

# STUDY ABROAD HANDBOOK

## *France*



GLOBAL EDUCATION  
MILLERSVILLE UNIVERSITY  
CUMBERLAND HOUSE  
P.O. Box 1002  
MILLERSVILLE, PA 17551  
PHONE: (717) 871-7506  
FAX: (717) 871-7956

GLOBAL EDUCATION@MILLERSVILLE.EDU  
[HTTP://WWW.MILLERSVILLE.EDU/GLOBALED/](http://www.millersville.edu/globaled/)

**Section 1: General Study Abroad  
Info**

**Section 2: Country-Specific Info**

**Section 3: Program-Specific Info**

# **Section 1**

## **General Study Abroad Information**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS – Section 1

GLOBAL EDUCATION .....	3
MISSION STATEMENT .....	3
NOTES ABOUT THE OFFICE .....	3
Role of Global Education.....	3
Limits of Global Education .....	4
GETTING READY TO GO – DOCUMENTS/PAPERWORK .....	4
PASSPORT.....	4
If You Lose Your Passport.....	4
SMART TRAVELER ENROLLMENT PROGRAM (STEP).....	5
DOCUMENTS YOU SHOULD TAKE .....	5
General Documents .....	5
Millersville University Documents .....	5
Host Institution Documents and Materials.....	5
POWER OF ATTORNEY .....	5
HEALTH ISSUES.....	6
HEALTH PRECAUTIONS & IMMUNIZATIONS.....	6
MEDICATIONS .....	7
Before You Go .....	7
While Abroad .....	7
INSURANCE .....	7
INTERNATIONAL STUDENT IDENTITY CARD (ISIC).....	8
LUGGAGE/U.S. CUSTOMS .....	12
GENERAL GUIDELINES.....	12
TSA ACCEPTED AND RECOGNIZED LOCKS.....	12
CARRY-ON RESTRICTIONS .....	13
U.S. CUSTOMS UPON RE-ENTRY .....	13
LAW AND SECURITY ISSUES ABROAD .....	15
THE LAW ABROAD.....	15
Local Laws and Customs .....	15
Drug Violations.....	16
Possession of Firearms.....	16

Photography .....	16
SECURITY ISSUES .....	16
Packing .....	16
SAFETY ON THE STREET .....	17
Safety in Your Hotel/Hostel .....	17
Safety on Public Transportation .....	18
How to Handle Money Safely .....	18
JET LAG .....	19
CULTURE SHOCK .....	19
HOW TO COPE WITH CULTURE SHOCK .....	19
PREPARING FOR SUCCESSFUL CULTURAL ADAPTATION .....	20
UNDERSTANDING CULTURE SHOCK .....	20
SYMPTOMS OF CULTURE SHOCK .....	21
OVERCOMING CULTURE SHOCK .....	22
CHARACTERISTICS FOR SUCCESS WHILE ABROAD .....	23
COPING STRATEGIES FOR CULTURAL ADJUSTMENT .....	24
WHILE ABROAD – Things to Keep In Mind .....	25
LOCAL/EMERGENCY STUDENT CONTACT INFORMATION .....	25
CONFIRMATION OF CLASSES REGISTERED (AT HOST INSTITUTION) .....	25
MU CLASS REGISTRATION/GRADUATION APPLICATION REMINDER .....	25
FINANCIAL AID ISSUES TO ADDRESS .....	26

# **OFFICE OF GLOBAL EDUCATION**

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

The Office of Global Education and Partnerships promotes the internationalization of the university community so that Millersville may realize its mission to:

- Prepare its students to live in an increasingly diverse and multicultural society
- Offer a curriculum that is rich and multifaceted
- Serve as a model of a pluralistic community and by providing leadership in this regard to the greater community.

Global Education fulfills this mandate by:

- Championing borderless learning and exchange of ideas by promoting institutional development to achieve these ends;
- Encouraging MU students, faculty, administrators and staff to communally embrace a vision of a globally connected campus through dissemination of information, coordination and support.
- Welcoming international students and scholars and ensuring an enriching and successful stay at Millersville by providing consistently professional logistical support and counseling where appropriate.
- Developing, operating and maintaining a comprehensive, cost-effective education abroad program (study, interning and service-learning) that meets the highest levels of professional and academic integrity and adheres to recognized “best practices” in the field;
- Organizing globally focused programming of benefit to the MU campus as well as the public and private sectors in the wider community.

## **NOTES ABOUT THE OFFICE**

The Office of Global Education has been administering study abroad programs since 1989. It is a full time office dedicated to international mobility of students and faculty, including study abroad and is staffed by individuals with several decades of combined international education experience.

### ***ROLE OF GLOBAL EDUCATION***

- Support students through pre-departure, study abroad and re-entry stages in partnership with partner institution and MU offices related to:
  - MU paperwork processing
  - Partner institution paperwork processing
  - Legal matters (passports, visas)
  - Insurance issues
  - Travel information related to study abroad experience
  - Housing and board arrangements (program dependent)

- Academic course selection and equivalencies process
- Medical, counseling and academic support where needed
- Cost information related to Financial Aid
- Program billing (program dependent)
- Issues at study abroad destination that cannot be solved “locally”
- Dormitory housing upon return
- Transcript processing after return
- Resolution of other outstanding study abroad issues upon return (academically, financially, etc.)

### **LIMITS OF GLOBAL EDUCATION**

- Address academic issues between study abroad participants and their advisors
  - TAP #s
  - Course changes/course equivalents
- Directly make flight arrangements
- Advise on housing, travel or other arrangements outside of formal study abroad program
- Address questions related to specific financial aid issues
- Assist students with program issues when Global Ed is not “kept in the loop” through regular communication with student
- Provide instant responses on non-emergency questions or routine matters

## **GETTING READY TO GO – DOCUMENTS/PAPERWORK**

### **PASSPORT**



The passport is your official identification as a citizen of the United States. It will be checked upon entering or leaving the United States or any foreign country as well as upon various other occasions that require official identification. All students going abroad need to have a passport. After you obtain your passport, be sure to sign on the signature line, make a photocopy of the record page (with your picture on it) and put it somewhere safe. It is suggested to take a copy of it with you abroad and keep it in a safe place. You may also want to keep a photocopy of your birth certificate and social security card with each photocopy of your passport. This is very helpful should your passport get stolen or become lost as it is a hassle to get your passport replaced. Take good care of this document.

**For more information and to download forms please see**  
[http://travel.state.gov/passport/passport\\_1738.html](http://travel.state.gov/passport/passport_1738.html)

### **IF YOU LOSE YOUR PASSPORT**

Loss or theft of a valid passport should be reported immediately. You must contact your nearest US Embassy or Consulate. For locations and further instructions reference <http://www.usembassy.gov/>. This will provide country specific instructions on how to proceed.

## **SMART TRAVELER ENROLLMENT PROGRAM (STEP)**

The U.S. State Department's Smart Traveler Enrollment Program, or STEP, is an invaluable resource for American citizens abroad. The State Department developed this program to better aid American citizens in emergency situations. By registering with the STEP program, you will receive updates, information, and travel warnings via email from the U.S. Embassy regarding your host country while you are abroad. The contact information you provide through this registration process allows the State Department to better assist you should an emergency arise. All students going abroad for academic credit are required to enroll in this program as part of the pre-departure paperwork process.

## **DOCUMENTS YOU SHOULD TAKE**

### **GENERAL DOCUMENTS**

- Passport\*
- Visa (if applicable)\*
- Flight Itinerary/Confirmation\*
- International Student Identity Card (ISIC)\*
- Insurance Card(s) - detailed company and insurer information\*
- Photocopies of credit cards\*

### **MILLERSVILLE UNIVERSITY DOCUMENTS**

- Copy of your Study Abroad Resident Credits Form (course selection with MU equivalencies)
- Updated DARS (Degree Audit Report)
- General Ed/major/minor curriculum sheets for reference
- Academic advisor and department chair's names, addresses, emails, and phone numbers in case you need to contact them while abroad.
- This handbook\*



### **HOST INSTITUTION DOCUMENTS AND MATERIALS**

- Acceptance letter\*
- Visa materials (if applicable)\*
- Relevant accommodation information and directions\*
- Host university's international student guides/handbooks (if available)\*

\* *Items to be taken in **carry-on** or on your person during travel, not in checked luggage.*

## **POWER OF ATTORNEY**



We suggest that you make arrangements with someone to give them power of attorney (POA) while you are gone. This enables the designated person



to have access to your accounts – deposit and withdrawal - and they are able to sign on your behalf. For MU, Power of Attorney may be necessary for the Financial Aid appeal process. Declaring a POA comes in handy as often applications, appeals and checks for financial aid must be signed and returned by a certain date which could be while you are abroad and your POA could sign on your behalf. (See “While Abroad – Financial Aid” for more information.)

The student seeking power of attorney can write up their own statement stating who is assuming the duties of power of attorney and have it notarized. This can be arranged through any lawyer or public notary. (Notary services are conveniently available at 2 locations on Millersville’s campus; the Purchasing Office and the Student Programs Office. Feel free to contact these offices for more information.)

The requirements to prove a person has power of attorney can vary by the organization or agency that is requesting the proof. It is best that you or your POA inquire directly with the agency as to what their policies are regarding this matter. It may be in your best interest to obtain several **original** copies of the notarized statement because your POA might be required to send originals with each POA signature.

Below is an example of the format for a power of attorney statement:

*I, (name of student), hereby grant power of attorney to my (state relationship), (name of person), for the following time span: (list dates of study abroad).*

*(Student signature)* \_\_\_\_\_  
*(Signature of person assuming power of attorney)* \_\_\_\_\_

## **HEALTH ISSUES**

### **HEALTH PRECAUTIONS & IMMUNIZATIONS**

Information for travelers on health precautions, immunizations and areas with specific health issues can be obtained from local health departments, private doctors, travel clinics or the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in Atlanta, Georgia. More information on the CDC can found at <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/>.

For local services in Lancaster, you may contact Passport Health. Passport Health is a national network of independently owned and operated Travel Health and Immunization Clinics. They provide information, immunizations and consultation for international travel.

<http://www.passporthealthusa.com/locations/pa/monroeville/154/>

Phone: 1-888-474-8907

In Lancaster:

150 Farmington Lane  
Suite 201  
Lancaster, PA 17601

Another web site that may be helpful is [www.travelersvaccines.com](http://www.travelersvaccines.com).

Consider all travel plans when researching health precautions, immunizations and areas with specific health issues so you can be fully prepared for your time abroad whether in or outside of your host city and country.

## MEDICATIONS

### **BEFORE YOU GO**

- Students should consider getting check-ups pre-departure for general wellness, vision, and dental.
- Prescription Considerations
  - Be aware that some commonly prescribed medications in the U.S., such as prescriptions for ADHD, may be considered illegal controlled substances in other countries. Check with the customs authority or local embassy of your host country, if this applies to you, to determine local laws.
  - Obtain a clearly written prescription as well as a letter from your physician fully explaining the use of your medication, including the generic name of the drug. Customs officials may want to see this, and should you require any additional prescriptions while abroad, the pharmacy there will require this information.
  - Plan how you will supply yourself the amount of your prescription(s) needed while abroad. You may want to pack enough for the entire period of time, especially if you have medication that has been specifically made for you, such as allergy serum; however getting prescriptions and carrying them in large amounts can be an issue with certain insurance companies and/or customs' officials.
  - If you wear glasses and/or contacts, take along your lens prescription and, if possible, an extra pair of glasses and/or an ample supply of contacts.

### **WHILE ABROAD**

- We do not recommend buying medications "over the counter", unless you are familiar with the product. Keep in mind, "over the counter" drugs abroad are not regulated by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.
- All medications should be carried in their original containers and clearly labeled, throughout your travels.

## INSURANCE



Health insurance coverage abroad is mandatory for MU study abroad participants and for Non-MU students participating in MU programs.

### **Important Notes About International Health Insurance:**

- Should medical attention be required while abroad, understand that you will often pay out of pocket for medical services and submit a claim to your insurance company to be reimbursed.
- It is important to have access to funds to pay for out of pocket medical costs as most insurance companies do not pay international medical providers. The cost

is on you to pay upfront. The Office of Global Education recommends having a credit card available to pay for an emergency medical situation.

- Before departing for your experience abroad, you should contact your primary insurance provider to determine if your insurance covers you internationally. If so, you want to know the details of your coverage while abroad and the claims process. It is much more helpful to have this information before a medical issue occurs.
- Your ISIC insurance through April Travel Protection is supplemental insurance to your primary provider in the U.S. If you do not have insurance here in the U.S., or your primary provider does not cover you while abroad, your ISIC insurance is your primary coverage when studying abroad.

### ***INTERNATIONAL STUDENT IDENTITY CARD (ISIC)***

(This information is taken from STA Travel, the issuing agency of the ISIC and is therefore subject to change.)

Millersville University policy requires that you purchase a Basic International Student Identity Card (ISIC) valid for the duration of your program abroad. The card is required due to the coverage it provides in certain emergency situations and for the many benefits provided to ISIC/ITIC cardholders such as:

- Medical/Health Insurance
- Travel Insurance
- Discounts

Additionally, ISICs may also be recognized as an official form of student identification.

### ***ISIC INSURANCE***

The ISIC Basic provides the minimum health and travel insurance coverage recommended for traveling abroad. ISIC also offers Premium & Explorer options which provide a higher level of health and travel insurance coverage as well as other benefits. Health insurance for both the ISIC Basic and the ISIC Premium is administered by April Travel Protection. [www.AprilTravelProtection.com](http://www.AprilTravelProtection.com)

Should you decide that you require additional health insurance coverage beyond the ISIC Basic and do not wish to purchase the ISIC Premium or ISIC Explorer, other independent international health insurance providers are available to you. You will need to research these options on your own. Please note, however, that you will still be required to purchase the ISIC Basic for its other benefits.

***NOTE for NON-MU programs:*** Some Non-MU programs require or include health and travel insurance. If this is the case, this insurance must be approved by your program coordinator at the Office of Global Education to determine if it is or is not necessary for you to purchase the ISIC Basic plan. Non-MU program participants must provide your program coordinator with the details of your NON-MU insurance coverage, (meaning Global Education needs to see what the insurance covers you for and up to how much). Your program coordinator will review your program's coverage and make sure it is at least comparable to the ISIC Basic.

- If your coverage is not adequate, MU requires you to purchase at least the ISIC Basic plan by completing the registration form and submitting it with payment to the Office of Global Education.
- If your coverage is approved, you must submit proof of having the insurance coverage through your Non-MU program provider, such as a letter from the insurance company or a copy of your insurance card. Additionally, if you choose your Non-MU program's insurance provider, it is your responsibility to be familiar with the specifics of their coverage, emergency hotline numbers and the procedure to make a claim.

### **SEEKING IN-NETWORK PROVIDERS**

Before you depart, *it is **strongly recommended** that you contact April Travel Protection and/or your independent health insurance provider to determine a list of network providers within your study abroad destination area.* If you do any traveling for an extended amount of time, you may also want to consider obtaining a list of providers within your travel destinations. It is always best to contact April Travel Protection **prior** to seeking medical attention, if possible, to determine the closest in-network medical facility and so that they can arrange an appointment with the physician's office on your behalf.

### **COVERAGE DETAILS**

April Travel Protection provides a letter showing proof of ISIC-related health insurance coverage. This proof of coverage will be emailed to you from The Office of Global Education to keep for your records and/or for use with your student visa application.

**Review the chart below for a breakdown of ISIC coverage benefits:**

<b>Coverage</b>	<b>BASIC</b> (min. required)	<b>PREMIUM</b>	<b>EXPLORER</b>
ISIC Card Validity	1 Year	1 Year	1 Year
Multi-Trip Insurance Validity	1 Year	1 Year	1 Year
Trip Cancellation	NA	NA	\$3000
Trip Interruption	NA	\$1500	\$3000
Trip Delay/ Per Day	\$250/\$100	\$500/\$200	\$500/\$200
Emergency Medical Evacuation & Repatriation (included emergency reunion assistance)	\$250,000	\$500,000	\$500,000
Repatriation of Remains	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000
Accident and Sickness Medical Expenses	\$25,000	\$100,000	\$100,000
Emergency Dental/ Deductible	\$500/\$0	\$500/\$0	\$500/\$0
Accidental Death/Dismemberment – Entire Trip	\$1,000	\$25,000	\$25,000
Accidental Death/Dismemberment – Entire Trip Common Carrier Air Only	\$5,000	\$100,000	\$100,000
Baggage and Personal Effects (If lost or stolen)	NA	\$2,000	\$2,500
Baggage Delay (Minimum of 12 Hours)	\$100	\$200	\$200
Adventure Sports	NA	NA	Included
Mental Health	NA	Included	Included
24/7 Travel/Medical Assistance Services	Included	Included	Included
Non-Medical Emergency Evacuation due to Catastrophe	NA	\$50,000	\$50,000
Security and Political Evacuation	NA	\$50,000	\$50,000
<b>Price:</b>	<b>\$25</b>	<b>\$95</b>	<b>\$200</b>

## **Additional Information about Coverage: 24-Hour Emergency Assistance Services**

- Emergency travel assistance services are provided by April Travel Protection. If you need assistance, you can call toll free 24 hours a day, 365 days a year at one of these telephone numbers:
- Within the USA Toll Free: (855) 743-6739
- Outside the USA Collect: (305) 455-1571
- Assistance Email: [assistus@apriltravelprotection.com](mailto:assistus@apriltravelprotection.com)

### **Assistant Services:**

#### **EMERGENCY MEDICAL EVACUATION & REPATRIATION**

- Medical Transport
- Dispatch of a Physician or Specialist
- Transportation of a Family Member
- Escort Services
- Repatriation of Remains

#### **MEDICAL ASSISTANCE SERVICES**

- Medical & Dental Referrals
- Medical Case Management & Monitoring
- Coordinate Hospital Admission & Discharge
- Vaccination Recommendations & Precautions
- Prescriptions Replacement

#### **TRAVEL ASSISTANCE**

- Telephone Interpretation Service
- General Travel Assistance & Information
- Pre-Trip & Cultural Information
- Emergency Cash & Bail Assistance
- International Claims Assistance
- Lost Luggage Assistance
- Lost Document Assistance
- Urgent Message Relay
- Legal Referrals

*There may be times when circumstances beyond April Travel Protection control hinder its endeavors to provide services. April Travel Protection will, however, make all reasonable efforts to provide such services and help you resolve the emergency situation.*

*April Travel Protection will not provide any services when the U.S. or other applicable trade or economic sanctions, laws or regulations prohibit April Travel Protection from providing such services, including, but not limited to, the payment of any claims. Accordingly, no services will be provided in connection with travel to Cuba and such services may be limited and/or delayed, or prohibited, in other countries.*

## ***PURCHASED A BASIC OR PREMIUM ISIC AND WANT TO UPGRADE TO A PREMIUM OR EXPLORER?***

You can upgrade to an ISIC Premium or Explorer by contacting The Office of Global Education via email or by coming into the office. In order to upgrade, you need to submit payment for the cost difference of what plan you purchased versus which plan you would like to upgrade to. This can be done in the form of cash, check, or money order payable to Millersville University.

**If you are considering upgrading your ISIC card, note that you may only upgrade PRIOR to departing the US.**

## ***SUBMITTING A CLAIM***

Follow the directions below to submit a claim to April Travel Protection (ISIC). If you have other primary insurance that covers you abroad, such as your parent's health insurance or insurance through your employer, April Travel Protection will require you to make a claim with your primary insurance first and then submit the remaining costs to April Travel Protection. Note that April Travel Protection must receive written communication within 90 days after a covered loss occurs:

### **1. Request an Insurance Claim Form**

Call or email using the contact information below to request an Insurance Claim Form & inquire about the required documentation given your coverage (Basic, Premium, and Explorer).

### **2. Provide the Required Documentation**

After you complete your claim form, provide the supporting documentation needed to complete the claim process.

-Trip Delay: Obtain specific dated documents which provide proof of the reason for delay (airline or cruise line forms, medical statements, etc. Submit this documentation along with your trip itinerary and all receipts for expenses incurred.)

-Medical Expenses: Obtain receipts from the providers of services, etc., stating the amount paid and listing the diagnosis and treatment; submit these first to other medical plans. Provide a copy of *their* final disposition of your claim.

-Baggage: Obtain statement from the common carrier that your baggage was delayed or a police report showing your baggage was stolen along with copies of the receipts for your purchases.

Report your claim to April Travel Protection at one of these telephone numbers:

Within the USA: Toll Free: (855)-743-6739

Outside the USA: Collect: (305) 455-1571

Email for claims: [Claims@apriltravelprotection.com](mailto:Claims@apriltravelprotection.com)

Claims Address:  
**April Travel Protection**  
**11900 Biscayne Blvd**  
**Miami FL 33181, USA**

All benefits will be paid in United States Dollars.

### **WHAT TO DO IF YOU LOSE YOUR CARD**

You are still covered under the insurance benefits for the validity period of the card; however if you wish to use the card to receive discounts and/or as a form of international ID, you will need to locate an ISIC issuing office close to you to purchase a replacement card. Contact ISIC to assist you with locating an ISIC issuing office.

The insurance benefits that come with an ISIC are only offered on cards issued in the US; therefore, you will not have double insurance coverage by purchasing a replacement card.

Keep your receipt should you get a new card and you can submit a claim to get reimbursed for the lost/stolen card.

## **LUGGAGE/U.S. CUSTOMS**

### **GENERAL GUIDELINES**

Airlines or travel agencies should be able to inform you of the latest policies affecting luggage limitations. Each airline has its own restrictions/requirements regarding checked luggage and carry on items. Excess luggage can be very expensive. Remember that luggage should be small enough to go up narrow stairways, go down train aisles, and fit on luggage racks. You may wish to use a backpack as your second piece of luggage for ease and flexibility while traveling. You should label your luggage on the outside, and it is recommended that you also include a name and address label inside your locked luggage as well.

### **TSA ACCEPTED AND RECOGNIZED LOCKS**



Company logos for *Travel Sentry* and *Safe Skies*

The vendors above, Travel Sentry and Safe Skies, have an arrangement with TSA to supply TSA “accepted and recognized” locks. TSA screeners have tools for opening

and re-locking luggage locks with either of these logos, thus avoiding damage to the lock or bag if a physical inspection is required.

Please check the web sites below for more information on TSA Accepted and Recognized Locks.

Travel Sentry: <http://www.travelsentry.org/>

Safe Skies: [www.safeskieslocks.com](http://www.safeskieslocks.com)

## CARRY-ON RESTRICTIONS

***Due to increased security at airports worldwide, the following restrictions have taken effect. Please read carefully.***

**3-1-1** for carry-ons = **3** ounce bottle or less; **1** quart-sized, clear, plastic, zip-top bag; **1** bag per passenger placed in screening bin. A one-quart bag per person limits the total liquid volume each traveler can bring. The 3 oz. container size restriction is a security measure.



Consolidate bottles into one bag and X-ray separately to speed screening. Be prepared. Each time TSA searches a carry-on it slows down the line. Practicing 3-1-1 will ensure a faster and easier checkpoint experience.

3-1-1 is for short trips. **If in doubt, put your liquids in checked luggage.**

Declare larger liquids. Prescription medications, baby formula and milk are allowed in quantities exceeding three ounces and are not required to be in the zip-top bag. Declare these items for inspection at the checkpoint.

Be aware, heavy travel volumes and the enhanced security process may mean longer lines at security checkpoints.

**Note:** These requirements are being strictly enforced. You must bring your own plastic bag as none are available in the airport. You will already have checked your other luggage so **anything that does not meet the requirements will be thrown away/confiscated.**

## U.S. CUSTOMS UPON RE-ENTRY



As you pass through the United States, or any other country, you will have to go through a customs inspection. United States residents are permitted to bring into the U.S. \$800 worth of foreign souvenirs and gifts provided that:

- The goods are for personal use or will be given as gifts
- They are in your possession (goods shipped are excluded from the \$800 exemption)



- They have been declared to U.S. Customs and Border Protection
- You have been abroad for at least 48 hours
- You have not utilized the \$800 exemption within a 30-day period preceding re-entry
- The articles are not prohibited by law

Examples of articles specifically prohibited by law are:

- Narcotics, dangerous drugs, or drug paraphernalia
- Obscene articles and publications
- Seditious and treasonable materials
- Hazardous materials- fireworks, toxic or poisonous substances
- Absinthe (a common European Wormwood and a green liqueur flavored with wormwood)
- Switchblade knives
- Endangered species and products made from them may not be brought into the United States. The penalty is confiscation and a possible fine.

You will be assessed an import duty based on 3% of the value for anything in the \$800 to \$1,800 range. Import duty varies according to the nature of the articles when you go over \$1,800.

### **Some Helpful Small Print about Customs**

Articles acquired abroad and in your possession at the time of your return to the United States must be declared to Customs officials in writing. Declaration forms will be distributed to you by the flight attendants on your flight and should be completed immediately to avoid the last-minute hassle at Immigration and Customs. Your declaration must include, in addition to the gifts and souvenirs you purchased while you were abroad, any items that you are bringing back to another person on their request, alterations or repair of articles taken abroad, and gifts given to you while you were abroad. Wearing or using an article acquired abroad does not exempt it from duties, and it must be declared at the price you paid for it, although Customs agents may make a reduction in value due to the use or wear of the article. To avoid misunderstandings, it would be wise for you to retain receipts for any purchases that you make while abroad. You must declare the price actually paid for an article. If you do not know the price, say so. If an article was not purchased (i.e. a gift), state its fair market price. Personal belongings of U.S. origin taken abroad may be sent back by mail duty-free if, on the outside packaging, it is stated that the articles were taken out of the U.S. as personal effects and are being returned without having been repaired or altered while abroad ("American Goods Returned").

If you expect to carry a foreign-made item (i.e., an expensive camera, a watch, etc.) with you out of the United States, you may be subject to duty on those items when you return to the U.S., unless you have acceptable proof of prior possession. Documents that fully describe the article, such as a bill of sale or an insurance policy, may be considered "as acceptable proof". Items, which may be readily identified by serial

number or permanently affixed markings, may be registered with the Customs officials prior to departure.

## **LAW AND SECURITY ISSUES ABROAD**

This section was obtained from the US State Department website at:  
<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en.html>

When you travel abroad, the odds are you will have a safe and incident-free trip. Travelers can, however, become victims of crime and violence, or experience unexpected difficulties. No one is better able to tell you this than the U.S. consular officers who work in more than 250 U.S. embassies and consulates around the globe. Every day of the year, U.S. embassies and consulates receive calls from American citizens in distress.

Happily, most problems can be solved over the phone or with a visit to the Consular Section of the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate. There are other occasions, however, when U.S. consular officers are called upon to help U.S. citizens who are in foreign hospitals or prisons, or to assist the families of U.S. citizens who have passed away overseas.

We have prepared the following travel tips to help you avoid serious difficulties during your time abroad.

### **THE LAW ABROAD**

#### **LOCAL LAWS AND CUSTOMS**



When you leave the United States, you are subject to the laws of the country you are visiting. Therefore, before you go, learn as much as you can about the local laws and customs of the places you plan to visit. Good resources are your library, your travel agent, and the embassies, consulates or tourist bureaus of the countries you will visit. In addition, keep track of what is being reported in the media about recent developments in those countries.

Familiarize yourself with legal expectations in the countries you will visit. The [Country Specific Information](#) (This link guides you to another portion of the US State Department Webpage) pages include information on unusual patterns of arrests in particular countries, as appropriate. Again, keep in mind that while you are visiting a foreign country, you are subject to the laws of that country. Legal protection and personal rights that we take for granted in the United States are left behind when you depart. American Embassies and Consulates are limited in the assistance they can provide. They cannot provide you with any financial assistance in paying for legal or medical services, nor can they intervene on your behalf in the administration of justice as seen from the point of view of the host country.

Bail provisions, as we know them in the U.S., are rare in foreign countries. Pretrial detention, without bail, is quite common. Prison conditions are often deplorable in comparison with conditions in the U.S. The principle “innocent until proven guilty” is not necessarily a tenet of the legal system abroad. It should also be stressed that students are subject to the statutes, ordinances and regulations of the host institution.

### ***DRUG VIOLATIONS***

More than one-third of U.S. citizens incarcerated abroad are held on drug charges. Some countries do not distinguish between possession and trafficking, and many have mandatory sentences – even for possession of a small amount of marijuana or cocaine. A number of Americans have been arrested for possessing prescription drugs, particularly tranquilizers and amphetamines that they purchased legally elsewhere. Other U.S. citizens have been arrested for purchasing prescription drugs abroad in quantities that local authorities suspected were for commercial use. If in doubt about foreign drug laws, ask local authorities or the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate.

### ***POSSESSION OF FIREARMS***

The places where U.S. citizens most often experience difficulties for illegal possession of firearms are nearby – Mexico, Canada and the Caribbean. Sentences for possession of firearms in Mexico can be up to 30 years. In general, firearms, even those legally registered in the U.S., cannot be brought into a country unless a permit is obtained in advance from the embassy or a consulate of that country and the firearm is registered with foreign authorities on arrival. (NOTE: There are also strict rules about bringing firearms or ammunition into the U.S; check with [U.S. Customs](#) before your trip.

### ***PHOTOGRAPHY***

Be cautious when taking pictures. Local authorities in many countries consider all airports, police stations, military locations, oil installations, harbors, mines and bridges to be security-related. Photography of demonstrations or civil disturbances is also usually prohibited. Tourists have had their cameras confiscated and have been detained for trying to take these types of pictures. When in doubt about whether you can take a picture, ask first.

## **SECURITY ISSUES**

### ***PACKING***

Safety begins when you pack. To help avoid becoming a target, do not dress in a way that could mark you as an affluent tourist. Expensive-looking jewelry, for instance, can draw the wrong attention.

Always try to travel light. You can move more quickly and will be more likely to have a free hand. You will also be less tired and less likely to set your luggage down, leaving it unattended.

Generally, it is suggested to carry the minimum number of valuables, and plan places to conceal them. Your passport, cash and credit cards are most secure when locked in a hotel/hostel safe. When you have to carry them on your person, you may wish to put them each in a different place rather than all in one wallet or pouch. Avoid handbags, fanny packs and outside pockets that are easy targets for thieves. Inside pockets and a sturdy shoulder bag with the strap worn across your chest are somewhat safer. One of the safest places to carry valuables is in a pouch or money belt worn under your clothing.

### ***SAFETY ON THE STREET***

Use the same common sense traveling overseas that you would at home. Be especially cautious in (or avoid) areas where you may be more easily victimized. These include crowded subways, train stations, elevators, tourist sites, market places, festivals and crime-ridden neighborhoods.

- Don't use short cuts, narrow alleys or poorly lit streets.
- Try not to travel alone at night.
- Avoid public demonstrations and other civil disturbances.
- Keep a low profile and avoid loud conversations or arguments.
- Do not discuss travel plans or other personal matters with strangers.
- Avoid scam artists by being wary of strangers who approach you and offer to be your guide or sell you something at bargain prices.
- Beware of pickpockets. They often have an accomplice who will:
  - jostle you
  - ask you for directions or the time
  - point to something spilled on your clothing
  - distract you by creating a disturbance.
- Beware of groups of vagrant children who could create a distraction to pick your pocket.
- Wear the shoulder strap of your bag across your chest and walk with the bag away from the curb to avoid drive-by purse-snatchers.
- Try to seem purposeful when you move about. Even if you are lost, act as if you know where you are going. Try to ask for directions only from individuals in authority.
- Know how to use a pay telephone and have the proper change or token on hand.
- Learn a few phrases in the local language or have them handy in written form so that you can signal your need for police or medical help.
- Make a note of emergency telephone numbers you may need: police, fire, your hotel/hostel, and the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate.
- If you are confronted, don't fight back -- give up your valuables.

### ***SAFETY IN YOUR HOTEL/HOSTEL***

- Keep your hotel/hostel door locked at all times. Meet visitors in the lobby.
- Do not leave money and other valuables in your hotel/hostel room while you are out. Use the hotel/hostel safe.
- If you are out late at night, let someone know when you expect to return.

- If you are alone, do not get on an elevator if there is a suspicious-looking person inside.
- Read the fire safety instructions in your hotel/hostel room. Know how to report a fire, and be sure you know where the nearest fire exits and alternate exits are located. (Count the doors between your room and the nearest exit; this could be a lifesaver if you have to crawl through a smoke-filled corridor.)

### ***SAFETY ON PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION***

If a country has a pattern of tourists being targeted by criminals on public transport, that information is mentioned in each country's [Country Specific Information](#) in the section about safety and security.

### ***TAXIS***

Only take taxis clearly identified with official markings. Beware of unmarked cabs.

### ***TRAINS***

Well-organized, systematic robbery of passengers on trains along popular tourist routes is a problem. It is more common at night and especially on overnight trains.

If you see your way being blocked by a stranger and another person is very close to you from behind, move away. This can happen in the corridor of the train or on the platform or station.

Do not accept food or drink from strangers. Criminals have been known to drug food or drink offered to passengers. Criminals may also spray sleeping gas in train compartments. Where possible, lock your compartment. If it cannot be locked securely, take turns sleeping in shifts with your traveling companions. If that is not possible, stay awake. If you must sleep unprotected, tie down your luggage and secure your valuables to the extent possible.

Do not be afraid to alert authorities if you feel threatened in any way. Extra police are often assigned to ride trains on routes where crime is a serious problem.

### ***BUSES***

The same type of criminal activity found on trains can be found on public buses on popular tourist routes. For example, tourists have been drugged and robbed while sleeping on buses or in bus stations. In some countries, whole busloads of passengers have been held up and robbed by gangs of bandits.

### ***HOW TO HANDLE MONEY SAFELY***

- Do not flash large amounts of money when paying a bill. Make sure your credit card is returned to you after each transaction.
- Deal only with authorized agents when you exchange money, buy airline tickets or purchase souvenirs. Do not change money on the black market.

If your possessions are lost or stolen, report the loss immediately to the local police. Keep a copy of the police report for insurance claims and as an explanation of what happened.

After reporting missing items to the police, report the loss or theft of:

- Credit cards to the issuing company
- Airline tickets to the airline or travel agent
- Passport to the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate

## **JET LAG**



Management of the phenomenon known as "jet lag" or "travel fatigue" begins when you board the plane. You may wish to grab a pillow and blanket from the overhead storage space in order to relax and save your energy on your long flight.

You probably have heard of "jet lag," which is as much a physical phenomenon as much as a psychological one. Your body, through long years of habit, has become acclimated to functioning in accordance with its own physiological clock based on a particular daily cycle.

When you arrive at your study abroad destination, that clock is going to be automatically out of sync with the local cycle because of the time difference. It will take your body a few days to adjust (some bodies take longer than others), during which time you can expect to feel quite tired and run down. This fatigue, in conjunction with the unfamiliar surroundings, customs and language, may produce a temporary sense of depression and "homesickness." It is a perfectly normal reaction and it may not even affect you; however, if it should happen, remember that it will soon pass.

**Although it's difficult to avoid jet lag, a few precautions are worth taking:**

- "Reset" your sleep patterns by going to bed early a few nights before you leave.
- On the plane, sleep as much as you can, and walk and stretch when awake.
- Avoid alcoholic and caffeinated beverages, and drink plenty of water in flight.
- On arrival in a new time zone, take a short nap, have a light meal at the appropriate local hour, and perhaps a brief stroll afterward.
- Eat lightly for two or three days.
- Keep the first day's itinerary relaxed.
- Allow at least 24 hours to adjust

## **CULTURE SHOCK**

### **HOW TO COPE WITH CULTURE SHOCK**



With Permission from the Council on International Educational Exchange, we are reprinting the following advice on preparing for successful cultural adaptation. Although you may not encounter difficulties with culture shock, you will certainly have some cultural adjustments to make which will require you to be prepared. Please read this material carefully.

## **PREPARING FOR SUCCESSFUL CULTURAL ADAPTATION**

The concept of culture shock may be very familiar to you, and any travel, which you have done abroad and perhaps even within your own country will have exposed you to it. However, if it has been quite a while since you have lived abroad, or if you have never lived abroad for a length of time, you will want to do some thinking about both what culture shock is and how you can develop personal strategies for overcoming it. Most people eventually develop their own ways of coping, but since the duration of your stay abroad will be relatively brief and the academic pressures considerable, preparing for adaptation ahead may save you a lot of time and anguish.

## **UNDERSTANDING CULTURE SHOCK**

Culture shock has been defined as "...the loss of emotional equilibrium that a person suffers when he moves from a familiar environment where he has learned to function easily and successfully, to one where he has not."<sup>1</sup> The effects of culture shock range from mild uneasiness, homesickness, and unhappiness to panic, severe irritability, and loss of perspective. The basic cause of this syndrome is believed to be the abrupt loss of the familiar, which produces feelings of isolation and diminished self-importance as you find yourself unable to fully interact with the rest of society. It is important that you understand that culture shock is a personal experience, affecting each individual differently.

Since all people undergo psychological as well as physical and social adjustments to new cultures, some knowledge of acculturation may be helpful.

### Stage I

This may be called the "tourist stage," "the honeymoon phase," or the "stage of euphoria." The student is fascinated and thrilled with all that is new and tends to see similarities between the host and the home country. Even difficulties are viewed as novel and interesting.

### Stage II

During this stage, the student will be taking a more active role in his/her setting. This will produce frustration, because of the difficulty in coping with even the most elementary aspects of everyday life. There may be a tendency to overreact to minor frustrations, delays, or inconveniences with irritation or anger out of proportion to the cause. Accomplishing small tasks, such as shopping and making telephone calls, become a major nuisance. The student's focus will turn to the differences between the host and home cultures, and these differences can be troubling. These sometimes-insignificant difficulties can be blown into major catastrophes. Hence, this stage is referred to as "culture shock."

---

<sup>1</sup> Gordon, Arthur. "How to Cope with Culture Shock," Re-entry Preparation and Integration for Study Abroad. Center for International Education. Cal. State U., Long Beach (1986), pp. 1-6.

### Stage III

The student slowly recovers. Interest in and sensitivity to the new culture and other people emerge. A sense of humor and an ability to joke about new experiences and difficulties return. One is able to accomplish everyday tasks without undue amounts of stress.

### Stage IV

A meaningful understanding of the new environment develops. The student stops assessing the new culture by using his/her own culture as a model and accepts the culture and people for who and what they are—not better or worse, just different. Ideally, the student is able to make the transition between the cultures' value systems and behaviors without internal conflict. The student develops the ability to operate comfortably and effectively between cultures.

### Stage V

The last stage is the re-entry phase, when the student returns home. For some, this is the most painful phase of all! The student will be excited about sharing his/her experiences, he/she will realize that he/she has changed, but he/she will not be able to explain how or why. The student will have acquired different ways of behaving, feeling, and responding to others. One set of values has already been instilled in him/her, another he/she will have acquired in the host country. Both may seem equally valid.

## ***SYMPTOMS OF CULTURE SHOCK***

Health care providers, exchange program coordinators, academic advisors, and all staff involved in international educational exchange need to understand the phenomenon of culture shock and the impact it can have on a student's personal life and educational experience. A person passing through of acculturation may experience some of the following symptoms:

- feelings of helplessness and a dependence on compatriots
- homesickness
- greater irritation than appropriate when things go wrong
- a fear of being cheated, injured, or robbed
- excessive concern about physical pains or skin eruptions
- a strong desire to be home with one's own people who understand them
- reluctance or refusal to learn the language of the country
- insomnia or fatigue
- excessive concern for cleanliness
- loss of appetite
- loneliness
- poor concentration
- headaches
- stomach problems
- withdrawal from the host culture
- depression



## **OVERCOMING CULTURE SHOCK**

Just as your experience of culture shock will be individual and personal, you will need to deal with it in an individualized personal way. In adopting the following suggestions and developing your own strategies, an important thing to keep in mind is that while you should only expect yourself to tackle the symptoms and cause of culture shock in stages, confronting rather than avoiding them will help you to adapt much faster and more effectively. The following ideas are drawn from the experience of past participants (and the sources listed under *Recommended Reading* below):

- *Resolve any personal and family problems before you leave.*  
While you may think that by going abroad you will be escaping pre-existing problems, they will only follow you and be exacerbated by the especially stressful time of adapting to a new culture. Resolving personal problems before you leave home will make you more emotionally free to deal with the stresses of your new environment.
- *Learn as much about your new culture as possible.*  
The more you can learn about the culture which you are traveling to, and its customs, the easier it will be to figure out the “cultural cues” necessary to communicate with new friends and to feel at home in the new society. As mentioned in the introduction to this book, don't stop when you're through at the library. Seek out nationals of the country you'll be visiting through international student associations, international student centers, any local Embassies or Consulates, or community cultural organizations. Make friends with other students who have studied in the country you're heading to and keep on top of the news.
- *Develop cross-cultural communication skills.*  
Chances are you count on this strategy as one you have already developed if you've had friends from other countries or have lived abroad. If not, it would be worth taking advantage of any cross-cultural communication workshops arranged on your campus, participating in activities with international students studying at Millersville, and actively seeking out students from the country which you will be studying in.

One of the most important skills in cross-cultural communication, which you will need is the basic skill of learning to open-mindedly inquire and listen without being judgmental. You may be surprised to run into negative stereotypes. Americans, for example, are often assumed to be rude, always in a hurry, promiscuous, disrespectful of authority, and ignorant of other cultures. When trying to show that you are different, be tactful and try to understand the reasons for these stereotypes.

Likewise, you may find that you have brought along your own preconceived ideas about the people of your host country, and the ethnocentric attitude that the way

things are done at home is "better." Remember that you have chosen to study abroad to learn from your host country. Reserve judgment and try to understand and appreciate the new customs and ways of thinking you encounter, remembering that although different from what you are used to, they are equally valid.

- *Learn to indulge yourself in positive ways.*  
If you are feeling anxious, frustrated, lonely and/or confused, a first step, which will help you to adapt more easily, is to make yourself feel better and stronger by reducing these feelings. Spending 24 hours a day trying to communicate in a new language with new people in very new surroundings is extremely exhausting. This means that you will benefit from paying a little more attention to your physical and emotional health.

Obvious as it may seem, many students forget that added stress means needing more, not less sleep; and better, not worse eating habits. Exhaustion and eventually illness makes coping all the more difficult. A good sleep can sometimes put a previous day's crisis into perspective.

Feeling emotionally better may mean easing back a little on any campaign to become one of the natives in a few short weeks. Let yourself write letters home to friends and family who understand you, listen to any familiar music which you've brought along and try to incorporate familiar routines (such as running or making a favorite food, etc.), into your new life-style. While we certainly do not advocate hanging out only with other program students, we do not encourage you to alienate yourself from them. Avoiding students who seem bent on reacting against the host culture and making friends with other students who share both your country of origin and your desire to get to know the new one will make adaptation much easier and much more fun.

- *Form new friendships with host nationals as much as possible.*  
Students who have ultimately made friends among the students of the host institution and other host nationals are almost always those who have gotten to know the host country, its language and people the best and who have enjoyed themselves the most in the process. While spending some time with your own nationals will help ease culture shock, keep in mind that your purpose is to get better acquainted with the people, language, and culture of your host country. Making friends as early as possible with the nationals from your host country will speed the process of adaptation and allow you to get the most out of the experience.

## **CHARACTERISTICS FOR SUCCESS WHILE ABROAD**



What personal characteristics are needed, not just to survive, but to enjoy the experience abroad?

Key traits are:

- An attitude for learning.
- Flexibility, a sense of humor, and the ability to laugh at yourself.
- Communication skills, especially the ability to communicate your feelings.
- The ability to tolerate ambiguity.
- The acceptance of different cultural demands.

## **COPING STRATEGIES FOR CULTURAL ADJUSTMENT**

### **PAY ATTENTION TO SELF-CARE**

- Eat healthy foods
- Rest/Relaxation
- Exercise
- Avoid overuse of alcohol

### **KEEP A POSITIVE ATTITUDE**

- Suspend judgment and keep an open mind
- Be curious
- Stay flexible
- Maintain your sense of humor – laughter relieves stress
- Read humorous books
- Rent a funny movie

### **THINK**

- Identify your expectations so you can minimize disappointment if they are not met- or turn them into realistic goals
- Try to identify situations that upset you the most
- Think about what you have control over and what you don't – let it go
- Take life one day at a time

### **GET INVOLVED**

- Ask questions
- Try new activities/foods
- Practice the language
- Set small goals for yourself
- It's okay to take risks and make mistakes

### **DO FAMILIAR THINGS – something you did at home to make you feel good**

- Familiar physical activities such as walking or sports
- Listen to music
- Share your culture
- Meditate

## EXPRESS YOUR FEELINGS

- Talk with others about what you're experiencing – they might feel the same way!
- Write – journals, letters, poetry
- Drawing, painting or other creative expression

## UTILIZE RESOURCES

- There are people who can help!

## **WHILE ABROAD – THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND**

### **LOCAL/EMERGENCY STUDENT CONTACT INFORMATION**

You will be contacted by the Office of Global Education to provide your local contact information for while you are studying abroad. You will be emailed shortly after your arrival for your physical address (written in proper format), local phone number, and SKYPE name (if you have one). This information will be issued to a limited number of campus officials such as Millersville University Police and is extremely important in the event of an emergency. Throughout your stay the Office of Global Education may need to contact you and without reliable contact information this will not be possible.

You will also be provided with a Trip Notification form which we strongly suggest you complete and submit to the Office of Global Education if you are traveling away from your host city overnight. It requests information of where you are going, dates of travel, accommodation details, mode(s) of transportation itinerary, availability of email access, etc. Should an issue or emergency occur while you are traveling, Global Education will have resources to assist you. If you do not inform Global Education of your whereabouts, we will have no information to go by in the event of an emergency.

### **CONFIRMATION OF CLASSES REGISTERED (AT HOST INSTITUTION)**

In order to facilitate both you and the Registrar's Office with processing your transcript from your study abroad institution, Global Education will request a list of the classes that you are actually taking soon after you have been abroad. This is for the purpose of cross checking that list with your Transfer of Credits Form that you completed pre-departure with your academic advisors. We encourage you to do this on your own as well. If the Transfer of Credits Form does not match the courses that you are currently taking, then you will need to work with your academic advisor to make the appropriate changes so that the Registrar's Office may process your host institution transcript. Not ensuring that the Transfer of Credits Form matches the list of classes you take seriously delays processing the transcript once it is received at MU.

### **MU CLASS REGISTRATION/GRADUATION APPLICATION REMINDER**

A reminder of Millersville class registration will be sent to you while abroad. You will need to communicate with your academic advisor(s) for advising and to obtain your TAP number.

If you are studying abroad during your last semester prior to graduation, you will need to complete and submit a Graduation Application to the Registrar Office prior to departure and ensure that you are registered for graduation.

## FINANCIAL AID ISSUES TO ADDRESS

The release of financial aid for the following academic year may be delayed while Millersville awaits the receipt of your academic transcript from the international institution. Transcripts from Spring semester study abroad will not arrive until early September. Because Millersville University cannot confirm that you have made “Successful Academic Progress” (SAP) in May, for the previous academic year without the transcript, your financial aid may be placed on hold until the transcript is received. The definition of SAP differs between state and federal aid:

- *Federal:* SAP is defined as earning 75% of ALL credits attempted at MU. (Example: A student completed 30 credits but earned 24 credits, therefore he/she earned 80%, calculated  $24 \div 30$ , meaning he/she made successful academic progress and will not have issues with financial aid for the following academic year.)
- *State:* SAP is defined as successfully completing, at minimum, 24 credits for the academic year.

We strongly encourage you to check your **MAX account** mid/late May to determine if you are identified as not making SAP. If you did not make SAP, you will receive an email from the Office of Financial Aid and it will be stated on your MAX account.

### **What If You Do Not Make SAP?** – Release Your Aid:

- *Federal Aid:* To ensure that your federal aid is released without your study abroad transcript being received, we suggest you complete the Financial Aid Appeal Form by indicating that you are studying abroad. The official appeal form is accessible from the Office of Financial Aid website and it is due in mid-June.

This process will release your *federal* aid even if the transcript has not yet arrived. Power of Attorney, processed prior to departure, may be required if you will need someone else to complete this form for you in your absence. This form can also be submitted as a scanned document via email with required signature(s).

Note: If your transcript is received, and you did not meet the minimum required Satisfactory Academic Progress, you will be required to immediately reimburse the Office of Financial Aid for any money already received. Failure to do so will result in a hold being placed on your account at Millersville University which will affect registration/graduation.

- *State Aid:* Your PA State Aid cannot be appealed because of study abroad yet it will be retroactively released upon receipt of your study abroad transcript confirming Satisfactory Academic Progress.

## **Section 2**

# Country-Specific Information

## TABLE OF CONTENTS – Section 2

ONLINE RESOURCES .....	3
CULTURAL AWARENESS .....	4
WRITING.....	5
HOST COUNTRY'S HOLIDAYS .....	5
U.S. EMBASSIES AND CONSULATES.....	8
WHAT TO PACK.....	9
CLIMATE AND WEATHER .....	9
SUGGESTIONS FOR PACKING .....	10
MONEY .....	11
CURRENCY EXCHANGE .....	11
EXCHANGE RATE.....	12
ACCESSING MONEY .....	14
TRAVEL MONEY CARDS/TRAVELERS CHECKS.....	14
BANK TRANSFERS.....	15
AUTOMATIC TELLER MACHINES (ATMs) .....	15
WESTERN UNION.....	15
MONEYGRAM INTERNATIONAL.....	15
FOREIGN BANK ACCOUNT .....	15
CREDIT CARDS .....	16
INTERNATIONAL TRANSACTION FEES.....	17
COMMUNICATIONS.....	18
EMERGENCY NUMBERS .....	18
WITHIN HOST COUNTRY .....	18
CALLING MILLERSVILLE.....	18
INTERNATIONAL TELEPHONE CALLS.....	19
FROM U.S. TO ABROAD.....	19
FROM U.S. TO ABROAD.....	19
FROM ABROAD TO U.S.....	19
SKYPE .....	19
MOBILE TELEPHONE .....	20
CALLING CARDS .....	21
DVDs.....	21
CAMERA/PHOTO SUGGESTIONS .....	21
CARS .....	23
TAXIS.....	23
BUSES .....	23
METRO .....	23
TRAINS.....	24
RAIL PASSES.....	24
PAYING FOR THE TRAIN .....	24
FLIGHTS .....	24
NOTES.....	25
DO NOT HITCHHIKE! .....	25
MISCELLANEOUS TRAVEL INFORMATION.....	25

SAFETY TIPS – CRIME .....	26
INTERNATIONAL CONVERSIONS .....	26
24-HOUR CLOCK .....	26
TIMES ZONES .....	27
METRIC SYSTEM.....	27
PHARMACIES.....	27
CONVERSION CHART .....	28
SIZE CONVERSION CHART .....	29



## **COUNTRY BACKGROUND**

Before you leave for your study abroad experience, it is important that you are aware of the social, cultural, political, and economic history of your host country. It is recommended that you research these topics to better understand your new environment and to help with your assimilation into the country.

### **ONLINE RESOURCES**

#### **Students Abroad Resource- U.S. Department of State**

<http://studentsabroad.state.gov/>

The Students Abroad website managed by the State Department gives information about almost every aspect of studying abroad in any country. In this website you can find information about how to travel safely as a United States citizen. The website provides information varying from Emergency Contacts, to Voting, Packing Lists, and much more.

#### **U.S. Department of State – France**

<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/3842.htm>

<http://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/country/france.html>

The State Department website for France gives in-depth information about almost every aspect of France, from history to culture to travel and business information. The second link is to the State Department's Travel page, which has information about traveling to and within France.

#### **U.S. Diplomatic Mission to France**

<https://fr.usembassy.gov/>

This is the website for the U.S. presence in France. Information about U.S. citizen services and current U.S. issues in France can be easily found on this website.

#### **Frommer's Travel Guide – France**

<http://www.frommers.com/destinations/france/>

#### **LonelyPlanet – France**

<http://www.lonelyplanet.com/france>

Frommer's and LonelyPlanet are two of the most highly respected guidebooks for any travel needs. The guidebooks and their online counterparts contain detailed information about travel spots, safety precautions, and visitor information.

*\*Fodor's, Let's Go, and Insight Guides are among other travel guidebooks that students may choose to take advantage of. More information on these guides can be found online and in bookstores*

#### **France Guide**

<http://us.franceguide.com/>

The French government's official tourism website, franceguide.com gives practical, day-to-day knowledge as well as travel destinations and recent news.

### **Central Intelligence Agency World Fact book – France**

<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/fr.html>

The CIA World Fact book is a great resource for a short, mostly statistical analysis of France as a whole.

## **CULTURAL AWARENESS**

Taken from (<http://fau.edu/goabroad/pdf/2012-2013%20Student%20Guide.pdf>)

### ***ADDRESSING INDIVIDUALS***

The first and most important thing is that people in France do not grant you an immediate status as an equal until you have established a relationship. You always have to establish a relationship, whether it be while making enquiries in a train station, ordering a coffee in a café or buying something in a shop. This is direct contrast with the US where you would expect the salesperson to make that initial approach. Establishing a relationship does not imply inviting that person out to dinner or anything as complicated. **It just means saying "Bonjour Monsieur or Madame"**. And beware, if you don't - you will probably not be considered polite or credible. Even in a shop, commissioned salespeople are likely to give you a brush off if you don't do this.

If your request is slightly off beat, be sure to explain why it is so, and explain your predicament. Don't just say "Please, I don't want any dressing on my salad" (which is off beat in France). Say "I've got an allergy" or "I'm on a diet and I'm not supposed to take any dressing."

Be prepared for the "ce n'est pas possible." This does not necessarily mean that it is impossible, but that you didn't give enough context to your request. Usually you simply have to repeat your request and explain why you are making what they perceive to be a strange request, and you will be successful.

## **SOCIAL INTERACTION**

When greeting new people, always shake hands. Shake hands with the males, and kiss the females on each cheek. If you're a female, don't be surprised when a French male leans in to kiss you when he first meets you. If your hosts have small children, it is appropriate to kiss them on each cheek. (The practice of shaking hands and kissing will make a good topic of discussion with your French friends!) If you have been invited for a meal by other students you ought to bring something. You can ask very simply what you should bring as a contribution when you are invited. You can suggest a bottle of wine, or dessert or cheese. Even with other students it is not appropriate to turn up with other

guests who weren't specifically invited, unless it's a real party. Even then, it is always better to check. If you have been asked by, say, your uncle's business partner to his home for dinner with his family, bring flowers or chocolates. One single rose is acceptable if you are (feeling) penniless, and the florist will wrap it up nicely for you if you say "c'est pour offrir" ("it's a gift").

In France, you leave the wrapping on the flowers when you hand them to the person and you open gifts that are given to you in front of the person offering the gift, even if it is offered in a public place.

Be prepared for conflict also. The French love argument, debate and conflict and will use it in many situations as ways to solve a problem. It may seem unreasonable or antagonistic, but there is nothing personal involved if this happens to you. Just join in and have fun.

Work on building a network of French acquaintances. Also, build relationships at your local marché (outdoor market), boulangerie (bakery), laundry, dry cleaners, bar/tabac, etc.

## **WRITING**



French and American writing have some differences. They are small differences that won't keep you from understanding, but good to know about them so as not to get confused.

The numbers: the American "seven" <sup>7</sup> can easily be confused with the French "one" <sup>1</sup>, that's why the French "seven" has a little dash in the middle <sup>7</sup>.

Also, the Americans use a decimal point where the French use a comma. And where the Americans use a comma to show the thousand, the millions... the French use a dot.

In France, and most of Europe, dates are expressed: day / month / year. For example, March 1st, 2012 is 01/03/12.

Time is expressed by a twenty-four hour clock system. Thus, 4:00 p.m. is 16h00. In the evening though, and in spoken French only, people tend to revert to a twelve hour clock as the context is sufficient to avoid misunderstanding. Midi is not necessarily high noon. It is advisable to check if your appointment is for 12h00 or 13h00.

## **HOST COUNTRY'S HOLIDAYS**

(as taken from <http://www.timeanddate.com/holidays/france/2015>)

- 1 January** New Year's Day
- 5 April** Easter Sunday
- 1 May** Labour Day/ May Day
- 8 May** WWII Victory Day
- 14 May** Ascension
- 15 May** Whit Sunday

**24 May** Whit Monday  
**14 July** Bastille Day  
**15 August** Assumption of Mary  
**1 November** All Saints' Day  
**11 November** Armistice Day  
**25 December** Christmas Day

## **VISAS**

A visa is an official permission to visit a country and is granted by the government of that country. The format varies considerably, from a simple stamp imprinted upon one of the pages in your passport at the time you enter the country, to an official document with your photograph attached. Many countries require advanced processing of visas, while other countries require no advanced processing whatsoever for brief visits. Whether or not you will be required to obtain a visa depends on several factors, including:

- the country you will be travelling to
- the length of your stay
- the purpose for your visit
- your country of citizenship

If you are required to obtain a visa in order to enter the country, the consulate or embassy that will process your visa depends on where you reside within the United States.

Please see this website for more information about visa and entry requirements for your host country: [www.info-france-usa.org/](http://www.info-france-usa.org/).

**Be advised that a visa for France is required for stays of 90 days or longer.**

**Note:** You may also need to acquire a visa in order to travel outside of your host country. Please visit the websites of the embassies of the countries that you wish to travel to in order to determine what the visa and entry requirements are for those countries.

For example, if you are studying in France, but you decide to take a weekend trip to Poland, you may need to acquire a visa. Obtaining a visa may require you to fill out the appropriate forms, have passport photos taken, send or take your passport to the respective embassy or consulate, etc.; the requirements can vary by country, consulate and citizenship of the applicant. Because the process can be very involved and time-consuming, we recommend that you start planning or preparing several weeks or months prior to your departure for any trips that you intend to take while studying abroad that may require you to obtain a visa.

## **HOST EMBASSIES AND CONSULATES.**

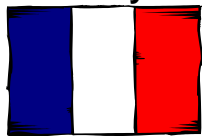
An embassy is a permanent diplomatic mission that is usually located in a nation's capital. Its main responsibility is to represent its home country abroad and to help handle major diplomatic issues.

A consulate is generally described as a smaller version of an embassy. Consulates can usually be found in large tourist cities. They are responsible for handling minor diplomatic issues, such as issuing visas and taking care of migrants, tourists, and expatriates.

Most sovereign states have embassies and consulates within the United States that are responsible for issuing visas to U.S. citizens who wish to travel to their countries. The location of your official residence will determine which foreign embassy or consulate will be the point of contact for you visa application.

For example, if you are resident of Pennsylvania and you wish to travel to France, you will need to visit the embassy in Washington, D.C. in order to obtain a visa. If, as a resident of Pennsylvania, you travel to New York City in order to obtain your visa, the consulate there would not be able to help you. The French Consulate in New York City is responsible for issuing visas to the residents of New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, and Bermuda, not to the residents of Pennsylvania.

**For residents of PA, MD, DE, VA, WV residents contact:  
Embassy of France in the U.S.**



4101 Reservoir Rd.  
NW, Washington, DC 20007-2185  
**Tel:** (202) 944-6000

Please visit <http://www.consulfrance-washington.org/spip.php?rubrique98> and [www.info-france-usa.org](http://www.info-france-usa.org) for more information.

**Obtaining Your Visa:** Please visit: <http://www.consulfrance-washington.org/spip.php?article385> to view a checklist of the requirements to obtain a visa for France. You will see links for the 2 steps of the visa process. One is for Campus France, and one is for making an appointment at the consulate. Follow those links for more information about each step. Please note that this process can take up to 6 weeks to complete, so make sure to start this process with plenty of time before your departure, as you need it to enter the country.

Useful things to know when going to the French Embassy in DC:

- There is Street Parking along the street where the embassy is located. It is \$2.00 an hour with a 4 hour limit.



- Take a copy of your driver's license if you are using that as proof of residency. The security guard keeps that while you are in the building.
- Once you are inside the building, you can just sit down in the lobby. It may take a while until you are called for your appointment, so be prepared to wait.
- They have a copy machine you can use if you forgot to photocopy something it is .25 cents a print. To make the process faster make sure *all* your paperwork is copied beforehand. DO NOT forget anything because they will make you come back and do the process over again, which can be extremely time consuming.
- Payment of the 50 Euro (around \$67.00) can only be made by VISA or MASTERCARD.
- Make sure that you have an actual physical photo that you have gotten done at CVS for your passport (ex. white background, no smile, head shot, dress clothes etc.). You cannot print out the photo like a copy onto different paper. If necessary the Embassy will give you a paper with directions to the nearest CVS to get photos taken. They require multiple copies of the photo as well.

If you reside outside of Pennsylvania, Maryland, Delaware, Virginia, or West Virginia, please research the consulate that you should visit based upon your area of residency.

## U.S. EMBASSIES AND CONSULATES



Should you encounter serious problems, the American Embassies and/or Consulates can offer limited assistance. They can, for example, provide you with a list of local attorneys and physicians; they can contact next of kin in the event of an emergency or serious illness; they can contact friends or relatives on your behalf to request funds or guidance and they can replace a lost or stolen passport. They cannot, however, provide the services of a travel agency, give or lend money, cash personal checks, arrange free medical service or legal advice, provide bail or get you out of jail, act as couriers or interpreters, search for missing luggage, or settle disputes with local authorities. Remember that their primary responsibility abroad is to help fulfill the diplomatic mission of the United States Government, not to act as nursemaids to American travelers.

**Note:** As a citizen of the United States, you are able to visit any U.S. embassy or consulate within your host country in order to seek assistance. Your location within your host country does not determine which embassy or consulate you will be able to visit as it does in the United States.

### U.S. Embassy in Paris

2, avenue Gabriel

75382 Paris Cedex 08

Tel: 01 43 12 22 22

Fax: 01 42 66 97 83

Website: <https://fr.usembassy.gov/>

### U.S. Consulate General in Marseille

Place Varian Fry  
13006 Marseille  
(Métro: Estrangin-Préfecture)  
**Tel:** 04 91 54 92 00  
**Fax:** 04 91 55 56 95  
**Website:** <https://fr.usembassy.gov/embassy-consulates/marseille/>

### **U.S. Consulate General in Strasbourg**

15, Avenue d'Alsace  
67082 Strasbourg  
Cedex  
**Tel:** 03 88 353 104  
**Fax:** 03 88 240 695  
**Website:** <https://fr.usembassy.gov/embassy-consulates/strasbourg/>

## **WHAT TO PACK**



When planning what to take with you, remember that the first rule is to take a minimum of clothes. You will tend to accumulate things as time passes, so, if in doubt, leave it at home. Choose clothes that can be mixed and matched and layered to serve several different seasons and temperatures. European heating standards are not the same as in the United States, so buildings and homes may seem somewhat chilly. Dark conservative colors are fashionable and they will wear longer without laundering, and will often help to make you less conspicuously American. It's a good idea to bring a scarf that you can mix and match with your outfits. Scarfs are very European and layering helps when the temperature fluctuates. In addition, the French tend to not wear shorts or any athletic looking clothing. This includes jackets and running shoes. It is okay to pack one pair of athletic shoes in case you partake in physical activities. Most French people only wear athletic clothes to and from the gym. Not to class. If you do wear these things be prepared to stand out. Try to take "heavy-duty" practical clothes that can withstand lots of wear, especially if you plan to do any traveling. Clothes that wrinkle and show dirt easily are not ideal. It is important to bring one jacket (preferably waterproof) because it rains often. Depending on the time of year you study, a light winter jacket that is waterproof is your best bet. Above all, pack light. You should be able to get all of your items into two suitcases (max.) and a carry-on bag. You will be buying some gifts and souvenirs to bring back, and you will have to lug and handle everything there and back!

## **CLIMATE AND WEATHER**

The climate of France varies from region to region. Southern France has a Mediterranean climate, characterized by hot, dry summers and mild, wet winters. Northern France has a temperate climate, with warm summers, cold winters, and rain year-round. Generally, on the west coast of France, the climate is milder, and the summer days are oftentimes very hot. The west coast has unpredictable weather patterns and can be very rainy year-round.

Be sure to consider the climate and weather when you pack in order to ensure that you pack appropriately.

## **SUGGESTIONS FOR PACKING**

We have compiled a list of items that some of our previous study abroad participants thought were useful while they were abroad.

- Extra Batteries
- Travel Alarm Clock
- Money Belt (to discreetly carry passport)
- Country Travel Guides
- Towel (Take 1 to start)
- Contact Solution (Could be available in host country, however it may be expensive)
- Shower Shoes
- Universal adapter or European adapter (for electronic devices)
- Language Dictionary
- Toiletries (Take travel-sized and then you can purchase more in your host country)
- Photos (In order to personalize your room)
- Coat (waterproof)
- Hat
- Gloves
- Umbrella
- A roll of toilet paper (one will not be in your room when you arrive)
- Travel sized tissues. (keep a pack in your book bag or purse at all times. You never know if a public toilet will be out of toilet paper)

Keep in mind that you will need a converter/adapter for all of your electrical appliances (razors, hair dryers, etc.). Some students choose to purchase converters/adapters before they depart for their host country. Other students, though, purchase converters/adapters once they are in their host country. Please note that many times the converters/adapters that are purchased in the host country work better than those that are purchased in the United States.

Every student will need to adjust the list above to fit his/her personal needs and tastes. You may find that you will choose to take somewhat different items, but you should remember that you can purchase similar products abroad to those at home. Also, take into consideration the season that you will be in your host country (or countries that you may be traveling to) and pack accordingly.

**NOTE:** Remember to leave room in your luggage for souvenirs and gifts. Previous study abroad participants have packed a rolled-up duffle bag in their suitcases. They were then able to use this for travelling while they were abroad and for bringing souvenirs and other items back to the States.

It has been recommended by some experienced travelers that after you pack your bags you should carry them around the block for at least 15 minutes. You'll probably repack!





A side note for when you get ready to pack to come home. It is possible to send books and other forms of media by surface mail. You should put them in a box about the size of a shoebox and it can't exceed 5kg. This will cost about 13 euros but keep in mind that because it is being shipped by boat it will take 4 to 6 weeks to get to its destination. I sent 3 packages of books when I was coming home and it greatly helped me with packing. I barely made the weight requirement without all my books!!

## MONEY

### CURRENCY EXCHANGE



Upon arrival, you may wish to exchange some of your American currency into the currency of your host country. This can be done at most major international airports, major banks, and railroad stations abroad. **Note:** It would be wise to exchange a small amount of your money *prior* to your departure in order to have some cash on hand upon arrival at your study abroad location.

While you are living in your host country, you may wish to exchange large amounts of money. Previous study abroad participants have found that banks are generally the best place to exchange large amounts of money while abroad. The airport is usually not the best place to exchange large amounts of currency, as airports do not offer the best exchange rates. It is also recommended that you do not exchange money at hotels, restaurants, or retail shops; the exchange rate at these locations is less favorable.



While I was abroad, I only actually exchanged currency 3 times - I exchanged a little bit of money at the airport when I arrived in my host country, I exchanged a large amount at a bank when I was about to go to a rural town that I knew did not have any ATMs, and I exchanged my host country's currency back into U.S. dollars at the airport when I left my host country. Most students do not exchange a lot of money. It's much more convenient to use your debit card and get your money, in your host country's currency, from an ATM machine. The only time I would recommend going to a bank to exchange money is when you want to exchange a very large amount (for instance, if you're going to a place where you know there aren't any ATMs, or you won't be able to use your debit or credit card, like a market). Even then, depending on how large an amount of money you want to exchange, you could just withdraw that money from an ATM machine, which is a lot easier, faster, practical, and more convenient than seeking out a bank to exchange money.

Search around when exchanging currency! At a local money exchange store near a busy train station, I was actually able to negotiate a more favorable rate!



I hardly exchanged money except for when I traveled to another country where they did not accept the Euro. Before leaving to study abroad I exchanged a significant amount of money at my bank and put some of it in my wallet, in my pocket, and in my suitcase and carry on. This way I had cash on me and would not have to exchange currency or withdraw money for quite some time. I used my debit card to pull money from my account later in the semester which was then directly converted to Euros. I also used my card to purchase tickets for flights or trains. If you do need to exchange money while you are in Caen there is an exchange bureau at 115 Rue Saint-Jean, 14000 Caen, France.

You can expect to pay a commission (which varies from one country to another) every time you exchange currency. Sometimes, this commission is a flat fee regardless of the amount of the transaction. If the commission is a flat fee, it is to your advantage to exchange larger amounts of money to avoid repeated visits to the bank window. This means that you will be carrying more cash than might be advisable. You will need to find a happy medium between the risks of carrying large amounts of cash and paying repeated bank commissions for exchange transactions.

**Note:** A few exchange services offer commission-free exchanges to students (just ask and be ready to show your ISIC) or they may even give you free exchange back to your original currency if you retain your original transaction receipt.



When you get to the airport, only exchange enough money for the first few days of your trip. Currency exchange in the airport is not the best deal for your money, as there are additional fees charged and the exchange rate is poor. It may be better to wait until an ATM machine is available to you once you arrive.

### **EXCHANGE RATE**

As with all currency, the exchange rate for dollars to euros is constantly changing. Please see this site to find the most up-to-date exchange rates:

<http://www.oanda.com/converter/travel>

Before your departure, you should also begin thinking about exchange rates in the foreign currency which you will be using when you make purchases here in the U.S.

This will help you become a little more comfortable converting money in your head before your arrival in your host country.

This is an **EXAMPLE** of a currency exchange chart from <http://www.oanda.com/converter/travel> Please note that currency exchange rates change every day, so check regularly for the most up-to-date rates.

USD	EUR	USD	EUR	USD	EUR
	1 = 0.75		10 = 7.45		100 = 75
	2 = 1.49		15 = 11.18		200 = 149
	3 = 2.24		20 = 14.90		300 = 224
	4 = 2.98		25 = 18.63		400 = 298
	5 = 3.73		30 = 22.35		500 = 373
	6 = 4.47		35 = 26.08		600 = 447
	7 = 5.22		40 = 29.80		700 = 522
	8 = 5.96		45 = 33.53		800 = 596
	9 = 6.71		50 = 37.25		900 = 671
			60 = 44.70		
			70 = 52.15		
			80 = 59.60		
			90 = 67.06		

**OANDA.com**  
FXCheatSheet for Travelers  
© 1997-2010 by OANDA, Corp.  
<http://www.oanda.com>

Interbank rate  
US Dollar (USD)  
Euro (EUR)  
April 10, 2010

EUR	USD	EUR	USD	EUR	USD
	1 = 1.34		10 = 13.42		100 = 134
	2 = 2.68		15 = 20.13		200 = 268
	3 = 4.03		20 = 26.84		300 = 403
	4 = 5.37		25 = 33.55		400 = 537
	5 = 6.71		30 = 40.26		500 = 671
	6 = 8.05		35 = 46.97		600 = 805
	7 = 9.39		40 = 53.68		700 = 939
	8 = 10.74		45 = 60.39		800 = 1074
	9 = 12.08		50 = 67.10		900 = 1208
			60 = 80.52		
			70 = 93.93		
			80 = 107.35		
			90 = 120.77		

**OANDA.com**  
FXCheatSheet for Travelers  
© 1997-2010 by OANDA, Corp.  
<http://www.oanda.com>

Interbank rate  
Euro (EUR)  
US Dollar (USD)  
April 10, 2010

## ACCESSING MONEY

### **TRAVEL MONEY CARDS/TRAVELERS CHECKS**

It is not recommended that you carry large amounts of cash with you. Travel money cards or travelers checks can be safer ways of carrying your money.

#### **Travel Money Cards**

**Visa Travel Money Card** – The Visa Travel Money Card is prepaid card; therefore, you can spend up to the card value anywhere Visa debit cards are accepted. You can also use the Travel Money Card to withdraw cash at any Visa/PLUS ATMs worldwide. Cards can be reloaded where they were purchased, online, or by phone. Use cash, funds from your bank account, credit or debit card to reload your card. If your card is lost or stolen, you can have the money refunded generally within 24 hours. Visa has a Zero Liability policy, which means you would not be responsible for any fraudulent purchases. It also offers emergency assistance services.

There are a number of fees associated with Visa Travel Money cards which can add up easily. If interested in using a Visa Travel Money card you will want to research into any additional costs associated with purchasing, reloading, and general use of the card.

For more information about the Visa Travel Money Card, visit

<https://usa.visa.com/pay-with-visa/cards/prepaid-cards/travel-money-card.html>

#### **Travelers Checks**

**American Express Travelers Checks** – While Travel Money Cards have become more common, traveler's checks from American Express can have some benefits. For example, they can usually be refunded within 24 hours if lost or stolen, they come with 24/7 customer support, and they never expire. A drawback is that these must still be exchanged for local currency before making a purchase and exchange locations may be limited.

For more information about American Express Travelers Checks, visit

<http://www212.americanexpress.com/dsmlive/dsm/dom/us/en/personal/cardmember/additionalproductsandservices/giftcardsandtravelerscheques/travelerschequesandforeigncurrency.do?vnextoid=6d17fc671492a110VgnVCM10000defaad94RCRD>

#### **AAA**

AAA offers both Visa Travel Money cards and travelers checks to members. For more detailed information about these options, go to AAA.com or contact your local AAA office.

## ***BANK TRANSFERS***

For certain host universities and programs abroad, students must make payments directly into a bank account. Programs that offer this payment option will provide the detailed account information needed to do so. You will need to check with your bank to see if they are able to conduct an international bank transfer. Most banks charge a fee, which is determined by each individual bank. We recommend that you contact your bank in order to determine what their transfer policies and fees are.

## ***AUTOMATIC TELLER MACHINES (ATMs)***



ATM cards issued by U.S. banks should work in other countries. There are two ATM systems worldwide: CIRRUS and PLUS. If you have a CIRRUS card, you need to use a CIRRUS machine; the same applies to PLUS. The PLUS or CIRRUS logo is located on the back of your card and on the front of each ATM. The machines work in the same way as they do in the U.S. and many machines have instructions in a variety of languages, including English. You will receive your cash in the currency of the country you are in and the equivalent amount will be deducted from your account at home. The exchange rate on these transactions is usually the best available; however your bank or the local bank may charge additional transaction fees.

## ***WESTERN UNION***

Western Union is one of the largest companies that offer wire transfer. Western Union allows individuals to transfer or receive money even if they do not have an account with Western Union or any other financial institution. Western Union has a number of divisions, with products such as person-to-person money transfer, money orders, and commercial services. The company has approximately 350,000 Western Union agent locations in over 240 countries and territories.

For more information about Western Union, its locations, and the services it offers, please visit its website at [www.westernunion.com](http://www.westernunion.com)

## ***MONEYGRAM INTERNATIONAL***

MoneyGram International is a financial services company that provides money transfer services, money orders, and bill payment services to consumers. MoneyGram has offices in 190 countries around the world. Similar to Western Union, MoneyGram offers highly secure and reliable person-to-person money transfers virtually to any place around the world, taking only minutes to transfer.

For more information about MoneyGram International, its locations, and the services it offers, please visit its website at [www.moneygram.com](http://www.moneygram.com)

## ***FOREIGN BANK ACCOUNT***

Opening a bank account in your host country may be required or recommended. By opening a foreign bank account, you will receive a debit card for that account. Using your debit card to withdraw money from your foreign account, as opposed to using your

American account, may save you a significant amount of money by cutting down on the number of international transaction fees. If you transfer a large sum of money from your American account into your foreign account, you can then rely primarily on your foreign account and debit card for day-to-day transactions. Most banks in France require proof of residency to open an account, so you need to bring a document to your appointment. Also, some of them only allow students who are studying for a full year to open a bank account.



Most banks have special student accounts and they might give you incentives for opening an account at their bank. I recommend using *Credit Lyonnais*.



If you plan on opening an account, I would recommend using *Crédit Agricole*, the leading local bank in France, which has a really nice account for students under the age of 25: *la carte Mozaïc* gives you discounts in many shops.

## CREDIT CARDS



Credit cards are helpful to have while abroad, especially to use for any emergency situations that may potentially arise. Visa is the most commonly accepted in the world among major credit cards.

Keep in mind, however, that not all merchants abroad accept credit cards. The amount found on your credit card statement will be based on the exchange rate on the day that your bank or credit card company processes the transaction. If the merchant doesn't submit in a timely fashion, the amount on your statement could be different from what you might have expected.

We recommend that you make copies of the front and back of your credit card(s) and leave some of these copies at home. If your card(s) were to get lost or stolen while you are abroad, you and your family would have the information for the cards on hand. We also recommend that you take the phone number of your credit card company(s) abroad with you. Previous study abroad participants have found it useful to put the phone number(s) of the company(s) on a small sheet of paper, which the students then kept with their passports.

Please pay attention to your credit limits. Make sure that you know what the credit limit is for each of your credit cards. Please note that newly acquired credit cards generally have low credit limits.

**We recommend that you advise your credit card company(s) and/or bank(s) that you will be studying abroad so that they will expect foreign transactions to appear on your monthly statements. This will avoid the possibility of the credit**

**card company and/or bank freezing your accounts because they are suspicious of foreign spending. You should notify them each time you travel out of your host country as well.**

If you are going to use a credit card while abroad you should make sure that it has a chip in it. This will ensure that you won't run into any problems using it at various locations. I used a Visa credit card with a chip that could be used internationally.

### ***INTERNATIONAL TRANSACTION FEES***

All credit card companies charge international transaction fees, usually in the form of a percentage of the total amount of the purchase, when their company's credit card is used abroad. We recommend that you contact your credit card company before your departure in order to find out what the international transaction fee is for your particular card. To help you remember that fee, we recommend that you write the percentage on the back of your credit card. This will remind you of the additional fees that you will incur with each purchase while you are abroad.



When using a credit card overseas, a special international purchasing fee may apply for each transaction. Please be sure to read the fine print on the contract you signed with your credit card company and contact them with any questions. Fees may vary from card to card, so it is important to know how much you will be charged ahead of time.

TIPPING (obtained from [http://www.discoverfrance.net/France/DF\\_tipping.shtml](http://www.discoverfrance.net/France/DF_tipping.shtml))



- Bills in bars and restaurants are required by law to include service, but it is customary to round out your bill with some small change unless you're dissatisfied. In expensive restaurants, it's common to leave an additional 5% of the bill on the table.
- Tip taxi drivers and hair stylists about 10% of the bill.
- In some theaters and hotels, cloakroom attendants may expect nothing (watch for signs that say "Pourboire Interdit" — tipping forbidden); otherwise, give them €0.75.
- Washroom attendants usually get €0.30, though the sum is often posted.
- If you stay more than two or three days in a hotel, it is customary to leave something for housekeeping — about €1.50 per day.
- Expect to pay about €1.50 (€0.75 in a moderately priced hotel) to the person who carries your bags or who hails you a taxi.
- Train and airport porters get a fixed sum (€0.90 - €1.50) per bag.



The bill you receive at a hotel, restaurant, café or bar includes a service charge already. It is the same for the taxi charge. You don't have to tip,

because the price already includes the tip. If you want to tip, you can give from several *centimes d'euros* to a few *euros* depending on the price, but you definitely don't have to, don't feel bad giving nothing.

## **COMMUNICATIONS**

### **EMERGENCY NUMBERS**

Before you depart, the Office of Global Education will provide you with an orange, wallet-sized emergency card. This card contains important information, including:

- The numbers that you must dial in order to call to the U.S. from your host country out of the U.S.
- The numbers that you must dial in order to call out of the U.S.
- The telephone numbers of the U.S. embassy and/or consulates that are located in your host country
- Your host country's emergency contact numbers (e.g., for fire and police)
- Emergency contact numbers for the Office of Global Education during office hours and, outside of the Office of Global Education's office hours, emergency contact numbers for the Millersville University Police Department

While you are abroad, please keep this orange card in your wallet at all times. You never know when you may need to reference it. Also, in case your wallet gets lost or stolen, we recommend that you place a copy of the card with any important documents that you may keep in your room.

### ***WITHIN HOST COUNTRY***

**Medical:** 15

**Police:** 17

**Fire:** 18

### **CALLING MILLERSVILLE**

**Office of Global Education:** (*within office hours: M-F 8:30am-4:30pm*) **717-871-7506**

**Millersville Emergency Number:** (*outside Global Education office hours*) **717-871-5506**

The *Millersville Emergency Number* should only be used in the case of a true study abroad emergency. Should you call the emergency number outside of our regular business hours, you will be connected with an Office of Global Education team member. If your call goes to voicemail, leave a very clear and detailed message with your first and last name, your study abroad location and a number to reach you. A member of our office will return your call promptly.



## **INTERNATIONAL TELEPHONE CALLS**

### ***FROM U.S. TO ABROAD***



Most areas in the U.S. are now able to directly dial internationally. Should you or your parents wish to make a direct-dial international call from the U.S., the procedure is:

### **FROM U.S. TO ABROAD**

1. Dial the international access code: 011
2. Dial the country code (France: **33**)
3. Dial the city code (normally a 1 to 5 digit number)
4. Dial the local number abroad

A cheap way for your parents to call you is to use 10 10 987. This can be used from any landline in the US and can connect to a landline in France or a cell phone for no extra charge. The fees can vary depending on the country but at the time of this handbook's publication, a call to France cost 55 cents to connect and 9 cents a minute after that.

<http://www.1010987.com/>

### **FROM ABROAD TO U.S.**

Should you wish to make a direct-dial international call from your host country to the U.S., the procedure is:

1. Dial the international access code: 00
2. Dial the U.S. country code: 1
3. Dial the U.S. area code
4. Dial the local U.S number

### **Calling Home Upon Arrival**

Some students wish to call home immediately upon their arrival in their host country to inform their families that they have arrived safely. Because students usually do not have a cell phone, phone card, or internet access upon their arrival, they may choose to make a collect call.

A collect call is when the calling party places a call, and the party receiving the call pays the expense. The simplest way to do this is to dial an operator from a payphone in your host country and tell the operator that you want to make a collect call to the United States. The operator will call the number you give them and ask the recipient if they will accept the fees for the call. If they accept, the operator will connect you.

### **SKYPE**



The Skype communications system is notable for its broad range of features, including free voice and video conferencing, and its ability to use peer to peer (decentralized) technology.

Skype users essentially make telephone calls and/or video calls through their computer using Skype software and the Internet. The basis of the system is free communication between users of Skype software; however, the product also allows Skype users to communicate with users of regular landline and mobile telephones and charges a reasonable per minute rate. This software is currently available free of charge and can be downloaded from the company website: <http://www.skype.com>.

WhatsApp is also the most popular messaging app used abroad. You can send text, picture, multimedia, and group messages to the entire world for free using WiFi or your data network.



Practically all of the international students used Skype. It's cheap and VERY easy to use. When you call people who also have Skype, the calls are free; when you call people who do not have Skype, the calls are very inexpensive compared to the price of phone calls with phone cards or cell phones. If you have a webcam, you can also video chat with other people who have Skype for free.

## **MOBILE TELEPHONE**

Depending upon the length of time you will be abroad, you may want to consider options for using a cell phone to make local calls from within your host country. Described below are two options for using a cell phone abroad. Either option is an additional expense and it is up to you to decide if this is necessary.

Most Millersville students decide to purchase cell phones with a pay-as-you-go plan. The prices of both the cell phone itself and the plans vary greatly from country to country. Upon your arrival, it is important to research the local cell phone providers in your host country to see which provider is best for you.

Two of the largest cell phone providers in France are Orange and SFR. Cell phones can be purchased in many stores throughout France.



Almost all of us used SFR. I would highly recommend that students buy a cell phone - even if they only use it for emergencies.

Another option is to replace your current cell phone's SIM card (if your phone has a SIM card) with an alternative SIM card. This process requires some research before departure and sometimes does not work with certain providers. A SIM card is a small card that lets the phone work on a particular mobile network. It can easily be swapped around in some phones. SIM cards for foreign networks can be purchased abroad at many locations including international airports, tabacs (tobacco stores), or supermarkets. Before departing for your host country, you should contact your cell phone provider and ask them if your phone will work in your host country. If it does, you should also ask whether they have locked your phone against use with a different SIM

card, and what, if anything, they will charge to unlock the phone. When purchasing a SIM card in your host country, make sure to ask if the alternative SIM card will expire after a fixed time. Often, you will pay a flat rate for the SIM card and instead of signing a contract; you can choose a pay-as-you-go plan.

## **CALLING CARDS**

We recommend if you plan to purchase calling cards, that you do so upon your arrival in your host country. Oftentimes, calling cards purchased in the United States do not work abroad. International calling cards can be purchased in many locations and can be a cheaper way to call home compared to using a cell phone. You can use international calling cards from public phones, from your cell phone or from landlines. The prices vary greatly and some cards have very cheap per minute rates so you should research these prices before purchasing.

Caution: If using an international calling card from a cell phone, you may have to pay for the minutes used on your cell phone as well as the minutes used on the international calling card. This varies by country and cell provider.

## **ELECTRICITY AND ELECTRONICS**



The standard electric current in Europe is 220 volt/ 50 cycle. You will need to purchase a converter in order to run and operate most American appliances.

More information about converters and adapters can be found under the heading “**Suggestions for Packing.**”

## **DVDs**

It is important to note as well that DVDs are formatted differently around the world. Most DVDs have a regional code, which generally restricts them from being played on American DVD players. You can purchase a universal or region-free DVD player which will allow you to play DVDs from every region. Many laptops will also play DVDs from different regions. Please note though that laptops generally only allow users to switch regions a limited number of times. Please research the number of times that the DVD player on your laptop will allow you to switch regions.

The DVD regional code for the United States, U.S. territories, Canada, and Bermuda is **1**. The DVD regional code for Europe is **2**.

## **CAMERA/PHOTO SUGGESTIONS**



If there is one piece of advice I would give anyone studying abroad it would be this: As soon as I came back from a weekend getaway or had a lot of pictures on my camera, I immediately uploaded them to the hard drive on my lap top. After that I uploaded those pictures onto walmart.com (or any other store that develops photographs - riteaid.com, walgreens.com, etc.). Once they were uploaded, I had the option of getting them developed, which I did. When

you are not using one hour photo, digital pictures can be relatively cheap. I chose the longest time period for them to develop (which is the least expensive) and had them shipped directly to my house. Every time I came back from a trip, I ordered my pictures, had them delivered to my home in the U.S., and my entire four months abroad was printed out and ready for me when I got home. I printed pictures out little by little, so I never had one big bill to pay. Waiting until you get home to develop all your photos will be very expensive. More than likely you will not have extra money to spend when you return home from your host country. Not only were my pictures ready when I came back but it saved me the trouble of printing them out. People have the tendency to never get their digital photos printed. I am guilty of leaving the pictures to sit on my camera for months. This is one experience you are not going to want to forget. Develop your pictures immediately and know that they are ready and paid for you when you come home.

I suggest uploading photos to Facebook or google photos as often as you can as well as bringing an external hard drive with you. I was lucky that every time I came back from a trip, I uploaded my pictures to Facebook even if I wanted to take more time to go through them, because my computer need up crashing and deleting all of my files from my computer. I lost some photos of days when I would just walk around Caen and take pictures or small memories of in class moments with friends that I didn't feel the need to upload to Facebook. I was glad overall that I did upload these because the majority of my photos exist there still. Usually at home I back up my files fairly often onto my external hard drive. It is definitely worth it to do so while abroad especially when you'll be taking lots of photos.

## **PRESS**

There are multiple popular newspapers in France that have great reputations. The most read, and arguably the best newspaper today in France is, *Le Monde*. Other popular newspapers in France are *Le Figaro*, *International Herald Tribune*, and *Courrier International*.

To improve my reading comprehension and learn more words I would grab the newspaper at least once a week and in between classes or during lunch just sit down with a highlighter and pencil and look up words I didn't know. It's a great way to learn about current events, culture, things going on in France / in Caen, and also to pick up key phrases. Some things might end up being discussed in class such as the Syrian Refugee crisis. Some weeks I even read the paper multiple times. There are free newspapers available in the Maison de l'étudiant.

## **TRAVELING IN HOST COUNTRY**

### **CARS**



Students may drive cars while abroad, but Millersville University will accept no responsibility in case of an accident or insurance problems. An International Driver's License may be required and can be purchased through the American Automobile Association (AAA).

### **TAXIS**



Taxis are available to get around towns and cities; however, they are not a bargain and you will end up paying about the same as you would for a taxi in the U.S. Nevertheless, it is highly recommended that you take taxis at night if you are out late. Outside of Paris, most bus lines don't run between midnight and 5 a.m., and late at night, bus stops can attract some unsavory characters. There are other cheaper options to taxis; such as Uber, Heetch (a similar app to Uber that is usually cheaper), and BlaBla Car ( a car sharing service).

### **BUSES**

Traveling by bus is not very popular in France (except in Paris). Because the French government strongly encourages people to travel by train in the country, there is no national bus system in France. Also, many travelers find that travelling by bus is neither the easiest nor the most convenient way to get around France.

Nevertheless, while buses are slower, less comfortable, and not as convenient as trains, they are also cheaper. For more information, please visit:

<http://www.bonjourlafrance.com/bus/>

If you are going to take the bus, there is a new service called Oui Bus which is relatively cheap in comparison to other bus lines. There are also a variety of destinations to choose from. For more information, please visit:

[http://www.ouibus.com/?gclid=Cj0KEQjw3Le4BRDxx5bk4aDn9t4BEiQAfmxQGYAMShAGtc7A1d1MH9UGQpgMg\\_7homGYUAnQI10IPoAaAhc-8P8HAQ](http://www.ouibus.com/?gclid=Cj0KEQjw3Le4BRDxx5bk4aDn9t4BEiQAfmxQGYAMShAGtc7A1d1MH9UGQpgMg_7homGYUAnQI10IPoAaAhc-8P8HAQ)

### **METRO**

Other means of transportation abroad include the subway (the *métro* in Paris). The *métro* is very easy to use; however, it does not operate in the early morning hours. Nevertheless, the *métro* is fast, convenient, and relatively inexpensive. Look for the saver passes for weekends or short stays, which will also work in conjunction with the bus service. In Paris, the metro system has recently introduced a new monthly pass, a Navigo Pass, that is by far the cheapest option. For 70 euros, you have unlimited use of the metro, bus, tram, and suburban train line (departing from inside the city only) for an entire month. Also be aware that every city has special discount prices for students. For more information, please visit <http://www.ratp.fr/>

## TRAINS



Combining convenience with inexpensive rates, perhaps the most widely used form of transportation within Europe is the railroad. Travel by rail within Europe will be a pleasant surprise. The trains are far more reliable in Europe than in the United States and travel to any destination worth visiting.

## ***RAIL PASSES***

### **INFORMATION ABOUT RAIL PASSES**

Information about these passes may be obtained from a travel agent. Rail passes are personal and nontransferable and will be forfeited if presented by anyone other than the person to whom they are issued. Presentation of your passport is compulsory when making use of the pass. Also, passes do not guarantee you a seat; some trains require seat reservations for a nominal/additional fee.

### **TYPES OF RAIL PASSES**

#### **EURAIL PASS**

The Eurail Pass must be purchased in the U.S., before departure. You choose which countries to visit and how long you want to travel for. This pass is limited to those under the age of 25. <http://www.eurail.com/>

#### **INTER-RAIL PASS**

The Inter-Rail Pass is available for purchase in Europe and cannot be purchased in advance in the U.S. Before purchasing this pass, you must be a resident of Europe for at least six months. It provides half-price travel in the country where you purchase it, and free travel in the rest of Europe, including much of Eastern Europe.

<http://www.interrail.eu/en>

### ***PAYING FOR THE TRAIN***

#### **YOUTH DISCOUNT CARD**

In France, you can get a discount on most second class tickets by having a *Carte Jeune* (12-27) and you can buy this *Carte* in any train station. The cost of the *Carte* is often easily made up after a few trips. For more information go to the SNCF (The French National Rail System: *Société Nationale des Chemins de Fers Français*), website:

<http://www.voyages-sncf.com/>

## FLIGHTS



Air travel is a bit more complicated than traveling by train because you need to find transportation to and from the airport, whereas train stations are generally found in the center of town. However, Ryanair (among others) is known for very reasonable prices and flies to almost every capital. You can find more information at [www.ryanair.com](http://www.ryanair.com).

## NOTES

### **DO NOT HITCHHIKE!**



Be careful when traveling and review the travel tips in this handbook before you go. Do not underestimate the amount of walking you will be doing in Europe.

For other traveling details and guidelines, you can look on the State Department Travel Advisory website: <http://travel.state.gov/content/passports/english/country/france.html>

A safer way of traveling via car is to carpool with friends using Bla Bla Car. It's an app (kind of like Uber) which allows you to pick a car heading to the same destination as you are. You and your friends can split the cost of a ride to Paris for example and you just have to meet the driver for your arrival and departure. You'll receive emails about the status of your trip and whether or not plans change or it will be cancelled. It is cheaper than a bus or train and relatively reliable. That being said it is still the safest to travel in groups and if anything seems out of the ordinary, trust your gut. You can always cancel.

## **MISCELLANEOUS TRAVEL INFORMATION**

### **HOSTELS**

A website that many students use to travel within Europe is [www.hostelworld.com](http://www.hostelworld.com). This lists every hostel that registers with the site and provides guest ratings and reviews and sometimes pictures. It also lists the price and allows you to reserve your bed.

Though private rooms are sometimes available, it is not uncommon to share a room with other travelers. This can be daunting to an American who may be used to more privacy; however, sharing hostel rooms is a common practice in Europe. While most travelers do not encounter any difficulties, it is still important that you use common sense and take precautions with your belongings. Many hostels allow you to use lockers but you should bring a lock and secure your luggage either way.

Many hostels require your passport at check-in, so even though some may suggest not taking your passport for domestic travels, it will be required for most hostels for their records.



I thought [www.hostelworld.com](http://www.hostelworld.com) was a helpful site and you don't generally need a membership card to stay at one of these hostels.

### **YOUTH HOSTELS**



A cheap place to sleep is a youth hostel. Here, you also get to meet a lot of interesting, young people from all over the world. Before you go, try to get some recommendations from some other students or online reviews. To save some more money, you can buy a Hostelling

International (HI) card). To learn more about this card, please check out [www.hiayh.org/](http://www.hiayh.org/)

There are also lots of cheap Hotels on the Ryanair website ([www.ryanair.com](http://www.ryanair.com)). The Auberges de Jeunesse is arguably the cheapest place for students to stay. You can find one almost everywhere, in France, as well as in Europe, and you can meet lots of students from all over the world. For more information, please visit <http://www.fuaj.org/> .

## **SAFETY AND SECURITY IN HOST COUNTRY**

(as taken from <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en.html> )

Violent, civil disorder is not a commonality in France; nevertheless, labor protests, student demonstrations, and other types of demonstrations have, in the past, developed into physical confrontations between demonstrators and police. U.S. citizens are advised to avoid any demonstrations, especially if riot police are present.

### **SAFETY TIPS – CRIME**

Generally speaking, France has a relatively low rate of violent crime. Nevertheless, there are a number of neighborhoods in the larger French cities that U.S. citizens should either avoid or be particularly cautious in. Thieves commonly target vehicles with non-local license plates and operate in or near tourist attractions (e.g., beaches, hotels, museums, monuments, restaurants, trains, airports, and subways). U.S. citizens in France should be particularly alert to pick-pockets in airports, train stations, and subways.

Although thieves may operate anywhere, the U.S. Embassy in Paris receives frequent reports of theft from Pigalle, the “adult entertainment district” of Paris. Many entertainment establishments in this area charge exorbitant prices for drinks. Reports of threats of violence to coerce patrons into paying excessive tabs are not uncommon. Visitors are encouraged to avoid this area unless touring with a well-organized and reputable tour company.

## **INTERNATIONAL CONVERSIONS**

### **24-HOUR CLOCK**



In the 24-hour clock system, the day runs from midnight to midnight and is divided into 24 hours. This system is the most commonly used time notation in the world today. If you subtract 12 from all times between 13:00 and 24:00, you will arrive at our standard afternoon and evening times. On the 24-hour clock, for example, 1:00 p.m. appears as 13:00.



## TIMES ZONES



There are different time zones around the world. Please keep this in mind when calling home. Be sure to remind friends and relatives of this time difference. You can check the world's different time zones at <http://www.timezoneconverter.com/>

France is 6 hours ahead of EST.

## METRIC SYSTEM



The metric system has been the standard in most countries for years; it is only the U.S. that has been out of step. If you are accustomed to thinking in terms of quarts, miles and pounds, it may take some time to get used to the metric system. Conversions that might be helpful:

1 gram	=	.04 ounces
1 kilogram	=	2.20 pounds
1 liter	=	1.06 quarts
1 meter	=	1.09 yards
1 kilometer	=	.62 miles

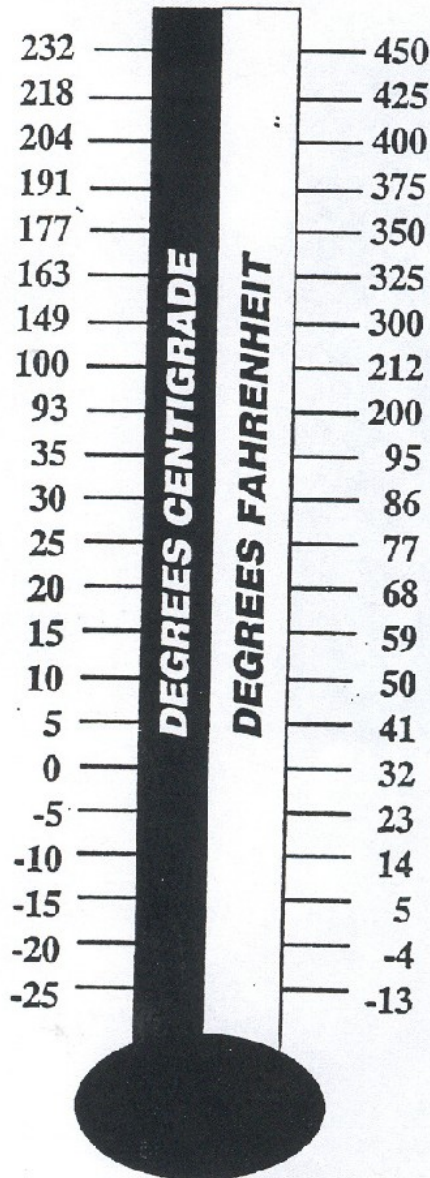
## MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION

### PHARMACIES

If you do need to buy medication while abroad (with or without a prescription) a pharmacy is where to go. You can locate a pharmacy by the flashing green cross in front of the store. While they generally keep the same business hours as other local businesses, at least one pharmacy per district is required to be open at all times. If a pharmacy is closed, the nearest open pharmacy will be posted on the storefront.

# CONVERSION CHART

## Temperature Conversion\*



### Length

	U.S.
1 centimeter (cm) (zentimeter)	0.4 in.
2.54 cm.	1 in.
15.24 cm.	6 in.
30.4 cm.	12 in.
91.4 cm.	36 in.
1 meter	39 in.
1 kilometer	0.62 mile
1,609.3 meters	1 mile

### Liquids

	U.S.
.94 liter	1 quart
1 liter	1.06 qt.
3.79 liters	1 gallon

### Weight

	U.S.
1 gram	0.04 oz.
28.35 grams	1 oz.
0.45 kilos	1 lb.
1 kilo (1000 grams)	2.21 lbs.

### Speeds

	U.S.
30 kph	19 mph
50 "	31 "
70 "	44 "
100 "	62 "
120 "	75 "
130 "	81 "

\* To convert Centigrade to Fahrenheit, multiply the Centigrade temperature by 1.8, and then add 32 to that number. To convert Fahrenheit to Centigrade, take degrees Fahrenheit, then subtract 32 and divide by 1.8.

## SIZE CONVERSION CHART

### SWEATERS

	USA	France
<i>women</i>	30	36
	32	38
	34	40
	36	42
	38	44
	40	46
	42	48

	USA	France
<i>men</i>	34	44
	36	46
	38	48
	40	50
	42	52
	44	54
	46	56
	48	58

### TROUSERS, JEANS

	USA	France
<i>women</i>	4	34
	6	36
	8	38
	10	40
	12	42
	14	44

	USA	France
<i>men</i>	26	36
	28	38
	30	40
	32	42
	34	44
	36	46
	38	48
	40	50

### SHIRTS

	USA	France
<i>men &amp; women</i>	XS	1
	S	2
	M	3
	L	4
	XL	5

### SHOES

	USA	France
<i>women</i>	3 1/2	34
	4	35
	5	36
	6	37
	6 1/2	38
	7 1/2	39
	8	40
	9	41

	USA	France
<i>men</i>	6 1/2	39
	7	40
	8	41
	9	42
	10	43
	10 1/2	44
	11 1/2	45
	12	46

# Section 3

## Program-Specific Information

### TABLE OF CONTENTS – Section 3

PARTNERSHIP/PROGRAM OVERVIEW .....	2
UNIVERSITY INFORMATION:.....	2
PARTNERSHIP/PROGRAM INFORMATION: .....	2
MU RELATIONSHIP/INTERNATIONAL OFFICE SUPPORT .....	2
BILLING PROCESS .....	3
HOUSING .....	3
FOOD OPTIONS:.....	4
COMMUNICATION IN YOUR UNIVERSITY: .....	5
HEALTH SERVICES:.....	6
ARRIVAL.....	6
GETTING TO YOUR HOST DESTINATION .....	6
ORIENTATION PROCESS .....	7
OPENING A BANK ACCOUNT .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
ACADEMICS.....	7
ACADEMIC CALENDAR .....	7
CLASSES/SCHEDULING: .....	7
EXAMS.....	8
ACADEMIC GRADE CONVERSION.....	8
EXTRACURRICULAR OPPORTUNITIES:.....	9
LIFE IN YOUR HOST CITY.....	10
OVERVIEW OF HOST CITY:.....	10
CLIMATE AND WEATHER: .....	10
LOCAL TRANSPORTATION:.....	11
COMMUNICATION IN YOUR HOST CITY .....	11
INTERNET: .....	11
POST OFFICES .....	12
RESTAURANTS/FOOD .....	12
SHOPPING .....	13
OPENING HOURS.....	13
HOSPITALS .....	13

## **PARTNERSHIP/PROGRAM OVERVIEW**

### **UNIVERSITY INFORMATION:**

Since its inception, the American Business School Paris has attracted students to Paris from all around the world and has evolved from a uniquely Franco-American vision to a completely global approach to business education.

Students interested in a diverse educational experience will find it by coming to the American Business School Paris where they are immediately immersed in an international setting. More than 50% of the students come from outside France and represent close to 65 nationalities. The campus is home to 10 schools and over 3,000 students. At the American Business School Paris, students learn to understand cultural and behavioral differences from the first day in class.

The American Business School Paris is based in one of the most famous cities in the world: Paris. The modern campus is centrally located on the Parodi Campus of IGS (Institut de Gestion Sociale) near the picturesque Canal St. Martin. Paris is a city to discover. Students see the sights, visit the museums - they're all part of the experience. You can also jump on the metro or a bus and get off at a place you've never heard of, wander through a quartier where French mixes with Arabic or Vietnamese, poke your head into mysterious shops, have lunch in a local restaurant, or just perch on a cafe terrace and let yourself fall in love with your very own Paris.

### ***PARTNERSHIP/PROGRAM INFORMATION:***

Recognizing that Millersville students were interested in studying business in international cities such as Paris, Millersville partnered with American Business School Paris in 2005. Since this time, many students have spent a semester or academic year in Paris learning international Business, Administration, Management, Economics, Marketing, and Finance as well as dabbling in a few Arts & Culture courses. We have a good working relationship with the ABS International Office, as well as the upper administration of the university, who are very much supportive of our international collaboration.

### ***MU RELATIONSHIP/INTERNATIONAL OFFICE SUPPORT***

American Business School Paris has a fully staffed International Office available to provide assistance to exchange students in Paris. They are very accessible and able to assist with most inquiries. Students will receive more information about the university and their procedures at a 3 day orientation provided by the International Office when they arrive.

The American Business School of Paris is located at 12 rue Alexandre Parodi – 75010 Paris, FRANCE

## **BILLING PROCESS**

### Semester/Year:

When you study abroad for a semester or year at ABS, you will still be billed according to the MU billing cycle. In other words, the fact that you are studying abroad does not affect the time at which you will receive your semester bill. You will be billed current rates for Millersville tuition, MU technology fee and the American Business School Program charge.

Students are responsible for (and **NOT** billed by Millersville for):

- **Miscellaneous Expenses** - visa fees, airfare, personal spending money, transport to and from the airport, books/texts, and passport, French "Sécurité Sociale" fee and French "fiscal stamp" fee (both paid in France).
- **Accommodations**

### Summer:

You will pay ABS directly via Credit Card (visa) upon your arrival for your summer tuition. You will not be billed by Millersville University for the summer.

Refer to the cost worksheet for a complete list of relevant costs, both billed and estimated for budgeting purposes.

## **HOUSING**

ABS offers multiple housing options that you decide upon in the application. Details and specifics will be sent to you by ABS. Or, you may choose a homestay. If you choose a homestay your monthly rent will include breakfast and will vary depending on how many dinners you choose (0-5.)

### **HOMESTAY**

**Taken from (<http://fau.edu/goabroad/pdf/2012-2013%20Student%20Guide.pdf> )**

The average Parisian family is quite small, and may comprise one or no children. Finding a family in which there is a student of your age doing studies equivalent to yours is next to impossible as young people tend to move out as soon as possible, especially in Paris.

Food is an important part of French culture and the French will really want you to try specialties. If you find yourself in front of something unusual, be polite and say something like "I have never eaten this before." Try it, unless religious or other deep convictions prohibit you!

Meals apart from breakfast are a communal sit down affair, and you don't just turn up when you feel like it to eat something. If you think you are going to be late, it is better to warn your family. They will very often not start to eat before you arrive unless you tell them you are going to be late. It is a good idea to help when meals are being prepared

or after. Also, do not help yourself to things in the fridge unless invited specifically, and even then, tell them that you took something. You should try to adapt to the dress code in your family, which may be more formal than you are used to. Smoking habits will differ from family to family. If this is an issue for you, check out the situation before committing yourself.

When living with a family, you will be sharing space with people. Be careful you are not monopolizing someone's favorite armchair, or the bathroom at a crucial time. Remember also to lock the bathroom door in France in order to avoid embarrassing situations... Friction and tension can be created by guests not turning off lights when leaving a room or leaving the heating turned up during the day when they are not there. The French are energy conscious.

### **FOOD OPTIONS:**

Students do not have any type of meal plan through the ABS, however, there is a cafeteria on campus. Therefore, students have many different food options while at ABS. You will have access to a kitchen if you choose an apartment, so students can cook their own meals. If you choose a homestay, breakfast is provided and dinners (0-5 times a week) are available with an additional cost.



Cafeteria is an extremely loose term for what is on the campus. It basically looks like a deli with an oven and an espresso machine. There are cold sandwiches (kind of like a half sub) and then hot sandwiches. There are cookies, apples, soda, and coffee. That's about it. But there are about 10 restaurants and 5 grocery stores all within a block or so of campus. They all are really cheap because they are trying to attract the students. I would say that you could find a decent lunch for about 8 euros (drink and dessert included). A lot of restaurants around school have "formule" options. Meaning that you can get a drink, dessert, and a sandwich of sorts for really cheap. Also I do know that some students would pack their lunch and bring it to school too. There also is a Subway maybe ten feet from campus.



Campus is also a really loose term. It consists of one main building and two "side" buildings that are used if necessary. I would recommend that students know that since it is in Paris, and squeezed in a neighborhood, that their college campus isn't going to be like what they are used to at Millersville. That was one of the major culture shocks to me. But that also may be because I didn't go to college in a major city.



## COMMUNICATION IN YOUR UNIVERSITY:

### COMPUTERS

American Business School Paris advises students to bring laptops, if you have one. Previous students have said that it is much easier with one.



ABS has a library in the lower floor of the building. There are four computers there. Those are the only computers offered in the entire school system, even for IGS. If a student does not bring a laptop, I really don't know how they would be able to get any work done. Also, if they are going to bring a laptop, I would keep a close eye on it.



I would absolutely recommend bringing a laptop. Not only does it make doing schoolwork much easier, but it allows you to access the internet from your apartment room. ABS does have computers in the library, but having your own for personal use is highly recommended.

**There are now 12 computers in the IGS library! It is still as hassle to secure a computer at peak times, so I still suggest bringing your laptop to school with you.**

### INTERNET



The school does have wireless. However, they have some sort of program that blocks internet usage on phones and tablets. So it does take a while for laptops to hook up to the internet. A password and username are provided to students on their first day of orientation. **They now have internet access on your phones and tablet.**



The school does have a library but it is about the size of two classrooms in McComsey combined. Mainly students use it to study right before an exam. It is nice because the windows can open up and it is surrounded by gardens. Also as a side note: the school does not have air conditioning. Students should remember this every single day!!

## **HEALTH SERVICES:**

Taken from (<http://fau.edu/goabroad/pdf/2012-2013%20Student%20Guide.pdf> )

France is a country at the forefront of medical research and treatment and practice. There are doctors one trusts more or less in any country, but you can certainly trust the medical and paramedical profession in France.

In case, you need it there is an Emergency medical hotline: dial 3624. You can phone this number if you want a house call outside normal doctor's office hours. They will send an English speaking doctor.

If you require any other form of medical advice, contact the International Programs Office which will refer you to a doctor.

To stay in shape, students Access to top-level sporting facilities at the CDFAS (Centre Départemental de Formation et d'Animation Sportive) in Eaubonne, near Paris.

## **SOCIAL SECURITY**

French law states that all international students staying in France for more than 3 months MUST enroll in the "Sécurité Sociale" (which is the national health system). This enrollment is done at time of registration, and during orientation at Caen. An original Birth Certificate is required at time of enrollment. The cost of the *Sécurité Sociale* is approximately 250 Euros. This will be paid upon arrival at the FLE/Carré office.

## **ARRIVAL**

### **GETTING TO YOUR HOST DESTINATION**

ABS recommends you book a shuttle to your apartment and will send more information in your official acceptance letter. "PariShuttle" mini-van service operates 7 days/7: Same rates from the Paris Airport (Charles de Gaulle.) It is approximately 20 € per person (when 2 or more people) or 31 € for one person. Group discounts, no extra charge for luggage. **Book online at least 2 weeks before your flight.** (A taxi will cost 45-60 €)

Tel: 01 53 39 18 18, web site: <http://www.parishuttle.com>

International Programs Office of IGS University:

IGS University Tel: 01 40 03 15 04

12, rue Alexandre Parodi

75010 Paris

Métro stations: Louis Blanc (line 7) or Jaurès (line 2)

The International Program Offices are located in rooms 503 and 504, and is open between 9am and 6pm Monday through Friday. The American Business School is located in rooms 408 to 416. In case of emergencies outside those hours, call Mr. Jarlath Dillon at 01 47 00 67 45.

## **ORIENTATION PROCESS**

After arrival, ABS offers a comprehensive Orientation Program which includes an introduction to Paris, the school, accommodations, money, transportation, as well as an Intercultural Seminar.



I would recommend that students go to every single orientation opportunity... On the first day you go on a boat cruise of the Seine, where the school provides you with wine and cheese. You also will probably make your friends for the semester in this orientation process. The group of kids I met in this orientation program on the first day were the ones that I was with every day for the rest of the semester.

## **ACADEMICS**

### **ACADEMIC CALENDAR**

Every school operates according to a different academic calendar. The academic calendar marks the first day of the semester, the last day of the semester, holidays, breaks, and the beginning and end of finals. At ABS the fall semester usually begins at the beginning of September and ends mid-December, before the holidays. The spring semester begins late January/early February and ends the very end of May.

For more information about the current ABS academic calendar can be found at: <http://www.absparis.org/en/academic/bba/calendar/>

### **CLASSES/SCHEDULING:**

ABS semester courses are offered to full time students, in which international undergraduate students attend classes with their ABS peers. Students at ABS are registered for 12-15 total academic credits. With a fully modular course load students can take from 5 classes per semester, which allow them to have after school activities. Students can take many of the ABS regular courses according to their needs and it is suggested to take one French Language course. Students desiring advanced French not offered by ABS may take courses through a special arrangement at the Sorbonne for an additional fee.

All regular classes at ABS are 3 hours long meeting once a week. Think of a 6-9 here at Millersville, except throughout the entire day. For example, I took a course at ABS that was 2:30pm-5:30pm meeting every Monday. For some special classes that require more credits, such as some of the fashion classes, classes may be 3 hours twice a week or 6 straight hours! It is definitely something that takes some getting used to!

For more information about courses and the current course catalog find:  
<http://www.absparis.org/en/academic/bba/course-catalog/>

Please, please, please double check the catalog!! While I was completing my ABS application, the ABS website wasn't updated and was still using last year's catalog. They didn't update the catalog until late June, which caused me to have to switch one of the classes I was planning to take in the fall! If you notice the previous year's catalog on the ABS website, please contact the Global Ed office so that they can reach out to ABS for the current year's catalog. Save the stress and the hassle!

## EXAMS



In almost every class there is a midterm and a final. Rarely are there exams or quizzes in between. This school heavily relies on group projects. Out of the four classes I had last semester, 3 of them had a group project that was a major percentage of my final grade. Exams are normally comprehensive, but some teachers allow a study guide of sorts during the exam. Exams are pretty strict though. Cell phones, purses, and backpacks are turned in as soon as you walk in the door and you can't have them until you have turned in your exam and then exited the testing room. A proctor (who isn't the teacher) watches you (like a hawk) while you take the test. And they are not afraid to call out people whom they suspect of cheating. The tests are open essay, not really multiple choice. The teachers like you to tell them what you have learned, instead of giving you options. So expect a lot of open-ended essays and short answers.



Tests at ABS will consist mainly of short answer and essay questions. Multiple choice questions are very rare in European tests. Also some classes may substitute projects for exams.

## ACADEMIC GRADE CONVERSION

The final grade in a course is a letter grade, at times followed by a + or - sign. Each letter grade has a point value, and ABS uses the following scale :

<b>ABS</b>	<b>Millersville</b>	<b>GPA</b>
<b>A</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>4.0</b>
<b>A-</b>	<b>A-</b>	<b>3.67</b>
<b>B+</b>	<b>B+</b>	<b>3.33</b>
<b>B</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>3.00</b>
<b>B-</b>	<b>B-</b>	<b>2.67</b>
<b>C+</b>	<b>C+</b>	<b>2.33</b>
<b>C</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>2.00</b>
<b>C-</b>	<b>C-</b>	<b>1.67</b>
<b>D+</b>	<b>D+</b>	<b>1.33</b>
<b>D</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>1.00</b>
<b>D-</b>	<b>D-</b>	<b>0.67</b>
<b>F</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>0.00</b>

American Business School grades in the A range are excellent, in the B range good, in the C range fair, and in the D range poor. Any grade under C- is considered a failure.

The American Business School requires students to maintain a minimum GPA of 2.5 during their studies at the school.

Percentage grades:

ABS uses the following scale to convert the grades into letter grades :

100 - 90 A to A-  
 89 - 80 B+ to B-  
 79 - 70 C+ to C-  
 69 - 60 D+ to D-  
 < 60 F

### **EXTRACURRICULAR OPPORTUNITIES:**

Study Abroad students may take part in student clubs, social events, weekend trips and sports such as soccer, basketball, & rugby teams.

Additionally, there are many ways that study abroad students can get involved in the greater IGS University community (Institut de Gestion Sociale) through American Business School Paris, to try new things and open doors to meet new people. For more information about extracurricular activities, excursions and getting involved check out: <http://www.absparis.org/en/about-us/student-life/> Moreover, the CIS (The Council of International Studies,) provides non-French students with a wide range of opportunities to get to know Paris, including Excursions, Visits, Trips and general assistance.

# LIFE IN YOUR HOST CITY

## **OVERVIEW OF HOST CITY:**



Last semester abroad was easily the best four months of my life and every day I think about dropping everything here and going back.

(Taken from: <http://www.absparis.org/en/about-us/living-in-paris/> )

Paris, the capital of France and also known as the “City of Lights” is a centerpiece of world culture and business. Situated on the River Seine, Paris is a confluence of political dynamism, educational excellence, fashion innovation and artistic inspiration. With an abundance of monuments that capture the glorious past of France, and its impact on modern civilization, Paris also creates an atmosphere epitomizing the cutting edge of modern trends. Famous sites and landmarks such as the Eiffel Tower, the Louvre Museum, the Notre Dame Cathedral and the Champs Elysees have established Paris as one of the world most popular tourist destinations.

More information: <http://www.paris.fr/>

## **CLIMATE AND WEATHER:**

(Taken from: <http://www.paris-paris-paris.com/tourism/climate>)

Paris lies in the midst of the Ile de France region, which has France's lowest rainfall, however the city is known for its unexpected rain showers which can occur at any time of year. Summer temperatures are mild to warm, with occasional heat waves, while winters are very chilly with temperatures hovering around freezing point.

	<b>Maximum</b>	<b>Minimum</b>
Paris weather in January	6°C / 43°F	1°C / 34°F
Paris weather in February	7°C / 45°F	1°C / 34°F
Paris weather in March	11°C / 52°F	3°C / 37°F
Paris weather in April	14°C / 57°F	6°C / 43°F
Paris weather in May	18°C / 64°F	9°C / 48°F
Paris weather in June	21°C / 70°F	12°C / 54°F
Paris weather in July	24°C / 75°F	14°C / 57°F
Paris weather in August	24°C / 75°F	14°C / 57°F
Paris weather in September	21°C / 70°F	11°C / 52°F
Paris weather in October	15°C / 59°F	8°C / 46°F
Paris weather in November	9°C / 48°F	4°C / 39°F
Paris weather in December	7°C / 45°F	2°C / 36°F



It rains about every other day in Paris. So keep an umbrella in your bag!  
You really never know when you might need it!

## SUMMER SESSIONS:



June weather in Paris is fairly mild and will mostly stay in the 60s. In July it was a bit warmer, but still nothing compared to a Pennsylvania summer. Also there is not much humidity there, overall the weather was fairly pleasant.

## LOCAL TRANSPORTATION:

Paris is known for their very large public transportation system. Travelling around the city is made facilitated by around 300 stations and 16 metro lines. It is simple and only takes minutes to navigate from one end of the city to the other.

For details on all of methods of public transportation in Paris:

<http://en.parisinfo.com/how-to-get-to-and-around-paris/transports-in-paris-and-the-paris-region/public-transport>



In order to use the metro, you need to purchase your NAVIGO pass. During my semester it was 70 euros for the month.

## COMMUNICATION IN YOUR HOST CITY

### **INTERNET:**

Taken from (<http://fau.edu/goabroad/pdf/2012-2013%20Student%20Guide.pdf> )

The PC's at IGS are equipped with the French versions of Microsoft Word and Excel for Windows. The keyboards at IGS are also "French" (**AZERTY keyboards**) and slightly different from what you may be used to (**QWERTY keyboards**).

We recommend, if you have already have them, to bring a laptop computer. Please note that the campus is Wireless (Wi-Fi).

You have access to photocopying facilities in the student library. To use these machines, you have to buy a credit card from the librarian (5 € for 50 copies, 10 € for 100, and 15€ for 200). Any credit left on the card will be reimbursed at the end of your stay.

You can use the pay phones in the lobby on the ground floor. Urgent faxes can be sent or received from the American Business School. The fax number is + 33 1 40 03 15 05. ABS retains the right to decide if a fax is urgent or not and charge for incoming faxes if the fax is not deemed urgent.



I know that not all of the apartments in Paris have internet. It really depends on where you stay. But the good thing is, at least one of your friends will be staying in a place where there is internet. Also, every Starbucks has internet. Most cafes and restaurants have wifi and you can get the password as long as you purchase something. The great thing is as long as you purchase one drink, you're more than welcome to stay for as long as you like!

### **POST OFFICES**

It is rare to find post offices in Paris that are open at all hours. Many postal services are closed after 6pm and not open on weekends. One exception is the Louvre Post Office which is a massive post office located at 52 Rue du Louvre, 75001 Paris, France. They also have western union, a bank and automatic shipping machines with English language capabilities.



There is a post office right around the corner from school. You walk by it every morning on your way there. And every worker there knows at least enough English to help you out!

Post offices near ABS:

La Poste  
18 Boulevard de la Chapelle  
75018 Paris  
France

La Poste  
GARE DE L EST  
4 Rue du 8 Mai 1945  
75010 Paris, France

### **RESTAURANTS/FOOD**

Food is an all important item in French culture. The French love eating and you will find food shops all over Paris. There are regular supermarkets, grocery stores and specialized food shops everywhere. Also, be prepared for some pleasant surprises - the quality, freshness, and flavor of food has to be tasted to be believed.

There are also the late night shops or convenience stores in most areas of Paris. They are usually more expensive than supermarkets and Parisians generally use them in case of emergency. They stay open to 10:00 p.m. or later. You can check with your



local one. Regular shops open between 8:00 and 10:00 a.m. and often close from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. to reopen until 6.30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. *The Monoprix on the Champs Elysées stays open until midnight (Métro Franklin D. Roosevelt, food downstairs). The cheapest supermarket chains are Ed, G20, Franprix, and Leader Price.*

In certain circumstances, in shops other than a supermarket, the salesperson is liable to say something incomprehensible, hand you a receipt, refuse your money and not give you the goods when you want to pay for (even though he has been using a cash register). *This means that you have to go to the cash desk which you will usually find near the exit. You pay there and have the receipt stamped payé (paid) before reclaiming the goods from the salesperson.*

Restaurants are everywhere. For a guide to inexpensive restaurants, buy a copy of "Le guide du routard-Paris" (in French). Also, ask people for good places to go.



Avoid restaurants and cafes in the 'touristy' areas. Often they are very overpriced and don't offer 'authentic' Parisian cuisine. Be sure to make use of neighborhood boulangerie 's for affordable sandwiches and pasties.

**I'm not too sure what it is about French food, but a good number of students studying abroad in Paris, including myself, lost weight while living in Paris! A few of my female friends even noticed their skin and nails looking and feeling healthier!**

## **SHOPPING**

You can literally shop 'til you drop in Paris. From upscale shops and boutiques to markets – there is truly something for everyone!

Visit the following site for a few shopping options, but just get out, walk around, and browse the streets.

<http://www.lonelyplanet.com/france/paris/shopping>  
<http://www.paristopten.com/shopping-streets/>

## **OPENING HOURS**

Most of the shops are open Monday through Saturday from 9 or 10 am to 7 or 8 pm. Restaurants usually open around 11 am for lunch and around 7 pm for dinner, which is later than the American restaurants because people usually eat dinner around 8:30 pm.

## **HOSPITALS**

American Hospital (They speak English...)

Tel: 01 46 41 25 25

63, boulevard Victor Hugo

92200 Neuilly-sur-Seine

(suburb very close to Paris)

