National University of Singapore Exchange
Getting to know each other!
Agenda

- Introductions and Program Statistics
- Logistics
- Academics
- Life on Site
- Health and Safety
- Finances and Budgeting
- Action Items
- Wrap up/Questions
Boston University Study Abroad
Pre-Departure Roadmap

BU Study Abroad

twitter.com/BUabroad  facebook.com/BUabroad  bu.edu/abroad
• Exchange began in 2007
• 7 BU students at NUS during Fall 2017
• 10 BU students at NUS during Spring 2018
• 5 NUS students at BU during AY 17/18
Program Logistics

- Direct enrollment at National University of Singapore
- Maintain full-time status at BU
- Earn BU credits and grades
- Pay home university (BU) tuition
- Pay host university (NUS) room, board, and other services and fees
- Access to all on-campus resources at NUS
- Make use of local services and resources before and during your semester abroad
Program Contacts at NUS

International Relations Office (IRO)
http://www.nus.edu.sg/iro/index.html#

Primary contact: Ms. Shona Gillies
iroskg@nus.edu.sg
nghelp@nus.edu.sg
Program Dates
See NUS academic calendar online

- January 9: Arrive at NUS
- January 10-11: Orientation & Registration
- January 15: Classes begin
- February 24 – March 4: Recess week
- April 20: Classes end
- April 28 – May 12: Final Exams
- July/August: Transcripts sent to BU
After Submitting NUS Application

Check application outcome and module approval online* after mid-Jun (for admission in Aug) and around end of Nov (for admission in Jan).

Confirm your learning agreement with your home university based on the list of pre-registered NUS modules.

Receive official acceptance and important information via email(s).

Read through the Registration Guide carefully and follow the instructions.

Submit on-campus accommodation application if invited via the offer email.

Receive email notification to verify your personal details for Student’s Pass application.

Complete registration (Part One) online.

*The approved modules have been pre-registered for you. If you are taking Law modules, you will be informed to go through a separate module registration with the Faculty of Law. You will see that you have been pre-registered for 3-4 modules. Additional modules can be added during the module add/drop period at the start of each semester.
Credits and Grades
- Classes are worth 4 credits each
- 12-20 credits per semester
- No pass/fail or incompletes
- All grades will appear on your BU transcript
- Make sure you review pre-requisites before registering for a course

Course Equivalencies at BU: Discuss in advance!

Academic Policies for exchange programs

Registration
NUS will register you for at least 3 classes based on the preferences you submitted in your online application
Admission email will list your classes
Make changes during add/drop
Academics at NUS

Academic Differences and Considerations

- Very heavily weighted final exams
- Competitive academic culture
- Keep up with your reading – very independent
- Less homework than at BU
- Professor availability varies
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Academic Policies

• All students are subject to BU’s [Academic Code of Conduct](#)

• Must take the full course load for a grade

• All coursework must be completed prior to end of program (or an F may be assigned)

• If accommodations are needed, notify BU Study Abroad and BU’s Office of Disability Services

• Attendance policies
  – Personal travel must NOT conflict with academic obligations
  – Details will be given during the on-site orientation and/or in syllabi
Academic Policies for Direct Enrollment at a Foreign University

As a student enrolling in one or more classes at a foreign university, you **are required to**:

- Maintain full-time status (12+ BU credits)
- Verify course equivalencies with your academic advisor
- Follow host university policies for final exam registration
- Understand how grades and credits from your host university will be converted to BU grades and credits

As a student enrolling in one or more classes at a foreign university, you **may not**:

- Audit classes abroad
- Take pass/fail classes abroad (no credit will be granted at BU)

Withdrawals and Incompletes at Host Universities

- Withdrawals reported on your host university transcript will be reported as ‘W’ on your BU transcript
- Incompletes reported on your host university transcript will be reported as ‘F’ on your BU transcript

Please note:

All grades assigned to you by the host institution will be recorded on your BU transcript and all grades earned abroad will be factored into your GPA. *Boston University cannot edit, modify or change in any way the final grades that are issued by your host institution and indicated on your host university transcript.* You cannot opt to omit courses taken abroad and/or grades earned abroad from your BU transcript.

Remember to review the full set of Academic Policies on your program hub page.
LEARN THE SKILLS IT TAKES TO BE A CITIZEN OF THE WORLD!

During the course you will:
• Set personal and professional goals for your study abroad experience;
• Learn to effectively articulate the value of your semester abroad to future employers or admissions committees;
• Learn tools for identifying cultural differences, patterns and values.

Quick Facts:
• 1-credit pass/fail – 5 very brief yet meaningful assignments.
• Open to students in all fall or spring semester programs
• Delivered entirely over Facebook

Check your Hub Page or www.bu.edu/abroad/gle for the syllabus and instructions on how to enroll!
WHAT STUDENTS ARE SAYING ABOUT IP 101:

“Being part of a community on Facebook helped me feel more connected” (Spring ‘17)

“The Global Learning Experience helped me to contextualize my experiences abroad and learn how to process my time in Spain in a way that will be useful for future employment, fellowships and academic endeavors” (Spring ‘16)

“The questions asked helped me identify what I had been learning, and by identifying these things, I have been able to see and reflect on how much I have changed” (Fall ‘16)

“After the point at which every day life abroad had become "normal", this program helped remind me to appreciate the special things around me.” (Spring ‘16)
Life at NUS: Housing

Halls of Residences
- Eusoff Hall
- Kent Ridge Hall
- King Edward VII Hall
- Raffles Hall
- Sheares Hall
- Temasek Hall

Student Residences
- Prince George’s Park Residences
- UTown Residence

Residential Colleges (RCs)
- Cinnamon (USP) College
- Tembusu College
- College of Alice & Peter Tan
- Residential College 4
- Ridge View Residential College

- Unique culture in each residence or hall
- Compulsory meal plans for Halls of Residences and RCs
- Check the rental costs for each type of on-campus accommodation
Life at NUS: Housing

- On-campus accommodation is NOT guaranteed at NUS
- Majority of exchange students will stay in Halls or Residences
- Students can use UTown facilities (i.e. infinity pool and gym) even if they stay in another Residency or are staying off campus
- Check-in is available on weekday during office hour from 9am to 5pm
Life at NUS: Student Life

- **Campus Life**
  - Student Organisations
  - Performing Arts, Sports Clubs, Societies and Interest Groups
  - Community Engagement Programme Network
  - Community Projects
  - IRO & Peer Advising Programme
  - Welcome Party, Orientation Week, Sports Activities and Information Sessions
  - Orientation Briefing, International language exchange, Heartland tour, etc.
  - International Student Support
Join the activities organised specially for you!

- Orientation Briefing
- Welcome Party
- Welcome Week – Around the Campus Tour, Local Games
- International Coffee Catch-up
- Dragonboat Race
- Explorasia
- International Exchange Day

- Pulau Ubin Cycling Trip
- Bridge Networking Session
- Go Away Fair
- Feedback Session
- SEP Ambassador Training Programme
- Farewell Party
Campus Service and Facilities

- 36 Food venues and kiosks
- 7 Libraries
- 3 Museums
- 2 Sports & recreation centres
- 1 University Cultural Center
- 1 Bank
- Disability Support Office
- University Health Centre
- National University Hospital
- 24-hour security and emergency call points
- Internal shuttle bus
Life in Singapore: Getting Around

**MTR (subway)**
- Easy, modern, efficient
- Student EZ LINK card provides discount on rides
- Closest stops to campus are Kent Ridge, Dover, or Bueno Visto

**Bus**
- Another good option
- Run frequently

**Regional Travel**
- Bridge to Malaysia: 40 minutes from campus
- Other popular destinations: Thailand, Cambodia, Vietnam, Australia
- Do not leave Singapore until you have Student Pass!
- Notify IRO when leaving Singapore
**BU Bill**
- Tuition only
- Contact Student Accounting Services with questions

**Typical expenses**
- $2,200 housing
- $1,200 food
- $1,200 airfare
- $450 local transportation
- $600 books
- $1,600 personal spending*

**Money-saving tips**
- Eat at NUS dining facilities
- Travel locally rather than internationally
- Prioritize your entertainment
- Take advantage of University resources and events

*Highly dependent on how much you travel while abroad*
• Make sure you have easy access to cash while abroad

• Using your American bank account
  ▪ ATM withdrawals and fees
  ▪ Minimize number of withdrawals
  ▪ 4-digit PIN

• Tell your bank and credit card about travel in advance
  ▪ Does your bank have a partner in Singapore?
  ▪ What additional fees will you have to pay?

• Singaporean bank account
  ▪ Eligible to open one (most students don’t)
  ▪ Information during orientation
  ▪ Takes several weeks to set up: have another source of cash

• Credit card for emergencies

• Access to multiple types of funds

1 USD = 1.36 SGD

Banking: Singapore dollar (SGD)
I LOVE IT HERE! FIGHT ON!

HOLLYWOOD

NO ONE UNDERSTANDS ME. EVERYTHING IS SO DIFFERENT...

OH IT'S NOT BAD HERE AFTER ALL. I EVEN KIND OF LIKE IT!

CULTURE SHOCK
Top 10 Tips for Coping with Culture Shock

1. Research your host country prior to departure
2. Keep an open mind
3. Search out new experiences and friends
4. Do not judge the people of a country by one person or one experience
5. Keep a sense of humor
6. Listen and observe rather than merely see or hear
7. Reflect daily to process your experiences
8. Use your host university’s support system
9. Stay in touch with home
10. Remember you have traveled far to learn about and experience a new culture, and to represent your country and school; most people only DREAM about having this experience.

There is no "best way" to deal with culture shock; it always depends on the individual.
Communication

Staying connected with home

- Skype and Facetime
- Email, messaging, and apps (WhatsApp)
- Wi-Fi widely available with good speed

Mobile Phones

- Make sure you have a local number for emergencies and ease of use
- Local pay-as-you-go plans are the easiest and most economical. You can either get a whole new cheap phone, or just a new simcard.
- Most students purchase a phone after arriving in Singapore to use for local calls/texts
  - T-Mobile offers good options in Singapore
- Keep your current smartphone on “airplane mode” and use apps on Wi-Fi when it’s available.
- US-based international mobile phone plans are more expensive and often don’t work. Skip them.
In an Emergency

If you are involved in an emergency:
1. Call local emergency services
2. Contact the program staff
3. Contact your family or emergency contact

If there is an incident while you are abroad:
1. Let the program staff know you are ok
   - Respond to any emergency messages they send
2. Contact your family or emergency contact

Unacceptable reasons for being unreachable:
1. Your phone isn’t turned on or charged.
2. You have limited minutes and want to save them.
3. You don’t want anyone to know where you are or what you’re doing.

We don’t judge! We just want to know you’re okay!
Plan ahead!

• Visit your doctor about any health concerns or for a physical, if overdue
• Maintain regular dental appointments
• Make a plan to access your medications abroad
  • Talk with your doctor
  • Make a copy of your prescriptions; keep them with your packed medications
  • Check with the host country consulate for restrictions
  • If allowable, obtain a supply for full semester
  • Do not plan to ship medicine abroad
• Learn about differences in medical facilities and the local health system
• Contact program staff with any concerns
Mental Health

• Talk to your therapist/counselor about mental health while abroad and make a plan before you go.

• Even if you may be excited about new opportunities, stress or anxiety may increase abroad.

• Stay Healthy:
  • NUS Student Health center
  • Keep up routine (when possible)
  • GeoBlue covers mental health care
  • Use the on-site staff as a resource
Approximately two weeks before the program start date, all students will be enrolled in a plan from GeoBlue that provides comprehensive international health insurance coverage, as well as emergency travel assistance to cover medical and security evacuation.

- Valid for the duration of the program; extendable at the student’s expense
- Detailed coverage information is provided on the BU Study Abroad [Health & Safety page](#) and again by email at the time of enrollment
- In case of need of medical treatment, mental health counseling, or emergency travel assistance while abroad, or to set up appointments in advance, contact GeoBlue directly and identify yourself as a Boston University student:
  - Call collect worldwide: +1-610-254-8771
  - Toll-free inside the US: 1-800-257-4823
  - globalhealth@geo-blue.com

**All students are required to maintain their US-based health insurance coverage while abroad**

[GeoBlue](#)
Program Emergency Plan
- Boston University closely monitors the security situation across the world, and follows guidance from local authorities and the US State Department
- Detailed emergency plans, general safety precautions and ways of communicating will be explained during orientation

Personal Emergency Plan
- Enroll in the State Department STEP Program to get travel alerts and warnings
- Talk with your family about communication expectations so they know you are okay
- Always have emergency contact numbers with you, both in your phone and separately
Personal Safety

Our Expectations of you:

We expect that you will...

• Share responsibility for your safety and that of others in the program
• You will be reachable by local phone at all times. Keep your phone charged and topped-up with minutes.
• You will reach out to program staff and your family if you experience, witness or become aware of a serious incident of any kind.
• You will report issues of any sort in a timely manner to the on-site staff (or directly to Boston if necessary) so that we can help you.
Personal Safety

Take Responsibility for your OWN Risk Management!

- Talk to your family and friends about the location-buildings, housing, staff, insurance, resources
- Practice situational awareness: Be aware of your surroundings; be vigilant of others.
- Do not drive (road and pedestrian accidents are #1 cause of injury/death abroad)
- Do not participate in demonstrations or protests
- Drink responsibly –The majority of problems student’s face are related to alcohol. It’s not the staff’s responsibility to manage your consumption!
- Travel with others and look out for each other.
- Pay attention to the news (before and during the program)
- Practice safe sex and report any sexual assault to staff abroad.
Personal Safety

Keep your belongings safe

- Do not bring valuables or sentimental items abroad
- Avoid carrying large amounts of cash
- Monitor your wallet/purse closely. Keep money hidden, or consider a money belt
- Limit smartphone usage in public
- Carry only necessities out at night – make sure you have emergency numbers with you
Boston University is committed to fostering a safe learning environment for all members of the University community and preventing sexual misconduct.

- All forms of sexual misconduct, including rape, acquaintance rape, sexual assault, domestic and dating violence, stalking, and sexual harassment are violations of Boston University's policies, whether they happen on campus or off campus.

- Reporting: On-site staff should be first resource. If unavailable or uncomfortable reporting, contact Title IX Deputy Coordinator Debbie Miller at millerda@bu.edu.

- BU staff/site staff are obligated to report any incident of sexual misconduct

- On-site staff will go over this in orientation

- Visit www.bu.edu/safety for more information.
You will receive your Student Pass after you arrive in Singapore. However, there are important steps to take before departing.

**Steps:**
1. Submit online application to NUS
2. NUS enters your information into SOLAR
3. Complete and print eForm 16 through SOLAR (pay fees about $95)
4. Enter Singapore with eForm 16; save your embarkation card
   - Bring NUS admission letter if you booked a one-way ticket
5. Receive IPA letter at NUS registration*
6. Convert IPA letter to Student Pass at NUS orientation/registration

*Some students (non-U.S. Citizens) will receive their IPA letter via email or mail in advance
Flights and Travel to NUS

Independent Flight

- Submit flight information to the BU International Travel Registry
- Book one-way or roundtrip
- Arrival instructions

TAXI – about 45 minutes, 35 SGD (27 USD)

Housing Check-In

- Find out official check-in dates and early arrival fees.
- Check-in early on JAN 9 for orientation
- Review & complete the early check-in information on the website
LOGISTICS
• Arrive at the airport no later than two hours prior to your departure
• Wear heavier clothes on the flight to be able to have room in your suitcase
• Confirm your departure time and flight

CARRY ON
• Passport and printed copy eForm 16
• Liquids 3oz or less in plastic bags (check www.tsa.gov for up to date requirements)
• Essentials to last you a few days in your carry-on in case your luggage gets lost (toothpaste, deodorant, underwear, medicine, socks)

HEALTH WHILE TRAVELING
• Drink lots of water and stay hydrated
• Be sure to time your medications while traveling
• Get lots of sleep after you arrive: jetlag can take up to a week to go away!
Packing List

• **Luggage:**
  - Use bags that are light and sturdy – one large, one carry on, one shoulder bag or backpack
  - Pack only what you can carry *yourself*
  - Check airline restrictions on weight and number of bags you can take aboard. Overage fees may apply.
  - Do not plan on shipping items abroad

• **All students should bring:**
  - Passport and printed copy eForm 16 (and IPA letter if applicable)
  - Flight itinerary
  - Copy of NUS acceptance letter
  - Site contact details and directions to your housing
  - All medication you will need for the duration of your program
Packing List

Program Specific Items:
- Handbooks and emails from NUS
- Clothes for hot, humid weather; light sweater and raingear
- Laptop
- USB drive for backing up academic work and for printing
- 3-prong plug adaptor (UK-style) and voltage converter (if needed)
- Ibuprofen: requires a prescription and can be expensive in Singapore, so bring it with you if you want it

What NOT to bring:
- US-based international cell phone plan
- Conspicuous clothing or electronics
- Sentimental items you could do without
- Personal appliances (hairdryers, straighteners, shavers)
Engaging with NUS and Singapore: Start now!

- Beneficial to research before you go and for resources while on site

- Local Social Media
  - Follow local businesses, venues, organizations, etc. to get latest news about places of interest and keep up with different social trends.
  - IRO Facebook page: https://www.facebook.com/nusiro.sg

- Local streaming TV, Spotify channels, radio, etc.

- Blogs and websites
  - You have a place to track good websites, magazines, and apps on the worksheet that’s attached to the online module. Use it!
Future Communication

- Pre-Departure follow-up and general reminders
- Additional information directly from NUS about classes, housing, SOLAR/immigration, and arrival dates and details
- Getting Ready to Go e-mail (important reminders sent a few weeks before departure)
- GeoBlue International insurance email
- Join BU-Singapore Facebook group
Action Items

- Complete general BU pre-departure documents
- Review admissions email from NUS very carefully
- Apply for NUS housing (November 14-20)
- Complete information in SOLAR and print eForm 16
- Book your flight (roundtrip or one-way)
- Watch the pre-departure roadmap
- Talk with your doctor about health and medications abroad
- Talk to your bank about finances abroad
- Join BU-Singapore Facebook group
Go away!
BU provides educational programs designed to promote awareness and prevention of sexual assault and domestic violence.

- **Rape Aggression Defense (RAD) training**
- In cooperation with BU’s Student Health Services, **SARP** provides a variety of trainings and services, including:
  - Step Up. Step In. (Bystander training)
  - Health services
  - Mental health counseling
  - Violence prevention workshops
- **Be Safe@BU**
- **Wellness & Prevention Services**
- Non-BU students, please also research your university’s services
Resources

LGBTQ Resources
- US State Department Advice for LGBT Travelers
- Diversity and Inclusion Abroad: Sexual Orientation Abroad

Disability resources
- Diversity and Inclusion Abroad: Student with Disabilities Abroad
- Abroad with Disabilities Facebook Community

Women’s issues by site
- US State Department Advice for Women Travelers
- Diversity and Inclusion Abroad: Women Abroad
- BU: http://www.bu.edu/shs/resources/

Many additional resources can be found online.