



Study Abroad

**EXCHANGE STUDENT
HANDBOOK**

2012/2013

<http://www.bu.edu/abroad/studentexchanges/>

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Introduction

Welcome to Boston University and congratulations on your acceptance to our exchange program. This year we are proud to offer opportunities to international students from 24 affiliated institutions worldwide. Boston University is an internationally recognized institution of higher education and research. It is a coeducational and non-sectarian institution with more than 3,400 faculty members and 30,000 students. The campus extends over 71 acres, beginning in the historic Back Bay section of Boston and running along the south bank of the Charles River. It is the perfect atmosphere for learning and collaboration.

Now that you have been accepted to Boston University, I am sure you have a number of important questions about your semester or year abroad. This handbook, and the web pages that it frequently refers to, will provide you with helpful information and will answer many of your preliminary questions.

I look forward to meeting you and working with you during the next few months. Please feel free to contact me directly with any questions.

Best wishes,

David Lamitie
Assistant Director
Exchange Coordinator

Boston University Study Abroad

You should plan to arrive in Boston in time to participate in the New Student Orientation. If you miss orientation you should arrange to meet with the Exchange Coordinator. It is best to have an appointment. The Exchange Coordinator is your primary academic and administrative advisor on-campus.

Contact Information

David Lamitie Assistant Director Boston University Study Abroad 888 Commonwealth Ave. Boston, MA 02215 USA	Main Line: 617.353.9888 Direct Line: 617.358.1245 Fax: 617.353.5402 Email: dlamitie@bu.edu
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The Office of International Students and Scholars and Visas

The International Students and Scholars Office administer visa documentation and is a valuable and essential resource for Boston University international students. Once you receive the SEVIS DS-2019 Form in your acceptance packet, you will be able to apply for a J-I visa at an American Embassy/Consulate in your country. Please follow the instructions listed in your visa packet in order to obtain a visa. Exchange students are eligible for J-I visas only.

You are required to register at the International Students and Scholars Office soon after you arrive in Boston.

For more information on J-I visas, please contact:

Boston University
The International Students and Scholars Office (ISSO)
888 Commonwealth Ave.
Boston, MA 02215

Phone: 617.353.3565
Web: <http://www.bu.edu/isso>

Academics and Registration

International exchange students are registered at Boston University as cross-registered, non-degree students. This means that exchange students, when qualified, may simultaneously enroll in courses from several (but not all) of the Schools and Colleges at the University. According to Boston University and United States Visa requirements, all **exchange students must register for a minimum of 12 academic credits per semester** (typically this means a minimum of 3 courses, however most students at BU are enrolled in 4 courses for a total of 16 credits).

Please note:

- Exchange students must register for a minimum of 12 academic credits per semester
- Exchange Students may register for a maximum of 18 credit hours. Typically, this means that you may enroll in 4 courses at 4 credit hours each and have the option of enrolling in two physical education courses (PDP)
- Physical Education and Dance class credit (usually 1 credit) may not be used to satisfy the 12 academic credit minimum
- There are no exceptions to either the minimum or the maximum credit policies

Course Registration

The list of courses that you provided with your application does NOT constitute a request list or an enrollment list. This was a sample list of courses that was used to assess your interest and goals.

You must complete the course registration process as indicated below and on our website at <http://www.bu.edu/abroad/exchange/academics/>.

You are not required by BU to register for the courses indicated on your application. You should investigate the specific course offerings for the semester that you plan to be in Boston and select from among those courses.

Registration for courses (enrollment in classes) can be handled in several different ways. **It is very likely that you will use more than one of the following methods to enroll in the courses that you select at BU.**

After you have established a Boston University Web Account (see page 7) you will have the ability to register yourself for some, but probably not all, of the courses in which you would like to enroll.

You will do this using an online registration procedure. There will be some courses that are 'restricted' and which are not available for web registration.

- **None of the courses offered by the School of Management (SMG) are available for online registration.**
- **There are restrictions on Communication (COM) course registrations.**
- **You will need to use a paper registration form for SMG and COM courses.**

Enclosed you will find a course registration form. If you are unable to register yourself for a course, using the online system you will use this document to indicate which courses you would like to attend for the first semester of your exchange. Please fill out the form and return it via email to the exchange coordinator as soon as possible. This form can also be printed from the University website at www.bu.edu/reg/registration/formsreg.html, click the link "Registration Form."

Complete instructions for researching and selecting courses can be found on our website at <http://www.bu.edu/abroad/exchange/academics/>

Important, Please note:

- 1) Exchange Students register for courses after regular, full-time Boston University students. You may find that certain courses are closed or already full. Upon arrival the Exchange Coordinator will work with students to finalize academic schedules. You need to be flexible with course selection and schedules. **We cannot guarantee enrollment in any course.**
- 2) During the first several weeks of the semester we have an "Add/Drop" period during which students (including you) will be adjusting their schedules. Some places may become available in classes previously designated as full. Each instructor, and only the instructor, can also allow additional students to enroll in the classes that they teach and we will be pursuing this option as necessary when you arrive. Instructors are NOT required to admit students to a course that is full.
- 3) Exchange students interested in taking courses at the School of Management (SMG) can register for undergraduate courses only (100-400 level). Graduate courses at the School of Management are NOT available to exchange students. Other course restrictions apply for SMG, please see <http://www.bu.edu/abroad/exchange/academics/>.
- 4) It is very likely that you will not have your final and confirmed course schedule until after you arrive in Boston.

Boston University Web Account

Exchange students are required to create a BU **web account**, login name, and Kerberos password before they arrive at the University. You will receive an email with specific instructions on how to create your BU web account, login name, and Kerberos password. You must complete the steps outlined in the email to create your accounts. A BU login name and Kerberos password are essential to student life at Boston University.

The web account and login name will give you access to online services such as the *Student Link* (<http://www.bu.edu/studentlink>). The *Student Link* provides secure access to view information about housing, as well as personal and financial records and course information. For more information about the *Student Link* see http://www.bu.edu/online/student_services/resources/student-link.html

The web account will also establish an email alias with an “@bu.edu” address. Email sent to your @bu.edu address will be sent forward to your preferred email address. Your username will be the first half of the email address – i.e. if your username was *asmith* your email alias would be *asmith@bu.edu*.

Exchange Student Orientation

All international exchange students are **strongly encouraged to attend the Boston University Exchange Student Orientation**. The *Exchange Student Orientation* provides exchange students with an opportunity to meet other students and familiarize themselves with the BU campus and with BU's academic and administrative policies. Students will have the opportunity to meet with advisors, learn about academic resources, and participate in city excursions. It is recommended that all exchange students attend Orientation.

Additional information about the Exchange Student Orientation will be provided in the coming weeks and months.

Orientation is scheduled for January 14--15, 2013. Dormitories will be available for move-in beginning Friday January 11, 2013. Orientation activity will begin at 9am on Monday January 14.

Classes for the Spring 2013 semester are scheduled to begin on Wednesday January 16, 2013. It is not permitted to begin classes late. You must arrive to Boston University in time to begin courses on Wednesday January 16, 2013.

Housing and Accommodations

In your acceptance packet you will find information that describes Boston University's on-campus (dormitory, apartment etc.) housing options and costs. On campus, most students live with a roommate (share one room) and share bathroom facilities with numerous students. All exchange students that intend to live in official university housing must send the Residence License Agreement and a \$600 deposit fee as soon as possible.

The deposit should be paid via wire transfer (See page 9).

The Residence License Agreement should be scanned and emailed to housing@bu.edu and dlamitie@bu.edu.

For more information on Boston University on-campus housing and dining plans, please visit: www.bu.edu/housing . For more information on appropriate payment options, please visit: www.bu.edu/comp/saweb/payoptions.html.

Please be advised:

- **There is high demand for Boston University campus housing and options are limited**
- **Students who apply for on-campus housing must remain flexible with their housing choices**

Exchange students may also choose to live off-campus in private, independently arranged accommodations. Boston University cannot assist students in finding accommodations off-campus. The Office of Off-Campus Services does offer some rental and hotel listings on their website www.bu.edu/offcampus/. You will need to establish your Web Account and user name and password for access to this information. Many exchange students have also found www.craigslist.com to be a useful tool for finding apartments off-campus.

Students interested in short-term housing in Boston may also visit the following websites:

Youth Hostels: <http://www.hostels.com/us.ma.bo.html>
Boston Hotels and News: www.boston.com

Health and Medical Insurance

Medical History

All Boston University Exchange Students are required to submit a *Medical History, Physical Report, and Immunization Form* before arriving in Boston. This document must be completed and signed by your physician. The required form is included in your packet. **Please note that you will not be allowed to attend classes until you have submitted this form.** Additional information can be found at <http://www.bu.edu/shs/required/index.shtml> and the form is also available online at <http://www.bu.edu/shs/forms/health.pdf>.

Medical Insurance

All exchange students at Boston University will be required to purchase the Boston University Student Medical Insurance Plan. All options for waiving (declining) this medical health insurance plan have been effectively eliminated.

You should budget for this expense. It will be billed directly to your student account.

The cost will be approximately \$760 for the Spring semester and will cover you from January 1, 2013 to May 20, 2013.

For more information see:

<http://www.bu.edu/comp/saweb/medins.html>

<http://www.bu.edu/comp/saweb/compmed.html>

Payment Options

- All fees – the cost of insurance, the cost of room and meals etc. can be paid in the same manner and all fees can be paid to the same account which is associated with your BU ID number
- **Wire Transfer** – This is probably the easiest way to pay any fees that you owe to Boston University. You should pay the \$600 housing deposit via wire transfer. **The housing deposit fee must be paid before you arrive. Do NOT send checks/cheques.**
- You can estimate the fees for housing, dining plan etc that you will owe to Boston University and you may want to consider wire transfer of a larger, lump sum. This will help save on wire fees and any over payment will be refunded to you after you arrive.
- Wire Transfer Instructions can be found at <http://www.bu.edu/studentaccountingservices/your-bill/payment-options/>. We recommend “peerTransfer” and “Travellex”.
- All other fees can be paid via wire transfer **before you arrive or you can choose to pay the fees after you arrive.**
- When paying via wire transfer you must include your University ID number (UXX-XX-XXXX) and a brief statement describing the type of payment (i.e. Housing Guarantee Payment).
- Soon after arrival all students must visit the Student Accounting Services Office (www.bu.edu/comp/saweb/) to pay for any pending fees. Such fees may include: health insurance, room, board, etc.
- **Fees cannot be paid with credit cards**

American Culture

The American Educational System

You may find the American educational system different from the one to which you are accustomed. Past exchange students have commented on some of the differences that they have experienced and some of their observations are noted in the following list of unique American educational characteristics:

- American students typically begin university courses when they are 17 or 18 years old. Most American students graduate from undergraduate programs and receive their Bachelor's degree after four years of study. In their first year, students begin with a broad curriculum, which becomes more focused over the years. This is something you should keep in mind when choosing between living on-campus and off-campus.
- Many American faculty/instructors pride themselves on the informality of student/professor relationships. Most professors feel that students contribute as much to the learning environment as they take from it. They stress the importance of class participation, study groups, and student presentations in class. Exchange students are encouraged to work closely with the professors and teaching assistants.
- Exchange students often consider American courses to be time-consuming and demanding. Many course notes and assignments are available online, but professors still require attendance and punctuality. Most courses are structured around continuous assessment: frequent writing assignments, quizzes, class participation, and exams. In most classrooms there is a large focus on teamwork and practical application of knowledge.
- There are many support systems on-campus available to students who may be struggling with personal or academic issues. There are numerous writing centers on-campus that assist international students with verbal and written English.

Life in Boston

Boston is a dynamic city rich in history. There are many museums, parks, sports facilities, nightclubs, and social centers to explore during your time here. The Thursday issue of the Boston Phoenix Newspaper (<http://thephoenix.com/>) and the Thursday issue of the Boston Globe are excellent resources for upcoming events and activities.

Boston transportation, locally known as the MBTA or the "T," includes buses, trains, commuter rails, and taxis. You are encouraged to purchase an MBTA pass through Boston University's Office of Parking Services (www.bu.edu/parking). You can purchase a semester pass before you arrive once you have established a *Web* account. The cost for a semester pass is approximately \$210. Currently it costs \$2.00 for most MBTA trains and \$1.50 for most inner-city buses. Passes can be purchased via the Student Link (www.bu.edu/studentlink).

To find out more about Boston University and Boston, please visit the following websites:

www.bostonusa.com
www.boston.com
www.bu.edu/visit

Pre-departure Check List

Please make copies of all documents that you send to this office for your records.

This document is meant to help you keep track of the required submissions.

All documents should be submitted as soon as possible and **no later than January 3, 2013.**

Send to Office of Housing:

To Do	Date Submitted
Housing Deposit and Forms	

Send to Exchange Coordinator, BU Study Abroad:

To Do	Date Submitted
Medical History Form	
Course Registration Form (if necessary)	
Arrival Information Form	
Orientation Registration Form (to be sent via email sent later)	

Arrival Check List

- Check-in for Orientation
- Check-in at ISSO (888 Commonwealth Ave., 2nd Floor)
- Notify the Exchange Coordinator of your arrival
- Pay for semester:
Student Accounting Services (881 Commonwealth Ave., Basement)
- Receive Student ID:
Terrier Card Office (775 Commonwealth Ave., GSU Basement)

Orientation is scheduled for Jan. 14-15, 2013. You will be permitted to move into your dormitory room on Fri. Jan. 11, 2013.

Orientation is strongly recommended. More information will be available in the coming weeks.

Your J-1 visa allows you to enter The United States 30 days prior to the start of your semester – as early as Dec. 18, 2013. You are responsible for all costs associated with early arrival.

Classes for the Spring 2013 semester are scheduled to begin on Wednesday Jan. 16, 2013.