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BRYN MAWR COLLEGE

STUDY ABROAD GUIDE 2011-2012



*Produced by the Office of International Programs (OIP),
Canwyll House, Bryn Mawr College
OIP, Bryn Mawr's "Gateway to the World"*



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INTRODUCTION

Choosing to study abroad can be an exciting experience! But living and studying in another country, while rewarding, can also be stressful and confusing. The Office of International Programs is here to help with any questions regarding study abroad and have put together this guide to assist students with information regarding studying as well as residing in another country.

This guide provides an overview of study abroad policies and procedures related to academic issues as well as program specific information for both students and their parents. We believe that those who go away should have a clear understanding of the study abroad experience and share in it. We urge both the student and parents to take the time to read this guide carefully. The policies and procedures stated here do not apply to summer study abroad.

The Role of the Foreign Studies Committee

The Foreign Studies Committee is responsible for evaluating applications from all Bryn Mawr students who want to study abroad during the academic year as part of their Bryn Mawr degrees. The Foreign Studies Committee determines a student's eligibility by looking at a variety of factors, including the overall and major grade point averages, the intellectual coherence of the study abroad experience with the academic program, the student's overall progress towards the degree, and faculty recommendations. After careful review of applications, the Committee will notify the student of their decision granting, denying, or giving conditions for permission to study abroad. Only those students whose plans are approved by the Committee will be allowed to transfer courses from their study abroad programs towards their Bryn Mawr degrees.

Good Luck!

We thank our colleagues at Smith College, Wesleyan University, University of Pennsylvania and NAFSA, Association of International Educators, for sharing resources that made this guide possible.

APPLICATION DEADLINES FOR AY 2011-2012

- Friday December 2, 2011** Deadline for applying to the Foreign Studies Committee via the Office of International Programs for permission to study at Oxford, or London School of Economics for Academic Year 2012-2013. Begin these applications early!
- Friday December 09, 2011** Deadline for applying to the Foreign Studies Committee via the Office of International Programs for permission to study at a non-approved program for Fall 2012 and/or Spring 2013.
- Friday February 10, 2012** Deadline for applying to the Foreign Studies Committee via the Office of International Programs for permission to study at one of Bryn Mawr's *Study Abroad Approved Programs* for Fall 2012, Spring 2013 or Academic Year 2012-2013.
- Feb. 15- March 31, 2012** Application Deadlines for most overseas programs for Fall 2012.
- Oct. 2- Nov. 16, 2012** Application Deadlines for most overseas programs for Spring 2013.

A STEP-BY-STEP CHECKLIST FOR STUDY ABROAD

1. *Assess your own goals and needs*

- What do you want to learn?
- What kind of classroom and teaching environment are you looking for?
- What kind of living situation best suits you?
- How long can you be away from Bryn Mawr College?

2. *Explore program options*

- Review the *Bryn Mawr College Approved List of Study Abroad Programs*
- Visit the Study Abroad Resource Room at the Office of International Programs – read student evaluations, browse program materials, talk with student coordinators.
- Talk to faculty, returned students, major advisor(s) and your dean.
- Attend one mandatory general information meeting.
- Read this *Study Abroad Guide* and the Study Abroad section on the Bryn Mawr College website.
- Attend program specific information meeting(s) presented by program reps.

3. *Application process at Bryn Mawr College*

- Declare your major/majors.
- Submit the completed Bryn Mawr Study Abroad Application to the Office of International Programs in Canwyll House West by application deadline. (Check website for information.)
- As you wait for approval of your Bryn Mawr study abroad applications by the Foreign Studies Committee, you may simultaneously apply to the overseas program.
- If applicable, contact Director of International Programs and/or the Financial Aid Office to discuss terms of your financial arrangements.

4. *Applications to Overseas Institutions*

- Obtain program application forms from overseas institutions.
- Be sure to send all materials in before the program deadline.
- Read your acceptance letter(s) carefully and return the completed information as requested.
- If applicable, send in the confirmation deposit before the deadline.
- Notify the Director of International Programs at Bryn Mawr College of your acceptance and submit a copy of your acceptance letter to OIP.
- Apply for housing at overseas program, if applicable
- Notify overseas program if you want to withdrawal.
- Notify OIP of your withdrawal.

5. *Before you leave Bryn Mawr*

- Clear all registration holds and make sure all outstanding balances are paid.
- Contact the Career Development Office about services they can provide in your absence. Open a reference file.
- Meet with your Dean to complete the Notice of Departure form.
- Terminate your telephone services by giving the Telephone Services in writing your name, dorm, room number, phone number, and the address where you want your final bill sent.
- Submit your forwarding address to the Post Office in Campus Center if you wish to have your mail forwarded to an address other than the one listed in the Campus Directory.
- Appoint another Bryn Mawr student to serve as your proxy and act on your behalf for Room Draw. If you are returning to campus mid-year, leave your list of preferences with the Residential Life Office.
- Attend mandatory pre-departure meeting.
- Submit Release form, address form, copy of your passport and copy of insurance card to OIP.

6. *Immigration and Visa Process*

- Become familiar with the entry/visa requirement of the host country.
- Apply for your passport or renew it if necessary.
- Make sure your passport will be valid the entire time you will be outside the U.S.
- Leave a copy of your passport with your family.
- If you are a non-U.S. citizen or permanent resident, consult the Director of International Programs about how studying abroad will affect your U.S. immigration status.
- Assemble documents needed for visa application and apply for visa.

7. *Prepare for your Trip*

- Inform yourself of health and safety issues in the country you are applying to and discuss them with your family.
- Make all flight arrangements
- Obtain the International Student Identity Card if your program does not provide it.
- Consider purchasing insurance for personal liability, property loss and trip cancellation
- Arrange for health insurance that will be valid throughout the duration of your stay overseas. Carry a copy of your insurance card.
- Have a physical, dental checkup, eye examination, etc. Make sure you receive all appropriate inoculations.
- Plan your budget. Bring an emergency fund (minimum \$250).
- Prepare to bring the recommended amount of money for start-up costs.
- Arrange to have \$100 in smaller denominations of local currency to bring with you.
- Plan to bring appropriate credit card and/or bank card.
- Arrange for Power of Attorney for the person handling your financial affairs in your absence.
- Arrange for an international calling card and/or cell phone.
- Bring medication, prescriptions, etc. for your entire duration away.
- Take several passport-size photographs with you.

8. *Go Abroad!*

- Participate in student orientation upon arrival at the program.

RESOURCES AND SCHOLARSHIPS FOR STUDY ABROAD

The Internet provides an excellent resource for financial aid. Two good general resources are http://www.studyabroad.com/forum/financial_aid.html and <http://www.finaid.org/otheraid/exchange.phtml>. Below is a short list of programs that have recently awarded funds to Bryn Mawr study abroad students:

- **Association of Teachers of Japanese (ATJ) Bridging Scholarship**
Website: <http://www.colorado.edu/ealld/atj/Bridging/scholarships.html>
- **Benjamin Gilman International Scholarship**
Website: <http://www.iie.org/programs/gilman/default.htm>
For students who are receiving federal Pell Grant
- **DAAD Scholarship Programs**
Website: <http://www.daad.org/scholarships.htm>
For study in Germany
- **International Research and Exchange Board (IREX)**
Website: <http://www.irex.org/programs> For study in Russia
- **The National Security Education Program (NSEP)**
Website: <http://www.iie.org/programs/nsep/default.htm>
For studying languages and cultures identified as being of strategic need to the U.S. Contact the fellowships advisor in the Dean's Office for more information.
- **St. Andrew's Society of Philadelphia Scholarships**
Website: <http://www.standrewsociety.org/scholar.htm>
For one year of study in a Scottish university. Contact the fellowships advisor in the Dean's Office for more information.

Some Bryn Mawr approved study abroad programs also provide financial awards. Check website for more information.

- **American University in Cairo**
Website: <http://www.aucegypt.edu/>
- **CET in Beijing or Harbin, China**
Website: <http://www.cetacademicprograms.com/>
- **CUPA in Paris, France**
Website: <http://www.cupa-paris.org/>
- **College Year in Athens**
<http://www.cyathens.org/>
- **DIS – Copenhagen**
Website: <http://www.dis.dk/>
- **Hamilton College in Madrid, Spain**
Website: <http://www.hamilton.edu/>
- **IES**
Website: <http://www.iesabroad.org/financialAid.do>
- **IFSA-Butler University**
Website: <http://www.ifsa-butler.org>

STUDY ABROAD ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

1) *College-wide Requirements*

You are required to complete college-wide requirements prior to the start of your senior year. These include:

- ___ 1 unit of College Seminar
- ___ 1 unit of Quantitative Skills
- ___ Foreign Language Requirement
- ___ 2 units of Division I: Social Sciences
- ___ 2 units of Division II: Natural Sciences and Mathematics (including a lab course)
- ___ 2 units of Division III: Humanities
- ___ 8 credits in Physical Education (including the swim test)

You should have completed a minimum of 4 PE credits by the time of the application. It is not realistic to expect to satisfy the Q or Division II requirements while abroad or, in most cases, to study a language other than the native language of the country for which you apply.

If you are planning to study abroad for the full academic year, normally you will have completed all your requirements, including PE, by the end of the sophomore year. With prior approval from the Director of Athletics and Physical Education and appropriate documentation, it is possible to earn a maximum of 2 PE credits while abroad. If you are planning to study abroad for one semester, you should have made good progress towards completing these requirements by the end of the sophomore year and present a viable plan to complete them all by the end of the junior year.

Students failing to meet these standards or failing to present a viable plan will receive lower priority in the Foreign Studies Committee approval process.

2) *GPA Requirements:* Students applying for Study Abroad are expected to have, and to maintain, a minimum GPA of 3.0.

3) *Foreign Language Requirement*

If a student plans to study in a non-English speaking country, she should take courses in the relevant foreign language every semester at Bryn Mawr prior to study abroad. If the student is applying to a program in which the primary language of instruction is not English, she needs to go to the language department and ask the Major Advisor to make sure that she has adequate preparation. Most non-English speaking programs expect students to complete at least intermediate language courses before matriculation, and some require more advanced preparation. Even after a student has met Bryn Mawr's foreign language requirement through proficiency testing or advance placement credit, she should continue building her foreign language skills in upper-level courses

4) *Declare a Major*

If you are interested in studying abroad in your junior year, you must declare your major (s) well before submitting your study abroad application. For students proposing independent majors, exceptions to this deadline will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Viable candidates will have already made good progress in their majors and will be maintaining a major grade point average of at least 3.0.

5) *Semester or Year*

Most students may study abroad for one semester only during their academic career. The committee will consider requests for exceptions to this rule from students majoring in a foreign language and those accepted to Cambridge, Oxford or the London School of Economics, which are yearlong programs for which one semester is not an option.

6) ***Pre-departure Residency Expectation***

Each applicant for study abroad is expected to be on campus during the semester preceding study abroad in order to participate in orientation program and to consult with her dean and major adviser about credit arrangements. For exceptions, see “Leave of Absence and Study Abroad” under the section “Study Abroad Policies”

7) ***Study Abroad Information Session:*** Attend mandatory Study Abroad general information session for sophomores.

CHOOSING THE RIGHT PROGRAM

Bryn Mawr emphasizes that study abroad is a serious academic endeavor not a prolonged vacation and travel opportunity. If the latter is what you're after, take some time off or wait until after graduation. Travel and living abroad is always educational but not necessarily worthy of academic credit; that is why there is an approved list of academically challenging study abroad programs. In the right program, it is possible to combine academic work of the highest quality with a deepened understanding of everyday life and culture in the host country. Bryn Mawr expects you to find the best program for your own individual needs, and not to choose a program because a friend is also applying.

1) Start planning early.

To find the most suitable program, complete a successful application, and integrate your study abroad with your Bryn Mawr experience, you need to start planning in the fall of the academic year before that in which you hope to study abroad. Careful planning is required to choose courses that will meet the college-wide requirements and introductory course requirements of your prospective major. You should also complete at least two introductory courses in your major(s) before applying to study abroad.

2) Language Proficiency Requirements for Study Abroad

Most non-English speaking programs expect students to meet at least intermediate proficiency level before matriculation, and some require more advanced preparation. Consider attending summer language classes to boost your language skills.

3) Research List of Approved Programs.

These programs are approved by the faculty as academically compatible with Bryn Mawr's curriculum. They also have a history of working with Bryn Mawr students. Please note that the College reserves the right to amend the list of approved programs and to remove a program from the list at any time, if in the College's sole judgment, the program becomes incompatible with the academic needs of our students or if conditions in the region in which the program is located may jeopardize students' safety. The Study Abroad Library in Canwyll House West has a collection of materials about various approved programs and former participants' comments on these. You can also find information from the approved programs website.

4) Consider Your Academic Needs

Is your top priority enhancing your language skills, learning about a foreign culture, doing on-site research, or exploring a specialized field in your major? Most importantly, how does the particular program enhance your academic experience? There are many reasons to study abroad, but it is important that you examine honestly your own motives for pursuing study abroad. Consult your dean and your major adviser(s) who can help you think through what you might hope to gain from it, before you waste energy on an idea that may not be suited to you. Do not confuse the benefits of *living* in a foreign culture with those of *studying* abroad and taking courses that can be integrated into your studies at Bryn Mawr.

5) Adapting to a Foreign Culture

Even if you have strong academic reasons to study abroad, you should be sure that you are mentally and physically prepared for an unfamiliar environment or culture. Anyone studying abroad should be prepared for "culture shock," a loss of emotional equilibrium, when confronted with a set of unspoken rules for social interaction that are different from those of the US. Food and housing opportunities may be very different, and you'll find that comforts and choices you took for granted at home won't be found where you expect. The duration and intensity of study abroad make a loss of emotional equilibrium more common in study abroad than in ordinary travel, especially in countries that are culturally similar to the US. This loss of equilibrium is likely to exacerbate existing problems such as anxiety, depression, or eating disorders. Talk about your study abroad plans with your parents, counselors, and therapists, especially if you think that you may be susceptible to such stress. Although program administrators have experience in helping students through difficult patches, the facilities to deal with complex problems will be limited in some countries. Furthermore, problems that become exacerbated by the challenges of your new location can distract from your academic success and cultural integration abroad.

6) Teaching Methods

You should carefully consider how the teaching and learning environment at the programs or universities you are looking at may differ from that at Bryn Mawr, and whether it is suited to your own strengths. There is much variation in teaching methods, types of assignments, amount of supervision and direction from instructors, and forms of assessment.

A common academic difference between US liberal arts colleges and higher education in most of the world (based more on a graduate/specialist education model) is in the degree to which you are expected to organize your time as an independent scholar. Past students have noted that they were not fully prepared for the differences in academic expectations and structure abroad, especially when they enrolled in host-country classes taught at a local university. While there are lots of variations from country to country and from university to university, many students observe that at universities abroad there is much less assigned reading than at Bryn Mawr, and few if any written assignments given before the final exam or paper. You may find academic systems where you have far less class time than at Bryn Mawr, where you are supposed to create your own reading lists, where you're expected to work entirely on your own until an exam tests you on what you've done, libraries with far more restrictions, and professors -- like everywhere, some brilliant lecturers and some not -- who are not concerned with you as an individual. It is key to realize that educational structure and pedagogy are part of the cultural differences study abroad students seek. Many students, but by no means all, find themselves newly empowered by the experience of taking charge of their own learning, and having the time to pursue interests deeply.

Programs where classes are offered expressly for the study abroad group are by definition less culturally integrated, but are likely to be taught in a way that is more similar to American institutions. Such programs are often more structured than host-country university based programs, also offering group excursions and events. Some programs offer a mix of both models, while other programs and universities use tutorial or field study models that may conform with neither your prior experience nor what has been described above.

7) Calendar Differences

Academic calendars vary widely around the world. Differences that you may find in specific regions are outlined below.

- In some European countries university examinations for the fall semester are required in late January; attendance in the fall can be impossible because the exams prevent return to Bryn Mawr in time for the spring semester.
- Until recently, the academic year in the U.K. and Ireland was broken into three terms (autumn, spring, and summer) running from late September through late June, with two long breaks at Christmas and Easter. Some institutions, including Oxford and Cambridge still use this system. Bryn Mawr students may, therefore, only attend these institutions for the full academic year.
- At universities in the southern hemisphere, the academic year is aligned with a calendar year. Semester I begins in February and Semester II in July. While students can earn a full semester of credit during either semester, some find it easier to integrate into the host university if they begin their study abroad experience in the first semester.

Calendar differences can affect your ability to work during the summer both before and after your time abroad. Students are responsible for their own costs during vacation breaks and university holidays, which may be longer than comparable breaks at Bryn Mawr. "Fall start" programs can begin as early as July or as late as October, and the same variation can be found for spring start and end times. Some countries allow full-time students to work during vacation breaks, and others forbid it. It is important that all these factors be taken into account as you are choosing a study abroad program, and thinking about the extra costs that school breaks abroad will present.

8) Consult with your dean

You must discuss with your dean how to complete the college-wide requirements if you go abroad. It is especially unlikely that a student will be able to complete the Quantitative Skills or Division II requirements while abroad or to study a language other than the native language of the country.

9) Consult with your major advisor.

You must discuss your study abroad plans with your major advisor. Departmental approval is crucial to the success of a student's time abroad. Your plan for study in another country must correspond with your overall plan for successful completion of a major. Furthermore, as you will be away for part of the time usually devoted to advanced work in your major, you need to carefully consider how you will meet the advanced requirements upon your return and what courses your major department will accept from another institution. The major advisor might also recommend a program that best fits your academic needs and personal interests.

10) Consult with Access Services if needed.

Deciding to study abroad is a personal decision. Study abroad is an exciting experience and offers many rewards; it can also be intellectually, physically, and emotionally challenging. It requires that you live with a high level of ambiguity. Students with a history of emotional or physical illness or of learning disabilities or differences should carefully consider the pros and cons of being away from familiar support while studying in a foreign country. It is essential that you consult with your physician, counselor, or other professional about your plans. The adjustment period and relative independence of living overseas are likely to exacerbate rather than alleviate any pre-existing problems.

If you are diagnosed with a learning, physical, or psychological disability that may need academic or facilities accommodations abroad, please contact Stephanie Bell, Coordinator of Access Services at 610-526-7351 or sbell@brynmawr.edu immediately to learn about the issues, procedures, and documentation requirements.

11) Talk to your parents.

While you bear the primary responsibility for deciding whether to go abroad and for selecting a program, it is important that your parents or guardians are fully aware of your plans.

12) Attend open meetings with representatives from study abroad programs.

Representatives from programs on Bryn Mawr's approved list visit the campus each year. The Office of International Programs sends out notices of visits via e-mail to students who have expressed interests in a specific country or world region.

13) Seek Advice

Read study abroad evaluations from past Bryn Mawr students in the Office of International Programs, talk to returned students, and consult with your dean, major advisor, and the study abroad program staff. Ask lots of questions.

STUDY ABROAD POLICIES

Academic Policy

A student is required to carry a full-time course load while studying abroad. Each Bryn Mawr course (one unit) carries an equivalent of four semester hours or six quarter hours at other institutions. Because of differences in the academic calendar or course weighting, the number of courses that constitute a full-time load at an overseas institution may be different from the number of courses that constitute a full-time load at Bryn Mawr. The maximum number of Bryn Mawr-equivalent credits that may be awarded for a semester of study abroad is five units, and for a full academic year, the maximum number is ten units.

To earn a semester of credit—four Bryn Mawr units—you will need to complete 15 or 16 semester-hours or between 22 and 24 quarter-hours during your study abroad. For example, if each course offered by a study abroad program carries three semester hours, you will need to take five courses to receive a full semester of Bryn Mawr credit. A student taking a full load for only one term of a three-term year will receive three Bryn Mawr units; a full load for two terms will receive five units; and a full load for three terms will receive eight units. Students should not take courses graded as pass/fail while abroad.

It is the student's responsibility to know the required number of courses she must take overseas before leaving Bryn Mawr and how many Bryn Mawr equivalent credits will be awarded upon her return. She should discuss any question she may have with the Director of International Programs, her dean, or her Major Advisor. In cases where a full-time course load for a term abroad is the equivalent of only three Bryn Mawr course units, a student will still be charged regular Bryn Mawr tuition.

Courses used to fulfill requirements in a student's major.

All courses taken abroad to fulfill major requirements must be approved by the student's Major Advisor. You should list all the courses you plan to take while abroad on the *Major Work Plan*. Be sure to work out a tentative plan of courses to take upon returning to Bryn Mawr. Courses in subjects or departments not offered at Bryn Mawr may need approval from a related Bryn Mawr department to assure their eligibility for credit. For example, Geography courses might be approved by Growth and Structure of Cities, Geology, or Political Science.

Foreign Language Study While Abroad

To enhance cross-cultural understanding, a student is expected to enroll in the language course offered by the study abroad program unless she receives a waiver. If you attend a program where the instruction is in English but the local language is not English, you must study the local language. For example, if a student participates in the DIS program in Denmark, she is required to register for Danish.

Transferring Credits from Abroad

In order to transfer credits to Bryn Mawr, you must earn a "C" grade of 2.0 or above. "C"-(minus) grades are not acceptable for transfer credits. Courses that lie outside the liberal arts will not be transferable (e.g., Business, Communications, Fashion Design, etc.).

Grades Earned Abroad and Bryn Mawr GPA

Grades earned abroad, which are judged by individual instructors according to local practice, are not included in a student's Bryn Mawr Grade Point Average. Only the number of transferred credits is recorded on the Bryn Mawr transcript. Nonetheless, you may be asked to submit your study abroad transcript when you apply to graduate or professional schools, which will certainly take the study abroad grades into consideration when evaluating your application.

Academic Honor Code

- 1) You should observe the laws of the country in which you are studying.
- 2) You should observe all academic and disciplinary regulations in effect at the host program or institution.
- 3) As a study abroad student, you remain concurrently enrolled at Bryn Mawr while abroad, and are therefore expected to also follow the Bryn Mawr Honor Code and serve as a representative of the College.

Leaving Your Program Early/Incomplete Coursework/Exams

You are expected to complete all assigned work and exams before leaving the study abroad program at the end of the semester. If you must leave your program early due to medical or personal reasons you cannot control or foresee, you must do the following:

- 1) Consult the on-site program staff.
- 2) Consult with Theresa Cann, the Director of International Programs, and/or your dean. The overseas program or host institution may consult with the Director of International Programs before deciding whether to make an exception and if so, what arrangements need to be made.
- 3) Obtain written permission from the overseas program director granting the early departure.
- 4) Obtain written permission from Bryn Mawr, from either Theresa Cann, the Director of International Programs, or your dean.

If you leave your program early for personal or medical reasons, Bryn Mawr will treat you as if you have taken a medical leave of absence and will expect you to apply for readmission and secure medical clearance before returning to Bryn Mawr.

Transfer Students and Study Abroad

Students who have transferred to Bryn Mawr from another institution must earn a minimum of 24 academic units at Bryn Mawr. Seven out of the last 16 units have to be completed in residence (registered at Bryn Mawr). If you transfer to Bryn Mawr after one year or more elsewhere, and you believe that study abroad is an essential part of your academic program, you should consult with your dean and major advisor about whether you have grounds to ask for an exception to this rule. If, however, a semester abroad is not possible, you might consider participating in a summer study abroad program, an internship, or a volunteer program overseas. A student maintaining excellent academic records may apply as a senior for prestigious postgraduate fellowships to continue her studies abroad for a year or more.

Leave of Absence and Study Abroad

After a leave of absence for medical or academic reasons, it is usually deemed necessary to spend one semester back on campus before being permitted to study abroad. If you need to take a leave of absence for personal reasons, plan ahead and discuss with your dean, the Director of International Programs, or your major advisor any plan to study abroad immediately after returning from leave.

Financial Policy

Financial Aid

Deciding to study abroad involves many academic, personal and financial considerations. Early in the process, you and your family need information about study abroad costs, how the costs are billed and, for financial aid recipients, which costs can be covered by financial aid funds.

Financial aid for study abroad is available for students who are eligible for assistance and have been receiving financial aid during their freshman and sophomore years. If the study abroad budget is not able to support all of those on aid, who plan to study abroad, priority will be given to those for whom it is most appropriate academically and to those who have had the least international experience.

The College follows the federal guidelines for financial aid. A student must fill out the required standard financial aid forms, and indicate on the Bryn Mawr College Application for Study Abroad that she is requesting financial aid. Only students approved to study abroad by the Foreign Studies Committee are eligible to be considered for financial aid from the College.

Expenses not covered by Financial Aid. (These are out of pocket expenses to the Student, plan accordingly)

The following fees are considered personal expenses and you and your family are responsible for paying them:

- Passport application fee
- Overseas program/institution application and or program deposit fee
- Visa application fee
- Medical check-up and immunization

- Health insurance
- Transportation
- Books (unless you are a financial aid recipient, whereby you will receive a \$500 book allowance)

Tuition

All students going abroad are charged Bryn Mawr College tuition regardless of the tuition charged by the overseas program. The student will receive a bill from Bryn Mawr College for the tuition. Bryn Mawr College will pay the tuition for the abroad program on the student’s behalf. If you are required to pay an enrollment deposit to your abroad program, Bryn Mawr College will refund the deposit as a credit on the Bryn Mawr College bill. Please note that only deposits that are applied to the program tuition will be refunded. You will not receive a refund for a deposit that is applied toward housing.

Refunds

If you withdraw from your program after the College has paid your tuition and fees, the College will make every effort to recover those funds. If the College is unable to recover the funds, the student and her family are then responsible for repaying the College.

- 1) Refund policies vary from one study abroad program to the next. Written notice of intention to withdraw must be submitted to the Director of International Programs and the student’s dean by the required deadline.
- 2) If you withdraw from a program after being accepted, you may incur penalties including, but not limited to: application fee, confirmation deposit, and funds that have been committed for your participation, as well as non-refundable costs such as airfare and visa application fees.
- 3) Refunds are calculated based on Bryn Mawr’s refund schedule policy for on-campus students. If you need an advance on your refund, you may apply for a Scharr Loan through Student Financial Services.

Room and Board

In most instances, a student pays room and board directly to her overseas program. A few programs include the room and board charge with their tuition charges as an all inclusive fee. In those cases, Bryn Mawr College will pay the host institution the entire fee. The room and board charge portion will then be put on the student’s Bryn Mawr College bill along with Bryn Mawr’s tuition charge.

The cost of living varies greatly in different locations around the world as does the value of American currency. Programs in major European cities such as Paris, London, and Florence as well as Tokyo have become very expensive. You should anticipate additional out of pocket expenses for transportation, meals, shopping and excursions

Financial Aid Recipients

Financial aid recipients need to evaluate their ability to pursue junior year or semester abroad study. Bryn Mawr does not cover transportation to and from study abroad nor travel while there, although the financial aid package does include some money for miscellaneous expenses.

Costs Used to Determine Eligibility for Aid from the College for students studying abroad:

Bryn Mawr Tuition per term	\$19,930 in 2011-2012; 2012-2013 tuition TBA
Study Abroad Room and Board Charges	varies by program up to Bryn Mawr maximum*
Book Allowance:	\$500
Personal Allowance:	\$500
Local Transportation Allowance:	varies by home state from \$40 to \$900.
Airfare	NOT COVERED
Travel While Abroad	NOT COVERED

* For 2011-2012 the Bryn Mawr College room and board charge is \$6,445(for one semester). When room and board fees charged by a program are less than Bryn Mawr's room and board charges, a financial aid recipient should

expect her grant aid to be reduced. When room and board fees charged by a program are more than Bryn Mawr's room and board, a financial aid student will only be awarded up to the maximum amount for room and board charged at Bryn Mawr.

Federal Work Study funds are not available for students who study abroad. However if a financial aid student who qualified for Federal Work Study has eligibility under the Federal guidelines, Student Financial Services will replace it with a Perkins Loan.

Any student concerned about how to pay expenses not covered by the standard financial aid award should make an appointment with her Financial Aid Counselor as early in the application process as she can to discuss alternative borrowing from federal or private loans before making her final decision. The student should be prepared to document airfare expenses.

When Financial Aid is Credited

If the amount of a student's financial aid is greater than the charges on her Bryn Mawr College tuition bill, she will have a credit on her Bryn Mawr student account once all the aid is posted to her account. The credit amount will be refunded to her by direct deposit or mailed to her home address. The student may use this credit to pay room and board and other expenses. However, refunds should not be expected prior to the beginning of the normal Fall/Spring semester at the College because Federal Funds (e.g. Stafford Loans, Plus Loans, Perkins Loan, Pell Grants, SEOG and SMART Grants) cannot be disbursed until 3 days before the start of the semester.

Study Abroad and Non-BMC grants and Scholarships

If a student receives a scholarship from a study abroad program, it will be credited to her Bryn Mawr College student account and reduce the amount of tuition she needs to pay. Any outside scholarship received by a financial aid recipient will reduce a portion of her Bryn Mawr College Grant or Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant.

The Office of International Programs Office and the Controller's Office are willing to discuss with you any questions or concerns.

Policy on Health, Safety, and Emergency Management

In case of an emergency overseas, students and families should contact the on-site program director or relevant university staff immediately, and then notify the Director of International Programs. Bryn Mawr's emergency management team (including members of the Undergraduate Dean's Office) will work closely with the overseas program directors to create an appropriate response. To reach the College outside the Office of International Programs' normal hours of operation (Monday-Friday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.); contact the Public Safety Office at 610-526-7911.

Travel Warnings by the Department of State: If either the US Department of State or the Centers for Disease Control issues a travel warning for a particular country or region within a country, Bryn Mawr College will suspend approval of study abroad at that site while the warning is in effect.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE

The Bryn Mawr application is due in the Office of International Programs by the required deadline. All study abroad applications are carefully reviewed by the Foreign Studies Committee. Usually applicants will receive written notification granting, denying, or giving conditions for permission to study abroad within 4-6 weeks of the application deadline. For programs on the approved list a student may begin to apply to the programs simultaneously as she is compiling her Bryn Mawr study abroad application materials. If she wants to apply to a program that is not on the list, she must obtain prior approval of her plans from the Foreign Studies Committee. This process requires significant additional planning.

Bryn Mawr Study Abroad Application Procedure

The Bryn Mawr study abroad application, which is available at <http://www.brynmawr.edu/oip> or in the Office of International Programs, includes:

Biographical Information

A student's biographical information is required for a complete application.

Semester Preferences and Program Choices

Only students who are majoring in a foreign language or are interesting in studying at LSE, Oxford or Cambridge may apply to study abroad for a full year. All others are required to indicate which semester would be their first choice for study abroad. Every effort will be made to accommodate your choice of semester. However, as the College must achieve a balance between the students who are abroad in the fall and those who are abroad in the spring, some students may not be granted their first choice.

If your dean or major adviser believes that, for academic reasons, you should not study abroad in a particular semester, he or she should send the Foreign Studies Committee a written explanation (see Academic Impediment Certification). If the Committee agrees that there is a substantive academic impediment to your study abroad in a particular semester, you will not be required to have a second-choice option. Generally the Committee will consider the following reasons (1) inability to complete the major; (2) inability to take courses following the study abroad semester in the appropriate sequence; (3) inability to complete the prerequisites for the study abroad program until the semester indicated.

The Committee understands that you may prefer a particular semester for non-academic reasons and will take your preference into consideration. Be sure to explain the reasons for your preferred semester in your essay. However, please note that academic considerations and the necessity of balancing the numbers of students abroad in each semester are always given higher priorities.

Student Certification

Your signature indicates that you have read the application instructions and this Guide, and also discussed your study abroad plans with your dean and major advisor. In addition, you authorize the Office of International Programs to release information from your records which are relevant to your study abroad application.

Essay

The study abroad essay is an opportunity to personalize your BMC study abroad application. Your essay should not be more than four pages long and it should address the following areas:

1. What initially inspired you to study abroad and the reasons why you decided to study abroad in the particular country or the particular programs you have chosen.
2. How you have prepared for study abroad: academically, socially and personally; how you have also prepared to handle any challenges you anticipate while studying abroad.
3. The impact that your study abroad program will have on your academic goals: enhance your language skills, pursue courses for your major/minor, take electives to broaden your academic perspectives and or learn a new language.
4. The impact that your study abroad program will have on your professional goals. Will you learn skills or conduct research that will be necessary and/or support your overall future career or preparation for graduate school?

5. Semester Specific study abroad. If you can only study abroad in a particular semester, add a separate section in your essay with the headings: "Semester Specific for study abroad" In this section, discuss the reasons for your semester preference. The Foreign Studies Committee will carefully consider your essay, along with your academic record, the intellectual coherence between your study abroad proposal and your academic program, and the Dean's and Major Advisor's recommendations, in determining whether to grant you your semester choice.

Major Work Plans

You need to provide two completed Major Work Plans incorporating the courses you plan to take while you are studying abroad: one for studying abroad in the fall semester and the other, for the spring semester. You only need to provide one copy of your Major Work Plan if (1) you are eligible to study abroad for the full academic year, or (2) if your dean or major advisor verifies that for academic reasons, you can only study abroad in one particular semester.

Transcript: You can generate and submit an unofficial transcript using Virtual Registrar

Recommendation #1: Dean Certification

All students must complete college-wide requirements prior to the start of their senior year. You must discuss with your dean how to complete the college-wide requirements if you go abroad.

Recommendation #2: Foreign Language Certification

If you are applying to a program in which the primary language of instruction is not English, you need to go to the language department and ask the Major Advisor (lower case) to make sure that you have adequate preparation. Most non-English speaking programs expect students to complete at least intermediate language courses before matriculation, and some require more advanced preparation. Even after a student has met Bryn Mawr's foreign language requirement through course work, proficiency testing or advance placement credit, she should continue building her foreign language skills in upper-level courses.

Recommendation #3: Major Advisor Evaluation: You must discuss your study abroad plans in detail with your major advisor, and your major advisor must complete Section 2 of your application.

Recommendation #4: Semester Specific Certification

If for academic reasons you can only study abroad in one particular semester, your dean or major advisor must complete this form. This statement should be submitted as soon as possible.

Requesting Permission to Study on a Non-Approved Program

You may request permission to participate in a program that does not appear on the approved list, if you feel that this program will provide particular academic benefits that none of the approved programs offer. For example, if your research in your major focuses on a country in which no programs are listed, you may have adequate reason to request a non-approved program. However, if you want to study in a country for which several programs already appear on the approved list, consider all the approved programs carefully, for permission will rarely be granted to attend another program in that country.

Do bear in mind that obtaining permission for a non-approved program requires significantly more time and effort than applying to an approved program. Thus you should begin the process as early as possible. You should consult with your dean, major advisor, and the Director of International Programs multiple times as you gather information about the program you are requesting to be sure that it will fulfill Bryn Mawr's academic requirements.

To request permission to study on a non-approved program, you must submit the following documents to the Office of International Programs by the required deadline.

1. Bryn Mawr Study Abroad Application Form
2. An additional statement by your major advisor recommending your choice as an important academic alternative to the approved programs
3. An additional essay explaining why you want to attend this program. You should list specifically:

- 1) What courses you intend to take;
- 2) How these courses will enhance your work in the major;
- 3) Any courses you intend to pursue outside your major.
4. A copy of the program description, including a list of courses and support services offered, and program dates, examination procedures, and costs.
5. A contact person for the program.

The Foreign Studies Committee will assess the overall academic quality of the program and its relevance to your plan of study in comparison with programs on the approved list. You will be notified of the Committee's decision regarding your request before the application deadline for study in an approved program.

Confirming Your Study Abroad Approval

If you are approved to study abroad, you will be notified in writing. Please submit the acceptance form to the Office of International Programs within 7 days of receiving your approval notice.

The Foreign Studies Committee reserves the right to withdraw the approval of a student who fails to return the Study Abroad Confirmation Form within the required 7 days.

Overseas Institution/Program Application Process

All study abroad programs now have Web sites and e-mail addresses where you can request forms and information. This method provides the quickest response. In some instances, a student might be able to download the application forms on-line. Usually you will need to submit: 1) an official transcript that shows at least three semesters of college coursework, the courses you are currently enrolled in 2) recommendation letters completed by a faculty member, your dean, and/or the Director of International Programs.

Managing Your Application

- 1) Please note carefully and follow the application deadline for each program.
- 2) Many programs have rolling admissions, which means they review applications and accept students continually until spaces are filled.
- 3) Whatever the deadline, the earlier you apply, the better your chances of getting your first choices—not only of program, but also of housing and courses.
- 4) The programs will inform you about your application status.
- 5) Submit a copy of your acceptance letter to Office of International Programs.
- 6) Almost all programs require a student's confirmation by a specified date and some require a deposit (ranges from \$100 or \$2500) to hold the place in the program.
- 7) It is advisable to wait to hear from the Foreign Studies Committee regarding your Bryn Mawr application status before you make any payments to confirm your acceptance.
- 8) If a deposit is required by the program to hold a place, you should send the deposit directly to the program.
- 9) If the deposit is applied toward the program tuition, inform the Director of International Programs in writing of the amount paid so that it can be credited to your Bryn Mawr account.

Overseas Program Housing Application

- 1) After you receive approval from Bryn Mawr and acceptance by the program, you should apply for housing immediately if it is not included in your initial application.
- 2) Some programs place students with families or in apartments while others will provide students with an array of accommodation choices.

Direct Admissions

Bryn Mawr has direct admissions agreements with the following overseas programs/institutions. Please make an appointment to see the Director of International Programs if you are interested in applying to any of these institutions.

- Collegium Hieronymi Pragensis in Prague, Czech Republic
- DIS in Copenhagen, Denmark
- Indiana University, Bologna Consortium Program, Bologna, Italy

- Oxford University in Oxford, England
- London School of Economics and Political Science in London, England
- Swarthmore College/African Studies Consortium University of Ghana in Legon, Ghana
- Bryn Mawr College/African Studies Consortium University of Nairobi in Nairobi, Kenya
- Science Po in Paris, France (Exchange Program)
- Keio University in Tokyo, Japan (Exchange Program)
- Tsuda College in Tokyo, Japan (Exchange Program)
- University of Pennsylvania/African Studies Consortium University of Gaston Berger in St. Louis, Senegal
- University of Cape Town, South Africa

Withdrawing your Study Abroad Application

If you decide not to study abroad, you will need to take the following steps:

1. Contact OIP and complete the Study Abroad withdrawal form. It is important to coordinate your withdrawal in a timely manner to avoid administrative challenges with housing assignments, and term billing.
2. Contact your dean to change your enrollment status at the College and to confirm your plan for the upcoming semester.
3. Contact Residential Life about housing arrangements. Please note that housing will not be processed until you have submitted the withdrawal forms to OIP
4. Contact the overseas program immediately and withdraw your application. It is imperative to do this in a timely manner to avoid late withdrawal fees and penalties. Any late withdrawal fees imposed by the program are solely your responsibility, and you must resolve any problems that arise from them directly with the program
5. Note that refund policies vary from one study abroad program to the next. If you withdraw from a program after being accepted, you may incur penalties even if the program has not yet started. These penalties might include, but are not limited to, the application fee, confirmation deposit, and funds that have been committed for your participation, as well as non-refundable costs such as airfare and visa application fees. Such financial penalties are your sole responsibility and will not be absorbed by Bryn Mawr College.
6. Once you withdraw your Bryn Mawr study abroad application, you will not be allowed to reapply

PREPARING FOR DEPARTURE

Before You Leave Bryn Mawr College

After you are approved by Bryn Mawr and accepted by the overseas program you should take the following steps:

- 1) Attend a mandatory pre-departure meeting
- 2) Schedule an appointment with your dean to complete the *Notice of Departure* form.

Pre-Departure Orientation

All study abroad students are required to attend the mandatory pre-departure orientation at Bryn Mawr. Students will be notified by *email* when and where the orientation will be held. An information packet which covers a wide range of topics will be provided at the meeting.

Notice of Departure

You will receive information about when to complete the *Notice of Departure* with the Office of International Program. You should pick up a copy of *What to Do When You Leave Residence* from the Dean's Office or from the Student Life Office and read it carefully.

Mail

The College Post Office will block off the mailboxes of students studying abroad so that they will not receive any junk mail. Your "real" mail from outside will be forwarded to your U.S. forwarding addresses listed in the *Campus Directory*.

Email

Your Bryn Mawr email account will remain active while you are abroad. Before you leave campus, we encourage you to change your password and unsubscribe from listserv. While abroad, check it regularly, since we will rely on it to correspond with you. If you choose to forward your Bryn Mawr email to another personal account, remember to check the Bryn Mawr account occasionally in case an important email was filtered out and not forwarded to you. Information Services provide detailed instructions on how to unsubscribe from campus Listserv: <http://www.brynmawr.edu/computing/docs/webcat.shtml>.

Bryn Mawr Housing

If you expect to study abroad in the fall, do not participate in Room Draw. If you participate in Room Draw and do not occupy the room during the fall semester you will be charged a \$100 fee for canceling the room before June 15. A \$500 cancellation fee will be incurred for cancellations after June 15.

If you will be abroad for the fall semester and need a room for the spring, fill out a Housing Preference Form ranking the dorms in order of preference. The form is available on-line at <http://www.brynmawr.edu/residentiaallife/forms/> and must be received by the Residential Life Office before December 1. Housing assignments will be confirmed via Bryn Mawr e-mail accounts approximately one week before the beginning of the second semester in January.

If you will be abroad for the academic year or for the spring semester, ask a friend to act as your proxy in the Room Draw. The proxy will not be allowed to choose a room if there is a balance on your Bryn Mar account. If the proxy arrangement falls through, ask the Director of Residential Life to assign you a room. Please remember that Residence Council will not automatically grant a room change if a student is unhappy with the room drawn by her proxy or assigned to her.

Storage

Unless you are an international student or live on the west coast, you will not be able to store any items at the college while studying abroad.

Health & Safety Issues

The health and security of our students are two of the College's primary concerns. We work collaboratively with overseas programs and institution, study abroad colleagues around the country, and contacts in the U.S. Department

of State and other government and non-governmental agencies to ensure that all students and their families receive adequate and up-to-date information regarding preparation and participation in study abroad.

As a study abroad student, we expect you to:

1. Assume responsibility for all the elements necessary for your personal preparation for the program and participate fully in orientations offered by Bryn Mawr and your study abroad program or institution.
2. Read and carefully consider all materials issued by the study abroad program or institution that relate to safety, health, legal, environmental, political, cultural, and religious conditions in the host country.

The U.S. Department of State Web site at <http://travel.state.gov/> offers consular information sheets for every country of the world. These sheets list such information as the location of the U.S. embassy or consulate in the subject country, entry requirements, health and safety issues, road conditions and other useful information for travelers. The Department of State also issues travel warnings, which advise travelers to avoid a country or specific area of a country. The College does not send students to countries or regions that appear in the Department of State's Travel Warnings.

3. Conduct your own research on the country you plan to visit with particular emphasis on health and safety concerns, as well as the social, cultural, and political situations.
4. Consider your physical and mental health, and other personal circumstances when applying for or accepting a place in a program, and make available to the program staff accurate and complete physical and mental health information and any other necessary personal data.

Consult the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Web site at <http://www.cdc.gov/travel> for immunization requirements and for general health updates and guidelines. You should have a complete physical checkup, and have your eyes and teeth checked before departure. For obvious reasons, it is best to do as much preventive health maintenance as possible before leaving for an unfamiliar environment.

If you have pre-existing medical condition that may require treatment or need prescription medication, have your physician summarize them in a note and be sure to bring an adequate supply. Carry information on your blood type and always carry prescription medication in its original container. If your medical condition is complicated in any way, a copy of recent test results can be invaluable to a treating physician overseas, for example, a copy of a recent X-ray report or blood tests.

5. Obtain and maintain appropriate insurance coverage and abide by any conditions imposed by the carriers. Some programs require that students purchase their health insurance, so be sure to read the program materials.

You and your parents must determine what exactly is covered and decide whether or not you wish to purchase additional insurance(s), including traveler's insurance, emergency medical evacuation and repatriation, in relation to her anticipated needs. Usually if a student sees a physician or require hospital treatment abroad, she must pay cash and obtain receipts for which she may be reimbursed in the U.S.

6. Inform your family and any others who may need to know about your participation in the study abroad program, provide them with emergency contact information, make a plan, and keep them informed of your whereabouts and activities.
7. Understand and comply with the terms of participation and emergency procedures of the program. Become familiar with the procedures for obtaining emergency health and legal system services in the host county.
8. Be aware of local conditions and customs that may present health or safety risks when making daily choices and decisions. Promptly express any health or safety concerns to the program staff or other appropriate individuals before and/or during the program. Obey host-country laws.

9. Commit to following the program policies and keep the staff informed of your whereabouts, particularly your travel plans.
10. Commit to avoiding illegal drugs and excessive or irresponsible consumption of alcohol.

How Parents can help

In study abroad, as in other settings, parents can play an important role in the health and safety of students by helping them make decisions and by influencing their behavior overseas. We recommend that parents:

1. Be informed about and involved in the decision of the student to enroll in a particular program.
2. Obtain and carefully evaluate the program materials, as well as related health, safety and security information.
3. Discuss with the student any of her travel plans and activities that may be independent of the study abroad program.
4. Engage the student in a thorough discussion of safety and behavior issues, insurance needs, and emergency procedures related to living abroad.
5. Be responsive to requests from the study abroad program or institution for information regarding the student.
6. Keep in touch with the student.

Register your Travel with the U.S Department of State

The State Department has launched a secure online travel registration website which will allow you, as an American citizen, to record foreign trip and residence information that the Department of State can use to communicate with you and assist you in case of an emergency.

U.S. citizens around the world who travel or reside abroad can access this site either through a link on travel.state.gov or directly at <https://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs/>. We invite you to register yourself and your family and get acquainted with travel registration. If you are already registered with this Embassy/Consulate, please re-register on line to update your records. Once you have registered with the Embassy, you will receive e-mail announcements for Travel Warnings, dates and places of Consular Outreach trips, and other emergency notifications. The new Internet travel registration service for American citizens allows you to register and update your contact information on the Internet at any time, making it easier for you to keep your information current. The site also provides you with up-to-date travel information customized to your unique travel agenda and itinerary. The data you provide is secured behind Department of State firewalls, accessed only by cleared personnel in Embassies, Consulates, and the Department of State, and releasable only under the provisions of the Privacy Act.

If you encounter any difficulties or have any questions about our travel registration website, please send an e-mail to CAIbrrs@state.gov.

Immigration and Visa Issues

Passport

All travelers between countries must have a passport. The passport is the official identification of your citizenship. New U.S. passports take four to six weeks to process, and they are valid for ten years. Students should make sure that their passports are valid until at least six months after returning from their study abroad programs and that their emergency information page is up-to-date.

More detailed information and a printable American passport application is available at http://travel.state.gov/passport_services.html The nearest post office branch that accept passport application are:

Ardmore Post Office
30 Ardmore Avenue (near the intersection of Lancaster Avenue and Ardmore Avenue)
Ardmore, PA 19003

610-649-5810
Monday-Friday: 9 AM-4 PM
Saturday: 9 AM-11 AM

US Post Office, Bryn Mawr
16 N Bryn Mawr Ave
Bryn Mawr, PA 19010
Phone: (610) 520-9417

Rite Aid (Passport photos)
1015 Lancaster Avenue
Bryn Mawr, PA 19010
610-527-3603
Monday-Sunday: 9 AM-8 PM

Make two copies of your passport identification page. This will facilitate replacement if your passport is lost or stolen. Leave one copy at home with your parents; carry the other with you in a separate place from your passport.

International Students and Non-United States Citizens

Non-U.S. citizens, students on Permanent Resident Status (Green Card) and student on a non-immigrant F-1 Visa, should consult with the Assistant Dean and Director of International Programs to make sure that all their U.S. immigration paperwork is in place for their re-entry to the United States

Visa

A visa is official permission to visit a country and is granted by the government of that country. Visa formats vary considerably, from a stamp in the passport to an official document with photo attached.

It is your responsibility to inquire about visa requirements; this includes countries you plan to visit before or after your study abroad programs. You should check the consulate Website for initial information. Some study abroad program may provide detailed information about visa application procedures after you confirm your acceptance into the program.

Obtaining a visa requires considerable time and effort. It can take several weeks to gather all of the documents needed for the visa application. A growing number of countries also ask student visa applicants to make an appointment and/or apply in person. It is important to be informed, organized, patient, and flexible, which are important cross-cultural coping skills to develop for studying abroad.

International Student Identity Card

Students should obtain the International Student Identity Card if it is not provided by their programs. The card offers many benefits, including significant discounts on airfares, access to commission-free currency exchange, 24-hour Help Line emergency service, and basic sickness and accident travel insurance. It may be obtained on-line at <http://www.myisic.com>.

Travel Arrangements

Once you know when you are expected abroad, you should book your airfare right away as the cheap seats tend to fill up. In the past, students have utilized web sites such as Student Universe at <http://www.studentuniverse.com/>

Health Insurance

Study Abroad students are not billed the Bryn Mawr College undergraduate health fee while studying abroad. You are, however, required to carry comprehensive medical insurance while abroad. Some countries like Australia automatically enroll students into their insurance coverage. Be sure to read the materials provided by the overseas program carefully. You should also consult with your parents regarding purchasing additional insurance for travel, luggage, and other personal effects. The College's insurance broker Special Risk Consultants at 610-489-6100, <http://www.visitsrc.com> can provide you with additional information.

Civic Matters

You should take care of civil and legal matters, including arranging absentee voting, completing income taxes, and purchasing property insurance before departure, and appointing Power of Attorney, who will take care of your official or legal documents during your absence.

Money Matters

Credit card such as a Visa, MasterCard and American Express are honored overseas. Credit cards make transactions

easy and are invaluable in a financial emergency. However, many American credit cards charge a transaction fee for overseas purchases. How much money you bring will depend on your budget, destination and personal spending habits.

1. Estimate the amount of money you will need while studying abroad and stick to it.
2. Learn the value of the local currency (i.e., in relation to the U.S. \$), and stay alert for special student rates and discounts.
3. A combination of local currency and an ATM card/credit card is recommended.
4. Have ready smaller denominations of local currency for buses, taxis, phone calls, tips and other miscellaneous expenses upon arrival.
5. American bank accounts can be accessed with the ATM cards in most countries around the world through the PLUS or CIRRUS network. The bank will convert the currency and charge a service fee. Be sure to check that there are sufficient funds in the account and that the PIN is valid.
6. You should take only one credit card as the loss or theft of a card can be an inconvenience, especially while traveling.
7. Check with the credit card company regarding credit limit and the number to call in case the card is lost or stolen.

Packing for Your Trip

For your flight, be sure to bring a carry-on just in case your luggage gets lost. You should include in your carry-on an extra set of clothes, toothbrush, toothpaste, pajamas, as well as any other items you might need on your first night overseas. It is important to fill and bring any prescriptions you might need for the entire duration of your trip. Do not pack documents into the luggage that you will check onto the plane.

The following documents should be carried in your hand or carry-on luggage:

- A set of clothes to last for two days (jeans and t-shirts, a nice blouse)
- Toothbrush, toothpaste
- Pajamas, as well as any other items you might need on your first night overseas.
- It is important to bring any prescriptions you might need for the entire duration of your trip.
- A written report (translated into the language of the host country) of any diagnosed medical condition
- Memories of Home: Photographs of family and friends, pets etc.
- Photocopies of your passport and visa
- International certificate of vaccinations
- Extra passport photos
- International Student Identity Card
- Bryn Mawr Major Work Plan (so that you can double-check your courses, and will know whether or not to notify your major advisor and/or your dean of any changes)
- Emergency phone numbers for
 - Credit cards
 - Banks of MAC cards
 - Bryn Mawr Office of International Programs and Public Safety
 - Health insurance company
 - Parents
 - US Consulate in the host country
 - Study Abroad Program/Overseas Institution

As a general rule, pack lightly. You do not want to have to pay excess luggage fees. Also, you will have to carry heavy luggage by yourself once you arrive at the airport.

WHILE YOU ARE ABROAD

When You Arrive Abroad-First Things First!

1. Get information about how to make international phone calls & contact your family
2. Attend orientation and any language and cultural classes organized by the program
3. Stay safe and make healthy choices
4. Find out about any services that might be available for students with disabilities
5. Obtain the phone number for local police and the equivalent of U.S emergency 911
6. Find out the address and contact information for the U.S embassy or consulate
7. Obtain information on local doctors or nearest hospital & ambulance service
8. Get information on your credit card provider to report lost or stolen credit cards
9. Obey local laws
10. Locate the nearest bank
11. Find out about local transportation
12. Contact us at Bryn Mawr, any time, if you need anything.
13. Have FUN!!

In Case of an Emergency Abroad

As a student is alone in another country, she needs to be prepared for any crisis, whether it is an illness, accident, violent crime, terrorist attack, natural disaster, or political unrest.

- 1) In case of an emergency you should contact the on-site program director or relevant university staff immediately.
- 2) Notify the Director of International Programs at 610-526-7390 or oip@brynmawr.edu. If the emergency happens outside normal business hours, call BMC Public Safety at 610-529-7911.

General Safety Precautions Abroad

1. Do not leave your bags or belongings unattended at any time. Security staff in airports and train station are instructed to remove or destroy any unattended luggage. Do not agree or carry or look after any packages or suitcases for anyone. Make sure no one but you puts anything in your luggage.
2. Do not keep all your documents and money in any one place. It's best to carry your travel documents and some money on your person in a place inaccessible to others even when you go to the bathroom on the plane.
3. Keep a photocopy of your passport and visa separate from the original.
4. If you find yourself in uncomfortable surroundings, try to look as if you know what you're doing, and stay in well-populated areas. Try not to draw unnecessary attention to yourself.
5. Always show respect for the culture and laws of other countries.
6. Use caution when traveling alone. Women especially should not walk alone at night. Be responsible for your safety and well-being. Learn from locals what behavior might put you at risk.
7. Keep the on-site director(s) informed of your whereabouts and any health problems. When you travel, be sure that someone knows where you are and how to reach you.
8. Have cash or credit card on hand for emergencies like illness or an unexpected need to get home.
9. Be alert to your surroundings and the people with whom you have contact. Be wary of people who seem overly friendly or interested in you. Be cautious with new acquaintances don't give out your address or phone number, and always meet in public places. Be discreet in giving out information about other students or group events. Report unusual activity near your classes or home to the program director.
10. Don't hitchhike, even if the locals do.

Safety Precautions in times of political conflict involving the United States:

1. Stay apprised of the current political situation by listening daily to the television or radio news. In the event of emergency, advisories may be made to the general public through the media. In this situation, stay in contact with the on-site staff, who then can contact authorities locally and at home, as well as parents and Bryn Mawr College.
2. The on-site director should register all participants with the nearest American Embassy or Consulate, and students should be sure they are so registered.
3. Ask your on-site program director about program emergency/contingency plans.
4. Always consult with the on-site director before making travel plans.
5. In large cities or popular tourist destinations, spend as little time as possible in potential targets for terrorist activities, especially places frequented by Americans: bars, discos, fast-food restaurants and stores associated with the US, branches of US banks, American Express, and US consulates and embassies.
6. Keep away from areas known to have concentrations of residents aligned with interests unfriendly to the US and its allies.
7. Be inconspicuous in dress and demeanor. Avoid American logos and name brands on clothing and belongings. Avoid large or noisy groups. Do not flash money or bring out documents (especially your passport) in public places. Keep small bills in your pockets to pay for purchases.
8. Keep away from political demonstrations, particularly those directed toward the US. If you see a situation developing, resist the temptation to satisfy your curiosity or join the crowd. Walk away.
9. Do not agree to newspaper or other media interviews regarding political conflicts.
10. Make a personal communication plan with your family and decide on methods of contact should an emergency arise.

Staying in Touch with Bryn Mawr

- You should keep Bryn Mawr College informed of any changes in your academic program.
- If you need to make changes in your plan of study, especially changes pertaining to coursework in your major, be sure to contact your major advisor.
- While abroad, you can continue communicating with Bryn Mawr using your e-mail account on the Internet. The Bryn Mawr e-mail account can be re-directed to a personal account so that you will continue receiving important announcements.
- Send at least one e-mail to your dean, your major advisor, and the Director of International Programs to let us know how you are and what you are doing.

Managing Culture Shock

Culture Shock is the anxiety produced when you move to a completely new environment. It's the feeling of not knowing what to do or how to do things in a new environment, and not knowing what is appropriate or inappropriate. It generally starts during the first few days/weeks of arriving in a new place. Culture shock includes the physical and emotional discomfort you suffer when coming to live in another country or a place different from what you know. The way you lived before may not work in the new place. So much is different, from the language to banking, from telephone etiquette to flirting, from how you behave with a professor or a fellow student to how you schedule your day. The symptoms of culture shock can show up at different times, and sometimes conflicting feelings overlap. Although you can experience real pain from culture shock, it's also an opportunity to learn about yourself, your own culture, and your host culture.

Symptoms of Culture Shock:

- Sadness, loneliness, melancholy;
- Preoccupation with health;
- Aches, pains, and allergies;
- Insomnia or a desire to sleep too much;
- Changes in temperament, including depression or feeling vulnerable, powerless, or lethargic;
- Anger, irritability, resentment, or unwillingness to interact with others;
- Identifying with the old culture or idealizing the old country;
- Loss of identity;

- Trying too hard to absorb everything in the new culture or country, or to abandon your own ways;
- Inability to solve simple problems;
- Lack of confidence or feelings of inadequacy or insecurity;
- Developing stereotypes about the new culture;
- Developing obsessions such as over-cleanliness;
- Longing for family or homesickness;
- Feeling lost, overlooked, exploited, abused, or misunderstood.

Coping with Culture Shock:

- **REMEMBER YOUR STRENGTHS!** Remind yourself of your talents and abilities.
- **KEEP AN OPEN MIND:** different is not necessarily better or worse. Try not to be judgmental; maintain tolerance for otherness.
- **KEEP YOUR SENSE OF HUMOR.** If you can laugh, you will be better able to fight off embarrassment, fear, shame, despair, and some of the other reactions people sometimes feel when experiencing culture shock.
- **EAT HEALTHY** foods and get enough rest.
- **DEVELOP A HOBBY** (also a good way to meet people).
- **SEEK ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:** Remember that there are always resources that you can use, and don't be afraid or shy to ask for help.
- **BE PATIENT.** Adaptation is a process, and it takes time.
- **IF YOU ENCOUNTER A PROBLEMATIC** situation and don't know how to handle it, ask someone you trust to help you understand it from a local perspective.
- **DON'T TRY TOO HARD** to be like everyone else: you need to be flexible, but not to change your core self.
- **LEARN TO INCLUDE** a regular form of physical activity in your routine. This will help combat the sadness and loneliness in a constructive manner. Exercise, swim, take an aerobics class, etc.
- **RELAXATION AND MEDITATION** have proven to be very helpful for people who are passing through periods of stress.
- **BE CURIOUS.** Ask questions – this will get you using English and learning colloquial phrases while learning important cultural cues and norms.
- **MAINTAIN CONFIDENCE IN YOURSELF.** Follow your ambitions and continue your plans for the future.

A student needs to learn what the unwritten rules are about and what she can and cannot do abroad. It is a good idea to talk to other participants and/or program staff early in her stay overseas. Most importantly, try to maintain the perspective that these challenges are part of the cross-cultural learning experience which is one of important reasons for studying abroad.

Academic Culture Abroad

- 1) You are responsible for finding out, knowing, and following the program or host institution guidelines.
- 2) Attend class regularly, prepare and participate actively in classroom discussion.
- 3) You are also encouraged to take a proactive approach to learning and to engage voluntarily in learning activities that complement the formal curriculum that will reinforce your language and cultural skills.
- 4) Absence from a class may be excused normally only for a legitimate medical reason. Absence from classes for other scheduled activities due to travel or visitors, including family, is not tolerated and may lead to sanctions (i.e., a reduction in grade).
- 5) It is a good idea to keep copies of syllabi, papers, and exams in case the Registrar's Office or the Major Advisor has any questions or concerns regarding the coursework overseas.

Living with a Budget

Because students are in an unfamiliar environment and confronted with an almost endless array of entertainment possibilities and attractions, the overall cost of living can be higher than when you are at Bryn Mawr. A go-slow approach to buying much makes sense. Try to live within budget that will take care of all necessities for the entire duration of stay.

The following suggestions may be helpful:

1. Make both daily and weekly budgets and stick to them.
2. Be consistently on the lookout for special student rates and discounts, and know what is available through the use of the International Student Identity Card (e.g., travel, accommodations, entrance fees, etc.)
3. Take advantage of less expensive alternatives when possible. Cook for yourself (especially breakfasts) if possible, or use student cafeteria meals rather than restaurants—saving even moderately priced restaurants for special occasions.
4. Plan your entertainment and recreation around the availability of free, inexpensive, and discounted events—on campus or in the surrounding community.
5. Shop when possible in street markets or major chain supermarkets. Avoid specialty shops and convenience stores (which tend to mark up the price). Put off making major purchases as long as you can, when you have learned the range of available selections and prices—or learned that you don't really need that expensive item, after all.
6. When you travel, stay in Youth or Student Hostels, or in modest bed-and-breakfast accommodations, as opposed to hotels that cater to tourists and business travelers and charge accordingly.
7. Take care of your belongings and safeguard your cash and credit card. Losses from carelessness are difficult at any time, but even more unpleasant while you are overseas. Pick-pocketing, unfortunately, is universally common.

RETURNING HOME

Re-entry into the United States can be both challenging and as frustrating as living and studying in another culture. As a returning study abroad student, you and your family might expect everything to go smoothly as you are “going (coming) home”. In fact, re-entry is a process and you should take time to relax and to reflect on what is going on around you and how you are reacting to it. Although most study abroad students report strong positive feelings of what they have accomplished overseas, it is common to develop complex feelings and attitudes from seeing people, places, and behaviors from a different perspective. You should give yourself permission to ease into the transition, understanding that like its antecedent, reverse culture shock is normal and seldom long-lasting. If possible, have some down time at home before classes begin at Bryn Mawr.

Transitioning to Campus Life

Participating in Campus Activities at Bryn Mawr

If you want to participate in activities that are organized the previous semester, such as serving as a Hall Advisor, you can apply from abroad, although it might be easier to line up recommendations in advance. Similarly, if you want to apply for an internship or summer job when you return, you should plan ahead. You can access the Career Development resources at its website <http://www.brynmawr.edu/CDO/>

Share Your Experience at the Bryn Mawr College Re-entry Reception

All study abroad participants are required to complete an evaluation at the end of their program. The evaluation materials become a permanent part of the study abroad reference materials, which future students consult for information about academic offerings and life in general at the program you attended. The Office of International Programs will also send an invitation to you to meet with other returning students at an informal welcome back gathering. We are eager to hear about your experiences and to profit from your advice.

Language in Motion (LIM), is an innovative, cooperative outreach program that provides study abroad returnees, international students, and upper-level language students with the opportunity to aid local urban and suburban K-12 teachers by creating and delivering language and culture presentations in their classrooms.

The Annual Delaware Valley Reentry Conference

Designed for students who have recently returned from a semester or year abroad, this conference, held in the Fall, addresses the following issues:

- The Study Abroad Experience and Reentry
- Contributing to the International Dimension of Your Campus
- Marketing Your International Experience to Employers
- Short-Term Work Opportunities Abroad
- Graduate Fellowships Abroad
- International Resources in Philadelphia

The Fall Reentry Conference is an event featuring many prominent guest speakers from the international arena. Contact OIP for specific details.

Pre-Registration for Bryn Mawr Courses

Although study abroad students are not required to pre-register from overseas, many register from home after their return. You may also pre-register during the first day of classes in the semester when you return. At the beginning of the semester, you should see your Dean to discuss courses, attend those classes you wish to take, and confirm them during the second week of classes. Take special care to attend the first class meeting of limited enrollment courses.

Transcripts from Abroad

A few weeks after you return to campus, check with the Registrar to see if the transcript from your study abroad program has arrived. Credits will usually be transferred soon after your return, provided the Registrar has received your transcript.