



BOSTON COLLEGE  
OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL  
PROGRAMS

**University of Bergen**  
Academic Year 2011-2012  
Program Guide

**University of Bergen**  
<http://www.uib.no/international>

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**Preparing for Study Abroad**

- Students can maximize their study abroad experience by learning about their host country, its history, and culture. Students may want to go to Encyclopedia Britannica <http://www.britannica.com/> for a summary of Bergen and Norway. Another useful site is: [www.economist.com/countries](http://www.economist.com/countries). Please refer to the suggested readings and websites provided at the end of this document for additional information
- Students should know what is happening in the news in their host country by reading the local newspaper at: <http://www.norwaypost.no/>
- Encountering and adapting to a different culture is an intricate component of studying abroad. Students are strongly encouraged to use the following websites to learn about intercultural communication before you leave home: <http://www.pacific.edu/sis/culture/> and <http://www.peacecorps.gov/wws/educators/enrichment/culturematters/index.html>.
- Customs and traditions in Norway will be different than the ones found in the United States and at Boston College. To learn a little about the local customs and traditions you may want to consider the following questions: What type of government does Norway have; what are the national sports; what are some of the popular TV shows; who are some of the biggest celebrities in Norway; what music is currently popular; how do you order food in a pub; what is the policy regarding tipping? In addition, students should review the below site for information regarding Norway customs and traditions: <http://www.kwintessential.co.uk/resources/global-etiquette/norway-country-profile.html>
- Students and their parents/legal guardian should refer to the Office of International Programs website for more information regarding the abroad experience: [www.bc.edu/international](http://www.bc.edu/international). In addition, all students will be given the Boston College Study Abroad Handbook prior to departure. Students are expected to attend the mandatory pre-departure orientation held at Boston College. At the orientation, students will have a chance to learn more about their host country/city from their advisor and former study abroad students. Finally, additional student and parent information can be found at: <http://www.studyabroad.com/guides/index.html>

**On-Site Contact Information**

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### **Travel Information**

- Students are responsible for making their own travel arrangements. There are numerous travel sites that can aid students in finding flights. STA Travel is popular among students ([www.statravel.com](http://www.statravel.com)). Direct flights to Norway may not be available; however, you can fly into Bergen Airport Flesland from any European continental airport.

Bergen will provide additional details regarding arrival.

- Passports: Students traveling to Norway need to have a valid passport that will not expire while abroad. Passports should be valid for at least 6 months after the last day in Norway. Students can find more information about passports here: [http://travel.state.gov/passport/passport\\_1738.html](http://travel.state.gov/passport/passport_1738.html)
- Residence Permit: A residence permit is required for students during their stay in Norway. All international students and personnel need a residence permit if they intend to stay in Norway for more than three months. As a general rule, the residence permit should be applied for and granted before the student arrives. With the "Letter of Acceptance to the University of Bergen" students are ready to start the procedures for applying for a visa/residence permit to Norway. This should be done immediately by contacting the nearest Norwegian consular authority as it may take at least 6-8 weeks to get a residence permit. The certified copy of the acceptance letter should accompany your application.

For further information about this, please view the Bergen exchange student website at <http://www.uib.no/education/practical-information/residence-permit> and here: <http://www.udi.no/templates/Tema.aspx?id=7415>

UiB will provide you with details in your acceptance package.

- There are no immunizations required for students studying in Norway.

### **Academics**

- Term Dates  
Spring 2012: January 5-early June, 2012
- Course information for Bergen is available at: <http://www.uib.no/education/studies/courses-for-exchange-students> The academic system at Bergen is different than what students find at Boston College. Students will take a total of 30 ECTS (Credits) per semester (60 ECTS for the full year). At the University of Bergen the student's academic performance is assessed both through final examinations as well as various term assignments. The University of Bergen offers a variety in teaching, working methods and evaluation. Some courses will have compulsory assignments and attendance, while others have a more free structure. Attending lectures

is an excellent way of having the course material presented. Some courses offer lab-work, fieldtrips and seminar discussions.

For students admitted to programs, there will be regular guidance and monitoring and an Individual Learning Agreement comprising both the student's and the institution's mutual commitments, which will be agreed upon by both parts.

- Boston College course approval information will be found at:  
<http://www.bc.edu/offices/international/advisingservices/academics/courseapproval.html>
- Information about transcripts and grades is available at:  
<http://www.bc.edu/offices/international/advisingservices/academics/transcripts.html>

## Housing

- Housing fees will be paid directly to UiB. International students live in Fantoft hostel. The rooms at this hostel are fully furnished. Boston College students may need to share a room with another student. As a tenant, students can use the common rooms and hobby-rooms (reading rooms, practice rooms for musicians, TV rooms, laundromats, solarium, etc.). Next to the hostel, students will find Fantoft Sports Centre, which contains a multi-purpose indoor hall with squash courts and a climbing wall for practicing mountaineering.

For more information on housing and fees, please see the Bergen website at:  
<http://www.uib.no/education/practical-information/student-accommodation> and at this site: <http://www.sib.no/en/housing>

- Additional information about the estimated cost of housing may be found at:  
[http://www.bc.edu/offices/international/meta-elements/pdf/0910\\_estimated\\_stude.pdf](http://www.bc.edu/offices/international/meta-elements/pdf/0910_estimated_stude.pdf)
- Meals: Bergen does not offer a meal plan. Students will have access to a kitchen and will be able to cook for themselves. Students can also take advantage of the student cafeteria on campus and inexpensive restaurants around the city.
- Local Transportation: A monthly student bus card gives the right to unlimited travel on city or suburban buses each month within the zones which the card is valid. The card is sold at the ticket office at the central bus station. A photo is required to get a card, and bringing the 'Letter of acceptance' from UiB together with your passport is sufficient to secure a student discount if applicable.

Bikes are also a popular form of transportation for Bergen students

- The Erasmus Student Network for exchange students organizes mountain hikes, trips to the University's cabins in the countryside, as well as other excursions and parties. In addition, students are encouraged to explore: the Student Society, which holds weekly debates on current topics; the student newspaper and radio station; the University Symphony and Orchestra; the International Students' Union; and Bergen's film society. Hiking, skiing, and rock climbing are also popular in the surrounding mountains, forests, and trails. A student sports organization also consists of various sub-groups for indoor and outdoor activities, such as aerobics, fencing, football, and diving. Additional information regarding student life can be found here:  
<http://www.uib.no/international/mobility/students/student-reception>

- Students at the University of Bergen are automatically members of the Student Welfare Organisation-SiB:

<http://www.sib.no/en/>

SiB's main task is to contribute to student's well-being during their time as a student in Bergen: SiB organizes nursery schools, counseling, a mental health service, canteens, student accommodation and sports activities, to mention a few. It is all organized through their three departments, the Housing Department, the Catering Department and the Welfare Department. In addition SiB owns Studia, the academic bookshop where student's can buy books and whatever else one needs for your studies.

- Cell Phones: Students may purchase pre-paid cell phones upon arrival (these do not require a contract).

### **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).
- 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>
- 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. The 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://www.bravenewtraveler.com/2007/11/20/the-4-stages-of-culture-shock-and-how-to-beat-them/>
- 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:
  - Office of International Programs: (617) 552-3827 (Monday to Friday 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.)
  - Boston College Police Department: (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 you choose to drink alcohol abroad, always drink responsibly and be knowledgeable about

your 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/offices/international/meta-elements/pdf/0910\\_estimated\\_stude.pdf](http://www.bc.edu/offices/international/meta-elements/pdf/0910_estimated_stude.pdf)
- Scholarships and Financial Aid information can be found at: [http://www.bc.edu/offices/international/financesawards/Scholarship\\_Opportunities.html](http://www.bc.edu/offices/international/financesawards/Scholarship_Opportunities.html)
- The best way to access funds from the US is with an ATM, credit, and debit cards (also give the best exchange rate). Students who use an ATM, credit and/or debit card abroad, should contact the appropriate bank before leaving United States. Please inform the bank that you will be overseas for an extended amount of time as some banks may question foreign transactions. In addition, banks may have additional fees if a card is used overseas. It is advisable to have some funds in traveler's checks as a back-up method as well as a small amount of local currency on hand when students arrive.

## Returning to BC

- Complete a Program Evaluation. Upon completion of your program OIP will e-mail the link to the evaluation.
- Mentor an exchange student from abroad by e-mailing: [oiexchange@bc.edu](mailto:oiexchange@bc.edu)
- Volunteer for Discovery Night, Pre-departure Orientation, Re-entry seminar by contacting Larry Pickener ([Pickener@bc.edu](mailto:Pickener@bc.edu)).

## References

- The *Lonely Planet* travel guide on Norway and the *Lonely Planet Scandinavian Phrasebook*
- International students website at Bergen: <http://www.uib.no/international/mobility/students/exchange>
- Norwegian Tourist Board: [www.visitnorway.com](http://www.visitnorway.com)
- Norway.org (published by Royal Norwegian Embassy in US): [www.norway.org](http://www.norway.org)
- Online newspapers in English: [www.norwaypost.no](http://www.norwaypost.no)
- Bergen Tourist Board web site: [www.bergen-travel.com](http://www.bergen-travel.com)
- The Bergen Guide: [www.bergen-guide.com/](http://www.bergen-guide.com/)