

CSUEB Pre-Departure Information

Part of ensuring that you have a successful study abroad experience is preparing yourself well. Preparation includes not only learning about your host country, its politics, culture, language, but also preparing yourself for the unexpected. You will want to think about your health, safety, and your finances while abroad. Below are some things to help in preparation for departure.

Turn into the Center for International Education (CIE) before departure:

- Study Abroad Participant Consent & Release Agreement
- Academic Advising Agreement
- Study Abroad Program Medical insurance Statement (*for students participating one of the CSUEB Bilateral Programs or NSE programs in Canada only – ISEP & CSUIP students exempt*)

PASSPORT & VISA

A valid passport is required to study abroad. The application process for a U.S. passport can take time, so US citizens should apply well in advance of departure. Applications for U.S. passports can be found at www.travel.state.gov or your local post office.

Visa requirements vary by country. You will need to research the visa requirements for your country of attendance by contacting the foreign consulate. Please note that processing times and procedures vary from country to country, and even consulate to consulate, and can be quite cumbersome at times. You will need your passport before submitting the visa application, and the consulate may need to have your passport in their possession for several weeks while processing the visa application, so please plan accordingly – you may not be able to make any international travel plans while your visa application is in process.

ACADEMICS

Remember to speak with your academic advisors (GE, major, minor) to see how courses abroad will apply to your CSUEB degree. Make sure you know how to get in touch with them while you are away in the event that you need to discuss some additional course offerings.

You are required to be a full-time student while abroad and maintain good academic standing. Your grades abroad will be calculated into your CSUEB G.P.A. Your host university will be able to tell you what the minimum full-time enrollment requirement is while away, but for financial aid purposes you will be expected to maintain the equivalent of at least 12 units/quarter. When your transcript is submitted to the Center for International Education at the end of your program, we will work with the Records Office to convert the coursework you took while on exchange into CSUEB quarter units and grades.

It is your responsibility to have an official transcript of your exchange sent directly to Center for International Education (attn: Kelly Moran). It is also your responsibility to complete a new Academic Advising Agreement upon return if you took courses that weren't pre-approved classes. Note that receipt and posting of transcripts can take 2-5 months.

(Note: the CSU International Programs office is responsible for forwarding your Academic Report to CSUEB. If you are participating in CSUIP, you will not need to have an additional copy of your transcript sent to the Center for International Education).

CSUEB FEES

NSE (Plan B) and bilateral exchange students must pay fees at Cal State East Bay according to CSUEB fee payment deadlines. The fees you pay are equivalent to your standard fees as a full-time student at Cal State East Bay. Non-residents are also subject to non-resident tuition while on study abroad. It is your responsibility to ensure that payment reaches the University by the payment deadline for each quarter that you are away.

ISEP-Exchange students will be billed for CSUEB fees according to the standard fee payment calendar, and in addition will be charged for room & board (full meal plan) in Pioneer Heights.

ISEP-Direct students will be notified by the Center for International Education when we receive your invoice from ISEP, and we will work with you directly to coordinate payment (either by posting to your MYCSEUB account, or for direct payment to ISEP via check, money order or credit card).

CSU International Program students will be paying the IP office directly – if you see anything on your MYCSUEB account that you have questions about, please contact Kelly Moran.

NSE (Plan A) students will be paying tuition at your host university. If you see anything on your MYCSUEB account that you have questions about, please contact Kelly Moran.

It can be useful if you authorize, in writing, a trusted friend/family member to contact the University on your behalf in case questions or problems arise (e.g. questions about fees, financial aid, registration, etc.). Otherwise, you are the only person with whom university employees will speak with regarding your records. Contact the Accounting office to complete a third party authorization form.

FINANCIAL AID

Speak with Financial Aid before departure to find out when and where aid will be dispersed. As such, you will need to plan to budget for some up front expenses (health insurance, airfare, visa application fees, etc) as well as some settling in expenses while you await your financial aid dispersal.

If you are receiving any additional non-CSUEB scholarships while on study abroad (including those from your host institution), you are required to notify the Financial Aid Office.

RECORDS AND REGISTRATION

While you are participating in a CSUEB study abroad or National Student Exchange program, the Center for International Education will coordinate with the Records Office to enroll you as a full-time student at CSUEB. You will be enrolled in a General Studies course (GS 4300, or GS 6300 for graduate students) which indicates to the campus that you are participating in a CSUEB study abroad/exchange program.

If you are attending an ISEP-Direct program or NSE Plan A program, your CSUEB tuition will be waived. Please contact Kelly Moran (kelly.moran@csueastbay.edu) if you have any questions about your CSUEB enrollment or account while you are away.

After we receive your official transcript at the end of your program, the GS 4300/6300 course will be removed from your record and be replaced by the courses (and grades) that you earned while on study abroad/exchange.

ONLINE COURSES WHILE ON STUDY ABROAD OR EXCHANGE

You are required to maintain a full-time course load at your host institution. However, from time to time we receive requests from students to take an additional online course through CSUEB. We discourage students from doing so, as that will take time away from the opportunity you have to engage in the host community while away. However, we will consider such requests on a case-by-case basis. Please contact Kelly Moran or Lé Shawn Cheatham for more information.

INSURANCE

The CSU Chancellor's Office requires that CSU students have adequate health insurance (which includes medical evacuation and repatriation) while studying abroad. It is important for you to understand your insurance policy and what the billing procedures are while you are abroad (both in the case of emergency and routine appointments). In many cases, you will have to pay upfront and file a claim later with your insurance company.

CSU IP and ISEP have mandatory health insurance programs built in to the program. You will be required to enroll in those programs.

If you are participating in a bilateral exchange program through Middlesex, Okayama, Chung-Ang, ESSCA or NSE program in Canada, you will be enrolled in an insurance policy through CSUEB's Risk Management Office, and will be required to pay for the insurance premium prior to departing the U.S. Please call (510) 885-2880 to schedule an appointment with Le Shawn Cheatham to complete your additional insurance documents.

If you are participating in NSE and remaining in the U.S., it is your responsibility to be sure you have adequate health insurance coverage while you are outside California.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT IDENTIFICATION CARD (ISIC)

The ISIC card (www.myISIC.com) provides some student discounts, as well as **basic medical coverage** (the CSU requires that you also maintain additional health insurance coverage) including emergency evacuation and repatriation at an affordable price- about \$22. Depending on where you will be living, the benefits could be worth the cost of the card.

MONEY MATTERS AND OTHER LOGISTICAL QUESTIONS

- Make plans to handle payment of bills while you are away, as well as monitoring snail mail.
- Check with your local US bank to check about access to ATMs abroad and what any additional charges, if any, there are. You should have with you a combination of cash (U.S. or foreign currency) and credit or debit cards, but take care not to put them all in the same place. You should have some local currency with you for the first few days.
- Arrange how money can be sent to you in case you unexpectedly have lost access to local funds (e.g. wallet stolen, emergency funds needed, etc.)
- Make arrangements ahead of time with family and close friends so they know how to contact you. Set up a regular schedule for calls and/or email, and be sure that family/friends know who to contact in case of emergency if they cannot reach you.
- Update CSUEB regarding with a valid mailing address at <https://my.csueastbay.edu>
- Continue to monitor your **Horizon Email** for any communication from the university, including the Center for International Education. It is your responsibility to take care of payments by stipulated deadlines.
- Research how to vote in state and federal elections while you are overseas: <http://www.fvap.gov/>
- Pack light! Comfortable walking shoes, weather-appropriate outerwear, a dressier outfit or two, and some jeans and tops are your basics. Research what kinds of personal items/toiletries you can purchase at your destination, and which things you might wish to take with you.

SAFETY & SECURITY MATTERS

INFORM YOURSELF ABOUT YOUR HOST COUNTRY AND UNIVERSITY

- Get a sense of the country and city that you will be living in by reading Travel Guides (Lonely Planet, Rough Guide), as well as Facebook groups/blogs of students who are studying abroad.
- Department of State, Tips for Students Studying Abroad: <http://studentsabroad.state.gov/>
- Department of State, Travel Warning and Consular Information Sheets: www.travel.state.gov

STAY HEALTHY

- Center for Disease Control – Travel guidance: <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel>
- World Health Organization - <http://www.who.int/en/>
- Study Abroad Safety Handbook: www.studentsabroad.com
- Get a complete physical, eye exam and dental checkup before going abroad.
- You should bring copies of any prescription, such as eye glasses, etc. with you. If you are on prescription medication, please check with your doctor to see if you can carry a supply with you abroad, or if a suitable alternative will be available where you will be studying.
- Think about what you will do if you get sick. There may be English-speaking doctors available, but you want to think about how you might communicate with non-English doctors.
- Consider your mental health as well. While all students can expect to suffer culture shock, for some the transition to a new culture/location can be challenging enough to warrant professional assistance. Speak with your advisors at your local institution if you feel you may need help.

PLAN FOR EMERGENCIES:

- Register with the State Department via the ‘Smart Traveler Enrollment Program’ <https://step.state.gov/step/>

- Make extra copies of your travel documents (i.e. passport page, visa page, air ticket). Give one copy to a trusted family member/friend. Keep one copy with you in case you lose your passport or air ticket.
- Upon arrival, speak with the host university staff about 'in case of emergency' meeting points, contact information, etc.
- Keep a sheet of important contacts (including the CIE office and the contact information for the host university's international student office) with you in case of emergency. (Don't keep your only contact information in your cellphone.)
- Keep track of your health insurance documentation, so that the health insurance company can be contacted ASAP in the event that you are sick or hospitalized.
- If you decide to leave the study abroad site for a weekend/vacation, let the host institution international student office know and provide them with contact information in case of emergency.

UNDERSTAND LOCAL LAWS

- Obey local and national laws, including local laws re: drugs & alcohol. In many countries, penalties re: illegal drugs are very strict.
- Rights of the U.S. do not apply abroad.
- The U.S. Embassy is not likely to be able to assist if you are found in violation of local laws.

AVOID HIGH RISK BEHAVIOUR

- Try to blend in. Tourists can be targets for crimes (pickpocketing, etc.) Be aware that speaking loudly in English in public may draw attention to yourself. Don't carry expensive jewelry or electronics.
- Avoid going out alone (in particular at night), especially until you are more familiar with your new surroundings.
- Be mindful that dating 'rules' and expectations are likely not the same overseas. In addition, locals may have their own cultural stereotypes about you as an American. Make friends with local students to learn more about the ins and outs of dating expectations.
- If you choose to drink while abroad, drink in moderation. Drinking to excess may give others a bad impression of you (and therefore of Americans). More importantly, adding alcohol to unfamiliar cultural surroundings can lead to dangerous situations (date rape, robbery, or worse.)
- Be mindful of participating high-risk physical activities (sky diving, whitewater rafting, skiing, etc.) particularly in areas which you are not familiar.
- Avoid political demonstrations.

FBI Foreign Intelligence Warnings (Glenn Duffy Shriver Story)

- See: <https://www.fbi.gov/news/stories/advice-for-us-college-students-abroad>

WITHDRAWAL POLICY

- If for any reason you need to withdraw from your study abroad/exchange program, you must notify Kelly Moran or Lé Shawn Cheatham and, if applicable, the Financial Aid Office, ***immediately in writing***.

FACEBOOK GROUP

- Our Facebook group is an excellent way to communicate with other CSUEB students who are also participating in Study Abroad or NSE! <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1592164801049279/>

CONTACT INFORMATION at CSUEB

- Center for International Education (510) 885-2880
 - Kelly Moran (510) 885-2903 or cell (in case of emergencies) (510) 825-2159 or kelly.moran@csueastbay.edu
 - Lé Shawn Cheatham (510) 885-2979 or leshawn.cheatham@csueastbay.edu
- University Police (510) 885-3791
- Student Health & Counseling Services (510) 885-3735