

# **PARENT/GUARDIAN HANDBOOK: A GUIDE TO STUDY ABROAD**



**PROVIDENCE COLLEGE CENTER FOR GLOBAL EDUCATION**  
**<http://global-education.providence.edu/>**

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| <b>Welcome from the Center for Global Education</b>                                 | <b>2</b>  |
| <b>Study Abroad Basics</b>  | <b>3</b>  |
| What is study abroad?   |           |
| When do students study abroad?  |           |
| Who are the students that study abroad?   |           |
| Where can students study abroad?  |           |
| Why do students study abroad?   |           |
| How are students able to study abroad?  |           |
| <b>Pedagogical Goals for Study Abroad</b>   | <b>5</b>  |
| <b>Academics</b>  | <b>6</b>  |
| Course Options  |           |
| Course Load   |           |
| Credits and Grades: Providence College Credit, Pass/Fail Policy, Transfer Credit    |           |
| Differences in Academic Systems   |           |
| <b>Finances</b>   | <b>7</b>  |
| Semester and Academic Year Study Abroad Costs: Two Invoices                         |           |
| Payment Plans   |           |
| Budgeting for a Semester or Academic Year Abroad                                    |           |
| Summer and Winter Intersessions Study Abroad Costs: Two Invoices                    |           |
| Budgeting for Short-Term Study Abroad   |           |
| Scholarships and Grants for Study Abroad  |           |
| Withdrawing from Study Abroad   |           |
| <b>Housing</b>  | <b>9</b>  |
| Housing at Providence College   |           |
| Housing Abroad  |           |
| <b>Health and Safety</b>  | <b>10</b> |
| Health Abroad   |           |
| How students can prepare to stay healthy and remain healthy when they arrive        |           |
| Disability Accommodations   |           |
| Safety Abroad   |           |
| Emergencies   |           |
| <b>Before, During, and After Study Abroad</b>                                       | <b>13</b> |
| Steps to keep in mind throughout the process  |           |
| <b>Appendix I: Parent/Guardian Financial Statement of Understanding</b>             | <b>17</b> |
| <b>Appendix II: Financial Aid Study Abroad FAQ</b>                                  | <b>20</b> |
| <b>Appendix III: Providence College Semester and Academic Year Study Abroad Fee</b> | <b>22</b> |
| <b>Appendix IV: Providence College Short-Term Study Abroad Fee</b>                  | <b>23</b> |
| <b>Important Contact Information Form</b>   | <b>24</b> |



PROVIDENCE  
COLLEGE

*Center for Global Education*

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Congratulations on your student's decision to study abroad! The Providence College Center for Global Education (CGE) is committed to offering high-quality study abroad programs to our students, and we are available to assist students and families throughout the process from the program selection to the return home and beyond. The CGE places a strong emphasis on pre-departure preparations, at which time questions and concerns abound. While study abroad is an enriching and transformative experience, we understand that it can also be challenging and unfamiliar.

One of the primary goals of the CGE is to foster in our students the independence and responsibility necessary to be successful abroad. Therefore, we consider students to have the primary responsibility for keeping their families informed of their plans and for sharing information related to study abroad. All communication is sent purposefully only to the students. We ask for your assistance in encouraging this independence by appointing your student as the primary contact with the CGE.

Families play an important role in supporting the international experiences of their student. The CGE recognizes that many of you provide financial, logistical, and emotional support in order to make study abroad possible. As a result, it is just as important for you to be informed as well! We invite you to utilize this handbook and to explore additional resources for parents of study abroad students, such as visiting the parent page on our website: <https://global-education.providence.edu/parents/>.

We look forward to working with you and your student before, during, and after the time spent on study abroad. We hope you will reference this handbook to assist in your preparations and your adjustment to your student's journey through the study abroad experience.

Sincerely,

The Center for Global Education Staff

# STUDY ABROAD BASICS

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## WHAT?

Study abroad can take many different forms. The study abroad programs used by Providence College are organized by international education organizations, otherwise known as “program providers.” Program providers can be affiliated with a college or university, or they can be independent organizations. The program providers recognized and approved by Providence College are of excellent quality and meet industry best practices in regards to academics, safety, and cultural immersion.

The PC Recognized Programs vary and offer a number of options for living and studying abroad. For instance, students may choose to study at a large university alongside local students or at a study center with other Americans. Students may also choose to do an internship, volunteer with a non-profit, take a service learning course, or engage in an independent research project. Some programs have a language requirement, but the Center for Global Education also approves many programs in non-English speaking countries where students with no language background can take courses in English.

## WHEN?

Students may study abroad during the fall semester, spring semester, or full academic year of their Junior year, or during the fall semester of their Senior year. In addition, students may participate in short-term study abroad programs any time after their Freshman year. Short-term study abroad includes winter intersession, Maymester, and summer programs. In order to balance the number of students intending to study abroad across the academic year, the College reserves the right to restrict the numbers of students approved to study abroad in any one semester.

## WHO?

All majors have the opportunity to study abroad while at Providence College. Students must meet the requirements stated below and maintain their eligibility up until the time of departure.

Semester and academic year study abroad students must:

- ✓ Have Junior or Senior class standing at the point of departure
- ✓ Have a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.75
- ✓ Have a major declared by December 1<sup>st</sup> of their Sophomore year
- ✓ Undergo a disciplinary review process
- ✓ Not have any financial holds

Short-term study abroad students must:

- ✓ Have completed Freshman year
- ✓ Undergo a disciplinary review process
- ✓ Not have any financial holds

## WHERE?

The Center for Global Education approves over 350 programs in more than 50 different countries.

Certain majors have specific lists from which they must choose a program in order to select an option with a suitable curriculum to remain on track academically. The major-specific lists can be accessed by following this link:

<https://global-education.providence.edu/study-abroad/programs-by-major/>

## WHY?

The benefits of study abroad are vast. Returned students frequently report the experience to be eye-opening, the effect of which stays with them long after graduation. Students living and studying in another country typically develop important transnational competencies that serve them well in a variety of contexts later in life and appeal to future employers.

The advantages include opportunities to:

- Expand horizons
- Explore new cultures and places
- Gain new perspectives
- Make new international friends
- Learn a new language
- Discover personal values
- Acquire essential skills (such as adaptability, flexibility, and problem-solving)
- Earn credit toward degree requirements
- Enhance the Providence College experience through engaged learning

## HOW?

For many students, the advising and application process begins during the fall semester of their Sophomore year; however, some students begin to plan as early as their Freshman year. Students take the following steps in order to complete an application to study abroad:

1. Speak with study abroad program representatives at the Study Abroad Fair, held annually during the last Monday of September.
2. Attend a study abroad information session.
3. Inform academic advisor of intent to study abroad.
- 4. Meet with a study abroad advisor.**
5. Research program options and select **one** program for which to apply.
6. Submit the Providence College **online** application for study abroad approval.

**NOTE:** Students must apply by December 1<sup>st</sup> of their Sophomore year to study abroad any time during the Junior academic year, or December 1<sup>st</sup> of their Junior year to study abroad during the fall semester of the Senior year. Students applying for short-term study abroad submit a **paper** application during the semester prior to their term abroad.

7. Upon receiving approval from Providence College, students then submit an application to the program via the program provider. Deadlines vary, but are during the semester prior to the semester abroad and are posted on the chosen program's website.

**EXCEPTION:** Students applying to either the Providence College Center for Theology and Religious Studies in Rome, Italy, or the Danish Institute for Study Abroad (DIS) in Copenhagen, Denmark, are both approved and directly admitted to the program by the CGE. They do not need to submit a second application to the program.

## **PEDAGOGICAL GOALS FOR STUDY ABROAD**

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1. Curricular Integration: Students on study abroad are expected to do coursework that relates to their major, whether core or elective courses that satisfy one or more requirements for the major. Students should be exposed to the international dimensions or topics of the discipline in order to gain a more transnational understanding of the field and the global workplace of tomorrow.

Furthermore, in keeping with the liberal arts focus of the undergraduate program of the College, students are expected to take course that will apply toward the Core Curriculum.

2. Geographical Diversity of Program Locations: In addition to the popular study abroad programs in Europe and the United Kingdom, program options are available in Asia and South Asia, the Middle East, Africa, and Latin America. Students are encouraged to consider study abroad in non-traditional locations as economic and business centers have similarly shifted globally.
3. Program Diversity: In addition to the traditional university enrolled and /or hybrid island programs, program options have been expanded to include those that offer internships or other experiential learning opportunities in the various areas of business.
4. Career Integration: Study abroad should enhance the career opportunities of PC students. Thus, students are advised to select programs and courses that will help them acquire the knowledge, the skills, and the intercultural experiences that will not only help them in their career search but also make them stand out from their peers.

In sum, study abroad should be seen as an intentional academic opportunity to enhance student learning beyond what the campus itself can provide. It is not academic tourism, though that will also be part of the experience. Rather, this approach frames study abroad as an integral component of the undergraduate academic program at Providence College.

# ACADEMICS

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## COURSE OPTIONS

In general, students can fulfill major, minor, core, and elective requirements while abroad based on their major and the program they select. Course options differ by program and semester, so students should begin planning early and discuss with their academic advisor their intent to study abroad as early as possible. Students submit to the CGE a Four-Year Plan of Study to review their academic plans for the remaining semesters prior to graduation and a Course Selection and Approval Form in order to learn how their courses will appear on their Providence College transcript prior to their departure.

## COURSE LOAD

Students must be fully enrolled while abroad, which means that they must be registered for at least 15 U.S. credit hours during a semester. Depending on the credit system of the program or university, students may take anywhere from three to six courses per semester for a minimum of 15 U.S. credits and a maximum of 18 U.S. credits. Short-term programs vary, but often require 3 – 6 U.S. credit hours for the term.

## CREDITS AND GRADES

**Providence College Credit:** Students who participate in semester, academic year, or Providence College faculty-led short-term programs receive PC credit for courses taken abroad, once the CGE has received an official transcript from the program or university abroad. Transcripts should be sent directly to the CGE, not to the student's home address. Since study abroad courses receive PC credit, all grades appear on the official transcript and are factored into the student's cumulative GPA. Students pay PC tuition because they receive PC academic credit and grades. Please refer to **page 17** for more information on the Home School Tuition Policy.

**Pass/Fail Policy:** Students may not take courses on a pass/fail basis while abroad. Once the grades have been posted to the transcript, students may choose to have one elective course changed to pass/fail. Students should speak with their Class Dean for information on changing a study abroad elective course grade to pass/fail.

**Transfer Credit:** For non-PC short-term (summer and winter intersession) programs, students receive transfer credit for courses taken abroad as long as they receive a grade of "C" or higher in the course(s). Grades do not appear on the transcript, and are instead replaced with a "T" to indicate transfer credit. As a result, students do not pay Providence College tuition costs. Please refer to **page 7** for more information on short-term program costs.

**Repeat Course:** If a course is a duplication of a class already taken for credit you will **not** receive additional credit for this course at Providence College. However, students repeating a course should be aware that the most recent grade will be recorded whether or not it is higher than the earlier attempt. A repeat course is noted on the transcript with an "I" (included in GPA) or an "E" (excluded from GPA) to designate the relationship of the course to the students' academic transcript.

## DIFFERENCES IN ACADEMIC SYSTEMS

The American model of higher education is a unique one, and teaching methods in other countries tend to be quite different. These differences do not indicate a lesser quality education, but rather an emphasis on independent learning and student responsibility. While abroad, students may be surprised by one or all of the following differences:

- Fewer support services and office hours
- Less frequent assessment – course grades may be based only on a midterm and final exam
- Accessibility of professors may be notably less than at PC
- Teaching styles will vary, usually with more lectures and less classroom discussion or with experiential learning components
- Classroom norms and expectations may differ, along with grading standards
- Language difficulties, if taking courses in a foreign language or with non-native English speakers
- A false impression of having to study less due to a lack of homework
- A grade appeal process may not exist

## FINANCES

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### SEMESTER AND ACADEMIC YEAR STUDY ABROAD

**Students and parents should expect to receive two invoices for the study abroad semester or year: one from Providence College and the other from the program provider.** Providence College uses a Home School Tuition billing model because students receive PC academic credit and grades for their coursework completed abroad. Furthermore, this billing policy allows for the portability of financial aid (institutional aid, loans, grant, scholarships), which makes study abroad equally accessible to all PC students. Please refer to the section titled “Budgeting for a Semester or Academic Year Abroad” for a complete breakdown of costs. More information on the Home School Tuition Policy, Financial Aid, and the PC Study Abroad Fee can be found on **pages 16-23**.

### Budgeting for a Semester or Academic Year Abroad

**You will be billed by and pay Providence College for:**

- PC Tuition as normal, with portable financial aid. In turn, PC will pay the program provider for tuition costs only.
- \$1,000 PC Study Abroad Fee.
- \*Student health insurance (only if the student is enrolled in the PC Health Plan).

**You will be billed by and pay the program provider for:**

- A non-refundable deposit to secure the student’s place on the program, which is applied to the total non-tuition fees.
- All non-tuition program fees, including housing, orientation, insurance, etc.



**Additional expenses to consider:**

- All personal expenses, including roundtrip airfare and other travel, passport, visa, required immunizations, meals (in most cases), textbooks, etc.

*In order to budget accordingly, students should check the currency rates (<http://www.xe.com/> or <http://www.oanda.com/> ) and the cost of living (<http://www.numbeo.com/cost-of-living/> or <http://www.expatisan.com/cost-of-living/> ) for their location.*

## **SUMMER STUDY ABROAD**

**Students and parents should expect to receive two invoices for the study abroad summer session: one from Providence College and the other from the program provider.** Short-term study abroad typically is for enrichment purposes or for catching up on credits. Since students receive transfer credit as opposed to PC academic credit for coursework completed on short-term programs, students are not billed for PC tuition and pay all published program fees directly to the program provider. In most cases, financial aid also is only offered during the fall and spring semesters, so it cannot be applied to study abroad during the winter intersession or summer term. Please refer to the section below titled “Budgeting for Short-Term Study Abroad” for a complete breakdown of costs. More information on the PC Study Abroad Fee can be found on **page 23**.

### **Budgeting for Short-Term Study Abroad**

**You will be billed by and pay Providence College for:**

- \$200 PC Short-Term Study Abroad Fee.

**You will be billed by and pay the program provider for:**

- A non-refundable deposit to secure the student’s place on the program, which is applied to the total program fees.
- All posted program costs, including tuition, housing, orientation, insurance, etc.

**Additional expenses to consider:**

- All personal expenses, including roundtrip airfare and other travel, passport, visa (if necessary), meals (in most cases), textbooks, etc.

*In order to budget accordingly, students should check the currency rates and the cost of living for their location. Helpful links are listed above.*

## **PC FACULTY-LED SHORT-TERM PROGRAMS ABROAD**

**Students and parents should expect to make two types of payments for Providence College Faculty-Led short-term study abroad programs: one for PC fees and one for program arrangements.** Students are billed for School of Continuing Education (SCE) tuition because they receive PC SCE credit for courses taken on faculty-led programs abroad. All other program costs, such as travel and housing, will be paid to the faculty leader or the operating program company directly.

## PAYMENT PLANS

Payment plan options are available separately for tuition and program costs. Students and families may use Tuition Management Systems (TMS) to cover charges that are billed directly from Providence College (tuition for semester and academic year study abroad students and the PC study abroad fee). Students should contact their program provider for more information on available payment plan options to cover the program fees.

## SCHOLARSHIPS AND GRANTS FOR ALL STUDY ABROAD TERMS

A multitude of scholarships for credit-bearing study abroad are available, including scholarships funded by program providers, non-profit organizations, and the U.S. government. Students should first consult the website of their program provider, and may find different scholarship options listed on the CGE website

(<https://global-education.providence.edu/study-abroad/payment/>).

## WITHDRAWING FROM STUDY ABROAD

Students will not be billed for the PC study abroad fee if they withdraw before the PC Commit Deadline; however, they may incur costs from the program provider. Students who withdraw once a program has begun may not be eligible for a refund from the program provider and, depending on the starting dates of the program, may not be eligible to return to PC to resume their studies that semester. Students and parents should become familiar with the program's refund policy.

## HOUSING

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### HOUSING AT PROVIDENCE COLLEGE

Students do **not** pay for on-campus housing for the semester(s) in which they are abroad. Students who study abroad for only one semester have three options for on-campus housing during the corresponding semester of the academic year:

1. Co-sign with students who are studying off campus the opposite semester.
2. Voluntarily overcrowd a pre-designated room, as approved by the Office of Residence Life.
3. Receive assignment of on-campus housing at the discretion of the Dean of Residence Life or her designee.

Students **must** inform the Office of Residence Life of their plans to study abroad in accordance with the policies implemented in that office. More information and relevant forms can be found online at

<http://www.providence.edu/residence-life/Pages/default.aspx>. Students who will be living off-campus **must** coordinate with Off-Campus Living and their landlord for the time that they will be away.

## HOUSING ABROAD

Students generally have three options for housing while abroad:

1. Dorm-style residence – Students live in university housing on or near campus.
2. Student Apartment – Students live with other participants in their program in a program-rented or owned apartment. Students typically live in apartments among locals in the same building.
3. Homestay – Students live with a host family. Host families come in all shapes and sizes, from a family with young children to an older single person to a young couple with no children. Families are selected by the program provider through an application process and are carefully vetted and reviewed based on a variety of factors with respect to the safety and comfort of students. Living in a homestay affords students the opportunity to: practice the language, engage in local customs, eat local food, and receive an added level of support.

Housing options vary by program, and not all of the options listed will be available on each program. Some program providers may offer additional housing options. **In all instances, students are required to live in housing that has been approved by PC and is arranged by the program. Students may not live in independent housing or make other arrangements.**

Accommodations abroad may be very different from student expectations. The room sizes and facilities available, such as kitchen and laundry appliances, may not meet the level of comfort to which students have become accustomed. Additionally, the distance between their housing and their classes may be significantly greater than at PC, so students should expect a longer commute. The average commute is 20-45 minutes, but it could be anywhere from five minutes to over an hour. Students who have concerns about their housing are required to live in their assigned housing for at least two weeks before they may request of their program to change their housing arrangement.

## HEALTH & SAFETY

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### HEALTH

Medical facilities and services will not be the same in every country. It is important for students and families to understand as much as possible about the facilities and services in their host city and country. Program providers can assist in answering questions about the health care system and services offered in the area. All programs will have medical and mental health services available to students, and they also have contacts with local physicians, hospitals, and other emergency services. In cases where English-speaking doctors are not available, program staff will accompany students and assist them with translation and receiving treatment. All program providers recognized by Providence College use supplementary insurance plans for their students so that they have appropriate coverage for the time they are abroad.

Before students leave, they should:

1. Have a thorough physical examination by their physician and get advice for managing their physical and emotional health while in another country.
2. Update prescriptions.
  - A. Get written prescriptions and a letter from their physician explaining the purpose and necessity of the medication.
  - B. Obtain enough medication for the duration of the program – medication **cannot** be shipped or mailed.
  - C. Learn if the medication is available and legal in the host country.
3. Check to see what, if any, immunizations are required to enter the host country.
4. Have their doctor complete a card listing the immunizations they have received to carry with their passport.
5. Understand their insurance coverage and how it is paid for while abroad. This includes both comprehensive and supplemental plans.
6. Disclose to the program if they are currently utilizing or have utilized in the past mental health services. Not all countries have similar mental health support services to the U.S. so it is important to understand in advance the services available.

When students arrive, they should:

1. Remember that in addition to cultural adjustment, their bodies will be going through a physical adjustment to a new climate, time zone, food, etc.
2. Eat healthily and get plenty of rest.
3. Drink lots of water and limit caffeine and alcohol consumption. Bottled water is best until the student can verify the portability of the local tap water. The extra vitamins in juice can also help boost the immune system.

### Disability Accommodations

Providence College encourages all students to study abroad. Students with disabilities increasingly are participating in study abroad programs around the world; the key to a successful experience is advanced planning. It is important that students with a disability or specific need disclose the information with sufficient advance notice so that the CGE can work with the program provider to assess whether or not reasonable accommodations are available at the host site. Students and their families should understand that accessibility and accommodation for students with emotional, mental, learning, or physical disabilities may differ from what is offered in the U.S. and/or may not be available at particular program sites. The CGE will work with students to find a program that offers the necessary services or accommodations.

## SAFETY

Student safety is our highest priority! All of our approved study abroad programs offer 24 hour emergency assistance to students and their parents in the U.S. and in-country. Upon arrival, students receive a listing of the necessary contact information while they are in their host country. They are required to keep the emergency contact information with them at all times.

The Center for Global Education, Providence College, and the program provider and/or university can never *guarantee* student safety abroad. However, students participate in two orientations – one before departure in which the CGE informs students of general health and safety issues to expect, and one from the program upon arrival to highlight local health and safety issues. Providence College only approves programs that adhere to best practices in safety and security abroad. Students are expected to maintain good judgment while abroad in order to abide by safety policies and procedures.

## EMERGENCIES

An emergency is an occurrence or situation that poses a genuine and sometimes immediate risk to the health and well-being of program participants. The following situations would be considered emergencies:

- Death of a student
- Life-threatening accidents or illnesses
- Crimes against a student (rape, assault, mugging, etc.) or arrest of a student
- Psychological emergencies
- Missing student
- Natural disasters
- Terrorism, war, or political crisis

**In the event of an emergency, students must contact on-site program staff first.** Then, the student and/or program staff will contact their parents/guardians and the Center for Global Education. The most immediate assistance in an emergency will come from in-country services, and program staff members are trained in emergency responses. If you are notified of an emergency situation by your student, inform him or her to contact the on-site program staff immediately.

The majority of students participating in study abroad never experience an emergency abroad, but in preparation for the unlikely event that an emergency situation occurs, students and their families should take the following steps in advance:

- Keep an emergency fund in case an immediate international flight is needed.
- At least one adult family member should have a valid passport in the event that they need to travel abroad without advanced notice.
- Have a plan in place to address an emergency at home (e.g. a death or serious emergency in the family).
- Make sure your student registers with the U.S. Department of State Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) <https://step.state.gov/step/> prior to departure in order to receive updates on in-country security.

# BEFORE, DURING, AND AFTER STUDY ABROAD

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## BEFORE

Prior to embarking on their study abroad experience, students are expected to complete the following requirements and recommendations. At the pre-departure stage, students usually depend upon the assistance of their families to accomplish these tasks.

- **Attend the mandatory CGE pre-departure orientation.**

Students who do not attend the required pre-departure orientation will jeopardize their eligibility for study abroad.

- **Obtain a passport.**

Students who are applying for their first passport or renewing their passport should do so immediately after their approval to study abroad if not earlier. Standard processing time is at least ten weeks.

Students who have a valid passport must ensure that the passport is valid for at least six months after the scheduled return date. U.S. citizens and non-citizens need a passport both to enter other countries and return to the U.S. For complete information about passport services, visit the U.S. Department of State website at: [http://travel.state.gov/passport/passport\\_1738.html](http://travel.state.gov/passport/passport_1738.html)

Family members should also have a valid passport if they plan to travel to the host country or must travel to the host country due to an emergency. Expedited services still can take several days and delay your ability to travel internationally.

- **Most semester and academic year students will need to apply for a visa.**

A visa is an entry/residency permit and official permission granted by the authorities of the country where students study or travel that will allow them to enter and remain in that country. The visa often is a stamp in the passport and not a separate document; therefore, a passport is needed before applying for a visa. Students must have received an official acceptance letter from their program before they may apply for a visa. The program provider will give specific instructions for how and when to apply for the visa. Students should begin this process as early as possible!

- **Make travel arrangements.**

Most programs do not offer a group flight and the cost of travel is not included in the program fee.

Travel arrangements should not be made until the student receives an official acceptance package from the study abroad program and confirms the arrival date and location. A roundtrip ticket is recommended and often required for a visa. Some agencies specialize in student travel, such as

[www.statravel.com](http://www.statravel.com), [www.studentuniverse.com](http://www.studentuniverse.com), and [www.fellowship.com](http://www.fellowship.com).

It is not recommended that family members travel to the country initially with their student. The orientation time is the first period of adjustment and it is important for students to begin this process independently. Family members who wish to visit should plan to go during the student's semester break or after the program has ended. Please check with your student's program staff regarding potential visit dates, as some programs have recommended times to visit.

- **Register with the U.S. Department of State Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP)** <https://step.state.gov/step/>.  
This is not a requirement, but the CGE strongly encourages students to register with STEP in order to receive notifications regarding potential threats in their host country. A valid passport number is needed for registration.
- **Make sure all financial affairs are in order with the PC Offices of the Bursar and Financial Aid.**  
Any balances must be settled before the study abroad term, as students cannot have a financial hold on their account up until the point of departure for study abroad. Students should also understand their financial aid package and how it applies to study abroad.
- **Create a budget and an emergency plan.**  
Students should understand the cost of living where they will be studying abroad in order to develop a realistic budget for their expenses. The CGE strongly recommends that families factor in a separate fund for emergencies and discuss what to do in case of an emergency at home or abroad.
- **Place a “travel note” on all debit and credit cards.**  
Failure to notify the bank and credit card companies may result in the cards being locked on suspicion of fraud. Also, learn the bank and credit card policies on locations of use and applicable fees abroad.
- **Check insurance coverage.**  
It is important to understand what the comprehensive and supplemental insurance plans cover and how payment is handled. For instance, many students must pay the full cost of a medical bill while abroad and then submit the bill to their insurance company later for reimbursement. In addition, all students are required to have insurance coverage for medical evacuation and repatriation of remains, which is included in their program supplemental health insurance plans.
- **Visit the doctor.**  
Students should see their doctor(s) to receive a physical examination, written prescriptions, and immunizations (if necessary) before they leave the U.S.
- **Make two photocopies of all important documents.**  
One set of copies should be carried with the student in a safe place and the other set should be left at home. These documents may include: passport photo ID page, visa paperwork, airline tickets, prescriptions, program acceptance letter, credit cards, etc.
- **Research the host country.**  
Students and families should research information on the politics, history, language, holidays, religions, social norms, laws, family life, shopping/cost of living, daily life, communication customs, food, clothing/style of dress, and medical care.
- **Recognize last minute doubts.**  
It is quite normal for students to have second thoughts about whether or not study abroad is right for them at this time. The CGE encourages students and families to give us a call before changing plans drastically at the last minute. Every semester, there are a few students who have some anxiety and think about withdrawing, but they eventually do go and are very glad they did. In particular, students who

have a history of anxiety or are being treated for an anxiety-related condition should notify their programs in advance.

- **Agree on a communication plan and set up devices.**

Create a plan for a safe arrival call or email. Please note that students may not have access to a system of communication for several hours after they arrive in their host country. Additionally, you and your student should agree on the frequency with which you will communicate and in what form (email, phone calls, texting, Skype, Facebook). You should factor in time zone differences as well.

- **Update contact information.**

An optional contact information form is provided on **page 24**.

## **DURING**

While your student is abroad, the CGE recommends that you utilize the following information.

- **Stay in touch.**

Make sure you stick to your communication plans or revise them as necessary so that you and your student agree on how often you should communicate. Although it may be difficult, we encourage students and their families to limit their communication to no more than 2-3 times a week. Constant communication with home slows down the acculturation process and can actually make homesickness worse. The best way for students to adapt to their new environment is to get involved with their program and new host country, rather than spending all of their time on Facebook and Skype.

- **Understand the symptoms of culture shock.**

Symptoms of culture shock manifest themselves subtly as opposed to feeling like actual “shock.” Culture shock can feel like homesickness, frustration, joy, anxiety, and general grumpiness. Students may have physical or emotional reactions while adjusting to the host culture, such as weight loss or gain, preoccupation with food or cleanliness, or atypical moodiness. This is a normal, and temporary, phenomenon. Students may bottle up their stress during the day and then “unload” over the phone to their parents in the form of yelling or crying. This, too, is normal and will typically pass within a week or two. As a parent, we encourage your responses to remain calm and sympathetic. It is also important to adhere to your communication plan. For most students, these symptoms go away on their own as they feel more settled. If you suspect your student requires assistance with coping with culture shock, or are concerned that his or her mental health indicates a serious problem, please encourage him or her to discuss this with the on-site program staff, who are experienced in assisting American students. You may also contact the CGE in these cases to receive assistance in contacting the on-site program staff to assess the situation.

- **Remain informed.**

Be aware of what is happening in the host country. Have your student notify you of when, where, and how he or she is traveling outside of their host city. Students should always leave their travel information with a parent and/or program staff member in case of emergency.



- **Keep an open mind.**

Your student will be engaged in new and unfamiliar experiences abroad. We encourage family members to remain open to these experiences, but to express concerns for your student's well-being when needed. Activities arranged outside of the program are at the discretion of the students.

## **AFTER**

The study abroad experience is a transformational one. When your student returns home, it will be helpful to keep the steps listed below in mind.

- **Understand the symptoms of reverse culture shock.**

Returning home from an extended period abroad can cause a confusing mixture of feelings, both positive and negative. Many returning students are surprised to find that adjusting to life "back home" may be more difficult than the adjustment they made to life in a foreign country. Students understand that study abroad is a life-changing experience, but many of them are not immediately aware of how they changed or how their experience abroad has caused them to look at life in the United States through a different lens. Students may feel out of sync with family and friends, experience boredom or a lack of direction, return to problems they put on hold while abroad (such as personal issues or career questions), or have difficulty reintegrating into the structure and expectations of academic studies.

- **Maintain an interest in the study abroad experience.**

Although you have been in regular contact while your student was abroad, returned students may compare everything at home to life in their host country. To friends and family members, this comparison may become tiresome and strain relationships. Try to remain patient and understand that these comparisons are part of how your student is processing the experience he or she just had. Continue to show a genuine interest in the stories and encourage your student to share photos and videos from their host country and their travels, and to articulate what they think they learned from the experience.

# **Appendix I**

## **PARENT/GUARDIAN FINANCIAL STATEMENT OF UNDERSTANDING**

Under the Home School Tuition Policy, Providence College institutional merit and need-based financial aid is portable for semester and academic year study abroad.

Students receive **two** invoices for the study abroad semester or year. A summary of the Home School Tuition billing model is listed as follows.

### **Bill from Providence College**

*Unless the student has outstanding charges, the only costs that will appear on the PC bill are:*

- PC tuition as normal. Financial aid is portable to study abroad.
- \$1,000 PC Study Abroad Fee
- Student Health Insurance\*

*\*Only for students enrolled in the campus Gallagher Student Health Insurance Plan.*

### **Bill from Program Provider/Host Institution**

*PC pays the program for tuition costs only. Therefore, the student will be billed by the program for:*

- A non-refundable deposit\* to secure the student's place on the program
- All non-tuition program fees (e.g., housing, orientation, insurance, etc.)

*\*The deposit is deducted from the student's total non-tuition costs or is returned at the end of the semester less any housing damages.*

Students are responsible for paying all other expenses out-of-pocket. These expenses may include, but are not limited to, roundtrip airfare, passport and/or visa fees, required immunizations (if applicable), meals (in most cases), textbooks, independent travel, and daily living expenses.

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## **HOME SCHOOL TUITION POLICY FAQ**

Students and their parents/guardians should **carefully review** the information included in these frequently asked questions. Students and their families are responsible for understanding the Home School Tuition Policy. Adherence to this policy is a condition of study abroad approval.

### **WHY DO I HAVE TO PAY PC TUITION WHEN I STUDY ABROAD?**

PC is committed to making study abroad a more integral and viable educational opportunity for all our undergraduates. This means, in order for study abroad to be **equally accessible to all students**, the College must be able to provide institutional financial aid to students who receive this aid when they study abroad. To accomplish the portability of institutional aid, the College relies mainly on tuition revenue, since institutional merit and need-based financial aid comes from this revenue.

In addition, academic credits and grades earned on semester study abroad are treated as Providence College credits and grades as opposed to transfer credit, as is often the case at other colleges. The courses, credits, and grades are reviewed, approved, and then posted on the academic transcript. Course grades are calculated into

the student's Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA). ***In sum, PC charges PC tuition for awarding PC academic credit.***

**WHAT IF THE PROGRAM TUITION IS MORE THAN PC TUITION?**

PC will pay the program's tuition up to the PC tuition rate amount. Students who elect to go on approved programs with a higher tuition cost will be charged the tuition differential between the program rate and the PC rate.

**OKAY, BUT WHAT IF I CHOOSE A PROGRAM WHOSE TUITION IS LESS THAN PC TUITION? WHAT IS THE COLLEGE DOING WITH THAT MONEY?**

The Center for Global Education, in conjunction with faculty members, selects and approves study abroad programs based on their academic rigor and integrity as well as the quality of their student support services. Only then is cost considered, with the aim primarily of finding programs that do not exceed PC tuition so that students do not incur additional expenses.

The PC tuition revenue from the students studying abroad is used to cover the tuition cost of the programs that students attend (up to the PC tuition rate). ***With the portability of institutional financial aid for study abroad, any tuition surplus is returned to the financial aid pool, exactly as is done when students are on-campus.*** The tuition cost alone for study abroad to the College is nearly \$5,000,000 annually. Thus, in order to make study abroad fiscally viable for the institution, the College has adopted the practice used by many private liberal arts colleges in charging home school tuition for study abroad.

**I RECEIVE PC FINANCIAL AID. HOW WILL MY AID APPLY FOR STUDY ABROAD?**

Students with financial aid who are approved to participate in study abroad will have their financial aid package reviewed by the Office of Financial Aid for the semester or year that they will be abroad. In some instances, the total aid amount may be adjusted higher or lower, based on the total cost of the program abroad. Federal Work-Study wages, by US law, are not portable for study abroad. However, in some cases, that amount can be replaced by additional loan or grant aid in order to keep the student's financial aid total the same. Athletic scholarships also are not portable for study abroad, as they require students to be on-campus.

**CAN'T I JUST TAKE A LEAVE OF ABSENCE AND GET TRANSFER CREDIT WHEN I COME BACK?**

No. The only way students can receive PC academic credit for study abroad during the academic year is if they go through the approval process of the Center for Global Education. No academic credit is approved or awarded otherwise. In addition, if a student were to take courses on a study abroad program while on a PC leave of absence, he or she would lose his or her status as a fully enrolled PC student and must apply for re-admission through the Dean of Undergraduate & Graduate Studies.

**WHAT ABOUT SUMMER STUDY ABROAD - DO I STILL PAY PC TUITION?**

The Home School Tuition policy does not apply for summer study abroad since financial aid is not portable outside of the academic year. Therefore, students pay the total published program fee, including tuition costs, directly to the program. Students pay the \$200 PC Short-Term Program Study Abroad Fee to Providence College.

**I AM PARTICIPATING IN A SHORT-TERM INTERNATIONAL PROGRAM LED BY A PC FACULTY MEMBER. WILL MY FINANCIAL AID APPLY?**

Financial aid does not apply for Maymester or summer faculty-led, short-term international programs, as these run outside of the academic year. Students who participate in these programs pay the PC School of Continuing Education tuition rate along with any program fees. The \$200 PC Short-Term Program Study Abroad Fee is not assessed to students participating on an approved PC faculty-led program.

Students who participate in a short-term international experience that is part of a semester on-campus course are billed by PC in the same way they would be billed for any other on-campus course. As a result, financial aid funds are applied to the tuition costs of semester course-embedded international programs.

**ARE SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE FOR STUDY ABROAD?**

Yes, scholarships are available from a variety of sources, including the Providence College Santander Scholarship, program providers, the U.S. government, and independent organizations. Students should consider their scholarship options as they are applying to their program.

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

I understand that under the Providence College Home School Tuition Policy, Providence College tuition will be charged by and paid directly to Providence College. I recognize that Providence College will pay the program provider for tuition costs only. Additionally, I understand and agree to pay the \$1,000 PC Study Abroad Fee to Providence College when assessed in the appropriate billing cycle.

I understand that all other non-tuition fees are to be paid directly to the program provider. I agree to meet the student's expenses for the year in accordance with the payment schedule established by the program selected. I further agree to accept any additional charges incurred by the student as a result of uninsured medical expenses, travel expenses, or other unforeseen circumstances for which the program is not responsible.

By signing below, I acknowledge and agree to the terms of the Providence College Parent/Guardian Financial Statement of Understanding for study abroad.

|              |                   |       |
|--------------|-------------------|-------|
| _____        | _____             | _____ |
| Student Name | Student Signature | Date  |

|                      |                           |       |
|----------------------|---------------------------|-------|
| _____                | _____                     | _____ |
| Parent/Guardian Name | Parent/Guardian Signature | Date  |

|                         |       |                   |
|-------------------------|-------|-------------------|
| _____                   | _____ | _____             |
| Relationship to Student | Email | Cell Phone Number |

**The Center for Global Education recommends that you keep a copy of this agreement for your records.**

## **Appendix II**

### **FINANCIAL AID STUDY ABROAD FAQ**

#### **WHAT ARE THE POTENTIAL FINANCIAL COSTS FOR STUDYING ABROAD?**

You will be required to pay Providence College: tuition, and a Study Abroad fee of \$1,000. Costs you may incur by the host program would be tuition differential (if any), room and board, travel, books and supplies, and other miscellaneous expenses.

#### **WHAT IS A 'REFUND INSTRUCTION FORM' AND WHAT DO I DO WITH IT?**

A Refund Instruction Form is filled out only if you are receiving financial aid (including loans) in excess of your billed charges at Providence College. By completing this form you are giving Providence College permission to send your eligible financial aid funding directly to the host program and/or directly to a parent/guardian.

#### **WHAT HAPPENS IF MY FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE CHANGES AFTER MY PAPERWORK IS COMPLETED?**

If your eligibility changes or you apply for loans or outside scholarships after your paperwork is completed by the Office of Financial Aid, you must notify us in writing where to send the financial aid by completing another Refund Instruction Form.

#### **WHAT FINANCIAL AID IS PORTABLE?**

Institutional funding (including tuition remission/exchange) along with federal, state, and most private financial aid in the form of scholarships, grants and loans are portable. If you have an outside scholarship, you must check with the sponsoring agency providing those funds to ensure that you may receive this funding while studying abroad.

#### **WHAT IF I AM USING A PLUS AND/OR ALTERNATIVE STUDENT LOAN TO HELP PAY FOR MY STUDY ABROAD PROGRAM?**

If you have a Federal Parent Loan for Undergraduate Student (PLUS loan), funds will be automatically credited to the student account. If you have an alternative loan, please be advised that if the lender sends Providence College a paper check, it will require the signature of the student/borrower. Most often loan checks will come in after the student has already left the country. We strongly recommend that a parent/guardian secure a Power of Attorney for the student's financial affairs so the check can be endorsed in the student's absence. This will help prevent any delays in payment. For the alternative loans and PLUS, all paperwork needs to be completed with Providence College and/or lender prior to departure. This includes the self-certification form and/or master promissory note, if applicable.

#### **CAN I CONTRACT WITH TUITION MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS (TMS) TO PAY MY STUDY ABROAD PROGRAM?**

Students may contract with TMS to cover charges that are billed directly from the College such a tuition and study abroad fee. TMS cannot be used to manage the other expenses that are billed by the host institution. You will be responsible for paying additional charges directly to the host school.

#### **HOW DOES MY MONEY GET RELEASED FROM PROVIDENCE COLLEGE TO MY HOST PROGRAM OR INSTITUTION?**

Once all the expected financial assistance for a student is applied to the student account, the money is then forwarded per the student's instructions on the Refund Instruction Form. Funds may be sent to the host program and/or the student's home address. If funds are not sent to the host program, the student is responsible for settling any outstanding charges on their own. Loans from third party lenders or outside scholarship funds may not arrive at the same time. Since funding may come in at different times it is possible for multiple checks to be issued.

**WHAT IF I AM GOING ABROAD IN THE SUMMER?**

You will be charged the host program/institution tuition and fees. Providence College charges a \$200 summer study abroad fee. **Institutional funds and TMS are not available for any summer programs;** however you may apply for an alternative loan, Federal Direct Loans, Federal Pell Grant, and Federal Direct Parent PLUS Loan beginning of July. In order to receive any financial aid including outside scholarships, you will need to complete and submit the 2013-2014 FAFSA, Refund Instruction Form, and any requested verification documents at least two weeks in advance of your departure date. If you are receiving an outside resource including scholarships or grants from your host program/institution, you must complete the Award Letter Response Form. It is a federal requirement that students notify the Office of Financial Aid of any sources of aid offered from a private source or other institution. This source of aid must be included when determining eligibility for need-based financial aid.

## **Appendix III**

### **PROVIDENCE COLLEGE SEMESTER and ACADEMIC YEAR STUDY ABROAD FEE**

All students participating on Fall/Spring or Academic Year study abroad programs are assessed a one-time study abroad fee of \$1000 by Providence College. Students will be invoiced in the billing cycle immediately prior to the study abroad semester or year.

With this fee, students:

- Maintain their status as full-time enrolled students at Providence College
- Retain course registration priority, as established for their Class Year
- Retain housing priority status, for those in residence-on-campus
- Have access, while abroad, to CyberFriar, Sakai, HELIN Library Catalog and Subject Databases, as well as their PC email account
- Have access, while abroad, to their academic advisor and to the services of the Center for Global Education and the Office of the Dean of Undergraduate & Graduate Studies
- Receive faculty review, articulation, and approval of courses taken abroad, the processing of academic credit earned abroad, and the posting of all credit and grades earned on their PC transcript by the Office of Enrollment Services
- Are provided with academic oversight of programs and periodic on-site evaluation visits by the Center for Global Education and PC faculty

*PC Tuition and the study abroad fee will be billed by, and paid to, Providence College. All other program expenses (non-tuition fees) will be invoiced by and paid directly to the program provider or host institution. Providence College will not waive the fee for any semester or academic year study abroad students.*

## **Appendix IV**

### **PROVIDENCE COLLEGE SHORT-TERM PROGRAM STUDY ABROAD FEE**

All students participating on non-PC summer or winter intersession study abroad programs are assessed a study abroad fee of \$200 by Providence College. Short-term study abroad students are those who have been approved by the Center for Global Education to participate in a credit-bearing summer or winter intersession program not led by Providence College faculty or staff.

With this fee, students:

- Are provided with review of their program selection by the Center for Global Education for acceptable academic and safety standards.
- Have the ability to transfer credits from short-term study abroad to Providence College. The fee also allows for the processing and posting of academic credit earned abroad on their PC transcript by the Office of Enrollment Services, provided that the student receives a grade of “C” or higher. Grades will appear as a “T” for transfer credit and will not be factored into the cumulative GPA.
- Receive departmental and Core Curriculum Committee review, articulation, and approval of courses taken abroad.
- Have access, while abroad, to the services and assistance of the Center for Global Education and the Office of the Dean of Undergraduate and Graduate Studies.
- Have access, while abroad, to CyberFriar, Sakai, HELIN Library Catalog and Subject Databases, as well as their PC email account.

*Providence College will not waive the fee for any short-term study abroad student who has been approved to participate in a non-PC international program during the summer or winter intersession.*



## IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION

*This form is optional and does not need to be submitted to the CGE. We recommend that you complete as much information as possible before your student departs and keep the form on hand while your student is abroad. Some of the information may not be available until your student arrives for orientation.*

Student's Banner ID: \_\_\_\_\_

Program Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Program Provider (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

Program Location (city and country): \_\_\_\_\_

Program Term: Fall   Spring   Academic Year   Summer   Winter

International Phone Number (and how to dial it): \_\_\_\_\_

Skype Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Roundtrip Flight Itinerary:

Date and Time of Departure: \_\_\_\_\_

Flight Number and Airport: \_\_\_\_\_

Arrival Airport and Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Date and Time of Return Flight: \_\_\_\_\_

Flight Number and Airport: \_\_\_\_\_

Arrival Airport and Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Safe Arrival Message Plan: \_\_\_\_\_

Program Contact Number (in-country): \_\_\_\_\_

Program Contact Number (U.S. Office): \_\_\_\_\_

Providence College Center for Global Education: 401-865-2114 \_\_\_\_\_

Providence College Office of Safety and Security (available 24/7): 401-865-2391 \_\_\_\_\_