WHERE ARE YOU GOING?
Are you ready?
Pre-departure Information for your Study Abroad Experience
• You’ve been selected to attend one of our direct exchanges or cooperative programs...
• Or maybe you found an independent program for summer or term..
• You should have had your courses pre-approved for ease of transfer and to work towards your educational goals

NOW WHAT?
Academic Expectations
• Some students find their study abroad experience more academically challenging than on campus.
• Don’t be surprised if they take attendance. Most schools abroad schedule courses only Mon-Thurs, but they do take attendance.
• Make sure you adhere to the syllabus and any class expectations outlined by your instructors.
• Extra credit and deadline extensions are NOT a thing overseas. Try your best from the beginning.
Housing & Roommates
• Be it an apartment or a residence hall, you will be living around other people and expected to respect others and their property.
• Remember the Manhattanville **Code of Conduct** still applies while you are overseas.
• This may be your first experience cleaning, shopping and cooking. Embrace it. Many programs offer cooking classes with foods from the host country culture.
Getting There
• You may book a group flight or travel independently.
• Enroll in https://step.state.gov/step/.
• Leave a copy of your passport and flight itinerary at home with your family and carry a paper copy (or 2) as well.
• Downloading your airline’s app is a good way to stay on top of any flight changes and learn about luggage weight restrictions.
• Pay attention to your program’s arrival procedures. Some programs meet students at the airport, others expect you to travel to campus on your own. If the latter, make a plan for transport upon arrival.
• Have local currency on hand for buses, taxis, etc.
Finances
• Familiarize yourself with the exchange rate from one of the online currency converters.
• Make a budget for food and transportation, both local and for weekend excursions and track your spending.
• Use Venmo or other apps to minimize ATM withdrawals.
• If using a credit card, be sure to have set a travel alert and try to use a card with no foreign transaction fees. Chase, Bank of America and others offer those. Check with your family to see if you can be an additional card user on an existing account.
• If you haven’t arranged for getting some destination currency while in the U.S., many take their first ATM withdrawal at the destination airport. Just be sure to use a DEBIT and not a credit card.
Arrival
• When you arrive, explore the host family culture and stay up to date with your academic responsibilities.

• Remember, it’s called STUDY Abroad, not vacation abroad.

• Be sure to ask your program hosts if you are curious about activities or destinations; they are more than happy to share suggestions.
Planning
• Planning is not a dirty word. You don’t have to plan every minute but it helps structure your time to have a few excursions planned. Is there a music festival or concert you want to attend? Do some research before you go, then you will have some suggestions when discussion excursions with your new friends.

• Plan a calendar for major excursions and activities shortly after you arrive. The time goes quickly!

• Establish “your” daily routine for when classes are in schedule and be sure to get enough sleep. It might be a local coffee shop or other restaurant. You will soon be recognized as a neighborhood regular if you take walks.
Health
• If you take prescription medication regularly, be sure to bring a supply along with you, in the original packaging. Medication cannot be mailed from the US.
• Familiarize yourself with the health care system in your host country by reading the information sent by your institution.
• Most cooperative programs offer excellent insurance and guidance for medical needs. Just ask. Orientation will also cover this in detail.
• Be sure to sleep enough, drink enough water and eat properly.
• Pharmacies and pharmacists can be very helpful, don’t be afraid to ask. No matter the country, most speak or read English.
Cultural Differences
• Remember, you chose to live in a different culture, be open to differences.
• Explore the food, learn the language (at least some basics), and read up on the history and daily patterns of interaction.
• You may notice that things such as eye contact, personal space, personal hygiene and meal times are very different from home. Read the cues from locals and listen for tips at orientation.
• You will also notice differences if you travel from country to country—it’s all part of the fun and you’ll become an “expert” in your new “home country” soon.
• There is actual science behind Culture Shock and Cultural Adjustment. Everyone goes through some element of shock, it just takes time.
“TAKE EVERY CHANCE YOU GET IN LIFE, BECAUSE SOMETHINGS HAPPEN ONLY ONCE”

- Karen Gibbs
VALIANT STUDY ABROADERS,
Prepare and plan; the time will go quickly.

Farewell and travel safe!
Send pics and email to studyabroad@mville.edu