

Boston University Study Abroad



2012 Parent Handbook



## BU Abroad

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# Getting Ready to Go

## STUDY ABROAD

Every year 2,200 students study abroad with Boston University Study Abroad, one of the oldest and largest study abroad providers in the United States. These students come from nearly 200 different colleges and universities and participate in nearly 100 different programs in over 20 different countries. These programs provide a broad range of opportunities and experiences that bring students into the world around them, ranging from academically based internship programs to the study of science and engineering, as well as field research, student teaching, and community service.

By electing a certain type of program, students choose the way in which they will encounter and experience a culture. In an internship program, students combine academic coursework with a placement in a business, agency, or organization, directly involving themselves in the local work-life. In other programs, students may enroll in a foreign university or take courses in a foreign language and become part of the local student community. There are also programs that allow students to combine coursework with active involvement in nonprofit service or field research.

All of our programs give students the opportunity for academic and personal growth, and offer a challenge to experience the world from a new perspective. On a study abroad program, students will translate involvement in a local community into international experience and global understanding. Several of our programs are based within the United States, and these programs also offer rich academic and internship opportunities.

In this handbook, we refer to “study abroad” programs. Most of the information in these pages is relevant to all of our students and programs, domestic and abroad.

### **Boston Administration**

Support staff at Boston University work in tandem with the on-site staff to assist students with their experience abroad. The primary role of the staff based at BU is support during the application process, pre-departure preparation, and return administration.

### **On-site Administration**

Resident Directors appointed by Boston University oversee the administration of most of our programs. The Resident Directors are present at the program site throughout the year to provide academic counseling, to represent BU in the determination of academic policies, and to serve as liaisons between the American and host educational systems. On-site staff assign housing; organize the academic, cultural,

and social components of the program; oversee health, safety, and security considerations; assist students with their adjustment to their new environment; and place students in internships. All sites have local coordinators and/or host university administrators who are available to assist the students.

## ACCEPTANCE POLICIES

### **Acceptance Materials**

Upon acceptance into a program, students are sent a Student Handbook, and are also directed to General and Program-Specific Pre-Departure Documents, which must be completed and submitted in order to accept the terms of the program. General Pre-Departure Documents, which must be completed and submitted in order for an accepted student to be registered for the program, include: Participation Confirmation; Student Declaration; Insurance Information; Emergency Medical Care Authorization; Medical Information. Each student must also submit a \$400 non-refundable deposit within two weeks of acceptance to secure his/her place in the program. This deposit will be credited to the student’s account and be applied toward payment for the program charges. Before departure, students are sent a Program Handbook, which provides more detailed information about the program in which they are enrolled.

### **Student Responsibility Statement: Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)**

Boston University Study Abroad adheres to the University’s policy regarding communication with parents under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

In keeping with University policy, Study Abroad considers students to have primary responsibility for keeping their parents or guardians informed about their progress at the University including their enrollment in an international program. To this end, all program-related information and instructions will be sent directly to the student. We encourage students to share this information with their parents or guardians.

Students are also encouraged to review the University’s FERPA policy at [www.bu.edu/reg/ferpa](http://www.bu.edu/reg/ferpa). Here you will find an explanation of the circumstances under which the University will communicate with parents or guardians. Such communication will depend upon whether the student has provided written consent and will be limited to the situations described.

Enrolled students, including visiting students, may grant consent to disclose information online by accessing the Boston University Student Link. Visiting students will be granted access to the Student Link after they have completed and submitted the required General Pre-Departure Documents and have been registered for the

program. Instructions on accessing the Student Link will be sent to the e-mail address listed on the visiting student's program application.

### Communicating with Home Institutions

Students should anticipate administrative matters they may need to take care of at their home institutions before they depart. To make communication with their home campuses easier, students should compile a list of names, telephone numbers, and e-mail addresses of important campus contacts to bring with them to their program sites.

### Address Changes

Since we will be sending pre-departure information, invoices, grade reports, etc. to the permanent and/or e-mail addresses given to us, students are responsible for keeping us informed of any changes in their current or permanent addresses, telephone numbers, and e-mail addresses.

Boston University students must file any change of address with the Office of the University Registrar or through the Student Link to officially change their address on the University computer system. Notice must also be given in writing to Study Abroad so that our internal records can be updated.

### Students Who Have a Disability

Students who require reasonable accommodations in order to complete the requirements of the program must contact the Study Abroad office in writing within two weeks of their acceptance. Please review the 'Health Issues' section for further information.

## WITHDRAWAL POLICY

### Early Withdrawal

Students who withdraw from the program after confirming their acceptance must notify BU Study Abroad in writing. Any adjustment of program fees will be made in accordance with Study Abroad's Policy on Refunds, found at the end of this publication. The \$400 program deposit is non-refundable.

Withdrawal from a program does not constitute withdrawal from BU. Boston University students who wish to change their status and withdraw from the University or take a Leave of Absence must make arrangements through the University Service Center in addition to withdrawing from the international program.

### Late Withdrawal

For personal or academic reasons, a student may decide to withdraw from the program after the semester has started. Difficulties in cultural adjustment often can be resolved without resorting to returning to the US. Your son or daughter has committed to a financial contract, the terms of which must be met even if the student withdraws from the

program. BU Study Abroad must be informed in writing by a participant of his or her withdrawal before the withdrawal can be considered official. Although withdrawal may be, in rare cases, the best alternative for a student, we ask you to consider carefully all aspects of the situation (personal, academic, and financial) before advising your son or daughter to return to the US, and to stay in contact with this office as well as the on-site program director.

## Cultural Adjustments

### SETTING GOALS

To make the most of their experience, students should identify goals and objectives before leaving to study abroad. You can help your son or daughter with this evaluation process by discussing these questions together:

#### Personal

- What does it mean to be an American? What are American cultural beliefs and customs?
- How does your son or daughter plan to learn about the cultures, customs, behaviors, and values of the region where he or she is studying?
- How open will your son or daughter be to different ways of doing things?

#### Academic

- Why is your son or daughter going on the program? To practice a foreign language, to learn about foreign countries and cultures, to see famous sites, to research independent study or senior thesis topics, to fulfill academic requirements, or to explore new areas of study?
- How does this semester fit into your son's or daughter's overall academic plans?

#### Professional

- How might your son or daughter integrate the international and/or internship experience into his or her future plans? Is he or she thinking of continuing studies in graduate school, or going directly into a career?

### PREPARING TO GO ABROAD

The decision to study abroad may be one of the most important that students make. A study abroad experience significantly influences the way students view themselves and the world around them. In addition to assisting with basic preparations for a semester abroad, it is valuable for you to take some time to investigate what you and your son or daughter are likely to encounter in terms of cross-cultural experience and adjustment. Work together and evaluate his or her academic, personal, and professional goals for the

## Adjustment Advice

Suggestions for you to help your son or daughter get off to a great start:

- Encourage your son or daughter to reach out to the on-site staff and discuss concerns while abroad. The resident director and program staff are uniquely positioned to evaluate your son's or daughter's situation and to provide constructive suggestions for resolution of any concerns.
  - Discuss your son or daughter's academic, personal, and career goals for the program.
  - Encourage your son or daughter to get involved with the local community by exploring the cultural opportunities awaiting him or her in the host city.
  - Work with your son or daughter to establish a budget for the semester. Some program locations may have higher costs of living than that to which they are accustomed.
- If your son or daughter experiences homesickness and doubt, keep a sense of perspective. Students do experience culture shock when adjusting to a new environment. Resist intervening and encourage self-reliance.
  - You may be used to frequent or even daily contact with your son or daughter while s/he is at school in the US. The more contact students have with home, the more difficult it can often be to integrate fully into the host culture. Additionally, keep in mind that distance can often be a barrier to clear communication. Students may phone home with concerns or frustrations "in the moment." Be careful not to react too quickly. Sometimes, students simply want to vent to a familiar person and are not necessarily seeking an immediate solution.

program. If your son or daughter is simply looking at this semester as a trip filled with endless travel opportunities, then he or she may need to reconsider the decision to enroll in this program.

### Pre-departure Meetings

To help students prepare for off-campus study, we hold pre-departure meetings for each of our programs. These sessions provide students with more information about the program and about the city in which they will be studying. During this meeting, students will have the chance to meet fellow participants and to discuss any questions or concerns they have with the program administrators and with past participants. For students going overseas, this orientation will assist them in beginning the adjustment to the differences in culture, manners, and communication they will encounter. In addition, all students participate in an orientation when they arrive at the program site.

## THE ON-SITE EXPERIENCE

### On-Site Orientation

Students begin their program term with an orientation to introduce them to their new surroundings and to the academic expectations of the program. They will have a chance to meet with the program staff and faculty, to become acquainted with program facilities and resources, and to learn more about daily life in their new environment.

### Cultural Differences

Americans share certain living habits. When living at home, students may take for granted that everyone possesses similar cultural norms, and when they go abroad, the local cultural norms may be unfamiliar. Encountering cultural differences is part of the excitement of going abroad, but it also poses a challenge. Adjustment to a new culture moves in phases. Upon arrival in a foreign country, students may experience an immediate sense of euphoria—everything that is new seems intriguing and exciting. Inevitably, the newness will wear off. Students may feel frustrated or isolated; what was once a fascinating cultural difference may become an annoying one. Gradually though, they will adjust to the foreign culture and become comfortable living in it. As their familiarity with the local language and customs increases, students may become so at ease in their new environment that they experience reverse culture shock upon returning to the US. There are peaks and valleys in the process of cultural adjustment. Just when the student is feeling great, he or she may suddenly feel uncomfortable again, and vice versa. Ultimately, they will adjust.

Students should become knowledgeable about the history, geography, political system, and culture of the United States. They will often be asked about the US and will feel uncomfortable if they are not well informed. The better prepared they are, the more able they will be to assimilate new experiences into a framework of understanding and achieve a deeper sensitivity to the new country, which, in turn, will minimize the effects of culture shock.

## Coping with Culture Shock

Experiencing a period of adjustment to a new place and culture is normal, and the adjustment period varies from student to student. Our on-site staff is available to help students through this adjustment period. If students experience difficulty adjusting to or coping with the new environment, they should speak directly to our on-site staff. Please keep in mind that a period of mild disappointment, homesickness or depression is a normal part of the study abroad experience—and one that passes quickly for most students.

It is important to remember that all students who are studying abroad, regardless of their previous experience, maturity, disposition, or knowledge of the country in which they will be living, experience culture shock to some degree. It is far more likely for students to phone home during the low periods than during the high, and to communicate more bad or depressing news than upbeat details. While you do not want to trivialize these problems, please try to keep this in mind.

Studying on our program may be a student's first exposure to a different system of higher education. The instructors at each of our program sites are faculty from either the host university or another local institution. Program faculty in many of our host countries may have different expectations from their counterparts in American classrooms. In many countries, higher education is more professor-centered, not student-centered. Professors may not encourage students' comments and opinions as they typically do in the US, and your son or daughter may not get as much feedback as he or she may be accustomed to at the home campus. It is important that students keep these differences in mind when discussing academic performance.

## RETURNING HOME

Once students have settled in and adjusted to a new culture, the thought of leaving their new friends and new home may bring on a different set of anxieties. Re-entry is the process of readjustment to the home culture and, in some cases, may prove to be more difficult than the adjustment to life in a foreign country. Students will have adapted to a new way of life and may find it difficult to fit back into former roles. They may be concerned with how family and friends will react to their new attitudes and behaviors, how they will adjust to being back at their home campuses, and how they will keep in touch with host families or friends made abroad. A study abroad experience may even change a student's academic or career goals. Parents can help their son or

daughter readjust to life at home by discussing their feelings upon re-entry and by encouraging them to talk about their experiences abroad.

# Academics

## ACADEMIC POLICIES

Courses are offered through Boston University's College of Arts and Sciences, College of Communication, College of Engineering, College of Fine Arts, College of General Studies, School of Education, School of Hospitality Administration and School of Management, whose academic policies and procedures apply. Performance guidelines are the same as those established in the Boston University Undergraduate Programs Bulletin and the College of Arts and Sciences Academic Conduct Code. For programs where courses are offered through a local institution, BU policies take precedence over the host institution's requirements. In addition, Study Abroad has developed academic policies and procedures concerning issues such as attendance, tardiness, language usage, and coursework. Students are informed of these general policies in writing in their Student Handbook, and the academic policies of specific programs are discussed in more detail during on-site orientation.

## ATTENDANCE

Students are expected to attend each class session, tutorial, field trip, internship or practicum, and any other course-related event. Attendance and class participation influence the grades students earn.

### Absence for Religious Reasons

According to Chapter 151C of the General Laws, Commonwealth of Massachusetts, any student in an educational or vocational training institution, other than a religious or denominational educational or vocational training institution, who is unable, because of his or her religious beliefs, to attend classes or to participate in any examination, study or work requirements on a particular day, shall be excused from any such examination or study or work requirement, and shall be provided with an opportunity to make up such examination, study, or work requirement that may have been missed because of such absence on any particular day; provided, however, that such makeup examinations or work shall not create an unreasonable burden upon such school. No fees of any kind shall be charged by the institution for making available to the said students such opportunity. No adverse or prejudicial effects shall result to students because of their availing themselves of the provisions of this section.

## Attendance and Your Visit

Students must fulfill strict attendance requirements and may not miss classes, examinations, their internship, or other required program events. If you plan to visit, please schedule your trip to take place before the start of on-site orientation, during a scheduled program break, or after the semester ends. The first weeks of the program are a time when students adjust to their new surroundings and connect with program participants, faculty, and staff. This period is critical to students' success and requires their full attention. The final weeks of the program are equally intense. The last two weeks are devoted to final examinations and this is typically a period when students reflect upon their experience and contemplate re-entry issues. By timing your visit to coincide with scheduled program breaks, your son or daughter can meet attendance requirements and take full advantage of their study abroad experience. Please do not visit during the first and last two weeks of the program in order to allow your son or daughter time to reflect upon adjustment and re-entry issues.

Students who have questions about practicing their religion while abroad should contact BU Study Abroad.

## TRANSFER OF CREDIT

Non-BU students should make sure that their credits will transfer to their home institution before they begin the program. Transfer of academic credit is at the discretion of the home university. Syllabi and course information are available to assist your son or daughter's academic advisor in the transfer credit evaluation process.

For BU students, courses and grades will appear in the student's Boston University records as main-campus courses do. BU students should consult with their academic advisors regarding how program courses will count toward graduation requirements.

Once at the program site, if a student decides to enroll in different courses from those that were originally approved by the academic advisor, the student should obtain new course approval from their home school. Transfer of credit is ultimately the home institution's decision.

Students are expected to fulfill all the academic requirements of the program. Students must complete all course requirements before departure from the program site. A grade of "Incomplete" is not permitted except by special arrangement in exceptional circumstances. Students enrolled in an internship program must complete the internship and all the academic work related to it, regardless of the transfer credit policy of their home institution.

## COURSE OVERLOAD REQUESTS

Authorization to enroll for additional course credits above the courseload expectations of a specific program will be considered on a case-by-case basis for fall and spring semester program participants. Certain programs cannot accommodate overload requests. No credit overload will be considered for participants in summer programs, or programs of less than 16 credits.

Students seeking overload authorization should notify the program manager as early as possible prior to the program start date. Students must obtain the consent of the academic advisor from their home institution as well as that of the resident director of the program. Final decisions about overloads are confirmed by the resident director.

Overload approval and fee waiver forms from other offices do not apply to programs offered through Boston University Study Abroad. Additional charges may apply for course credit overloads for off-campus programs, regardless of fee waiver approvals by the student's home school or college.

## GRADES AND TRANSCRIPTS

All students will have a permanent academic record at Boston University for courses and grades earned. The University grading system is a letter system ranging from A through C-, D, and F.

For BU students, grades earned through our programs will appear on their Boston University transcripts and will be averaged into their grade point averages in the usual manner. Non-BU students should check with their home institution to determine whether or not the grades they receive will appear on that institution's transcript, or if the coursework will be transferred as pass/fail grades. Whether or not the actual grades received will appear on the home institution's transcript, the student should keep in mind that he or she will have a permanent record at Boston University. Should the student apply to graduate school at a later date, he or she most likely will be required to submit an official transcript from each institution attended.

Once transcripts are issued by the Registrar's office, we will send two copies (one unofficial copy for personal use and one sealed, signed official copy) to non-BU students at their permanent addresses. The sealed official transcript then

should be sent or delivered by the student to the appropriate individual at the home institution so credits may be transferred. Transcripts are mailed only to students whose accounts are paid in full.

Transcripts for Fall semester programs are released starting in early January, for Spring semester programs after Boston University's Commencement date (late May), and for summer programs starting in late August. If a student needs multiple copies of the official transcript for graduate school applications or other such purposes, he or she should make a written request.

The written request should be sent with a check for \$5 per transcript (made payable to Boston University) to:

Boston University  
Transcript Office  
881 Commonwealth Avenue, 2nd Floor  
Boston, MA 02215  
[www.bu.edu/reg](http://www.bu.edu/reg)

Questions regarding program grades and courses should be directed to Boston University Study Abroad.

## Money Matters

### DETERMINE THE BUDGET FOR THE SEMESTER

Program fees differ. Depending on the program, the program fee may include tuition, housing, airfare, board, textbooks, and/or excursions. Check the guide to program fees at the end of this handbook. Students should plan a budget to cover personal expenses, textbooks, course materials, and any other costs not included in the program fee. Information on estimated costs, banking, and other money matters is included in the program handbook. Cost break downs can be found on our website at [www.bu.edu/abroad/aid/finances.html](http://www.bu.edu/abroad/aid/finances.html).

Websites such as [www.x-rates.com](http://www.x-rates.com) and [www.xe.com](http://www.xe.com) provide a quick and easy way to calculate currency exchanges.

### THE BOSTON UNIVERSITY STUDENT ACCOUNT

#### Arrange for Payment of the Program Fee

Boston University Student Accounting Services will send an invoice to the permanent address on file for program participants. The student account must be settled in full by the settlement deadline set by that office. Billing for Fall programs generally begins in July. Billing for Spring programs begins in late November. If an invoice has not

been received, please contact the Study Abroad office at 617-353-9888 or Student Accounting Services at 617-353-2264. Per Boston University financial policy, student accounts must be settled by the deadline set by Student Accounting Services, without regard to receipt of an invoice. Make all checks payable to Boston University and include the student's name, program name and Boston University identification number on the check to ensure proper credit to the account.

### ACCOUNT ADJUSTMENTS

Invoices for BU Study Abroad should reflect a program tuition charge, along with a fee to cover program housing and/or student services. In addition, the invoice may reflect other account adjustments, such as a medical insurance charge and/or waiver. Invoices are not automatically reissued after an account adjustment. If you believe that the invoice does not accurately reflect the anticipated balance, please contact Boston University Student Accounting Services to confirm the current balance and to request an updated bill. Program participants can view their current balance on the Student Link.

#### Medical Insurance Waivers

Medical insurance is an additional and separate fee, and is automatically applied to student accounts for Fall and Spring students. Once a student submits a valid Boston University Medical Insurance Waiver, the medical insurance charge will be reversed on the student account.

#### Travel Adjustments

Some program fees include round-trip airfare from designated cities. If the program fee includes airfare and students wish to make separate travel arrangements, they must inform BU Study Abroad in writing in order to receive authorization. If we receive this written notification in advance of making final group flight arrangements, the program fee will be adjusted accordingly. A travel adjustment cannot be processed if the ticket has been purchased for the student.

Because travel adjustments generally are credited to a student account after the bills are produced, the invoice you receive will most likely reflect the full program charges. If relevant, you may indicate the amount of the travel credit as a deduction on the payment stub, provided you have confirmed the amount of the travel credit with BU Study Abroad.

For programs that include airfare, academic-year (all-year) participants will receive one round-trip ticket and a reduction in their spring semester program charges as a credit on their student account in Boston.

## Main Campus Housing Charges for Boston University Students Participating in a Spring Semester Program

For students who live in BU on-campus housing, main campus room and/or board charges will most likely appear on the invoice for the Spring semester. These charges will be removed from the account after the student completes room check-out, returns the key, and is released from the Residence License Agreement at the end of the Fall semester. Students must notify the Office of Housing that they will not be on campus for the Spring semester. See the Flight and Housing Arrangements section of this Handbook for detailed housing information.

### On-Site Charges

Students are expected to settle any program-specific charges (such as for room damage) before leaving the program site. Any program-specific charges that are not settled prior to the student's departure from the program may be assessed to the Boston University student account at the conclusion of the term, and may result in withholding of the student's academic record for the program.

### Housing Deposits

Some programs require students to pay a housing deposit upon arrival on-site. Housing Deposits are paid in addition to the program deposit paid to hold the space in the program. The amount of the housing deposit is determined on-site and is usually payable in local currency. Program Handbooks contain more information about Housing Deposits where they apply.

## SETTLEMENT DEADLINES

Settlement deadlines are set by Boston University Student Accounting Services. BU students are responsible for settling their student accounts by the usual deadlines set for BU students (mid-August for Fall programs and mid-December for Spring programs). Non-BU students must settle their student accounts by the deadlines set for non-BU students (mid-September for Fall programs and mid-January for Spring programs).

You may settle the account by paying in full or by providing qualifying documentation to Student Accounting Services indicating that arrangements have been made to complete payment.

### Unsettled Accounts

Student accounts that are not settled by the settlement deadline may be assessed late fees. Non-settlement also may result in the inability to register for courses and have grades assigned, transcript holds, and delays in processing financial aid awards for future semesters.

Accounts that remain unsettled at the end of the semester may be forwarded to the University's Collections Department and assessed a collection fee.

## POLICY ON REFUNDS

A copy of the BU Study Abroad Policy on Refunds is at the end of this handbook. Read this information carefully and keep this policy for your records.

## ACCOUNT SETTLEMENT

### Boston University Students

Boston University students should follow their normal procedures for account settlement. Students whose financial aid is processed through Boston University need not submit documentation of federal loans or University grants and scholarships, as the Office of Financial Assistance will relay this information to Student Accounting Services, as usual.

### Non-Boston University Students

Students are responsible for ensuring that their accounts are settled and paid in full.

Non-BU students must provide official documentation of loans, grants, etc. that they will be using toward payment of the program charges. Documentation must be sent to Student Accounting Services accompanied by a completed Non-BU Student Payment/Settlement Agreement Form. This form will be enclosed with invoices sent to non-BU students. Documentation may be in the form of an award letter from the home institution's financial aid office, or a bank loan notification.

If, by the settlement deadline, you do not submit this information along with payment of any balance not covered by financial assistance, the account will not be settled and may be subject to late fees.

If the home institution is processing the financial assistance, the student is responsible for making arrangements in advance to sign any promissory notes or checks and to have the funds released to the Boston University student account. A copy of the document indicating the student's authorization of release of funds from the home institution to Boston University should be sent to Boston University Student Accounting Services by the settlement deadline.

Checks and settlement documentation should be directed to:

Special Programs Coordinator  
Boston University  
Student Accounting Services  
881 Commonwealth Avenue  
Boston, MA 02215

Payments must include the student's name and Boston University identification number to ensure proper credit to the Boston University student account.

### Institutional Billing Arrangements (Certain Non-Boston University Students)

Certain colleges and universities have special arrangements with Boston University Study Abroad. The student makes payments to the home institution, which in turn pays some or all of the Boston University Study Abroad fees. Non-BU students must consult with their schools to determine whether a special billing arrangement applies, and if so, the amount the student should pay to each institution. In some cases, the home institution requests an invoice for a portion of the program fee and asks Boston University to bill the student for the remaining balance.

### Payment Plan

Boston University does not make individual payment arrangements but will accept payment through the Sallie Mae TuitionPay Plan. The TuitionPay plan is available for fall, spring, and academic year programs, but not for summer programs. For information on this payment option, contact TuitionPay directly at 888-844-4754, or through their website, [www.tuitionpayenroll.com/bu](http://www.tuitionpayenroll.com/bu).

Under a TuitionPay contract, arrangements and payments start months before the beginning of the semester. A service charge is assessed by TuitionPay.

## FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Any student considering using financial assistance should consult their financial assistance advisors as early as possible prior to departure. There are several points to keep in mind:

- If you plan to use a federal student loan or parent loan or any credit-based loan to help finance the program costs, you and/or the student should apply early, as it may take time to collect and complete all loan application materials.
- Disbursements of loan funds are made after the start of the term, so do not count on the proceeds of a loan being available at the beginning of the semester.
- Students should submit and/or sign any necessary documents before departure. Contact the student's financial aid officer about specific requirements.
- Many loans require an online application. It is likely that the student will be able to electronically sign an online promissory note in most locations, but consider the availability of internet resources if the program site is particularly remote. Some loans require a paper promissory note that must be signed by the actual borrower. In either case, it is important to apply early. Many institutions, including Boston University, participate in the Direct Lending Program for federal aid, which uses a Master Promissory Note system. After competing and signing the Master Promissory Note, students do not have to sign individual promissory notes each loan period. Contact the financial aid office directly for specific instructions.

- Loan applications and associated forms must be completed and submitted in time for approval and disbursement to be made before the program end date. Federal student loans that are not processed and disbursed by the term's end will be cancelled.

## FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR BU STUDENTS

BU students should follow the normal procedures and apply for financial aid through Boston University's Office of Financial Assistance. Graduate students should apply through the Boston University school or college financial aid office.

The Boston University Office of Financial Assistance website ([www.bu.edu/finaid](http://www.bu.edu/finaid)) provides useful information and on-line application materials for BU students and their parents. The Student Link is a valuable resource for BU students to check the status of their financial aid applications.

Study Abroad provides the Boston University Office of Financial Assistance with lists of accepted students who have confirmed their intention to participate in the program and who have paid their program deposits. Students' financial aid packages are then reevaluated in light of the study abroad program's financial aid budget.

All decisions regarding transferability of financial aid for BU students are at the discretion of the Office of Financial Assistance. Questions about financial aid awards should be directed to that office.

Generally, BU students remain eligible for all financial aid awarded on campus, with the exception of Federal Work-Study awards and certain grants (Supplemental Grants) that require students to live in Boston campus housing. Note: Tuition scholarships are based on the tuition portion of the program cost.

If the cost of the program is less than the cost of studying on Boston University's Charles River Campus, the financial aid award may be adjusted. University grants or scholarships are reduced first, since the amount of grant or scholarship in a student's package depends on his or her calculated need. Any reduction in cost will cause an equal reduction in need.

Any academic year Federal College Work-Study award is decreased by half (for a one-semester program) or canceled if a student will be abroad for an academic year. A Federal PLUS or Federal Perkins loan (if the student meets the eligibility criteria) may be available to replace lost College Work-Study funds. If the student will be studying on a Fall semester program, he or she should be sure to inform the Office of Financial Assistance and the Work-Study Office that he or she intends to accept the College Work-Study Award for the Spring semester. Otherwise, the award will be canceled for the entire year, and it is very difficult to have it reinstated.

### **Pamela Posen Scholarship**

Boston University juniors and seniors spending the academic year or Spring semester abroad are eligible to apply for the Pamela Posen Endowed Memorial Scholarship, a scholarship in memory of Pamela Posen, a Boston University student killed in the December 21, 1988 crash of Pan Am flight #103 in Lockerbie, Scotland. This scholarship is intended to support travel following the Spring semester program. Applications are available at the Study Abroad office. The application deadline is January 15. Decisions on recipients are made during the Spring program semester.

### **FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR VISITING (NON-BU) STUDENTS**

Check with the home institution's financial aid advisor to see whether the financial assistance the student currently receives can be transferred to Boston University. Program cost sheets (financial aid budgets indicating total estimated costs) are available online at [www.bu.edu/abroad/aid/finances.html](http://www.bu.edu/abroad/aid/finances.html).

The Boston University Study Abroad office is authorized to sign documentation to facilitate the transfer of state or federal financial aid.

Non-BU students who wish to apply for loans through Boston University should address inquiries and send financial aid documents to Study Abroad, not to the Office of Financial Assistance at Boston University.

### **Boston University Study Abroad Grants and Scholarships for Non-Boston University Students**

BU Study Abroad awards a number of off-campus study grants and scholarships to eligible students. The awards are based on demonstrated financial need and/or academic merit. These grants and scholarships are awarded from BU Study Abroad departmental funds.

The application deadlines for Boston University Study Abroad grants and scholarships are:

May 1: Fall Programs

November 1: Spring Programs

Applications for summer grants and scholarships are reviewed on a rolling basis.

If your son or daughter is interested in applying for a grant or scholarship, you may download the information and forms from our website, [www.bu.edu/abroad/aid](http://www.bu.edu/abroad/aid).

### **BANKING**

We recommend that students exchange \$100-\$200 into foreign currency before leaving the US to cover minor expenses between the time of arrival and the opportunity to change additional sums. Other than a small amount of local currency, we recommend ATM cards (Automatic Teller

Machine cards; see below). Automatic Teller Machines are accessible in most countries. Students should let the bank know that they will be abroad.

At program sites in Dresden, Grenoble, and Shanghai students will be able to open short-term bank accounts; information on banking abroad is included in the student's Program Handbook.

Students who bring travelers checks should leave a list of the travelers check numbers at home in case checks are lost or stolen.

Expenses will vary depending on the student's own standard of living and how much traveling, shopping, and dining out he or she does. Buying power is directly related to the strength of the dollar.

### **ATMs (Automatic Teller Machines)**

The transfer of funds from a parent in the US to a student abroad seems an inevitable part of the study abroad experience. This aspect of study abroad has been simplified by the common use of ATM cards, credit cards, and electronic fund transfers. In most countries, it is possible to use ATMs to obtain local currency with a VISA or MasterCard, or even with the card issued by the student's home bank account as ATM networks such as CIRRUS, PLUS, and NYCE have become widely used around the world. The bank should be able to provide a list of available locations in the countries the students will be visiting.

Students should make sure their PIN (Personal Identification Number) works overseas. The PIN must be four digits (not letters); most ATMs overseas cannot accept a longer PIN and many ATM keyboards will not have letters indicated. Bank card withdrawals are debited directly from the US bank account (in dollars, using the market exchange rate) directly, while credit card withdrawals are charged against the card.

Most banks levy sizable fees for each foreign ATM transaction. Check with your bank about its ATM policy. The local bank may also apply a service charge for each transaction. To limit these fees, students should avoid making frequent, small withdrawals. Keep in mind that ATM cards will be useless if they become demagnetized or damaged, so students should have travelers checks and/or a credit card as a backup.

For those students with checking accounts through Bank of America, please note that local currency can be withdrawn with no additional fees from ATMs operated by Barclays Bank in the UK, BNP Paribas in France, Deutsche Bank in Germany, Santander Serfin in Mexico, and Westpac in Australia and New Zealand.

### **Credit Cards**

We recommend that students carry a major credit card (VISA, MasterCard, American Express) with cash advance privileges that they may use in case of an emergency. VISA

and MasterCard are accepted in most locations where we have programs. Most credit card companies charge a transaction fee each time a credit card is used abroad, and these fees are often hidden in the credit card statement. Holders of American Express cards may write personal checks (drawn on their own account in the US) for local currency at the local American Express offices.

## Health Issues

### MEDICAL HISTORY

Each student is asked to complete a Medical Information Form to inform BU Study Abroad of any medical or emotional problems, past or present, which might affect the student during the program. This frank evaluation of health issues is essential to the student's safety. Any information provided remains confidential.

### Emergency Medical Care Authorization

We ask participants to complete an Emergency Medical Care Authorization form to indicate whether the program director is authorized to obtain necessary medical care for the student should an emergency arise.

### MEDICAL INSURANCE

Each student must carry adequate medical insurance and the insurance coverage must be valid outside the United States. The student may be fully covered under your policy, or may need to purchase insurance that provides coverage overseas. Students must provide this information on their insurance coverage on the Medical Insurance Form.

In accordance with the policies of Boston University and Study Abroad, all fall semester, spring semester and academic year program participants are automatically enrolled in the Boston University Student Medical Insurance Plan, and their student accounts are assessed a medical insurance charge. This ensures that the student has qualifying medical coverage. This plan is not automatically offered for summer programs but can be requested.

### Waiver for Students with Other Coverage

If the student has alternate health insurance coverage comparable to the Boston University Plan the student may waive this requirement by submitting the Medical Insurance Waiver portion of the Insurance Information form; BU students should also complete the Medical Insurance Waiver online via the Student Link.

It is important that the student realize that the burden of proof that the alternate insurance is adequate falls on the student, not Boston University. Students should compare the benefits, limitations, and exclusions of their alternate health

insurance plan with those provided by the Boston University Student Medical Insurance plan before filing their Medical Insurance Waiver.

For more information about what constitutes comparable coverage, see [www.bu.edu/comp/saweb/compmed.html](http://www.bu.edu/comp/saweb/compmed.html).

### BOSTON UNIVERSITY STUDENT MEDICAL INSURANCE PLAN

The Boston University Student Medical Insurance is administered by Aetna Student Health. For a detailed description of the student medical insurance plan benefits and for instructions how to use the plan for the 2009/2010 policy year, visit Aetna Student Health's Web site at [www.aetnastudenthealth.com](http://www.aetnastudenthealth.com).

### BU Plan Coverage Dates

The 2010/2011 academic year medical insurance coverage is effective from August 23, 2010 to August 22, 2011. Fall program participants who purchase the Boston University student medical insurance plan will continue to have plan coverage through the end of the coverage period. Fall-only program participants may be eligible to apply for fall semester only coverage; eligible students should sign and return a Medical Insurance Premium Adjustment Form to Student Accounting Services by the appropriate deadline. For students who attend beginning Spring 2011, the medical coverage is effective January 1 to August 22, 2011.

Some programs abroad start before the regular insurance coverage start dates; students who participate in these programs must either request and purchase additional coverage through Boston University, or present documentation of alternate coverage, for the period before the regular Boston University plan takes effect.

For more information about what constitutes comparable coverage, see [www.bu.edu/studentaccountingservices/resources/medical-insurance/comparable-coverage](http://www.bu.edu/studentaccountingservices/resources/medical-insurance/comparable-coverage).

Please note that information in this Parent Handbook is provided as a guide. Official information about the student medical insurance plan offered through Boston University is published by Boston University Student Accounting Services.

### HEALTH CARE PAYMENTS AND REIMBURSEMENTS

Most insurance plans including the Boston University Student Medical Insurance Plan require students to pay up-front for medical care obtained away from the Boston campus and to submit claims for reimbursement. BU Study Abroad cannot lend students money for medical expenses.

Students who waive the Boston University Student Medical Insurance Plan coverage should consult with their insurance

company regarding reimbursement policies and procedures. If applicable, students should take several copies of their insurance reimbursement claim forms to the program site.

## EMERGENCY TRAVEL ASSISTANCE INSURANCE AND REPATRIATION COVERAGE

Boston University Study Abroad provides an emergency travel assistance package for all students. This package provides for such contingencies as medical evacuation and repatriation, and other travel-related services, and takes effect when the student is 100 miles from home. This coverage is included in the program fee. Please note that emergency travel assistance does not replace medical insurance coverage.

## MENTAL AND PHYSICAL PREPARATIONS

For their safety and well-being, it is vital that students inform us of any physical, emotional, or psychological difficulties or special needs they may have.

Students with chronic health problems (such as diabetes or epilepsy), significant mental health problems, or eating disorders (such as bulimia or anorexia) should consult with their physicians before embarking on an overseas program. The range of counseling services available to students on the BU main campus and other US college campuses will not be available overseas. At best, the Resident Director may be able to refer students to a local, fee-for-service counseling resource. Many insurance policies, if they reimburse for counseling services at all, may not do so for services obtained overseas. In the event that the Resident Director determines that appropriate counseling is unavailable overseas, the student will be advised to withdraw from the program and return home.

## IMMUNIZATIONS

Childhood immunizations should be updated before any travel abroad. It is possible that your son or daughter was required to update the childhood immunizations when he or she entered college. Massachusetts requires that all full-time undergraduate and graduate students be vaccinated for measles, mumps, rubella, and tetanus/diphtheria. Massachusetts also requires the Hepatitis B immunization. Boston University Student Health Services also strongly recommends that students be vaccinated for meningitis, polio, and varicella (chicken pox). College-age students who live in dormitories and other residence halls have an increased risk for meningitis. Please check with Boston University Health Services or the student's college's student health center or personal physician.

Other immunizations may be required or recommended for travel to certain countries. The most recent health information by country may be obtained from the Center for

Study abroad can be both physically and mentally stressful. A healthy mind and body are essential to a successful study abroad experience. If the student is experiencing any physical or emotional problems, please address these issues before he or she leaves the US. The pressures which lead to eating disorders, dependency problems, and other emotional problems are only exacerbated when students are coping with adjustment to a new culture, language, and way of life. Leaving the country will not make problems go away—if anything, it may make them worse.

Disease Control (CDC) at 404-639-3311 or [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov). Information regarding required or recommended immunizations also is included in the student's program handbook, if relevant. The information provided in these program handbooks is intended as a general guideline only and is current at the time of its printing. However, since requirements can change depending on the prevailing health conditions, we recommend that you recheck those requirements with the CDC and that you consult your family physician to determine the advisability of receiving certain immunizations and medications. If a student plans personal travel to other countries before, during, or after the program, it is his or her responsibility to know which immunizations are required.

## DISABILITY INFORMATION

Students who have a disability and who wish to request accommodations are responsible for notifying BU Study Abroad, in writing, of their disability and any special needs they may have. This notification should be made within two weeks of the student's acceptance in order to allow adequate time for the University to review the specific requests.

A copy of this notification, with appropriate supporting documentation as set forth below, should be submitted to:

Boston University  
Office of Disability Services  
19 Deerfield Street  
Boston, MA 02215  
617-353-3658 (V/TTY)

Students should indicate the program, semester of study, and Boston University identification number on any correspondence or documentation.

BU students already receiving accommodations should notify Study Abroad but are not required to submit additional supporting documentation to the Office of

## Information on Worldwide Health and Safety Conditions

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention  
404-639-3311  
[www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)

State Department Bureau of Consular Affairs  
<http://travel.state.gov>

**Disability Services.** Students from BU who are requesting accommodations for the first time must submit documentation as outlined in the policies and procedures of the Office of Disability Services. Students from other institutions should provide a letter to the Office of Disability Services from the office at their own institution responsible for the provision of accommodations. The letter should include: a) the student's specific disability; b) a description of the functional limitations imposed by the disability; and c) the recommended accommodations.

As is the case for all academic programs at the University, the Office of Disability Services will evaluate the documentation and will make recommendations to Boston University Study Abroad and its program staff concerning accommodations for students with disabilities. Please be aware that the level of accessibility, services, and accommodations to which your son or daughter may have access at his or her home campus may not be available overseas.

## What to Bring

### LUGGAGE AND PACKING

If you are involved in packing, you will want to ensure that: (a) your son or daughter takes lightweight yet sturdy luggage (with well-made seams and fasteners able to withstand airline luggage-handling); (b) he or she packs light, and can carry everything on his or her own; and (c) he or she checks with the airline regarding baggage size and weight limitations and any other luggage and packing restrictions. Travelers are subject to excess baggage charges if they exceed the limitations.

### Clothing

It may be useful to remember that in most countries people tend to have far fewer clothes than the typical American student. There is no stigma attached to being seen repeatedly in the same outfit. Encourage your son or daughter to take a small number of versatile clothing items and remind

him or her that storage space is usually quite limited in program housing. We provide students with detailed information in their program-specific handbooks regarding packing and clothing.

### Prescriptions

Students who wear glasses or contact lenses should bring an extra pair in case the original pair is lost or damaged.

Students enrolled in our overseas programs are urged to bring a full supply of prescription medications to last through the program term and any travel the student plans following the semester. Because of the risk of lost or misplaced luggage, we strongly advise against packing medication with checked luggage. All medication should be sealed in original, clearly labeled containers and packed in carry-on luggage. This recommendation applies only to prescription medication. For most overseas locations, there is no need to bring a six-month supply of Tylenol and ibuprofen-type medication, as these over-the-counter medications are often available.

Because packages can take weeks to arrive at the program site, shipping additional supplies during the semester is not recommended. Sending medication via an overnight service does not speed the delivery process, as both US mail and express delivery are subject to Customs inspections. Although most packages shipped overnight will arrive within 24 hours, medication deliveries often do not clear Customs for several days. Customs officials open, examine, and reseal the contents before forwarding the packages on to their destinations, as some medications may not be legal in that country. This process typically takes several days and, in extreme cases, can take up to a month to complete. If it is absolutely necessary to ship medications, plan to do so as early as possible.

The delay in receiving prescribed medications can be especially problematic for students who rely on medication to function on a daily basis. Sudden discontinuation can lead to unpleasant side effects (e.g., migraine headaches) and impair a student's ability to study, travel, and function effectively at his or her internship site.

American medications may not be available overseas. Finding an equivalent medication may require a medical examination and interrupt a student's busy academic schedule. Local pharmacists or "chemists" will fill prescriptions from local physicians only.

### Other Items

Students should bring a small supply of toiletries and plan to replenish such items at the program location. Contact lenses can pose problems, and it may be advisable to take an adequate supply of lens solution or to obtain disposable lenses.

Pillows, sheets, and blankets are provided in most program housing (except in Washington DC, Dresden, Guadalajara, and Guatemala). Students should bring their own towels. Other recommended items include: a portable MP3 player, a camera, a hand-held calculator for quick currency exchange calculations, extra batteries, and comfortable, sturdy walking shoes.

### Computer Facilities

Limited computer facilities are available at some programs. Depending upon the site, there may be limited access to e-mail facilities or no access at all. In some locations, students may be able to access e-mail and Internet services through cybercafés, bookstores, or public libraries. Students should refer to their program-specific handbook for details on available facilities.

### E-mail

Please keep in mind that over-reliance on e-mail can interfere with your son's or daughter's adjustment to his or her new environment. The convenience of e-mail communication may lead you and your son or daughter to expect instant solutions to cultural adjustment problems, most of which will take some time for the student to come to terms with and resolve.

## TRAVEL DOCUMENTS

### Passports and Visas

Students traveling abroad need to obtain a passport valid for at least six months after the end of the program. It generally takes two to three weeks to process a passport application, but please be aware that the process may take longer, especially during peak travel times.

### Fall and Spring Semester Participants

All US citizens studying in Australia, China, Denmark, Ecuador, England, France, Israel, Italy, Japan, Lebanon, Mexico, New Zealand, Niger, Spain, Switzerland, Turkey and the UK will need to secure a visa. Information on how to obtain this visa is included in the student's program-specific acceptance forms.

### Summer Participants

All US citizens studying on a summer program in Australia, China, France, Italy, and the UK (internship programs only) will need to secure a visa. Information on how to obtain this visa is included in the student's program-specific acceptance forms. US citizen students going to Spain for a summer program do not need to apply for a visa.

### Travel Documents for Non-US Citizens

Students holding a passport other than a US passport should check with the consulate or embassy of the country to which they are traveling in order to determine whether a visa will be required. The student should also investigate whether he or she will need to apply for a new visa to re-enter the US if he or she plans to do so on completion of the program. Non-US citizens who attend a university in the US should discuss their travel plans with the appropriate administrator on their home campus. Boston University international students should visit the International Students and Scholars Office at 19 Deerfield Street in Boston.

### International Student Identity Card

Students may wish to purchase an International Student Identity Card (ISIC), which provides some basic travel insurance coverage, discounts on admissions to museums and other attractions, and some travel discounts. The discount opportunities vary, depending on the program location. The ISIC is available from STA Travel, [www.statravel.com](http://www.statravel.com).

### Calling Cards

Some US phone cards charge significantly higher rates than overseas cards and, while recommended, should be used with caution. Although advertised as offering substantial discounts, the rates for some US phone and corporate cards can be three to four times higher than local overseas calling cards.

We recommend that students bring US phone cards and make one or two calls to gauge the actual versus advertised rates before running up enormous phone bills. Local phone cards are available for purchase at some of our overseas locations. Students have the option to purchase these cards or phone cards available from local newsagents. By comparison shopping, your son or daughter is likely to find that local cards offer significantly lower rates.

### Cell Phones

Most students choose to purchase cell phones to use abroad. We recommend waiting until arrival on-site to buy cell phones or SIM cards for existing cell phones. Students usually buy "pay-as-you-go" phones or SIM cards without contracts. In most countries, cell phones are not charged for incoming calls, which means you can call your son or daughter without a charge to him/her. Students have received more information on cell phones in their program handbooks. You should check with your carrier to determine any additional charges for calling a cell phone overseas.

### Documents

We recommend that students carry photocopies of important documents, such as a driver's license or identification card, credit card, passport, flight itinerary, medical insurance information, and travelers checks. Students should leave a set of copies of these documents with you as well.

Parents may wish to provide their son or daughter with a list of their contact information for the student's easy reference. This list might include home, office, and cell phone numbers; work and private e-mail addresses; and the mailing addresses of parents as well as another relative or adult family friend.

## VOTING FROM ABROAD

US citizens who plan to vote while abroad need to complete a Federal Post Card Application form and send it to their local Board of Elections. You may want to encourage your son or daughter to contact the Federal Voting Assistance Program through its website ([www.fvap.ncr.gov](http://www.fvap.ncr.gov)), e-mail ([vote@fvap.ncr.gov](mailto:vote@fvap.ncr.gov)) or by calling 800-438-8683.

# Travel and Housing

## FLIGHT ARRANGEMENTS

Program fees for certain programs include transportation from the US to the overseas site on an optional arranged group flight from a designated city. Group flights are an option on most other programs for an additional fee.

### All Participants

All arrangements for group flight travel must be made through the designated travel agency, not through BU Study Abroad. When purchasing an airline ticket, students should carefully consider their travel plans and any possible restrictions on tickets. In case of withdrawal from the program, it is the student's responsibility to contact the travel agent, to cancel the ticket, and to cover any cancellation costs.

## HOUSING ARRANGEMENTS

### Program Housing

For reasons of cultural adjustment, language acquisition, and safety, students are required to live in program housing. Housing opportunities vary by program and range from a local household or an apartment to an international dormitory. Given that standards of living vary from country to country, students should expect certain fundamental differences with respect to comfort. Electrical systems, heating systems, and even water pressure may be different from what students are accustomed to at home or on campus. Storage room, including closet space, is usually at a premium in the program housing, so students should keep packing to a minimum. Amenities such as internet and cable may not be available in many families' homes. Keep in mind that housing is not the reason a student decides to go abroad.

## What Do Parents Need?

We recommend that one or both of a student's parents or guardians possess a valid passport for the period the student is abroad. In the event of an emergency, this would allow for travel on short notice.

## Host Family Selection Process

The program site is responsible for selecting host families for those programs where students live with families. In many cases, there is a Housing Coordinator whose primary function is to select host families and resolve any host family issues that might arise during the student's stay. Many families have hosted BU students for several years. Others are referred to us by word of mouth from families who have hosted our students. The Housing Coordinator or Resident Director visits each host family to ensure the quality of the physical accommodations, the safety of the neighborhood, access to public transportation, and the quality of the hosts themselves.

## Housing Assignments

Each student completes a housing questionnaire to determine his or her housing preferences. Every effort is made to place students in an environment which meets their needs and preferences; however, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to accommodate all student requests. Students generally receive their housing assignment when they check into the program on Arrival Day.

## Special Housing Options

Single rooms are available on a first-come, first-served basis in the London, Los Angeles, and Washington, DC, programs for an additional fee. To request a single room, students in our Los Angeles and Washington, DC, programs should complete the single-room section of the housing questionnaire. Students enrolled in the London program should indicate their single-room preference when completing the online housing questionnaire available on the London website.

Students should submit the single-room payment when they are instructed to do so by the on-site staff. Checks should be made payable to Boston University and include the student's Boston University identification number. Should a student withdraw from the program, special charges such as single rooms or other special services or arrangements are non-refundable.

## STUDENT HOUSING RESPONSIBILITIES

In any housing situation, as in academic and general settings, students are expected to comply with Boston University and Study Abroad policies, procedures, and codes of conduct. Students are prohibited from engaging in conduct that poses a threat to the health or safety of persons or property. Policies on guests, noise, smoking, consumption of alcohol, and property damage will be addressed at the program site. Students who violate the rules and regulations may be subject to disciplinary action and/or fines. Program participants are responsible for their room and common areas, and they are responsible for the behavior of their guests. The cost of repair for damage or loss to the residence facility will result in appropriate charges to the student or students responsible. These charges should be settled at the program site, prior to departure. Charges not paid on site will be assessed to the student's Boston University student account and may result in a comptroller hold and transcript hold.

### Consider Personal Property Insurance

You may wish to consider purchasing insurance to cover loss of your son's or daughter's personal possessions while abroad. Your current insurance policy may already include this coverage. BU does not offer insurance that covers loss of students' personal possessions.

Boston University or any of its officers, agents, or representatives shall not be liable directly or indirectly for loss and/or damage to personal property by fire, theft, or other cause.

## TELEPHONES

You and your son or daughter will need to familiarize yourselves with different telephone systems abroad. Keep in mind that telephones are not used as often in some other countries as in the US, so students may not have regular access to phones. If they are living with a host family, students will need to discuss and abide by the host family's guidelines for telephone use.

For many of our programs, information regarding the purchase of cell phones will be provided in the on-site orientation materials. For information about calling cards, see the "What to Bring" section of this Handbook.

## MAIL

The quality of mail service varies by country. Depending on its destination, air mail can take anywhere from a week to a month, and surface mail will generally take two months or longer. International express service is available through companies such as Federal Express, UPS, DHL, and the US Postal Service. All packages should be marked clearly as either USED PERSONAL ITEMS NOT FOR RESALE (in the case of sending extra clothing) or UNSOLICITED GIFT (in

the case of birthday presents, etc.). Packages are inspected by customs agents, and duty will be collected from the student if proper forms are not filled out correctly.

## HOME-CAMPUS HOUSING POLICIES

### Non-Boston University students

Students who do not attend BU should check with their home institutions about housing policies and procedures for their current housing situation and for the semester they return to their campus.

### Boston University Students

It is the student's responsibility to contact the Office of Housing directly regarding any aspects of his or her current or future Residence License Agreements. For answers to questions about Office of Housing policies, please contact that office directly.

### Cancellation of Boston University Campus Housing Arrangements

Students who currently reside in Boston University-owned housing must ensure that the Office of Housing is aware that he or she will not be living on the Boston campus next semester.

The office of Housing maintains a website with detailed instructions on leaving the Charles River Campus for a semester abroad and returning to it after a semester abroad. Students should visit [www.bu.edu/housing/assignments/abroad](http://www.bu.edu/housing/assignments/abroad) for housing procedures.

# Student Conduct and Safety

## STUDENT CONDUCT

Boston University seeks to provide all members of the University community with an environment conducive to learning. Membership in this community entails rights and responsibilities for each of its members. By enrolling in or attending a course or program of study sponsored by the University, all persons are deemed to have agreed to respect the rights of the University and its members, to abide by the provisions of the Boston University Code of Student Responsibilities and the rules and regulations of the University, and to be subject to any sanctions which may be imposed for their violation. Boston University reserves the right to suspend or dismiss any student for failure to maintain a satisfactory academic record, acceptable personal behavior, or satisfactory standards of health. Copies of the Code of Student Responsibilities are available at BU Study Abroad and at our program sites.

## Calling Home

Many parents ask their son or daughter to call home immediately upon arrival. We understand your concern, but please be aware that it simply may not be possible. Students on group programs may be swept onto a bus, through formalities, and into a housing situation where they are not immediately in a position to ask to use the phone to make an international call. In some countries, they will need to make special arrangements or adhere to established hours in order to call. They also may be exhausted or may simply forget. We advise asking your son or daughter to call within three to four days of arrival to allow them to get their bearings. Since we check carefully that all students arrive on site, you can assume that no news from us is good news.

In addition, Boston University Study Abroad has the authority to establish rules of conduct necessary for the operation of the program and to reserve the right to require a student to withdraw from the program. In such instances, the student will be entitled to the same due process established on the Boston University campus.

## JUDICIAL AND ACADEMIC STATUS

All participants must be in acceptable judicial and academic standing. If BU Study Abroad becomes aware of judicial or academic issues after a student is accepted into a program, we reserve the right to rescind acceptance. Study Abroad is not responsible for costs incurred by the student resulting from rescinded acceptance.

Any BU student in academic suspension or expulsion status is not eligible to participate in a program through Study Abroad during the period of suspension. Any BU student in residence separation status is not eligible to participate in a program through Study Abroad during the period of residence separation. BU students on deferred separation from University housing must make their situation known to the program manager at Study Abroad; their enrollment will be reviewed on an individual basis.

In addition, Boston University policy requires the withholding of educational services, including participation in programs offered by BU Study Abroad, from any person whose financial obligations to the University are due and/or unpaid. If a student has been accepted to a program and their Boston University student account is not in good

standing due to an unpaid balance from a prior semester or he/she is not in compliance due to a hold on their student account, the program acceptance may be rescinded.

## ALCOHOL AND ILLEGAL DRUG USE

While overseas, students are not only subject to the Boston University Standards of Conduct and disciplinary sanctions, but also to the local laws and sanctions of the country in which they are studying as well as the code of conduct of the host institution. In many countries, the punishment for possession and/or distribution of controlled substances and for driving while under the influence of alcohol or controlled substances is much more severe than in the United States. As part of the Student Declaration signed by all participants, students agree to abide by the University's policies on alcohol and illegal drug use. Failure to abide by these policies will lead to sanctions up to and including immediate expulsion from the program.

## LOCAL TRANSPORTATION AND TRAVEL

Students, like the majority of residents in the areas where our programs are located, generally use public transportation. We strongly discourage students from renting automobiles or other motorized vehicles for travel during program breaks. Students are not permitted to rent a car for program-related activities, such as internships, study adventures, or culture reimbursement activities.

## GENERAL SAFETY

We provide students with information on safety abroad. By no means is this meant to frighten them or you; rather, it is to inform them of the importance of being aware of their new surroundings. Entering a new city and culture can be overwhelming, and it is crucial that students use the common sense that they would use in any large city in the US.

Parents' concern for the safety and well-being of their children abroad is natural and shared by Boston University. Boston University makes a concerted effort to ensure students' safety, while not unnecessarily restricting their exposure to the country they have chosen as a place to live, study, and work. This effort is headed by the Boston University resident staff abroad. In most cases, this staff consists of a Resident Director and one or more additional full-time staff, among whose responsibilities are the health and safety of their students. It is their job to be in ongoing contact with the students, as well as the US embassies, local universities, police departments, and other appropriate bodies in our host cities, and the Study Abroad staff in Boston.

## Sensible and Safe

Remind your son or daughter that he or she soon will be spending a summer or semester in what may be unfamiliar territory, and that he or she should use the same common-sense safety precautions as at home. We also recommend that you know your son's or daughter's travel plans before departure so that you know where he or she can be reached in the event of an emergency.

When students arrive at their destination, part of their on-site orientation consists of presentations on health and safety issues, simple precautions they can take while there, and more detailed information on handling issues of safety, illness, injury, and emergencies. The role of the resident staff is highlighted throughout. During the semester, the Boston staff is in ongoing communication with each of our program offices, and we carefully monitor the economic and political situations of the host countries via our contacts abroad as well as announcements issued by the US Department of State and other public information sources. At the same time, we work with the Resident Director, in an unobtrusive way, to keep track of the health, safety, progress, and well-being of our students.

In addition, each program office has developed a plan for dealing with contingencies affecting individuals and the group. These vary from country to country depending on the available communication, transportation, and political systems, and include resources such as networks of doctors, dentists, and health care facilities, contact persons, and emergency plans established for resident Americans by the US Department of State.

We do not take these precautions to pamper our students or to restrict their ability to enjoy fully their time abroad. The value of study abroad depends in large part on the experience of difference, not similarity, to what we are familiar with at home.

In case of emergency, you may contact our office in Boston or the Resident Director at the program site. Students traveling away from the program site are required to notify the Resident Director of where they can be reached in an emergency.

## EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Our Resident Directors and other staff abroad have established emergency procedures for each program, including 24-hour contact procedures. This information is shared with students, and your son or daughter should share this information with you. Please keep this information in a safe, handy place.

Resident staff members are highly trained and experienced and are in the best position to deal with emergencies or other urgent situations as they arise. One or more members of the resident staff at each site are available on a 24-hour basis.

In the United States, you can reach a member of the Study Abroad staff on a 24-hour basis at 617-594-3215. Please restrict calls to this number to actual emergencies involving students currently overseas. In all other cases call the Study Abroad office 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Eastern Time, Monday-Friday, at 617-353-9888.

## A FINAL NOTE

A student's semester of off-campus study, whether it is at a site as close as Washington, DC, or as far away as China, will introduce him or her to many people whose lifestyles and cultures differ from those to which he or she is accustomed. In fact, a student's experiences on our program may be quite different from what he or she first expected. Getting the most out of the program depends on his or her ability to adapt to new and challenging situations. Our staff in Boston and at each program site is trained to assist your son or daughter in adjusting to the new environment. However, we cannot anticipate the exact course of events he or she might experience during the semester, nor can we make the world run as we wish it would. The decision to study in a particular program or region of the world must be made by each student and his or her family in light of their own interpretation of events and the student's willingness and readiness to live with a certain degree of ambiguity. Unfortunately, it is impossible to predict future events or guarantee a completely safe environment in any region of the world, including our own, and we therefore reserve the right to alter or cancel a course or program due to unforeseen circumstances.

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*Transitions Abroad*  
*World Hum* (online only)

## GUIDE BOOKS

*Cambridge Guide series*  
*Culture Shock! series*

## ONLINE RESOURCES

*Study Abroad Research Online*  
[www.globaled.us/ro](http://www.globaled.us/ro)

*Transitions Abroad* (general and by country/region)  
[www.transitionsabroad.com/listings/study/resources/study\\_abroad\\_resources.shtml#worldwide](http://www.transitionsabroad.com/listings/study/resources/study_abroad_resources.shtml#worldwide)

*Students Abroad Website*  
<http://studentsabroad.state.gov>

This website created by the Department of State offers valuable information for students studying or traveling abroad. The website is an excellent resource to refer to before and during their semester abroad. In addition to practical information such as instructions on obtaining a passport and American Embassy contact information, the website also provides health tips and links for information regarding immunizations and health precautions to take abroad. Visit the Smart Travel section for insights for GLBT travelers, women and travelers with disabilities as well as information pertaining to local laws and packing for international travel. The website provides two checklists in its To Go section: a "Prep-list" and a "Pack-list" to help keep your son or daughter on track as they prepare for your experience overseas.



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*All of the foregoing information is subject to change without notice.*

# BU Study Abroad 2012/2013 Policy on Refunds

## DEPOSIT POLICIES

A non-refundable \$400 deposit must be made within two weeks of acceptance to the program.

- For a withdrawal to be considered official the student must inform BU Study Abroad in writing. Upon the official withdrawal from the program, a portion of the program fee will be credited to the student's account based upon the schedules below. In order for the student to receive the maximum refund, the decision to withdraw must be indicated in a letter postmarked no later than one week prior to the official start date of the program.
- For all programs in which airfare is included in the program fee: once airfare is purchased for the student, that portion of the fee which represents the University's cost for airfare is non-refundable unless a refund can be obtained directly from the airline.
- Students who withdraw from any portion of an all-year program may be assessed charges for non-recoverable costs for both fall and spring semesters, regardless of the date of withdrawal.
- Refunds will be made for tuition and fees excluding non-recoverable costs. Funds for some program services are committed early.
- The term "program fee" refers to the total cost of the program, including tuition and all fees. Special charges for single rooms or other special services or arrangements are non-refundable.
- The term "Amount of Refund" indicates the percentage of the program fee that will be credited to the student's account following his or her withdrawal from the program. An actual monetary refund will be possible only if a credit balance remains on the student's account after the Policy on Refunds has been implemented. If the account has not yet been settled at the time of withdrawal, the student will owe the portion of the program fee remaining after the refund policy has been implemented.

### FOR PROGRAMS OF 12 WEEKS OR MORE:

#### Withdrawal Date

#### Amount of Refund

More than one week prior to the official start date	100% of Program Fee except non-refundable deposit, airfare and other non-recoverable costs (if applicable), and any special charges
From one week prior to one week after the official start date	75% of Program Fee except non-refundable deposit, airfare and other non-recoverable costs (if applicable), and any special charges
During the second week of the program	50% of Program Fee except non-refundable deposit, airfare and other non-recoverable costs (if applicable), and any special charges
During the third, fourth, or fifth week of the program	25% of Program Fee except non-refundable deposit, airfare and other non-recoverable costs (if applicable), and any special charges
After the fifth week of the program	NO REFUND

### FOR PROGRAMS OF 11 WEEKS OR FEWER:

#### Withdrawal Date

#### Amount of Refund

More than one week prior to the official start date	100% of Program Fee except non-refundable deposit, airfare and other non-recoverable costs (if applicable), and any special charges
From one week prior up to the official start date	75% of Program Fee except non-refundable deposit, airfare and other non-recoverable costs (if applicable), and any special charges
During the first week of the program	50% of Program Fee except non-refundable deposit, airfare and other non-recoverable costs (if applicable), and any special charges
During the second and third weeks of the program	25% of Program Fee except non-refundable deposit, airfare and other non-recoverable costs (if applicable), and any special charges
After the third week of the program	NO REFUND

## Rescinded Admission

Boston University Study Abroad reserves the right to rescind admission to or continuation in any program if an applicant's academic or disciplinary record is not satisfactory. Boston University students placed on expulsion, academic suspension or residence separation are not eligible to participate for the duration of the sanction. Deferred separation will be reviewed on a case by case basis. In addition, your Boston University student account must be in good standing. Boston University policy requires the withholding of educational services, including participation in an international program, from any Boston University student whose financial obligations to the university are due and/or unpaid. In cases of rescinded admission, all program-related expenses incurred directly by the student, for items such as non-refundable airfare, are solely the student's responsibility. In addition, a student whose admission has been rescinded is responsible for all non-recoverable costs incurred by BU Study Abroad on his/her behalf.