

University of Southern Maine
Office of International Exchange

Are YOU Ready To Depart?

In preparation for your study abroad experience we want to just remind you of a few questions that you should consider prior to your departure. This handy check-list should help avoid any last minute anxiety and potential problems upon arrival in your host country.

Do you have a passport? If not you should apply immediately. For information on how to obtain a passport you should visit the US Department of State website at http://travel.state.gov/passport/passport_1738.html

Program Dates: Do you know that dates your program begins and end? Check with your program provider or the website of your study abroad program to confirm dates if needed so that you can begin planning for airline tickets.

Have you completed the necessary paperwork for your school abroad: This will be slightly different for each student, but often there will be course proposals, a general application and housing application to fill out for the school that has accepted you? Double check with your program provider to be sure they have everything they need, or if you're going on a reciprocal exchange check with Kimberly in the International Office.



Airline Tickets: Do you have your paper tickets and itinerary? Or do have a confirmation of your e-tickets? Have you left a copy of your schedule with family or a close friend?

Health Insurance: Does your current health insurance policy cover you while abroad? Do you know how it works while your abroad (will you have to pay all costs locally and then submit bills to your insurer upon your return?) If you don't have health insurance you should consider temporary health insurance designed for study abroad student. Very often students are **required** to have health insurance in order to obtain a student visa.

Two policies used by our students in the past with positive experiences are:

- Health Care Global 2000: <http://www.wallach.com/hcglobal2000.asp>
- US Study Abroad Plan by HTH Worldwide:
http://www.hthstudents.com/healthInsurance_selectState.cfm

☐ **Student Visa:** Do you need a student visa or an entry permit? If you do have you obtained it? If it's an electronic process do you have a printed confirmation that you completed the on-line process to bring with you?

Students studying in the following countries should check the Consul website for student visa/entry permit requirements. If you are working with a program provider (example, AIFS, Butler, AustraLearn, CEA) you should check with them directly for assistance with the visa process. **If you have additional questions you should contact the appropriate embassy. Contact information for all of the embassies below can be found at <http://www.embassy.org/embassies/>**

Australia	Students going to Australia should work with their program provider on the <i>electronic</i> visa process. However, some general information can be found on line at http://www.austemb.org/DIMA/visiting/eta.html
Bulgaria	http://www.consulbulgaria-ny.org/visas.htm
England	It is highly recommended by our partners in the UK that all students going to England obtain a student entry permit, even if they are going for less than 3 months as this permit includes permission to work part time. http://www.britainusa.com/visas/articles_show_nt1.asp?i=65009&L1=41000&a=41074
France	http://www.consulfrance-boston.org/article.php3?id_article=666
Japan	http://www.boston.us.emb-japan.go.jp/eng/visa_services/visa.html
Italy	http://www.esteri.it/visti/home_eng.asp
Latvia	Students going to Latvia for more than 90 days will need to obtain a Residence Permit http://www.ocma.gov.lv/?_p=362&menu_id=12
Netherlands	http://www.ind.nl/en/Images/Verblijf_ENG_tcm6-595.pdf Student going to the Netherlands do not need to obtain a visa prior to departure, but must register upon arrival in the Netherlands. Be sure to read up on what you need to bring with you, including the cost!
Russia	http://www.ruscon.org/
Spain	http://www.spainconsul-ny.org/Boston/english/visastub.htm
Switzerland	http://www.eda.admin.ch/washington_emb/e/home/consular/visas/vistyp/study/citiz.html

Immigration: Do you have everything you need to pass through immigration upon arrival in the foreign country. Usually students need their passport, a letter of acceptance form their school/program abroad, proof of sufficient funding to cover their costs, proof they plan to leave the country (a round-trip ticket) and a student visa in some cases. You should double check the consulate website for the country you are studying in to make sure you have everything required to enter as a student.

Medical Issues: Do you need any medical exams or immunizations for the country you are traveling to? Visit the CDC website at http://www.hthstudents.com/healthInsurance_selectState.cfm
Are you traveling with prescriptions? Do you have copies of the prescriptions with you in case you're asked by immigration to produce them, or if you need to obtain additional medical abroad?

Copies of Important Documents: Have you left copies of your passport, identification, and contact information with your family or a close friend?

International Student ID card: Did you obtain your International Student ID card from the USM Office of International Exchange or your study abroad provider? They cost \$22 at USM and you need to bring with you the following: 2 passport photos, your student ID, a photo ID and \$22 (cash or check).

Do you know what happens when you land: Will someone from the school or program be meeting you upon your arrival? Do you have to take a train or taxi? Do you know how to get to campus?

Scholarships and/or Bills: If you're paying USM have you paid your bill prior to departure? If you're receiving a refund of financial aid or a USM study abroad scholarship have you made arrangements for a family member to pick up the refund for you and deposit it in your account? Do you need a power of attorney for financial matters? **Most of these arrangements will need to be made in advance** with Virginia Johnson, USM's Bursar located in Corthell Hall in Gorham or via phone at 780-5111 or by e-mail at virginia@usm.maine.edu

Local Currency: Have you or will you (prior to departure) obtain some local currency in case you need a taxi upon arrival? Some major banks can sell you international currency and there are *bureaus de changes* in several larger airports.

Banking: Will your bank accounts be accessible while you are abroad? Will you rely on a debit card or credit? Will you bring traveler's cheques? Will you be able to access your funds via an ATM, will there be additional charges for currency conversion? These are all good questions to ask your bank prior to your departure.



Bring your camera and e-mail us some photos during your trip to let us know how you're doing. Plus we'd love to share them with other USM students, faculty and staff by posting them on our website.

Mandatory Pre-Departure Orientation is
Scheduled for Friday, December 1st from 9:30 to 11:30 AM in room #1
Payson Smith on the USM Portland Campus.

See you then, if not before!

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