

# Checklist for Study Abroad

## I. What should I do before I leave Hamilton College?

- **Have your courses pre-approved:** If you are going on a non-Hamilton program, prior to your departure you MUST complete the Petition for Transferred Credit form. YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR GETTING YOUR DEPARTMENT CHAIR'S SIGNATURE FOR COURSES YOU WANT APPROVED FOR YOUR CONCENTRATION OR MINOR. Most courses taken as electives can be approved by the Registrar. Math, Computer Science, Physics, Comparative Literature, and Foreign Languages courses must be approved by the Department Chairs. Have additional courses approved in case you have to switch courses once you arrive at your destination. Decisions for granting credit are based on the course material you provide, so submit complete information about a given course (description, reading list, academic expectations, etc.). All completed form(s) additional materials go to the Registrar's Office.
- **Get your immunizations:** See Diann Lynch (ext. 4111) in the Student Health Center to receive immunizations and other important health information AS SOON AS YOU APPLY.
- **Get a physical:** Contact the Health Center (ext. 4111) for an appointment AS SOON AS you receive the health forms from your program. Lab tests, if needed, can take time!
- **Check your financial aid:** Stop by the Financial Aid Office and see Diane Barrett (ext. 4395). Tell her that you are going abroad and ask if your financial aid is in order, both for the semester(s) you are abroad and for the semester you return to Hamilton.
- **Visit the Career Center:** We encourage you to make an appointment to discuss how study abroad fits with your career plans. Also begin planning for a summer internship or your fall job search BEFORE you leave campus, particularly if you will be away in the spring.
- **Secure your housing for your return:** Complete a housing proxy form and turn it in to the Office of Residential Life.
- **Prepare your immigration documents:** If you are *not* a US citizen, check with the Dean of Students Office to make sure that your visa and other immigration papers are in order. US citizens *and* non-citizens should also see passport and visa recommendations in section II.
- **Let us know where you will be:** Be sure that the Dean of Students Office and the Registrar's Office have an address, phone, fax, and e-mail where you can be reached abroad. If you do not have this information by the time you leave Hamilton, be sure to send it as soon as possible once you arrive in your host country.

## II. What should I do before I leave the U.S.?

- **Learn about your host country:** Get informed about its history, customs, important cities/places, politics. The more you know about your host country, the easier your transition will be.
- **Have a valid passport:** If you already have a passport, make sure it is valid for at least six months beyond the date of return. For information on applying for a passport, see <http://travel.state.gov/passport-services.html>.
- **Secure a student visa if necessary:** For phone numbers for the embassies or consulates see: [http://state.gov/www/ravel/consular\\_offices/FCO\\_index.html](http://state.gov/www/ravel/consular_offices/FCO_index.html). Your study abroad provider may also help facilitate this process.
- **Consider an International Student Identity Card:** You may be going to a country where this might be useful (ask your program provider). For information, see <http://counciltravel.com/idcards/apply.asp>.
- **Plan ahead for travel while abroad:** You may find a Eurail pass helpful. For more information, see <http://www.counciltravel.com> or <http://www.eurorail.com>. There are similar rail passes available outside Europe. Consult travel books and look on the Web for more information.
- **Be prepared for medical prescription needs:** See your doctor and obtain enough medication to last for your stay abroad. Take a copy of vision prescriptions, and an extra pair of glasses or contacts.
- **Keep all of your documents in a safe place for travel:** Make sure that you collect any documents you need to take with you, such as medical records, entry documents, etc. and keep them together in a folder, Ziploc bag, or whatever works for you.
- **Be sure you have medical insurance that works overseas:** Consult your insurance agent to make sure that you have appropriate medical insurance and any other travel insurance you wish to purchase. Be sure that you have coverage for medical evacuation, in the rare case that you would have to be flown back to the U.S. (or to a different country) for medical treatment. Also, check to make sure that your policy covers any continuing treatment you may need for newly acquired medical conditions after you return home.
- **Talk to your family about potential safety issues and make sure they know how to contact you in case of emergency:** Have a discussion with your family about these and other issues that may come up while you are away.
- **Learn how to vote from overseas:** Arrange to vote absentee ballot for any elections you will miss while abroad.