



**BOSTON COLLEGE**  
OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS

**University of Cape Town**  
**Academic Year 2013-2014**  
**Program Guide**

University of Cape Town (UCT)  
<http://www.uct.ac.za/>

---

### **Preparing for Study Abroad**

- To maximize the study abroad experience, students should prepare themselves by learning about their host country, its history, and culture. Students might want to begin with: <http://www.economist.com/topics> or <http://www.britannica.com/> for a summary.
- Know what is happening in the news in the host city by reading the local newspaper at: <http://www.allyoucanread.com/south-african-newspapers/>
- Engaging with and adapting to a different culture is an inherent component of study abroad. Students may find the following websites useful to learn about intercultural communication before they leave home: <http://www2.pacific.edu/sis/culture/> and <http://www.peacecorps.gov/wvs/educators/enrichment/culturematters/index.html>  
Customs and traditions in the host country are different from those at home. To learn a little about the local customs and traditions, students may want to visit the following website: [www.hthstudents.com](http://www.hthstudents.com)
- Students and their parents should refer to the Office of International Programs website ([www.bc.edu/international](http://www.bc.edu/international)) and specifically to the *Study Abroad Handbook* for more information regarding the abroad experience.
- Prior to departure, students will meet with their International Study Advisor at an orientation to help them further prepare for their study abroad experience.

### **On-Site Contact Information**

- **Ms. Ida Cooper**  
On-Site Coordinator and 24hour Emergency Contact  
Tel: (021) 683 4648  
Email: [idaca@iafrica.com](mailto:idaca@iafrica.com)
- **Lisa Essex**  
Semester Study Abroad (SSA) Administrator  
Tel: +27 21 650 2822  
Email: [lisa.essex@uct.ac.za](mailto:lisa.essex@uct.ac.za)
- **Penny van Zyl**  
Coordinator: Exchanges & SSA non-Academic  
Tel: +27 21 650 5059  
All hours mobile: +27 082 399 9296  
Email: [penny.vanzyl@uct.ac.za](mailto:penny.vanzyl@uct.ac.za)

## Travel Information

- Students are responsible for making their own travel arrangements to Cape Town. They should arrive on one of the recommended days (see program dates below).
- Once travel arrangements have been made, students must submit their arrival/flight information at <http://www.uct.ac.za/apply/intlapplicants/semester/services/predepart/flightdetails/>. Additionally, students should email this information directly to Ida Cooper.
- UCT will arrange airport pickup, which will place the incoming students into on-campus accommodations for the first two nights before orientation. The vacation accommodations are on-campus residence halls, which provide the students with time to adjust to Cape Town and meet other exchange students and orientation leaders in a comfortable environment. After this introduction, students will be transported to their respective houses on the designated “move-in” day.
- **Visa Information:** Once you have received your acceptance letter from the University of Cape Town, call your nearest South African Consulate [New York: (212)213-4880], or visit [www.southafrica-newyork.net](http://www.southafrica-newyork.net) to download the visa application form and confirm application instructions. Please be sure to coordinate the process before sending your passport and application materials for processing. Obtaining a student visa prior to departure is the responsibility of each student.

## Academics

<b>Program dates and Academic calendar</b>	
<b>Fall 2013</b>	<b>Spring 2014</b>
<b>July 4-5:</b> Arrival dates	<b>January TBD:</b> Arrival dates
<b>July 6:</b> Move-in day	<b>January TBD:</b> Move-in day
<b>July 7-12:</b> Orientation week	<b>January TBD:</b> Orientation week
<b>July 15:</b> Classes start	<b>February 17:</b> Classes start
<b>August 31-September 8:</b> Mid-term Vacation	<b>April 5-13:</b> Mid-term Vacation
<b>October 22 – November 15:</b> Exam period	<b>June TBD:</b> Start of exams
<b>December 17:</b> 2 <sup>nd</sup> Semester ends	<b>June TBD:</b> Semester ends
	<b>June TBD:</b> Recommended departure date

- Check in at <http://www.uct.ac.za/calendar/> and <http://www.uct.ac.za/apply/intlapplicants/semester/applications/dates/> for updated dates and information.
- **Important:** All matriculating students must take the PTEEP placement test during the orientation. There is no fee, no preparation required, and grades will not appear on students’ transcripts or elsewhere.
- For course selection information, please refer to <http://www.uct.ac.za/apply/handbooks>
- Course approval information will be found at: <http://www.bc.edu/offices/international/academics/courseapproval.html>  
Information about transcripts and grades is available at: <http://www.bc.edu/offices/international/academics/transcripts.html>
- If you have a learning disability you should discuss with your ISA whether your host university is able to make appropriate accommodations; if so, bring documentation from

your doctor or the BC Disabilities Office to support any request for accommodations at your host university

## **Housing and Living**

- Self-catering student housing within close proximity of UCT's lower, middle and upper campuses is available to BC students. Well-equipped and fully furnished apartments, rooms adjoining family homes, garden cottages on the grounds of family homes, and rooms in large houses with other international and local students are possible accommodations. A list of available choices is included in the housing form you complete with your application. There is a limited number of single rooms available.
- Students will choose the housing arrangement of their choice and fill out the housing form.
- In the section that reads "Special Comments," please include a brief paragraph describing interests, hobbies, and expectations for housing in South Africa. UCT will do her best to accommodate students' preferences. For further information, please e-mail Ida Cooper.
- All accommodations are fully furnished and include basic bedroom furnishings (bed, desk, chair, cupboard); bedding and bed linen (pillow, duvet, blanket); kitchen equipment, (including cutlery, crockery and cooking utensils); fridge, stove, and a furnished communal living area. Most houses have laundry facilities and those that don't either have a laundry service or are located close to a laundromat.
- Additional information about the estimated cost of housing may be found at: <http://www.bc.edu/content/dam/files/offices/international/pdf/Nov%2011%202011-2012%20estimated%20student%20budget%20w%20housing.pdf>
- **Local Transportation:**  
Cape Town offers many forms of transportation including trains, buses and taxis. The trains and buses stop working early in the evening. We recommend that students not make use of busses or trains outside of regular commuter hours (7:30am–5:30pm, Monday to Friday). We highly recommend that students make use of the Boogie Bus. The Boogie Bus allows you to make appointments (even at night) to be picked up by the driver and driven to a specific destination. Details will be provided at orientation
- **UCT Sponsored Activities:**  
There are over 100 sport and recreational clubs on campus. Facilities include tennis and squash courts, a swimming pool, playing fields, and a gym. Over 60 cultural, religious, and special interest societies also exist at UCT - ranging from an animal activist group, chess club, ballroom dancing club, drama club, film group, botany club, choir, and reggae appreciation society. SHAWCO is an innovative student community service organization whose vision is to improve the quality of life of those in developing communities within the Cape Town area. A certificate of participation is issued at the end of the semester if a minimum of 35 hours of service has been completed. Details on these organizations will be provided during orientation.
- **Cell phones:**  
South Africa operates on a GSM network, so any mobile phone compatible with a GSM network can be used. Mobile phones are relatively inexpensive in South Africa and can be purchased from any of the three mobile service providers. Airtime can be purchased on a 'pay-as-you-go' basis from most retailers and from ATMs.

## Wellness, Health and Safety

- Make sure that you have had any required or recommended vaccinations for your travel destinations by consulting the Centers for Disease Control website at [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov).
- St. Elizabeth's Hospital in Brighton has a travel clinic where you can receive vaccinations.
- HTH Worldwide Insurance Services is an emergency health and emergency services provider. All registered BC students are covered by our blanket policy while living and traveling outside of the United States. For more information, visit the following website: <http://www.bc.edu/offices/international/travel-health-safety.html>. You are encouraged to consult HTH online services for health and safety information about all world destinations, travel illnesses, and as a resource for international medical providers
- Students are advised to visit the U.S. State Department website: <http://www.state.gov/> for important travel information including travel advisories.
- Adjusting to a new culture and environment can be stressful. Students will have a smoother transition by making sure that they prepare to remain healthy. Following are some websites that provide important information and advice about how to have a healthy and safe experience abroad:  
[http://kidshealth.org/teen/your\\_mind/emotions/culture\\_shock.html](http://kidshealth.org/teen/your_mind/emotions/culture_shock.html)  
<http://www.kwintessential.co.uk/cultural-services/articles/cultureshock-stages.html>  
<http://matadornetwork.com/bnt/the-4-stages-of-culture-shock-and-how-to-beat-them/>
- Be aware that the manner in which medical help is obtained, the way patients are treated, the conditions of medical facilities, and how health care is afforded may be quite different from U.S. practices. U.S. health care values, assumptions, and methods are not universally practiced; even notions regarding the onset of an illness or the timing of expert attention may be considered culturally based.
- Refer to your Study Abroad Handbook for further information about health and safety issues including women, LGBT, disabled people and others
- There are more than 100 student societies and organisations at UCT reflecting a wide range of interests, including academic, religious, cultural, social and political activities. A full list of these can be found at <http://www.uct.ac.za/students/recreation/societies/>
- Students with disability needs can contact UCT's Disability Unit on campus - more information can be found at <http://www.uct.ac.za/services/disability/>
- Similarly, UCT has a counselling service as part of the Student Wellness Suite. Further information on this service can be found at <http://www.uct.ac.za/students/health/wellness/counselling/overview/>
- In the event of a large-scale emergency, such as a natural disaster, you should first text your onsite coordinator; follow the emergency procedures discussed in the onsite orientation; and call or text your parents to let them know where you are and that you are safe
- The emergency phone number in South Africa is 112 from a cell phone, or 10177 for ambulance, and 10111 for fire and police.
- Be sure to visit the OIP website for additional information about Health and Safety: <http://www.bc.edu/offices/international/travel-health-safety.html>  
BC emergency contact information:  
OIP (617) 552-3827 (Monday to Friday 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.)  
BCPD (617) 552-4444 (outside of normal business hours)
- Alcohol and Drugs

In many cultures, alcohol consumption is an acceptable part of the culture and people are taught to drink in moderation at home. Many countries have a lower drinking age than the U.S. while other countries have drinking and drug abuse laws that may be more severe. Students are subject to the laws of their host country, so if students choose to drink alcohol abroad, always drink responsibly and be knowledgeable about their host country's laws by visiting:

[http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/tips\\_1232.html#drug\\_offenses](http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/tips_1232.html#drug_offenses)

### **Finances**

- The OIP website provides information about estimated expenses for study abroad:  
<http://www.bc.edu/content/dam/files/offices/international/pdf/Nov%2011%202011-2012%20estimated%20student%20budget%20w%20housing.pdf>
- Scholarships and Financial Aid information can be found at:  
[http://www.bc.edu/offices/international/Scholarship\\_Opportunities.html](http://www.bc.edu/offices/international/Scholarship_Opportunities.html)

### **Returning to BC**

- Complete a Program Evaluation. Upon completion of their program, OIP will e-mail the link to the evaluation.
- Mentor an exchange student from the host university by contacting [oipexchange@bc.edu](mailto:oipexchange@bc.edu)
- Volunteer for Discovery Night, Pre-departure Orientation, Re-entry seminar by contacting the International Study Advisor, Christina Dimitrova at [dimitroc@bc.edu](mailto:dimitroc@bc.edu)
- It is not uncommon when students return from studying abroad to experience “reverse” culture shock. The following may help students transition back to home:  
<http://www.cie.uci.edu/prepare/shock.shtml>

### **References**

#### **Useful websites:**

- <http://www.roughguides.com/> travel guidebook
- Student and parent guides at <http://www.studyabroad.com/guides/index.html>
- The UCT Pre-Departure Book can be found on the OIP website:  
<http://www.bc.edu/content/dam/files/offices/international/pdf/UCT%20pre%20departure%20booklet%20112911.pdf>