



BOSTON COLLEGE
OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS

UNIVERSITY OF OTAGO
2012-2013
Program Guide

University of Otago
<http://www.otago.ac.nz>

Preparing for Study Abroad

- To maximize your study abroad experience, you should prepare yourself by learning about your host country, its history, and culture. You may want to begin with: www.economist.com/countries or <http://www.britannica.com/> for a summary.
- Know what is happening in the news in your host city by reading the local newspaper, *The Otago Daily Times* (<http://www.odt.co.nz/>)
- Engaging with and adapting to a different culture is an inherent component of study abroad. You will find the following websites useful to learn about intercultural communication before you leave home: <http://www.pacific.edu/sis/culture/> and <http://www.peacecorps.gov/wvs/educators/enrichment/culturematters/index.html>
- Customs and traditions in your host country are different from those at home. To learn a little about the local customs and traditions you should visit the following website: <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/412636/New-Zealand/228273/Cultural-institutions>
- Before you leave home, you are advised to read the information on the University of Otago website at: <http://www.otago.ac.nz/international/internationalprearrivalinfo.html> - before_leaving
- You and your parents should refer to the Office of International Programs website (www.bc.edu/international) and specifically to the *Study Abroad Handbook* for more information regarding the abroad experience.
- Prior to your departure you will meet with your International Study Advisor at an orientation to help you further prepare for your study abroad experience.

On-Site Contact Information

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Travel Information

- You are responsible for making your own travel arrangements. In the past BC students have often used student travel agencies such as STA Travel at www.statravel.com. These agencies generally offer competitive rates and open-ended tickets allowing you to leave New Zealand whenever you want (as long as your visa does not expire).
- To study in New Zealand, you must have a **passport** (valid at least six months beyond your estimated return date) and a student **visa**. You may apply for a passport at any major U.S. post office.
- The University of Otago will send you an official acceptance letter. You should then go to the New Zealand Government Immigration website at: <http://www.immigration.govt.nz/> Click on the “Study” section and then “Get a Student Visa.” Be sure to read the “Requirements” section and then click on “How to Apply.” If you are a U.S. citizen, there is no fee for a student visa. Print the application and *Student Visa Guide*. On occasion, a student might be asked for an x-ray; the New Zealand Immigration Office will contact you directly should it be necessary. You will be required to show evidence of financial support while in New Zealand; this is standard procedure for most countries. Page 12 of the *Guide* gives clear instructions on how to complete section G: Financial Support; however, in general, you are asked to show proof that you have at least \$1000 NZD per month of your stay to support yourself. Make certain that when you are applying for your visa you provide an e-mail address that you use regularly. If there are any problems in the granting of your visa you will be contacted by e-mail. Carefully complete the application and send it to the correct New Zealand visa office; you can find out where to send your application at: <http://www.immigration.govt.nz/migrant/stream/study/application/LinkAdministration/ToolboxLinks/officeandfeescalculator.htm?level=1>
- Vaccinations are not required for U.S. citizens; however, you should check the New Zealand Department of Immigration website for recommendations.
- The flight to New Zealand is long. From the U.S., all flights travel west. If you are departing from Boston or any other city on the East coast, you have to add 5 hours to your trip. The most common route to Dunedin is by way of Los Angeles with a connection in Auckland to Dunedin. We recommend that you wear comfortable clothes and shoes, and take as little carry-on luggage as possible.

Academics

- **Academic Calendar**

Please consult the acceptance materials that you receive from The University of Otago for the dates of the orientation. Plan to stay until the last exam date; you must remain for all of your exams. As of now, the semester dates are:

Fall Semester 2012 (Semester 2)

July 2	Arrival
July 4-6	University Orientation (Mandatory)
July 5	Course registration
7/9- 10/12	Teaching period
8/27-9/2	Mid-semester recess
8/25-9/2	Mid-semester recess
10/15-11/10	Examinations (subject to change)

Spring Semester 2013 (Semester 1)

2/18-20	Orientation (Mandatory)
2/18-19	Course registration
2/25-5/31	Teaching period
4/4-14	Mid-semester recess
6/3-19	Examinations (subject to change)

- The Study Abroad Office provides an orientation program for all study abroad and exchange students. The orientation covers general information about the local area and the university.
- During the orientation you will complete your course enrolment and meet your academic advisor. You are encouraged to take some of the courses with a New Zealand focus that are offered by many of the academic departments.
- 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>

Housing and Meals

- Although The University of Otago has a Residential College system, available places for visiting students are extremely limited. BC students are advised instead to apply for University flats. <http://www.otago.ac.nz/uniflats/> These are shared apartments near the campus and the main shopping area. The University includes a New Zealand host student in each flat.
- The following website tells you how and when to apply for housing:
<http://www.otago.ac.nz/about/accommodation/application/index.html>. Applications for Semester 2 are accepted beginning on April 1, and for Semester 1 you may apply beginning August 1.
- Remember that **you are responsible for paying housing fees directly to the provider.**
- Be sure to send your contact information abroad to OIP once you're settled. New Zealand universities do not have meal plans as universities do in the United States. There are a number of dining facilities on campus and you may dine on a pay-as-you-go basis. Living in a flat you will be able to cook for yourself at home.

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
 - HTH Worldwide Insurance Services is an emergency health and emergency services provider. All registered BC students are covered by HTH insurance while living and traveling outside of the United States; however, HTH insurance does not replace your U.S. medical insurance. For more information, visit the following website:
<http://www.bc.edu/offices/international/travel-health-safety.html>. You are covered by HTH insurance only during the period between the start and end dates of your program.
 - Student visa holders are not eligible for publicly funded health and disability services.
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- 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. You will have a smoother transition by making sure that you 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://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:
 - 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. You are subject to the laws of your 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

Finances

- The University of Otago has information about the cost of living in Dunedin on its website
 - <http://www.otago.ac.nz/international/otago005589.html> - CostofLiving
- The OIP website provides information about estimated expenses for study abroad:
 - http://www.bc.edu/content/dam/files/offices/international/pdf/Updated_Budget_2010-.pdf
- You will find information about banking in New Zealand at the following website:
 - <http://www.otago.ac.nz/international/otago005589.html> - CostofLiving

If you are thinking of opening a bank account, you should know that Bank of America is affiliated with Westpac; if you have a Bank of America account, you may be able to avoid costly transaction fees in New Zealand. Be sure to check with your bank before leaving home.
- Scholarships and Financial Aid information can be found at:
 - http://www.bc.edu/offices/international/Scholarship_Opportunities.html

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 your host university by contacting oiexchange@bc.edu
- Volunteer for Discovery Night, Pre-departure Orientation, Re-entry seminar by contacting your International Study Advisor, Esther Messing at: messines@bc.edu
- It is not uncommon when you return from studying abroad to experience “reverse” culture shock. The following may help you transition back to home:
 - <http://www.cie.uci.edu/prepare/shock.shtml>
 - <http://www.studyabroad.com/guides/handbook/handbook5.html#shock>

References

- Suggested readings:
 - Landau, Elaine. *Australia and New Zealand*. New York: Grolier, 1999
 - Ihimaera, Witi. *Whale Rider*. New York: Harcourt Inc., 1987

- Useful websites:
Local information about Dunedin: <http://www.newzealand.com/us/dunedin-coastal-otago/?cid=p:sem:us:generalmarket>
<http://isitedunedin.co.nz/>
News about Dunedin: *Otago Daily Times*: <http://www.odt.co.nz/>
Travel guides for New Zealand: www.lets-go.com/
<http://www.roughguides.com/travel/oceania/new-zealand.aspx>

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