

Boston University Study Abroad



QUITO ECUADOR

2012 Handbook: Language and Liberal Arts
Program & School of Education Program



BU in Quito

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Getting Ready to Go

As you begin to prepare for your semester in Ecuador, remember that this program is a learning experience. Speak Spanish, make Ecuadorian friends, and integrate into society. Try not to get discouraged, maintain your self-confidence, be open-minded, and keep your sense of humor—it is going to be an interesting semester!

LANGUAGE PREPARATION

You will need to hone your language skills before you leave the US so that everyday life is easier for you and so your language studies will have a greater impact. You should begin reviewing your Spanish early. Listen to Spanish conversation CDs and review the grammatical structures you have studied in the textbooks you used in previous courses. Converse with a language partner and begin to familiarize yourself with idiomatic and colloquial Spanish. If you would like to brush up on your reading skills, pick up Ecuadorian newspapers and magazines like *El Comercio*, *El Universo*, *El Hoy*, or *Vistazo*. You might even try watching Spanish movies, soap operas, and news on television.

In addition to brushing up on Spanish, learn something about Ecuador. There's plenty of information on the web. Travel books such as Lonely Planet or Footprints also often have an introduction to history, politics, and geography. These books are fantastic resources when you want to travel independently within Ecuador—providing suggestions of places to visit, prices of hotels and restaurants and how to get around.

Language Acquisition

Are you willing to strike up a conversation with a peer? Will you make your best effort to listen to Ecuadorian music and radio reports? Some people come by language acquisition easily, for others the process takes more time, so remember to bring your patience abroad with you.

A SENSE OF PURPOSE

There is more to preparing for your semester in Ecuador than deciding what to pack or brushing up on your Spanish. You will also need to identify your own goals and objectives:

- Establish some general priorities before you go—academic, personal, and professional—and try to keep them in mind through-out the semester.

- Think about what you hope to accomplish while you are in Ecuador.
- Think about how you might accomplish those goals.
- Remember to keep an open mind. Learn from all of your experiences.

HELPFUL WEBSITES

- Students Abroad Website
www.studentsabroad.state.gov

This website created by the Department of State offers valuable information for students studying or traveling abroad. The website is an excellent resource to refer to before and during your semester abroad. In addition to practical information such as instructions on obtaining a passport and American Embassy contact information, the website also provides health tips and links for information regarding immunizations and health precautions to take abroad. Visit the Smart Travel section for insights for GLBT travelers, women, and travelers with disabilities as well as information pertaining to local laws and packing for international travel. The website provides two checklists in its To Go section: a “Prep-list” and a “Pack-list” to help keep you on track as you prepare for your experience overseas.

- Universidad San Francisco de Quito
www.usfq.edu.ec
- Tiputini Biodiversity Station
<http://192.188.53.69/tiputini>
- Center for Disease Control
www.cdc.gov/travel.html
- Embassy of Ecuador in Washington, DC
www.ecuador.org
- US Embassy in Quito
<http://ecuador.usembassy.gov/>
- The Lonely Planet (Ecuador)
www.lonelyplanet.com/ecuador
- State Department Travel Site
www.state.gov/travel
- Allows BU students to access online journals and other library resources.
www.bu.edu/proxy
- Spanish Language Review
www.bbc.co.uk/languages
- Country Profile and Articles
http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/country_profiles/1212882.stm
- How to Call Abroad
www.howtocallabroad.com
- El Comercio
www.elcomercio.com
- El Universo
www.eluniverso.com
- Hoy Digital
www.hoy.com

- Vistazo
www.vistazo.com
- BU Romance Studies Department
www.bu.edu/rs
- Geddes Language Lab
www.bu.edu/geddes
- Footprints Travel Guide
www.footprintguides.com
- Universidad Católica
www.puce.edu.ec
- Universidad Central
www.uce.edu.ec
- Casa de la Cultura
<http://cce.org.ec>
- Lincoln Information Resource Center
www.usembassy.org/ec/lincolnirc/indexsp.html
- FLACSO
www.flasco.org.ec
- Galapagos National Park
www.galapagosonline.com/Galapagos_Natural_History_National_Park/National_Park.html
- How to Call Abroad
www.howtocallabroad.com

Self-Assessment

Think strategically about setting your goals for your semester in Ecuador.

- Why is this particular program of interest to you?
- List and evaluate your personal and academic interests. What do you enjoy doing in your spare time? Why did you choose your major? What courses have you enjoyed taking?
- How does this program relate to your course of study in college, career plans, and other interests?
- How and what can you contribute to make your semester in Ecuador a success?

Academics

QUITO LANGUAGE AND LIBERAL ARTS PROGRAM

Students on the Language and Liberal Arts Program may register for any course at the Universidad San Francisco de Quito as long as you meet course prerequisites. USFQ operates on a semester system. Students will earn three semester hour credits per USFQ course; a maximum of 18

credits per semester may be earned. Students must register for a minimum of five courses. Students will not receive credits for non-academic or artisan type classes.

QUITO SCHOOL OF EDUCATION (SED) PROGRAM

Students on the SED program should contact Dean Ellenwood's office in SED for instructions and registration forms prior to leaving Boston. You should then see Professor Jennifer Bryson (jbryson@bu.edu), who will advise you on course choices for your semester abroad, as well as on pre-registration for your return semester back in Boston. Students on the SED program register for a ten-credit student teaching practicum and one course at USFQ. Elective courses are limited to those offered after 4pm due to teaching schedules. Students conduct their teaching practicum at the Colegio Menor San Francisco de Quito, a private, bilingual pre-K-12 grade school located near USFQ.

THE UNIVERSIDAD SAN FRANCISCO DE QUITO

Universidad San Francisco de Quito (USFQ) is a small, private university with a beautiful modern campus located in the valley of Cumbayá, east of Quito. Modeled on the American university system, USFQ offers students a variety of liberal arts and science curricula, as well as professional programs. Many of the faculty have been trained at the graduate level and have taught in the United States so there is a familiarity with the US system of higher education and US students.

Tiputini Biodiversity Station

The Tiputini Biodiversity Station was established in 1995 by the Universidad San Francisco de Quito in collaboration with Boston University. It is located on a 650-hectare tract of undisturbed rain forest on the north bank of the Tiputini River in western Amazonia. Facilities include a laboratory building with research space, computers, drying ovens, dissection and compound microscopes, centrifuges, and a small library. One of your excursions will be a visit to Tiputini.

Libraries

Universidad San Francisco de Quito has a lending library, with books in both English and Spanish. Though it may seem small compared to your home university, it is something of a rarity in comparison with other universities in Quito. Unlike most other Ecuadorian universities, students are able to stroll through the stacks. Books may be borrowed for up to one week.

Using library facilities elsewhere in Ecuador may be frustrating. The libraries are scattered and have classification systems unfamiliar to you. You may have access to other university libraries in Quito, such as Universidad

University Life

At the beginning of the semester you might notice that Ecuadorian classmates know each other very well. It may seem difficult at first to break into what appears to be a close-knit group of friends, but persevere. It will take some work on your part. Ecuadorian students can be very helpful with the ins and outs of class work, and they will introduce you to the social life of Quito, if you make the effort.

Católica and Universidad Central. You may also use public libraries, such as Municipal, in downtown Quito, and Casa de la Cultura, in Ceplaes. Lincoln Information Resource Center (IRC) tends to be the best resource for International Relations, Political Science, Foreign Affairs, and Government. If you become a member, you will have borrowing privileges there. Otherwise, you will only be able to do research in the library.

Besides the USFQ bookstore, other local bookstores include *Librimundi* (Juan León Mera y Wilson), *Abya Yala* (12 de Octubre y Veintimilla), and *Librería Studium* (Avenida América #5021). There is also an English book store called Confederate Books on Juan León Mera across from Papayanet and NoBar, for some fun reading.

Computer Facilities

There are several computer labs on campus, but be advised, the computers (IBM- and MAC-compatible) may not always be accessible, as the labs are small and classes are held there during most of the day. E-mail access is available through these facilities, although e-mail at USFQ may be unreliable. Local Internet cafés which are easily accessible and inexpensive are a viable alternative.

Other Facilities

Students in Quito may find Facultad Latinamericana de Ciencias Sociales (FLACSO) Office, Pradera y Diego de Almagro, a convenient place to do research. FLACSO has a library, which is open to the public, with collections devoted primarily to the social sciences and development in Latin America.

COURSES

Classes are a mix of lecture and classroom discussion and usually meet two or three days a week for one hour and a half. Professors welcome questions and discussion in class and are very helpful and accessible outside of the classroom. For the most part, they are accommodating to exchange students in terms of problems comprehending both lectures and reading assignments. Take advantage of office hours to ensure that you understand everything. Your Ecuadorian

classmates may also be willing to discuss classroom issues in a more social setting.

Sometimes there are no assigned textbooks; students are given a syllabus or reading list the first day of classes. Most of the assigned literature can be found in the library or can be photocopied from the professor. If it seems like everyone in class but you knows where to get the readings, do not hesitate to ask someone in your class or the professor for help.

As with any university, the quality of courses varies. Some courses may be relatively easy and others may prove to be very challenging. You will register online for courses before leaving the US. The USFQ International Programs office will contact you directly with information about registration. Jorge Zalles, a USFQ professor, is the faculty advisor for the BU group. You should also review your course choices with your academic advisor at your home institution. We strongly recommend that you enroll in "Latin America's Boom" and/or "Latin American Themes" at USFQ.

Please visit the USFQ website for more information about the university and course offerings.

Note: USFQ does not add + or - to letter grades. For example, if you earn an 89% in one class and an 81% in another, you will receive a B for both.

Students should plan on enrolling in a minimum of five courses and a maximum of six. Non-academic courses such as karate, jewelry making, and other gym or craft activities will not be granted credit.

ACADEMIC CONDUCT CODE

All students participating in a Boston University International Program are expected to maintain high standards of academic honesty and integrity. It is the responsibility of every student to be aware of the Academic Conduct Code's contents and to abide by its provisions. The Academic Conduct Code can be found at www.bu.edu/cas/students/undergrad-resources/code.

ACADEMIC POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

More detailed information on academic policies and procedures will be given to you in Quito. Please keep in mind the following:

Transfer of Credit

Please make sure that your credits from Boston University will transfer to your home university before you leave—we cannot stress enough how important this is. It is up to your home university to grant transfer credit.

Once in Quito, if you decide to enroll in courses different from those that were originally approved by your academic advisor, you should obtain new course approval from your home institution. Approving transfer credit is ultimately your home institution's decision.

Courses at USFQ are worth three credits, as opposed to four credits on the BU Charles River Campus. Students will take at least 15 credits and no more than 18 credits. Non-academic courses are not granted credit.

Attendance

You are expected to attend each class session, field trip, and any other course-related event. Attendance and class participation will influence your grade for the course. You will be required to account for undue absence either by personal explanation to the course instructor or by written documentation from another authority. If you are absent from class for more than two days for medical reasons, please seek medical attention.

Tardiness

Students must make every effort to be on time for all scheduled meetings and class sessions and should notify the appropriate person by phone or written message of extenuating circumstances that result in tardiness. If you should arrive late for class, please minimize the effects of your arrival; it will be disruptive, and some instructors will not tolerate it.

Coursework

You are expected to turn in all course assignments on time. Turning in assignments late will have a negative effect on your grade. Students caught submitting the same written work for two separate courses will fail one of the courses.

All academic commitments must be completed before you leave Quito; no incompletes are permitted. Students who do not complete a course on time will be given an 'F.' In addition, students are not permitted to audit courses or to take courses on a pass/fail basis.

Dean's List

Students studying abroad should be aware that differences in the academic calendar at Boston University and at your international program site may mean that grades from your semester abroad are reported after the computations for the Dean's List have been made. As the semester abroad may end later than the semester on the home campus, grades for some programs may not arrive in time to be counted towards the Dean's List. In this case, students are advised to notify the office of Student Records or the Dean of Students office in order to request that grades earned on a BU international program be counted towards the Dean's List. It is the student's responsibility to bring this to the attention of the student records office.

What to Bring

Along with the materials and supplies listed in your Student Handbook, be sure to bring:

HANDBOOKS

Bring this handbook and the Student Handbook with you to Ecuador. They contain information to which you may need to refer during your semester in Quito.

DOCUMENTS

Passport and Cultural Exchange Visa

You must have a valid passport and cultural exchange visa for your semester in Ecuador. Please refer to the "Visa Instructions" for Ecuador that are posted with your pre-departure forms. These forms are available at www.bu.edu/abroad/accept.

With the visa, each student will receive a packet of information from the Ecuadorian consulate. Included in this packet is a document called "Certificado de Visacion" that usually has a photo of the student on it. **Students should remember to bring the entire packet with them to Ecuador, especially this page.** If you arrive in Ecuador without the Certificado, you will be charged an additional \$200 by the Ministry of Immigration, and will go through a lengthy replacement process.

If you are not traveling on a US passport, please contact the nearest Ecuadorian consulate for information on visa requirements.

Passport-size Photos

You should already have supplied BU Study Abroad with the specified number of photos along with your acceptance documents. If you have not done so, please turn them in immediately. **In addition, you should take at least six photos with you to your program site for various paperwork and passes.** These photos need not be of passport quality; those from photo booths are sufficient and sometimes cheaper.

Student Identification

Bring your student ID card; it's always helpful to have an extra form of photo identification. You may also wish to purchase an International Student Identification Card, which provides some student discounts and insurance benefits. Please call 1-800-2-COUNCIL for information on the nearest issuing office or check the STA Travel website at www.statravel.com. Be sure to make several copies of your passport as well.

Personal Gear Checklist

(For both Language and Liberal Arts and SED Program Students)

Clothing

- ___ Raincoat & Umbrella
- ___ Pants/Khakis/Jeans
- ___ Sneakers or walking shoes
- ___ Lightweight (cotton) clothes for jungle excursions
- ___ Sweaters for nighttime Quito weather (the famous Ecuadorian sweater can be purchased)
- ___ Dress shoes and dress clothes—Latin Americans dress more formally than Americans in general.
- ___ Socks
- ___ Swimsuit
- ___ Lightweight (Fall) jacket for nighttime
- ___ Shorts
- ___ Beach towel
- ___ T-Shirts

Miscellaneous Items

- ___ Sewing kit—bring a small one; it will prove useful.
- ___ School supplies—these items can be purchased in Quito but tend to be more expensive than in the US. It is a good idea to bring a few notebooks and pens.
- ___ Swiss army knife—this comes in handy when traveling, but you will not be able to bring this on the plane.

- ___ Camera and camera accessories
- ___ A gift for your host family (Suggestions- photo book/calendar of New England or your home town, salt water taffy, etc.) It's a kind gesture, good icebreaker and gives your family a taste of your background.
- ___ Photos of friends and family
- ___ Flashlight
- ___ Calculator
- ___ Flashdrive

Other Items

- ___ Hat, sunglasses, sunblock, sporting equipment (soccer cleats, etc.)
- ___ Camera and camera accessories
- ___ Insect repellent
- ___ Backpack
- ___ Toiletry bag for personal hygiene items
- ___ Any regular medicines, medication to combat traveler's diarrhea
- ___ Sandals
- ___ A flashlight keychain

Note: Pens, notebooks, paper and other supplies can be purchased at the 'Buho'—USFQ book store—or at nearby stores. Blank computer diskettes can also be purchased in Quito.

Luggage

When going on excursions to the rainforest or the coastal regions you will not want to bring a lot of 'hard' luggage with you. Backpacks, mountain packs, and 'soft' luggage are most convenient.

Immunization Records/Yellow World Health Organization (WHO) Card

It is a good idea to carry records of your recent immunizations with you. When you get your Yellow Fever vaccination (see page 13) you will be given a yellow WHO card. Be sure to carry this card with you; it should indicate your immunizations and inoculations.

Please consult the "Health and Safety" section (pages 13-15) for important information on required immunizations, medications, and other health care items.

TEXTBOOKS

Students in the USFQ Language and Liberal Arts and School of Education Programs will purchase their textbooks in Quito. Students are given a stipend to cover a portion of the cost of books. In addition, all students should plan to take a

good Spanish-English dictionary, a grammar book, and a travel guidebook.

CLOTHING

The most important thing to remember when packing clothes is that whatever you pack will probably be more than you will need. Although Quito has pleasant, spring-like weather year-round, it can be quite cool, especially at night (50s°F), so you will need to bring sweaters and a warm jacket (and even a parka if you plan to go mountain climbing.) It rains occasionally, so make sure you bring rain gear and an umbrella. Laundry is usually air-dried in Ecuador. Jeans especially take a long time to dry on a clothesline, so bring cotton pants in addition to a pair or two of jeans. Shorts are great for the coast and in the jungle, but are not appropriate to wear in Quito, especially after dark. The sun can be very intense at Quito's altitude, so bring a

strong sunblock (SPF 30). The USFQ campus in Cumbayá is generally much warmer than Quito, so you may find yourself shedding your jacket and sweater during the daytime hours.

Bring as few clothes as possible. Bring those that can be easily mixed and matched. Casual wear in Ecuador can be less “casual” than in the United States, even on campus. You should be prepared with some semi-dressy clothes and shoes for an occasional invitation “out” or at least one dressy outfit for special occasions; previous students have been invited to special events by their host families. When going to clubs, Latinos dress to impress. Be sure to pack a pair of comfortable shoes for walking. You may also wish to bring a bathing suit. It’s also a good idea to bring a money belt to carry travelers checks, passport, and money. As for luggage, remember to bring a bag that is suitable for overnight and weekend trips, as you will be going on excursions.

Do not bring army or camouflage clothing because this type of apparel will draw negative attention.

Linens

Bed linens and towels are provided, but you should bring an extra towel and/or a beach towel for weekends away. A towel that you can discard at the end of your trip to make room for souvenirs is perfect.

Climate

Quito is located in the northern Andes of Ecuador, in a valley ringed by mountains and volcanoes about 25 km south of the equator. Ecuador derives its name from the fact that the equator runs right through it. The country itself can be divided into three roughly parallel zones that run north to south. The coastal zone, the sierra region, and the tropical lowlands (Oriente) that grade into the Amazon Basin, are characterized by warm temperatures through most of the year. The climate in the center of the country, the sierra region, is tempered by high altitudes of the steep Andean mountain chain. Quito, located at 9000 ft. above sea level, is characterized by a much milder climate than either the coast or the Oriente.

Because of its altitude and its proximity to the equator, there are no well-defined seasons. In fact, in Quito the mornings and evenings are cool, but during the afternoon it might get warm—into the 80s. Nights tend to be cool to cold. Seasonal changes are marked by the amount of rainfall rather than by drastic temperature variation. The rainy season lasts from the end of October through April. During this time, it will rain briefly most days in Quito with heaviest rainfall from 3:00 p.m. on. The dry season runs from May through September. July through September are the driest and the coolest months, marked by high winds. However, even during the dry season, Quito can still receive an occasional rainstorm. It’s a good idea to have an umbrella on hand.

APPLIANCES

Electrical voltage is the same as in the US. You can bring small electrical appliances such as electric razors, MP3 players, and laptops. You may wish to bring an extension cord and/or power strip. Rechargeable batteries are recommended. Do not bring anything you cannot bear to lose.

Alarm Clock

An alarm clock is a must so you can be on time for classes and appointments. Be sure to bring a small, battery-operated or non-electric alarm clock; an electric clock will take up outlet space and is vulnerable to power outages. If you plan on purchasing a cell phone while in Ecuador, you will likely be able to use it as an alarm clock.

PHONES

Students can choose to purchase cell phones once they arrive in Quito. Information will be given out at the on-site orientation, and students can shop around locally upon arrival. Students choose “pay-as-you-go” phones” rather than signing on to a contractual plan. We do not recommend buying an international cell phone. They tend to be extremely expensive. While your American provider may have coverage in Quito, you should only use it in emergencies. You will be charged “international roaming” rates which tend to be very high. In many cases, your host family will have a cell phone to pass on to you from a previous student.

Calling Cards

Using a calling card is a convenient and generally inexpensive way to call the US since calls are billed at US, not local, rates. Contact your long distance carrier (e.g. AT&T or Sprint) to obtain an international calling card for your calls back home to the States. Most of the long-distance companies offer cards and special calling plans for international calls. It is also convenient to buy a calling card for local calls once you arrive in Ecuador. Internet cafés also often have phones you can easily use to call the US inexpensively. Skype is also an excellent way to make cheap/free phone calls from your computer (www.skype.com).

COMPUTERS

Macintosh and PC computers are available for student use on the USFQ campus. If you have your own laptop computer, you should bring it (though a laptop is not necessary or required for the program). If you plan to take your laptop, please take note of the following recommendations:

- Make a complete backup of all the information/software on the computer. If the computer has one, bring along the computer system maintenance or operation system disk.

- Computers should be insured, under your family's general household policy or a specialized student insurance policy (check with companies such as Safeware (www.safeware.com) or National Student Services (www.nssi.com) for specialized coverage), to the full value of the computer (including any peripherals, modem, CD ROM, etc.).
- A security kit is essential because of the possibility of theft. A range of kits are available through companies like Kensington (www.kensington.com) or Targus (www.Targus.com).
- Make sure that you are entirely familiar with the workings/programs of your computer, as we do not have a technical or computer support department in our Quito office.
- You must ensure that your computer is protected with up to date anti-virus software. Boston University students can either visit the Boston University website to download free software for both Mac and PC laptops, which is available at www.bu.edu/tech, or visit Common @ Mugar to configure their laptops. Visiting Students should consult with the computer/technology support department at their home institution. You can also search websites for free anti-virus programs, or purchase your own software.

E-mail

E-mail is available through computers at the USFQ campus. Boston University students can continue to use their Boston University e-mail address and obtain messages from the web at www.bu.edu/webmail/horde. Non-Boston University students who know the POP address of their home institution may also continue to use their address from that home institution.

At the time of publication, only USFQ e-mail accounts can be accessed on campus. BU students may want to forward their BU address to a Web-based free e-mail service (such as Hotmail or Yahoo) for easier access. Consult IT for instructions on how to do this. Internet cafés are everywhere and are very inexpensive if students need to access their e-mail while not at school.

It is your responsibility to make arrangements to keep your e-mail account open while you are abroad.

PRESCRIPTIONS AND DRUG STORE ITEMS

Bring copies of prescriptions for any medications you may need and for glasses or contact lenses if you wear them. Since it may be difficult to get the equivalent medications in Ecuador, we recommend that you bring an adequate supply of all medications you may need while abroad. Any medications you do bring should be in the original, properly labeled containers. Your insurance provider may require a copy of your itinerary in order to cover the cost of filling a prescription for the entire time you will be in Ecuador.

Some types of medication require refrigeration. While refrigeration is readily available in Quito and at Tiputini, power failures and mechanical breakdowns are not uncommon. You might want to explore the possibility of finding medication that does not require refrigeration.

You should bring an extra pair of glasses (or contact lenses) if you wear them. You should also bring your preferred brands of over-the-counter drugs, a supply of deodorant, and contact lens solution. Although these products can be found in local drug stores, they are not always available.

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION PROGRAM SUPPLIES

Students in the SED program may wish to bring special school supplies with them, such as Boston University pens, pencils, or stickers, to distribute to their students. The students you will be teaching in Quito are just as excited to learn about life in the US as you are to learn about life in Ecuador. Other items you might consider bringing are postcards or photos of your hometown, home state, and Boston. You also might wish to bring a book to donate to the class or to the school library, especially books with a Boston theme or about your hometown or state.

Money Matters

PROGRAM FEES

For information about the program fee and personal budgeting guidelines visit: www.bu.edu/abroad/aid/finances.html.

Field Trips and Program Activities

You are expected to participate in all orientation and field trip activities/excursions, the costs of which are covered by the program and are not refundable. The schedule for these activities varies and is at the discretion of the Resident Coordinator. A tentative program calendar can be found at www.bu.edu/abroad.

Room and Board

Your room and board is covered throughout the semester, when the academic program is in session. Your host family is expected to provide breakfast and dinner. Students will be given a small stipend by the Resident Coordinator to help defray the cost of lunches that may be purchased on campus at the USFQ cafeteria or at nearby eateries. Should your lunch expenses exceed the stipend amount, you will be responsible for the extra costs.

Student stipends do not cover vacation periods. For academic year students, room and board are also not covered during the intercession between Fall and Spring terms.

How much will I spend?

Depending on one's own standard of living and how much traveling, shopping, and dining out one does, students' expenses (exclusive of tuition, room, and board that are covered by your program fee) will vary. In the past students on the Language and Liberal Arts Program and School of Education Program have spent \$1,500–\$2,500 per semester.

Airfare for Academic-Year Students

If you choose to use the December return of your group flight ticket for return at the end of the Spring semester, rather than using the Spring group flight, your student account will be credited for the amount of the cost of the Spring semester group flight. You are responsible for notifying BU Study Abroad in writing that you will not be taking the Spring semester group flight and you must also contact Advantage Travel directly to change your return ticket.

TEXTBOOKS AND COURSE MATERIALS

The cost of textbooks is included in the program fee. Students will purchase their textbooks in Quito and will be reimbursed for the actual cost of their textbooks up to a maximum amount to be determined once you arrive in Quito.

VISA FEE

Students who decide to spend an additional consecutive semester in Ecuador will be charged to extend their visas.

CURRENCY

In January 2000, the government of Ecuador declared the US dollar legal tender and replaced the local currency, the sucre, for all transactions. All bills are US bills. However, small change is given in a mix of US and Ecuadorian coins.

BANKING

Traveler's Checks

Traveler's checks are not recommended as a primary source of money while in Quito, as they are increasingly difficult to cash. However, they do offer a safe way to get your money to Ecuador because you can deposit them in a local bank or keep them in a safe place with your own belongings. When purchasing checks, keep in mind that even if you are able to purchase them without charge, there will always be some kind of charge when you cash them. It is usually best to cash a larger amount at one time than smaller amounts more

frequently in order to reduce check cashing fees. Traveler's checks can be cashed at large banks. Also, many hotels will cash traveler's checks. **In general, traveler's checks cannot be used for purchases in stores or restaurants.** At the time of printing, a bank at USFQ will cash your traveler's checks free of charge.

Credit Cards

Credit cards are a very good emergency money source. Card holders can get cash on the spot from participating banks. Don't forget to memorize your PIN. VISA and Mastercard are more widely accepted than American Express and Discover. However, American Express cardholders may cash personal checks from their US bank account at the American Express office in Quito (up to \$1000 per month). Most credit cards now charge overseas transaction fees. Please call your credit card provider to determine these fees prior to your semester abroad.

ATMs

Many students rely on a combination of traveler's checks, an ATM card, and a credit card. Remember to bring both types of cards with you, as your ATM card will be useless if demagnetized, damaged or lost.

With your ATM card from home, you may be able to withdraw funds from your US checking account. However, there will probably be a fee for each transaction at another bank's ATM machine. US banks vary widely in the charges they attach to foreign ATM withdrawals. Shop around well before leaving and consider moving your account based on what you learn. Check with your bank to determine if your ATM card will work in Ecuador. To make the most of your money and avoid piling up charges, withdraw an amount you budget for a week or two. You should do this only when you have time to take the money home. (See "Cash").

Money deposited into your US bank account during the normal work day is typically updated on the US bank's computer at midnight that day, which means that you cannot withdraw money until the Ecuadorian bank's computers have similarly updated their records at midnight the following night—in other words, there generally will be a delay of two business days before you can access those funds. For some banks, you will need to inform them that you plan to use your ATM card abroad so that bank officials can allow overseas card transactions. Be persistent in finding out information on service fees and restrictions.

If your ATM Personal Identification Number (PIN) is not four digits long, change it to four digits before you leave the US. Many international ATMs cannot accept a longer PIN, and many ATM keyboards may not list letters.

Replacing Lost/Stolen Credit Cards

Students should take at least two copies of all credit cards (front and back). One copy should be left at home with a

parent. The other should be taken to Ecuador and kept in a safe place. Having copies of credit cards and important documents on hand will make it easier to replace them if lost or stolen.

CASH

The obvious danger of losing your cash or having it stolen does not make this a good option for large sums of money. **No student should ever keep large amounts of cash in his/her room or on his/her person.** You will usually only need smaller denominations of cash since you will find that most businesses don't have change for large bills (including \$20s). Plan to use \$1, \$5, and maybe \$10 bills most frequently. **Only go out with the smallest amount of money you need, as petty theft is not uncommon in Quito.**

Cash for Departure

When leaving Ecuador, you will be responsible for paying a departure tax (approximately \$42 in cash), the cost of which is not included in your airline ticket.

Arrival

TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS

Your program fee includes round-trip group airfare from a designated US city. You should already have received separate information on these group flight arrangements by e-mail. **If you are using the group flight, you must contact the travel agency directly to make your reservations; we cannot do this for you.**

Students arriving on the group flight will be met at the airport by their host families and the Resident Coordinator, and will immediately go to their homestays from the airport.

Independent Travelers

To receive authorization to travel independently, students traveling to Ecuador on their own must notify the Boston University Study Abroad in writing of their exact travel itinerary. Once the BU Study Abroad office receives an independent itinerary, a credit for the cost of the student's group airfare may be placed on the student's account after the first month of the program.

You should indicate your plans via e-mail to Kathleen Rodriguez Dietzel (kr@bu.edu) and Maria Antonieta Zalles (mazalles@bu.edu).

Early and Late Arrivals

If you arrive in Ecuador earlier than the official arrival date and/or stay later than the official departure date, you will need to make your own housing arrangements. Anyone

On-Site Contacts

Maria Antonieta Zalles, Resident Coordinator, oversees students on Boston University programs while in Quito and is your main point of contact. She can provide you with a wealth of practical information about Quito and Ecuador.

arriving in Ecuador prior to the commencement of the program should contact the program office in Ecuador in advance for suggestions on local accommodations.

ORIENTATION

On-site orientation is designed to introduce you to your new surroundings and to the academic expectations of the program. You will have a chance to meet the program staff, become acquainted with program facilities and resources, and learn more about daily life in your new environment. Students are expected to attend the orientation sessions for international students conducted by USFQ staff as well as program-specific orientation meetings for the Boston University program.

Housing

All students are placed in Ecuadorian homes. Placement is based on the information that you provided on the USFQ housing application which you received with your acceptance packet. Every effort is made to place students in an environment commensurate with their interests and preferences. Maria Antonieta Zalles will e-mail you about a week before you depart to let you know more about your homestay. All housing questions, changes to the housing questionnaire, and specific requests should be directed to her (mazalles@bu.edu).

HOMESTAYS IN QUITO

Ecuadorian households who have hosted Boston University students vary in size, age, and lifestyle. Some may be young couples with children or families with college-age students, others are single mothers, and still others are retired couples or widows. Boston University does not place you in a household with the expectation that you will become a family member. Rather, you are placed in a household to facilitate your language acquisition and to integrate you into Ecuadorian society and culture. In many cases, students do form warm and long-lasting friendships with their host families.

Just as there is a period of adjustment to living in Ecuador, there will be a period of adjustment to living with a host family. In general, US students “go away” to college, living either in a dorm or in their own apartment. In contrast, most college students at USFQ live at home with their parents or relatives; or if they are from outside of Quito, they live in a family-run boarding house. Be prepared to give up a little of the independence that you are used to at college so that you can integrate yourself better with your family. For example, in order to avoid worrying the members of the household, you should determine their expectations and tell them when to expect you to come home if you go out for the evening. You should not automatically assume that visitors can stay in your room with you.

Although you will be considered a special person in the household, you must be careful not to take advantage of this status. Make an effort to find out about and participate in the family activities. Your family will probably invite you to accompany them on certain visits, activities, or excursions. These provide great opportunities to learn about the culture first-hand, and should be taken advantage of whenever possible. Sunday is a family day and usually is devoted to a family dinner. It’s a great experience! Some past students have recommended getting up early for markets and breakfasts.

Family Relations in Ecuador

One significant difference between Ecuadorian and American culture is family structure. In Ecuador, the family is extended rather than nuclear in form, and family relationships are very close. A great deal of respect is paid to older people, whether they are parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, or older friends. In general, children in Ecuador grow up experiencing a broader network of family members than do children in the United States. A high value is placed on kinship, and a special relationship, even responsibility, is acknowledged among extended family members.

Because so many young people live at home until they are married or finish college, they remain very respectful of and close to their parents throughout their lives. Women should be aware that in Ecuador you will find that your family will be more concerned about your whereabouts when you go out, especially at night. Furthermore, do not be tempted by the nightlife in Quito to go out every night. Most young men and women spend weeknights at home.

In Ecuador it is fairly common for middle class families to have maids. You should be prepared to make your own bed and clean your room, but your host family will let you know if there is anything they prefer the maid to do. Do not leave valuables (i.e., airline tickets, cash, travelers checks) lying around your room and don’t bring expensive jewelry. Past students recommend bringing a little box with a key; you might also ask your host family to lock up any valuables or check with the Resident Coordinator for other suggestions.

Dietary Restrictions: Vegetarianism and Keeping Kosher

Lifestyles that impose dietary restrictions such as being a vegetarian or keeping kosher for religious or ethical reasons can mean different things to different people. Therefore, try to be patient with people who might not understand what it means when you say that you are a vegetarian or kosher. For instance, do your dietary restrictions imply restrictions on food preparation? If you are a vegetarian do you eat dairy or fish? Since you will be eating most of your principal meals in your household, you will want to be as specific as possible in defining your dietary restrictions on your housing questionnaire. You should also learn to express your needs in Spanish before you arrive in Quito and be prepared to explain them to your host. The Resident Coordinator does her best to place students with dietary restrictions in homes that have previously hosted students with dietary restrictions and/or that are flexible with student’s meals.

Most importantly, please do not treat your host’s home like a hotel. Please be considerate.

You may want to bring a gift to your Ecuadorian homestay. (This is not required.) Ideas include books, t-shirts, or anything reflecting where you are from.

FAMILY HOUSING REGULATIONS

Please remember that every culture and every household has unwritten rules which you will have to discover for yourself (and by doing so, put your Spanish to use). Attention to these rules, written and unwritten, will make your housing situation easier, and your transition to life in Quito more pleasant. Below you will find the basic family housing regulations: please read them carefully. They will be discussed more in-depth during on-site orientation.

Meals

Your host family will provide breakfast and dinner. You will receive a stipend to cover lunches. You should expect to eat what your family eats. If you have dietary restrictions, you should make them clear on your housing questionnaire and the family should be notified at the beginning of the term. Please also keep in mind that some Americans eat far more at one meal than some Ecuadorians do. You should not expect to consume much more at a meal than your host family does. You will need to purchase your own snacks if you eat between meals. Ecuadorians also tend to be very

conscientious about waste. Even when dining out in restaurants, but especially when taking meals with your family, you should not take any more food than you actually intend to consume.

Kitchen

You should not expect to have kitchen privileges. You may not use the kitchen, invite friends over to eat, etc. without first obtaining permission from the family.

Telephone

When staying with your family you may receive all the incoming local or international calls made to you. However, you should be aware of common courtesies when you use the phone to call out. In Ecuador, the telephone charges on local calls are measured in minutes per call and they are expensive. This can make excessive use of the telephone a sensitive issue; keep your local calls brief. Please ask for more guidance about phone usage from your host family. Phone privileges should be worked out in an arranged agreement with the household. Boston University is not responsible in this matter.

In general, you can expect to be allowed to make 1-3 brief local calls per day. You should plan to use your calling card if you are allowed to make outgoing calls. If you are allowed to receive calls, please respect the sleeping hours of your hosts. The telephone bill is not itemized, therefore it is best to keep a record of your calls (including the approximate length of time for each call) and offer to pay the family for calls you make. Before making long-distance calls, arrange with your family to call collect or use your international calling card. It is much cheaper to call Ecuador from the United States than it is to call the United States from Ecuador. It is recommended that you arrange a day and time for your friends or family back home to call you in Quito so that you can be by the phone waiting for the call. If you want to make calls from a public phone, you can buy local calling cards at different selling points around the city.

Laundry

If your family has a washing machine, you should arrange a schedule with them to use it. Usage will vary from family to family. For example, your family may suggest that you put your clothes with theirs to be washed at the same time. If there is a maid, part of her duties may include washing and ironing for the family, or the family may have a separate laundress. Keep in mind that most Ecuadorian houses do not have clothes dryers. This means that the turnaround time for getting your laundry back can be from one to five days as clothes dry and are ironed before they are returned. You may need to handwash some of your most delicate items or at least check on the family's laundering practices before proceeding.

Linens

The household will provide you with clean sheets and towels.

Shower

You can take a shower (with hot water) once everyday. Many showers heat the water using gas or electricity. Have your family instruct you how to use these devices to be sure you get a warm shower.

Room

The room given to you will be the one that the household has designated for you. You will be responsible for taking care of your own room and keeping your room neat and orderly.

House Key

Discuss the house key policy with your Ecuadorian family as soon as possible so that you may come and go without disturbing them. Be conscientious in your care of the key, as many Ecuadorians are security conscious and would probably want to replace locks if you lose the key. The household will provide you with a key for entrance into the house and will consider you to be a responsible adult. In case the key is lost, Boston University declines all responsibility, and you and your host family will need to work out the terms of incurred expenses. **Once you finish the program you must return the keys.**

In & Out

If you come home at late hours, you must respect the sleeping schedule of family members whether you return late in the evening or early in the morning. A flashlight keychain to find your way around your new surroundings at night is helpful for some students. You should also let your host family know if you will be out late, not for permission, but out of courtesy.

Absences

Out of courtesy and respect, you should always notify your host family if you intend to be away for an evening or a weekend and if you plan to miss a meal.

Visitors

You cannot invite guests or visitors to your host family's home unless this has been agreed upon in advance. Students are responsible for the conduct of guests or visitors (including family, friends, and relatives), who must also respect and comply with all rules/regulations of the host family. Any breach by any such guest or visitor shall be deemed a breach by the student.

Property Damage

You are responsible for the repair or replacement of any household item you damage or destroy. Boston University declines all responsibility. Failure to settle these charges with your host family prior to departure from the program site will result in appropriate charges being assessed to your BU student account. It may also result in inability to register for courses; inability to have grades assigned; transcript holds; and delays in processing aid awards for future semesters.

Personal Property Insurance

Each student is encouraged to review his or her family's personal property insurance coverage. Boston University or any of its officers, agents, or representatives shall not be liable directly or indirectly for loss and/or damage to personal property by fire, theft, or other cause.

Conflicts

If you have any concerns about your homestay, please advise Maria Antonieta Zalles, the Resident Coordinator, as soon as possible.

PROGRAM HOUSING OUTSIDE OF QUITO

The following section describes a few of the sites where students on the Tropical Ecology Program will be living and studying. Students on the Liberal Arts and SED programs will be visiting these sites.

Tiputini Biodiversity Station

Located at about 300km (200 miles) east-southeast of Quito on the north bank of the Tiputini River, a right bank tributary of the Napo River, the Tiputini Biodiversity Station (TBS) represents the only developed access for the Yasuni Biosphere Reserve. The Station (1,500 acres) has been developed by the Universidad San Francisco de Quito and Boston University as a research/education/conservation facility.

The facilities of the camp are scattered throughout approximately five acres of virgin rainforest. Housing is dormitory-style. All rooms are screened and have bathrooms with showers (cold water only) and flush toilets. Linen service is standard (sheets changed once per week and towels twice per week), and food service is provided in a central dining hall where three meals are served daily. In the middle of the camp is the laboratory building with a collection of readings—available to all visitors—concerning the rainforest and its conservation.

On the land around the camp are a series of well-marked trails (more than 30km or 20 miles), giving access to an abundance of primary terre firme (upland) forest along with varzea (seasonally-flooded forest), swamps, and even a small lake. There is a 38-meter canopy tower access to observe birds and other wildlife as well as to view the spectacular panorama. Because of the remote location of the TBS, in combination with its history as a part of the traditional territory of the Waorani people, the region has been well protected and still boasts a tremendous diversity of wildlife, including eleven species of primates (at least half of them are seen very commonly near camp), and more than 525 species of birds. Jaguars may be observed along the river as are animals like tapirs, capybaras, caimans, otters, and pinkriver dolphins.

Students travel from Quito to Coca (Puerto Francisco de Orellana) by air (45-minute flight). Upon arrival in Coca, TBS staff will meet students for transfer to a motorized boat for a two-hour trip downstream on the Napo River to the Village of Pompeya and the entrance to the YPF oil operation in Block 16. Here you must have your passports and valid yellow fever vaccination records reviewed by YPF security personnel. You will be given YPF passes; personal documents will be kept until exit at the end of the visit. Subsequently, there is another short trip (1 1/2 hours) by land to reach the Tiputini River. Passengers, gear, and supplies are then transferred to a boat and travel continues (2 hours) downstream.

Travel to and from TBS can be done by a number of different routes, and is subject to change. You will receive the most updated information from the staff in Ecuador who will plan your trip.

Galapagos National Park

The most recognized of all sites visited in Ecuador provides access to unique wildlife and support for many topics of scientific discussion including island biogeography, evolution, and conservation. This visit involves accommodation on a comfortable vessel.

Health and Safety

INSURANCE COVERAGE AND HEALTH CLINIC ACCESS

Health and Accident Insurance

All students participating in a Boston University International Program must carry adequate health insurance. With the exception of the medical evacuation coverage provided, the student policy available through Boston University is considered adequate by BU Study Abroad.

Medical Evacuation Insurance

In addition to regular health and accident insurance, we require that all participants carry medical evacuation insurance from On Call International. You do not need to enroll in this plan yourself; BU Study Abroad will automatically arrange coverage for all students on the program. Information on this insurance will be sent in a separate mailing.

Clinic Access in Ecuador

The USFQ Medical School supports a regional medical clinic on campus with limited student services. The Office of International Programs at USFQ has a listing of doctors and dentists and will assist you if you have problems. There is an American Hospital, Hospital Voz Andes, in Quito. Health care is good and quite accessible in Ecuador. Visits to local

doctors run about \$30-40 per visit. Medicine is also relatively inexpensive.

Depending on your health insurance policy, you may be able to apply for a reimbursement upon your return to the US or by forwarding a claim form to your insurance company from Ecuador. Be sure that you bring a copy of your insurance company's claim form. If you anticipate a need for dental work, get it done before departure.

The USFQ clinic also offers yellow fever vaccinations and antimalarial medication at a reduced cost, though supplies may be limited.

STAYING HEALTHY

Often the first concern that crosses the minds of most Americans when thinking of travel to Latin America is their health. There are a number of medical precautions that you will need to take before you depart and especially while you are in Ecuador. Certain immunizations are for your health and safety and in some instances are required by the Ecuadorian government to protect its citizens. Below, you will find information about remaining healthy in Ecuador.

Please note that this information is intended as a general guideline only. You will need to consult with your own physician regarding recommended immunizations depending on your specific situation and physical history. Your physician may refer you to a travel clinic for more accurate advice on immunizations. Boston-area travel clinics include:

- Mass General Hospital: 617-724-1934
- Beth Israel Hospital: 617-632-7706
- Logan Airport: 617-568-6500
- New England Medical Center: 617-636-7001

For the most recent and often most conservative advice about health risks, you may contact your local health department or call the Atlanta Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Hotline at 1-800-311-3435, or check the CDC website (www.cdc.gov).

Adjusting to the Climate and Altitude Sickness

Some people have trouble with altitude sickness when they first arrive in Quito. Altitude sickness results from the thinner mountain air which holds less oxygen. You may experience dizziness or shortness of breath, difficulty in sleeping, reduced appetite as well as bouts of nausea. To avoid altitude sickness, you should have plenty of rest, avoid overeating, and stay hydrated for the first week while your body acclimates. If symptoms persist, see a local physician. Also, the altitude often results in a lower tolerance for substances such as alcohol. The sun's rays are also much stronger at higher altitudes. Students should protect their skin by wearing a high SPF sunscreen.

Diet

Part of staying healthy is making sure you have a lot of ammunition to resist pathogens that you will encounter regardless of precautions. Maintaining a healthy diet is key to your health. If you have never paid attention to nutrition before, now is a good time to begin.

Gastrointestinal Problems

You will probably encounter some problems with your gastrointestinal system during the first few weeks. People coming to the US from other countries often experience the same problem. It is not necessarily due to lack of sanitation, but often is simply an adjustment that your intestinal tract is making to new bacteria; although certainly eating contaminated food or water will contribute to the situation, and make you temporarily quite miserable. The easiest way to stay healthy is to avoid drinking water unless it is bottled water or you know it has been boiled. Vegetables and fruits that have been cooked are fine, but avoid eating raw fruits and vegetables unless you have peeled them or know that they have been washed with purified water. Avoid ice cubes in drinks and don't brush your teeth with tap water. These may seem extreme measures, but cholera, typhoid, and hepatitis are serious diseases and you don't want to have to spend time in a hospital.

The less serious but more common stomach upsets are no fun either. Take a supply of Imodium with you in the event that you experience temporary gastrointestinal problems. For more severe cases, other medicines may become necessary. You might want to bring some of the over-the-counter type remedies available at drug stores, such as Paregoric or Lomotil. To relieve an upset stomach, go on a BRATT (bananas, rice, apples, tea, and toast) diet until the problem clears up. You should avoid alcohol if your stomach is upset. Remember to get plenty of rest and watch what you eat. Consult a physician if the problem persists.

Water

Water is easily contaminated. If you drink untreated water, you will get sick. Drinking contaminated water can not only give you dysentery but, under certain conditions, you could contract hepatitis and typhoid. (Water treatment, however, will not guarantee preventing the occurrence of these diseases; the immunizations that you will get before you leave are the best defense against hepatitis and typhoid.)

There are two forms of dysentery: bacillary and amoebic. One is caused by bacteria and the other by amoebas which are small one-cell organisms. Bacillary dysentery is the common "travelers' tummy" and usually passes after a couple of days. Eating bananas or taking an anti-diarrheal medication will help the symptoms but the bacteria will take its own time to clear your system. Amoebic dysentery, known as amoebiasis, is quite a different story. This is a very serious disease and needs to be treated by a physician. It is also difficult to diagnose. If you have stomach cramps and

diarrhea for more than a few days, contact your host family or the program director.

The most important thing to remember about getting sick is don't be shy about it. It happens to everyone, it's not your fault and you shouldn't be embarrassed. Make sure you get treatment as soon as possible, since it is better to catch things early.

IMMUNIZATIONS AND MEDICATIONS

(Please also refer to the "Health Issues" Section of the **Student Handbook**) Some of the following immunizations are required or recommended specifically for travelers visiting certain risk areas, such as jungle and coastal regions. Please note that all students (not just students on the Tropical Ecology Program) will be traveling to the Tiputini Biodiversity Station (jungle region) and to the Galapagos (coastal region) during their semester in Ecuador.

These immunizations and medications are strongly recommended or required because of the serious, potentially fatal, nature of most of these diseases. Please consult with your physician or travel clinic to determine which immunizations and medications would be appropriate for you. Limited supplies of immunizations may be available at the USFQ clinic at a reduced cost.

Yellow Fever

This vaccination is required; it is only administered at designated Yellow Fever centers. Please call your state department of public health to find out which clinics in your area can administer this vaccine. When you receive the vaccine, you will be given a yellow World Health Organization (WHO) card. The card is not required for entry to Ecuador. It is required to enter the Tiputini Biodiversity Station. Be sure to carry this card with you when you travel to Tiputini Biodiversity Station. You can not get there without it.

Cholera

Cholera spreads rapidly through contaminated food and water. Although often fatal for those who are already malnourished (partly because of dehydration), it is entirely preventable with the proper precautions, such as careful eating habits. The cholera vaccine is good for six months only and has limited effectiveness; therefore it is usually not recommended by the CDC. However, if the vaccination is available, check with your physician to see if it would be appropriate for you. If the shot is unavailable, please ask your doctor to make a note on your WHO card.

Childhood/Routine Immunizations

Make sure your childhood immunizations are up to date:

- MMR: measles, mumps, rubella
- DTP: diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis

(Td booster recommended)

- Polio (eIPV booster recommended)
- Any others your doctor might recommend

OTHER RECOMMENDED IMMUNIZATIONS AND MEDICATIONS

Typhoid

The oral regimen causes less reaction than the injection.

Hepatitis A

Hepatitis A is best avoided by not drinking tap water, eating raw vegetables or uncooked shellfish. Getting a gamma globulin injection (as close to departure as possible) in the States prior to travel is recommended. The Hepatitis A vaccine must be given twice, six months apart. It is costly, but may be worthwhile, especially for academic-year students.

Rabies

The pre-vaccine for rabies is recommended if working in rural areas or occupationally exposed to animals. In particular, Tropical Ecology students who plan to work with bats should consult their physicians regarding this vaccination. You must have the rabies vaccine to work with bats at TBS.

Malaria

Anti-malarial medication for Chloroquine-resistant malarial parasites is recommended but not at all required. In most instances, mefloquine, trade name Lariam, or Malarone are usually prescribed, although other options are also available. The best precaution is a combination of avoiding mosquito bites and taking anti-malarial medication. You should consult your doctor regarding your need and use of anti-malarial medication.

Malaria is endemic to much of the developing world despite continued and expensive efforts to eradicate it. It is fairly uncommon in much of Ecuador, although certain areas of the country are at risk.

Mosquitoes are most prevalent after the rainy season has begun because mosquitoes breed in stagnant water. Mosquitoes tend to bite (and transmit malaria) between dusk and dawn. Cover yourself during these hours with long pants and long-sleeved shirts. Sleep under mosquito netting (this will be provided when necessary), burn mosquito coils, and run a fan at night. Apply repellent to exposed areas of the skin. If you use a repellent and have a skin reaction or feel nauseous, try a repellent with a lower concentration of DEET. Avoiding mosquito bites is not for the inconvenience of itching but to ensure your healthy future.

Malaria is characterized by headache, fever, chills, and sweating. These symptoms subside and then recur over a period of days. Left untreated, the disease may progress to anemia, heart or kidney failure, coma, and even death.

Malaria can not live in the high altitude region of Quito, so this is only an issue when living in the lowland areas. Again, it is best to consult a physician regarding the need and use of anti-malarial medication. Past students have found anti-malarial medication is available, and much less expensive, in Ecuador (available through the university clinic). In the past, students have opted to purchase medication in Ecuador if necessary.

You cannot donate blood for three years after you have taken antimalarial drugs.

Insect Stings: Anaphylaxis

Individuals with acute sensitivity to insect venom are at a high risk of serious allergic reaction while at Tiputini. Students with such allergies should bring several Epi-Pens (self-injections of adrenaline) for emergencies and carry them on their person at all times at Tiputini, the coast and Galapagos.

Other Immunizations

Depending on length of time you will be staying in Ecuador and the areas to which you plan to travel, vaccinations for typhoid and the plague may be considered. Please consult with your physician.

Medical Alert Bracelet

If you are allergic to penicillin, sulfur or other medications, or have a serious medical condition, a medical alert bracelet is a very good idea.

AIDS

Since AIDS is transmitted through sexual intercourse, you should take the same preventative steps that you would take in the United States in sexual relationships—abstinence being the only sure way to avoid this means of transmission. The prevalence of HIV in Ecuador has not been very well documented but is generally thought to be relatively high.

ON YOUR RETURN HOME

You may want to get a check-up by a physician when you return home. Even if you were not sick while abroad, it is still possible that you may have carried a pathogen or parasite home with you. The physical exam might include a blood test, tuberculin test, stool examination for intestinal parasites, and perhaps, a chest X-ray.

Life in Quito

STEREOTYPES

Many stereotypes of Latin American society have entered into US culture, not all of them are favorable. Often people think of Latin America as an essentially rural society, a peaceful countryside populated by indigenous peasants using oxen rather than tractors. Indian markets and thatched roofed houses are images used to promote tourism in many Latin American countries. True, some of Latin America is like this, but the diversity in the region is incredible. In our stereotypes of Latin America, we tend to simplify the region and reduce its complexity. Another prevalent stereotype that comes through movies and TV programs is that Latin America is full of drug dealers, “violent macho-men” and submissive women.

Ecuador, and Quito in particular, challenges these simplified stereotypical images. In Ecuador, about 70% of the national population refers to itself as “mestizo” (people of racially mixed heritage), 10% of the social scale is occupied by the “blancos” (people of Spanish descent)—this 10% tends to cluster at the top of the socio-economic scale. Indigenous populations, glossed in Spanish as “indios,” make up a large proportion of the population, and their customs are a mixture of hispanic and American Indian culture. In fact, the term “American Indian” covers a broad spectrum of diverse ethnic groups. Many of the Indians are Quichuas who live outside of the main cities of Ecuador in smaller communities in the Sierra. Although their home communities tend to be the focus of their lives, many indigenous people, especially the younger men and women, migrate to Quito looking for employment opportunities. Therefore, with these continuous comings and goings, they build strong links between Quito and the Ecuadorian countryside.

Getting to Know Quito

Quito is a cosmopolitan city of 2 million inhabitants. It was a seat of Spanish power during the Real Audiencia period, and because of the Spanish architecture, is known as one of the most beautiful capital cities in all of South America. Consequently, it has been designated a cultural heritage site by the UN. During the hispanic period, Quito was viewed as the home of Spanish blancos, the ruling upper class of Ecuador. Now, with increased migration from the countryside to the city, Quito represents a microcosm of the overall Ecuadorian society. The small colonial centre of the city is surrounded by barrios composed of various classes and ethnicities.

Menu Items

Some items you will see on menus or served at home will be new to you, and some with which you are more familiar will be served in a slightly different form. The following is a list of items you might find on a menu.

Meat

asado o parrillada: roast or outdoor barbeque
chorizo: spicy sausage
salchicha: hot dogs
pollo: chicken
hígado: liver
milanesa: a thin breaded beef steak
cuy: guinea pig, served roasted
lomo a la plancha: grilled filet mignon steak
tripa mishque : small intestine

Staples

tallarines, fideos: spaghetti noodles/pastas found in soups
papas: potatoes
arvejas: peas
habas: lima beans
frejoles: beans
mote: hominy
ají: spicy sauce
choclo: corn-on-the-cob
empanadas: a meat or cheese pie
arroz: rice
tostado: corn nuts
lentejas: lentils
queso fresco: mild white cheese

Desserts

helado: ice cream
arroz con leche: rice pudding
frutas: fruits
flan: custard

Soups and Stews

locro: potato soup
sopa: soup with various ingredients
caldo: broth-based soup
cazuela: stews of any kind

Fish/Seafood

corvina: whitefish/seabass
ostras: oysters
mariscos: shellfish of any kind
cangrejo: crab
camarones: shrimp
trucha: trout
calamares: calamari
pulpo: octopus
langostinos:prawn
mejillones: mussels
langosta: lobster
almejas: clams
ceviche: fish cooked and marinated in lemon juice

Drinks

agua sin gas: non-carbonated mineral water
agua con gas: carbonated mineral water
vino: wine
colas: soda
cerveza: beer

FOOD

Adjustments in food and eating patterns are among the first changes you will have to cope with in a new culture. If you know what to expect in the way of food and meals, you will have an easier time adjusting. In Ecuador, people eat three meals a day. Breakfasts are lighter than in the US and consist of coffee, milk, juice, bread and butter, or sweet rolls. The main meal of the day, *almuerzo* (lunch), consists of several courses whether eaten at home or in a restaurant. The meal usually starts with soup, and is followed by rice, beans, meat, fish, or chicken, vegetables, and dessert. In some homes a *café*, a light snack of coffee, bread, and cheese, is served between 4 and 5 p.m. The dinner, *cena*, is generally a light meal served between 8 and 9 p.m. It may consist simply of coffee and bread. When you first get settled in with your family, discuss the schedule they are accustomed to for eating.

You will be eating breakfast and dinner with your family. *Almuerzo* can be eaten in the university cafeteria for about US \$3-5 per day (this may change with the economy). Many restaurants in Quito also offer fixed priced menus for *almuerzo*. This is much cheaper than eating “à la carte.” If you find a restaurant you like (for example, there are a number of vegetarian restaurants in Quito), you can arrange to eat *almuerzo* there for a weekly or monthly rate.

Ecuadorian cuisine is a mixture of Spanish and indigenous elements. The staples of Ecuadorian cooking tend to emphasize starches such as rice, lentils, potatoes, and include hearty stews and soups. Because of Ecuador’s access to the Pacific coast, seafood is excellent and cheap. You will be introduced to all sorts of tropical fruits. Don’t be afraid to try new things, some favorites to try: granadilla, mango, taxo, mora, and tomate de arbol.

RECREATION

Most people in Quito lead active social lives. You will find movie theaters that show US films subtitled in Spanish. During theater season you can attend plays for a very reasonable price. Cafés are beginning to become popular; they usually are located close to theaters and art galleries. There is a growing number of Internet cafés as well.

In Quito most young people meet on Avenida Amazonas, the main commercial street of the city, and Avenida González Suárez. Bars and discos are scattered around the city. Try to go accompanied by other friends since it is not typical in Ecuador to go to bars alone.

In Quito you will find Peñas, which are places that specialize in particular kinds of live music or entertainment. For example, a *Peña Típica* presents Andean folk music. Your

host families will have ample suggestions about socializing. Above all when planning your recreation, although it might be alluring, avoid simply going out with Americans to common American hangouts. The cultural experience will be richer and your Spanish will improve more if you vary with whom and where you socialize.

Nightlife, Dining and Shopping

Quito has a variety of hangouts, bars, and discotecas that provide a wide variety of entertainment when you want to go out at night. It is safest, especially for women, to go out in groups.

It is very popular for tourists to go to the Mariscal section of town. Therefore, this section of town is popular with criminals who would want to prey on tourists. It is not recommended that students frequent this area at any time of the day. If you do, you need to be very vigilant both on the street and in establishments. Most crimes perpetrated on students have been in this neighborhood.

Sports

USFQ has athletic facilities available for student use. Students may find themselves playing soccer, volleyball, tennis, and basketball. There are also opportunities for mountain climbing, mountain biking, fencing, running, and dancing. If you are interested in joining a gym outside of the university, it can cost approximately \$30 or more per month.

MAIL

Letters to and from the US can take from 7 to 20 days to arrive. If you mail your letters from the Central Post Office downtown, they arrive much faster. Avoid using certified mail as it takes even longer than regular mail. If something needs to reach you quickly or is very important to you, use express mail (DHL) or a fax. Due to potential complications with customs, it is advisable to avoid having packages sent

Address All Mail:

Name of Student
c/o Boston University in Quito
Oficina de Programas Internacionales
Universidad San Francisco de Quito
P.O. Box 17-12-841
Quito ECUADOR

to you unless there is a specific need or emergency situation that simply cannot be remedied locally.

TRANSPORTATION: GETTING AROUND QUITO

Public transportation is quite good in Ecuador and is especially convenient in Quito. Buses are probably the cheapest and most efficient way to travel within the city. However, in Quito and throughout Ecuador, you will find variation in service from neighborhood to neighborhood and less standardization in the bus schedule. Ask your host family for help getting around the first few days and for their recommendations regarding transportation. If you are out late and there do not seem to be any buses running, taxis are quite cheap. Instead of hailing a cab, you should carry the phone numbers of recommended cab companies that the USFQ gives in the on-site orientation packet. Make sure you find out the cost of the ride before you get into the taxi; taxis with running meters are more dependable than those with no visible meter. Unlike taxis in the US, you can bargain for taxis in Ecuador to get the best price. You should agree on a price with the driver prior to accepting a ride. Take advantage of your Spanish language skills.

TRAVEL WITHIN ECUADOR

When independent travel takes you outside of Quito, you should always consult with the International Programs Office at USFQ and www.travel.state.gov to find out if there are any specific issues you should be aware of at or en route to your destination.

At the Universidad San Francisco de Quito there are many field trips to local churches, museums, volcanoes, etc., offered to the students through university classes. Quito is located in the north central zone of the country which makes the altiplano, the coast, and the upper amazon or tropical forest east of the Andes (Oriente) easily accessible by bus. Buses are the main means of transportation throughout Ecuador. Be aware that there are several classes of bus service. First class buses will provide non-stop service to your destination; second and third class buses will mean frequent stops, more crowded conditions, and a significantly increased travel time. Even through short weekend trips, you can begin to get a feeling for the ecological and ethnic diversity that comprises Ecuador.

Ecuador also has an extensive system of national parks which are accessible for camping or staying in cabins and hiking. Some of the more commonly recommended parks include *Cotopaxi National Park* near the town Latacunga and *Paschoa Reserve* near Amaguaña. When you leave for long weekend trips during school vacations, be sure to leave an itinerary behind with Maria Antonieta Zalles (the resident coordinator), a staff member in the International Programs Office at USFQ, and your Ecuadorian family. If you are delayed on your return, please contact Maria Zalles and your Ecuadorian family to let them know.

Local Transportation and Travel

While abroad, you should remember that public transportation is the way the great majority of local residents get around their town and country, and so it should be a part of your experience as well. For that reason, and for reasons of safety, we strongly discourage students from renting automobiles or other motorized vehicles while abroad. If your internship, community placement, study adventure or cultural reimbursement activity involves travel, you may not rent a car or other motorized vehicle for that purpose.

If personal travel takes you to Guayaquil, we recommend that you exercise extra precautions when using taxi cabs. You should always call a cab or ask a staff member at a public establishment (hotel/restaurant) to call one for you. www.travel.state.gov details some of the dangers present in that city and also lists cab numbers that you can use.

TRAVEL OUTSIDE OF ECUADOR

In order to travel to a country outside of Ecuador, it is important to plan ahead so as to avoid disappointment or surprises. We strongly advise that you include the following steps in your planning process:

- Check in with both the resident coordinator and with the International Programs Office at USFQ and let them know where you are going, when, how long you plan to stay—i.e., give all the details of your itinerary so that if there is an emergency they know where to find you. It is also important to give your host family this information.
- If you plan to travel outside of Ecuador, please visit www.travel.state.gov or call the US Embassy to check for travel advisories for any countries to which you plan to travel. Please take travel advisories very seriously. **The US Embassy in Quito is located at Avigiras E12-170 y Eloy Alfaro, telephone: 398-5000.**
- Call the US Embassy and ask them about required immunization and other travel requirements. Be sure to inquire about travel restrictions as well. Unfortunately, guerrilla warfare, drug trafficking, unstable political conditions, and civil war are all common occurrences in parts of Latin America.

Travel Tips

Some suggestions from past students if you plan to travel independently:

1. Bring guidebooks! These books are like gold when you plan a trip, providing: bus schedules, hotel info, city maps, restaurants and activities. Lonely Planet, Lets Go, Footprints.
2. Consider joining the South American Explorers Club. They have a clubhouse in Quito where they plan excursions, hold lectures, provide storage space and have an endless library of travel and volunteer info. Membership for one year costs about \$40. www.saexplorers.org/club/home
3. Travel light. Bring only your bare essentials travelling, this makes your life far more comfortable!
4. Be Flexible. Plan extra time for flat tires, festivals, and feeling sick. You never know what you'll encounter.
5. Be responsible, act responsibly, and lookout for your safety as well as the safety of others.

- Upon arrival in the country you are visiting, you must clear customs. The policia nacional de migracion may ask you a number of questions regarding your trip (such as the intended length of stay, where you are traveling to, why you are traveling there). When the questioning has finished, an immigration officer will stamp your passport and grant you an exact time period that you may remain in the country. Failure to leave when the period is over may result in a fine or legal action.
- After you have finished your travels, you must 'sign out' or request permission to leave the country you have been visiting. Clearing the aduanas again is crucial. Remember to cooperate to ensure your speedy return to Ecuador (or wherever you may be headed.)
- When you arrive in Ecuador again, you must declare any and all goods, perishable or non-perishable, when clearing customs.

If you are traveling within Ecuador or to neighboring countries, please remember to keep proper identification (passport, or at least a copy, and the local ID card issued to all participants) with you at all times.

Names and Numbers

BOSTON UNIVERSITY IN QUITO

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Maria Antonieta Zalles, Resident Coordinator
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Kelly Swing, Tropical Ecology Program Director
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OTHER USEFUL NUMBERS

Advantage Travel

1-800-788-1980
315-471-2222

US Embassy in Quito

Avigiras E12-170 y Eloy Alfaro
(011) 593-2-398-5000

On Call International

(Emergency Travel Assistance Coverage)
603-328-1956

Emergency Telephone Numbers

Students experiencing any kind of emergency while in South America should contact Maria Antonieta Zalles.

Parents who need to contact their son or daughter in South America in an emergency should first call him/her on his/her cell phone, then at his/her homestay. If the student can't be reached there, the parent should contact the resident coordinator directly.

During weekday office hours:

(Program Office)
011-593-2297-1700
-1755 International Programs
-1403 Maria Antonieta Zalles
-1963 Kelly Swing

Fax: 011-593-2289-0070
"Attn: International Programs"

Weekend and evening emergencies:

(Maria Antonieta Zalles, home)
011-593-22-257-037

(Maria Antonieta Zalles, mobile phone)
011-593-94-135-262

You will be notified of any changes in the emergency contact numbers.



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All of the foregoing information is subject to change without notice.

Tell us about your experience in Ecuador!

Share your favorite photo, a link to your blog, or post your story directly on our Facebook fan page (note that you'll have to 'like' our page in order to post to it). And be sure to tag "BU Study Abroad" in all your great photos.

Let the rest of the BU community hear about your time abroad and upload your videos on BUiverse. Tag them as "study abroad."

Want to see your photo in our next study abroad catalog, on the website, or on a poster? Email, snail mail, or drop off a high-resolution copy (on a CD or flash drive) at the BU Study Abroad office, for the marketing department.

And don't forget to follow us on Twitter to learn about BU happenings around the globe as well as new developments in our study abroad programs.

Good luck next semester!

—BU Study Abroad