host institution contact and address
- Copy of prescriptions, medical contacts

- Make two sets of photocopies of all important documents.
- Include the emergency telephone numbers for your credit cards, just in case you need to cancel or replace your cards while you are overseas.
- Leave one set of copies at home, and keep the other with you.
- **Do not** pack your passport or any other important documents in your check-in luggage.

Passport (for U.S. Citizens)

The U.S. State Department recommends applying for a passport several months prior to your scheduled departure. For an additional fee, you can request expedited processing. The expedited service may vary in length depending on current demand for passports.

**Applying for and Renewing a Passport**

If you're applying for a passport for the first time, you'll need to submit your application in person at a U.S. Post Office or Passport Agency. You will also need to provide proof of citizenship (such as an original birth certificate), proof of identity, and recent 2”x2” color photographs.

For more information on applying for your passport, or once you have applied to check your application status, visit [http://travel.state.gov/passport](http://travel.state.gov/passport) or call the National Passport Information Center at 1.877.487.2778.

If you have a passport already but it will expire during your stay abroad or be valid only six months beyond the end of your term abroad, you need to apply for a new one before you leave. If you are not a U.S. citizen please contact the government agency for the country where you hold citizenship for application information.

Visas

Many countries require that students have a visa, an official document giving permission to enter a country. It may be in the form of a stamp imprinted on a page in your passport or it might be an official document which includes a photograph. As they vary from country to country, you need to check with the country’s embassy for up-to-date visa and entry requirements. For students studying abroad in a Fordham-sponsored program, visa information can be found in your Study Abroad Portal Account.

To apply for a student visa you will need to visit the consulate nearest your permanent address or in New York City depending upon the country. When applying, make sure to check what documents you will need to submit along with your visa application and fee. These might include: your passport, a letter for immigration authorities, and the acceptance letter from your study abroad program/institution. You may also be required to submit one or more photographs, evidence of financial support during your period of study abroad (i.e. bank statement), and proof of medical insurance.
Please be aware that the conditions on your student visa may limit the number of times or the frequency with which you may leave and re-enter your host country. Make sure you understand these restrictions before you leave by inquiring about the re-entry requirements at the appropriate embassies/consulates.

Registering at the US Embassy

In addition to securing a visa, all students are required to enroll in the Department of State’s Smart Traveler Enrollment Program. The State Department maintains a website with information specifically for students abroad, as well as more general consular information about various countries.

Registering Travel with Fordham University

When travelling independently from your program site, you must register flight details, itinerary, dates, and accommodation information in the Fordham University Travel Registry at https://travelregistry.fordham.edu/login.

Acceptance Letters for Immigration Authorities

The study abroad office can provide participants a Visa/Enrollment Letter addressed to the immigration authorities certifying that you are a full-time student in a Fordham sponsored study abroad program.

- Keep the above mentioned letters together with your passport. Authorities at the airport may ask to see both documents (make copies and keep them in a safe place). Additionally, you may have to sign or provide proof of a statement indicating that you will have sufficient funding for the time you will be studying abroad.
- In some countries you may be required to register with the police after arrival (any fees involved in registering with the police or applying for a visa are your responsibility).

Plane Tickets/Travel Arrangements

Some programs include group flights to and from the program site, while others require you to make your own travel arrangements. If you do need to arrange your own transportation, get started well in advance. Keep in mind that a mandatory orientation session may precede classes, so you will need to schedule your arrival accordingly. Do not buy a one-way ticket: most foreign countries require visitors to have a round-trip ticket.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

If you are an international student, study abroad may affect your status: You must visit the Office of International Services to discuss your plans well in advance of studying abroad (718.817.3145 or ois@fordham.edu).
As you prepare to pack for your overseas experience, be sensible as it is highly recommended to travel light. Airlines have luggage weight restrictions and storage space may be very limited in your abroad housing. Research and plan accordingly.

A good rule of thumb? Pack everything you intend to bring and see if you can carry it without assistance during a short walk.

Since clothing styles differ all over the world, there is no way to generalize what one should or should not wear. Make sure however to pack comfortable clothes and shoes for everyday wear, and least one dressier outfit for special occasions.

- **Internship students** may need conservative business appropriate outfits.
- **Students in self-catered housing** arranged by your study abroad program often do not need to buy/bring towels, bed sheets and/or cooking utensils. Check with your on-site coordinator.

**At the Airport**

Check your airline’s website for the most recent regulations on luggage weight. Keep one change of clothes, toiletries, identification (passport, visas, ID card, etc.), and any medication in your carry-on luggage in case your checked-in luggage is delayed or lost.

Be mindful of airports’ security regulations and what is permitted and not permitted in your carry-on.

Make sure all your suitcases and carry-on bags have name tags with the address of your program study center.

For checked baggage, use a TSA Accepted and Recognized Lock. The Transportation Security Administration’s (TSA) website [www.tsa.gov](http://www.tsa.gov) can provide additional information.

**Electrical Equipment**

The country of your destination will likely be on a different voltage system, so keep in mind that most American electrical appliances will have to be used with an adapter and voltage converter. While you can buy adapters and converters in the US prior to your departure, in many cases it is easier, cheaper and safer to just buy the needed appliances abroad (the one exception being your laptop).

**Insurance for Personal Property**

Make sure that your personal effects are insured under your travel insurance, an existing homeowner’s policy, or separately. Fordham cannot be responsible for the loss or theft of personal effects such as clothes, cameras, laptop computers, sports equipment, jewelry, etc.
Registering for Study Abroad Classes

Study abroad course registration takes place in the my.Fordham.edu portal for Fordham University classes. Registration for courses taken outside of Fordham will take place outside of this portal.

Course Approval and Guidelines

For students enrolled in programs not run by Fordham University, you must complete a Course Approval form to count credits towards your major, minor, or as an elective.

Grades and Transcripts

Grades earned in Fordham Abroad Courses will be calculated in the GPA and will be seen on the student’s transcript. Students will need to earn a grade of C or above to meet transfer requirements. For a complete list of credit transfer guidelines please visit the Fordham Study Abroad website.
Section IV: Financial Matters

Paying for Study Abroad

Study abroad participants in Fordham Abroad Courses are registered at Fordham and thus receive a Fordham University bill, which reflects the cost of the study abroad program’s tuition charge and program fee. The cost typically includes educational instruction, advising, comprehensive orientation, program-sponsored trips, social activities, international health and travel insurance, local transportation.

The cost typically does not include airfare, passport, visa, personal expenses, books, laptop, independent travel, meals. For an updates list of costs, please visit the study abroad costs and funding page.

Study abroad students in programs not run by Fordham University will receive and pay their bill directly to the host study abroad program.

Financial Aid

Generally financial aid is not available for short-term study abroad. Please contact the Office of Student Financial Services to discuss your individual situation and to find out about loans that may be available to short-term study abroad participants. For other scholarship opportunities visit our costs and funding page.

Budgeting for Personal Expenses While Abroad

Be sure you know what is covered and not covered by the Program Fee of your chosen program. The amount of spending money required varies with each student and it will depend on lifestyles, currency exchange and cost of living at your destination.

Estimated Expenses

- Tuition (plus applicable fees)
- Passport and visa
- Housing and meals
- Airfare and transportation in country
- Health insurance: immunizations/medicines
- Communication costs (SIM card, phone)
- Books and class supplies
- Recreation and travel
- Personal expenses

Accessing Money Abroad: Credit Cards and ATMs

Most major credit cards and debit cards are honored abroad. Notify your bank and credit company of where and when you’ll be traveling overseas. This will ensure that you will be able to use these cards abroad, and with identity theft on the rise, sudden charges in a foreign country may seem suspicious and your credit cards/debit cards may be put on freeze until you notify them otherwise.

ATMs overseas are used the same as they are in the US: your home checking account is debited for your withdrawal. Be aware that some ATMs abroad will only access a checking account. Make sure to check with your bank concerning use of your particular ATM card and any additional charges you may have to incur.

While major credit cards are honored abroad, many small stores, restaurants and street vendors do not accept them. Apple Pay and Google Pay are often accepted in major cities.
Quick Money-Saving Tips While Abroad

• **Avoid touristy restaurants:** Avoid those that have “We speak English” signs and multilingual menus.

• **Shop at family-run businesses:** A family-run business is often less expensive. In a “mom-and-pop” shop you are more likely to encounter people who care about their reputation and customers.

• **Have a picnic:** $10 or less can often buy a nice picnic lunch for two. Shop at the local market and make sandwiches.

• **Eat seasonally:** White asparagus in Germany, Porcini mushrooms in Italy, and Caracoles in Spain will only appear on restaurant menus when they are in season. You find more taste for less money when you order what is in season.

• **Use ATMs:** You can take out cash fast for a small transaction fee when you use an ATM. You can minimize transaction fees by making fewer and larger withdrawals. Just make sure to secure the cash in a safe place, and be sure to check the currency rate before you take out cash.

• **Buy a phone card on-site, not in the US:** International phone cards are generally sold at newsstands throughout the world. They offer calls to the US at cheaper rates than cards you can purchase prior to departure in the US.

• **Make the most of public transportation:** Public Transportation will always be your cheapest option when traveling. Know the fares and options- buses in England, for example, are cheaper than the “Tube” and Rail service. Before you do this, be sure you understand their routes and the neighborhoods that you may be asked to avoid.

• **Buy a map on-site:** These are half the price of maps you can buy in the US prior to departing for your host country.

• **Use email, zoom and skype to keep in touch:** Schedule a weekly or monthly time to catch up with your parents.

• **Do not over-tip:** In most parts of the world, the American standard of tipping 15-20% on top of a restaurant meal bill is not customary. Ask locals (not restaurant employees) for advice.

• **Museum passes may save time and money:** The Paris Museum pass, for example, pays for itself in three visits and saves you hours by letting you skip long lines.

• **Use your student ID:** Museums, public transportation systems, movie theaters, operas, and plays all offer student discounts in many parts of the world. It does not hurt to flash your ID and ask every time you purchase a ticket.

• **Learn key words and numbers in the local language:** You will gain more respect and will understand if you are getting ripped off.

• **Learn the local words for “Tap Water”:** “L’eau du robinet,” “agua del grifo,” and “l’acqua del rubinetto” sound fancy and will always be less expensive than soda or bottled water. Make sure tap water is potable/drinkable in your host country.
Health Recommendations

Changes in air quality, elevation, diet, climate, geography/topography and stress factors related to adjusting to living in a new culture can exacerbate many medical and mental health conditions. You should plan to continue any medical treatment you are currently undergoing while abroad and ensure that you will have access to any prescription medications you may require for the duration of your program.

Please consult www.cdc.gov/travel regarding health and vaccination recommendations for your host country. Study abroad students are required to have a medical examination form completed by a medical practitioner prior to traveling abroad.

In order to properly prepare for your study abroad term, we recommend that you do the following before your departure:

• Make sure that you are in good health.
• Obtain any immunizations that are required.
• Learn as much as you can about the health and safety conditions in your host country.

Pre-existing Conditions

If you have an ongoing medical condition, or are taking medications, you must take special precautions in preparing for and managing your condition overseas.

• Be sure to inform your program directors and study abroad staff of any medical condition you have or any medications you are taking.
• Take your medication while abroad to prevent worsening your existing condition.
• Consult with your primary care physician and insurance company

Prescriptions

Access to certain medications can be limited while abroad, so you should talk to your doctor about how to take care of all prescriptions before you leave.

• Bring an adequate supply for the time you will be away.
• Make sure all drugs are in the original pharmacy containers and are clearly labeled.
• Carry copies of your prescriptions as well as a letter from your doctor or pharmacist describing your medicines, their dosage and a generic name for them as well as the condition being treated. This could help avoid problems with Customs and in cases of emergency.
• Bring a copy of your vision prescription along with an extra pair of glasses/contact lenses.
• Do not take the risk of these items being misrouted or lost with your checked luggage. Put any prescription medication, eyeglasses and contact lenses in your carry-on bag.

Immunization

Check with health care providers to ensure that your immunizations are up-to-date. Certain additional vaccinations may be necessary before you travel to various countries. Please check with the consulates and your doctor concerning vaccinations or medications you may need throughout your time overseas.
World and Regional Health Conditions

For medical-related information about traveling abroad please check the following websites:

- [http://travel.state.gov](http://travel.state.gov) For Travel warnings and Consular Information Sheets. This site lists travel warnings for Americans and informs the public of conditions abroad that may affect their safety and security.
- [http://www.cdc.gov/travel](http://www.cdc.gov/travel) For Traveler’s Health. This site includes vaccination recommendations and information on the latest outbreaks of diseases around the world, and provides health information on specific destinations.

Health Services Abroad

Study abroad programs and faculty can provide valuable information about the health-care system in the region to which you are going as well as the proper protocols in case of sickness or a medical emergency. Make sure to inquire about these with your program director.

Health Insurance

All study abroad participants should be covered by a comprehensive international health insurance plan while abroad. Students participating in one of Fordham’s short-term undergraduate programs sponsored by the International and Study Abroad Programs Office are automatically enrolled in a comprehensive plan for their time abroad. Once you are enrolled in the insurance you will receive your policy information and ID card. Please be sure to open the email when you receive it and keep your ID card with you at all times before, during, and after your trip.

Summary of Benefits and Coverage

If you are not participating in one of the programs mentioned above, you can purchase an international health insurance plan, including trip cancellation insurance at [www.fordham.edu/studyabroad](http://www.fordham.edu/studyabroad).

Please review your current health insurance plan to make sure that it will provide adequate coverage while you are out of the US. A comprehensive protection plan is strongly recommended. It should provide benefits in the event of any accidents or illnesses that may occur, medical evacuation and repatriation of remains.

The following important questions will help you assess your coverage and determine if you need a supplement:

- Does your current insurance provide coverage outside of the United States?
- If it does cover you abroad, how will you be reimbursed for expenses?
- Does your insurance cover non-emergencies, e.g., prescriptions and doctor visits?
- What does your current policy exclude from coverage (injuries received while driving a motor vehicle, sporting injuries, etc.)?
- What is the maximum amount of coverage your insurance provides?
Section VI: Safety Issues

General Information

Personal safety requires that you pay careful attention to your surroundings and act accordingly. Whether you are an experienced traveler or this is your first time abroad, keep in mind that your on-site program staff or faculty leaders will have significant experience in your host country. Safety will be everyone’s concern. It is important to listen to suggestions and advice from resident directors, faculty leaders and on-site staff.

Independent Travel

Approval to study abroad is specific to the site at which your study abroad program is located. Students must complete a Travel Registration at my.fordham.edu as well as follow the on-site procedure each time you leave your host city. Fordham University does not permit study abroad students to travel independently to countries with US State Department ratings of 3 or 4. Failure to comply with these guidelines can result in dismissal from the study abroad program and loss of academic credit.

Behavior

Pay attention to the acceptable norms of conduct in your host country and abide by those standards.

Under most circumstances simple honesty, courtesy, restraint and respect for the law are usually sufficient guides for proper conduct anywhere.

It is important to remember that Fordham students enrolled in study abroad programs are expected to comply at all times with the University Code of Conduct and all other rules, regulations and policies contained in the Student Handbook and other University publications. They are also expected to conform to the rules, policies and standards of their host institution and program.

Legal Issues

Study abroad participants are expected to follow local and national laws.

In most countries, these are not unlike the laws governing the US, and a law-abiding student has nothing to fear.

Law enforcement and court procedure, however, may differ sharply. You must be prepared to assume responsibility for your actions. If you do have difficulties with the authorities, remember that you are subject to local laws. Consider the following:

- Drugs are governed by harsh penalties and strict enforcement. If you are caught with either soft or hard drugs abroad, you are subject to local, not US, laws and constitutional rights. Penalties for possession or trafficking are often the same. If you are convicted, you face the possibility of expulsion from your study abroad program, a stiff fine and/or a jail sentence.
- Study abroad participants should not interfere in the domestic affairs of the host university or country. Involvement in demonstrations or meetings which host country university or governmental authorities declare illegal may result in interruption of your academic schedule, personal injury, and open manifestations of hostility and violence to yourself and other students (either as random targets or as representatives of the United States). Furthermore, it could jeopardize the present or future existence of study abroad programs in the host country and/or on the campus of your host university.
Safety Recommendations

ISAP regularly monitors U.S. Consular advice as well as State Department travel advisories. Evacuation of students participating in study-abroad programs has been rare and would likely not occur unless recommended or required by either the U.S. Embassy or the U.S. State Department. Here are some simple suggestions about things you can do to ensure your safety while living and traveling abroad:

Be Alert
• Be aware of your surroundings and the people with whom you have contact.
• Be wary of people who seem overly friendly or interested in you.
• Be cautious about giving out your address or phone number to new acquaintances.
• Learn which areas should be avoided. If you find yourself in uncomfortable surroundings, act with confidence and purpose and extricate yourself from the situation as soon as possible.

Avoid theft
• Keep valuable items in a safe place, if you must bring them at all.
• Do not keep all of your documents and money in one suitcase or location on your person.
• Do not flash large amounts of money: carry and use small bills whenever possible.
• Be discrete in displaying your passport—do so only when necessary and avoid doing so in public places.
• Avoid situations and locations popularly identified with tourists/Americans.
• Use extra caution when traveling or going out alone, especially at night.
• NEVER leave your bags unattended (even briefly) in an airport, bus or train station.

Be prepared for an emergency
• Have phone numbers of your program contacts handy at all times.
• Know how to reach a doctor/hospital/clinic and the police in the country in which you are studying and/or traveling.
• Have sufficient funds or a credit card on hand for emergencies.
• Always carry enough local currency to take a taxi home or to make a phone call (phones in some countries do not accept coins, and you may need to use a phone card).

Stay in touch
• Maintain regular communication with your parents. Keep in mind that during a crisis, phone communication may be unreliable. Consider setting up an alternative method of communicating with your family, such as e-mail.
• Maintain regular communication with your on-site program staff and faculty leaders when traveling and notify them (as well as someone at home in the U.S.) of your itinerary when traveling.

Stay informed
• Review U.S. State Department Travel Advisories concerning the countries or regions to which you will be traveling. Travel warnings and announcements are available online: http://www.travel.state.gov/travel/warnings_current.html.
Section VII: Cross-Cultural Issues

Living and learning overseas successfully usually means adjusting to a different lifestyle, food, climate and time zone, and it often involves having to learn to communicate in a foreign language. This process is never easy and can include changes in your mood, alternating between exhilaration and excitement about new experiences and some homesickness and frustration about the challenges you are facing adjusting to living in a different country. It helps to be aware that these feelings are a natural and essential part of adjusting to a foreign culture.

Preparation

Knowing what you might expect when you first arrive in your host country can ease the effects of culture shock and help you make the most of the experience from the start. The internet has valuable resources for learning about all aspects of other countries. Talk with us and to students who have studied abroad before in your host country as well as international students from there.

Coping with Culture Shock

- Be aware of cultural differences, but do not view them with an “us” versus “them” perspective.
- Try not to be negative and critical—go out and do something. Keep yourself busy doing things you enjoy. When you have free time, visit parks, museums, go to movies, tour local sites of interest, and meet people in your host country.
- Look for the best, not the worst. If you allow yourself to have a positive state of mind, your attitude will follow.
- Identify one thing that reminds you of home in your host country to help ease the culture shock.
- Keep an open mind. Unmet expectations create disappointments.
- Embrace your sense of humor.
- Keep in touch with your family and friends at home – this can help you feel less isolated.

You will probably find that after the first few weeks, as you begin to understand your host culture better, the symptoms of culture shock slowly disappear. However, if you find that feelings of irritability or depression remain, you may need help from a doctor or counselor. Your program director or the international student office at your host university should be able to direct you to counseling or support organizations. Fordham’s Counseling and Psychological Services (CPS) Office can also provide some resources for you.

Challenges of a New Culture

Your study abroad experience will be heightened if you pay attention to the local social environment. In many ways, the key to adapting to the new environment is your ability to quickly understand what behavior is and is not appropriate and make necessary adjustments. Observe local students and don’t be afraid to ask questions about local customs. In fact, most people will appreciate that you are trying to learn about their culture and lifestyle, and are likely to help you adjust.

It also may help to realize that most students at host universities abroad, or the general public, might be highly informed about world issues. They may be ready with all sorts of questions and opinions for you to listen to and consider. Knowledge about political and social and cultural conditions in your destination will be of great use in your attempt to integrate and make friends with local people.

Keeping up with political and cultural happenings in the U.S. will also be helpful, as you can expect that in a foreign environment you will occasionally be put in the position of being a spokesperson for the US and American
culture. Topics such as politics, the economy, the environment, and religion are taken very seriously by many foreign university students.

**Personal Identity**

**Gender**

As gender-based norms abroad may differ significantly from your home culture, be aware that it can affect your experience abroad. It is important to understand the role of gender in the culture in which you are living. Observe how the host country’s people dress, behave, and treat members of different sexes. Also remember at all times that what may be appropriate or friendly behavior in the U.S. may bring you unwanted, even dangerous, attention in another culture.

**Race, Ethnicity and Socio-Economic Status**

Be aware that because of your race or ethnicity, you may be accorded different privileges or experience different barriers abroad than those you experience at home. Different cultures define race and ethnicity differently, create different categories and expect different things of people within these categories. Different cultures have ideas and perceptions about socio-economic status, which may not be the same as those in the US. Consider where your program is located. If it is in a city, are you living in an affluent or middle-class neighborhood? Where is your host university or study abroad program located? Once you arrive at your destination, take cues from your surroundings and as you go about your everyday routines observe your host culture. For more information on these topics, check out these [student resources](#) from Diversity Abroad.

**Sexual Orientation**

It is important to be aware of the cultural, legal and social issues regarding sexual orientation and gender identity abroad and how they could impact interactions in your host country. Since many ideas we have about sexual orientation and sexuality can be culturally based, students need to be aware of how this will affect their relationships with their host culture, cultural adjustment, and the overall study abroad experience. For information regarding sexual orientation issues in countries outside the US, check out [NAFSA’s Association of International Educators Rainbow Special Interest Group](#).

**Disability**

Travel is always a challenge to a person’s problem-solving abilities; this is no different for a person with a disability. While overseas, people with disabilities may find some things inaccessible, but many countries around the world provide accommodations and assistance for people with a physical disability. [Mobility International USA](#) (phone/TTY: 541-343-1284) is an excellent resource on travel for people with physical disabilities.

For more information and tips on how your personal identity can present challenges and opportunities while you are abroad, please visit [Diversity Abroad](#).