BOSTON COLLEGE
OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS

Hong Kong University of Science & Technology
Academic Year 2011-2012
Program Guide

Hong Kong University of Science & Technology (HKUST)
http://www.ust.hk/eng/

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: www.economist.com/countries 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.newspapers24.com
- 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://www.pacific.edu/sis/culture/ and http://www.peacecorps.gov/wws/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
- Students and their 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 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

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Travel Information

- Students arriving at the Hong Kong Airport have the option of requesting an airport pick-up service. Details will be included in the acceptance package from HKUST regarding transport means from the new international airport to the campus. Students can also consult the HKUST website at http://gso.ust.hk/pre_arrival/index.html for additional arrival information.

- **Visa Information:** Students must route their visa application through the Undergraduate Programs Office at the School of Business Management at Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (SBM-HKUST) well in advance of your departure (at least two months). Information regarding the visa process is provided in your HKUST acceptance letter. For more information visit: http://www.bm.ust.hk/bba/exchange/in/preparing_visa.html

Academics

Program dates and Academic calendar	
Fall 2011	**Spring 2012**
August 26: Earliest dorm check-in	**January 15**: Earliest dorm check-in
August 31: Orientation program	**January 31**: Orientation program
September 1: Classes start	**February 1**: Classes start
TBD: Classes end	**April 3-9:** Spring break
December 21: Exams end	**May 12**: Classes end
	May 25: Exams end

- Check in at http://www.bm.ust.hk/ug/exchange/in/popup_calendar_date.html for updated dates and information.
- For course selection information, please refer to http://www.ust.hk/international/admissions/pgm/index.html
- 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
- The following are changes to the grading system at HKUST:
- 1) Change from 12 point to a 4 point grading scale
  This will be reflected on the official HKUST transcript. Letter grades of each course and also the CGA using the 4 point system will be listed. For details of what each point relates to in letter grades, please refer to this link:
  - http://publish.ust.hk/prog_crs_ar/ugreg/index.html (Section 7.1)
- 2) Course Code changes from 3 to 4 digits
  - While content of most courses remain similar, all our numerical course codes suffixes have changed. A listing of the old course codes, new course codes, and credits can be found at:
  - http://publish.ust.hk/prog_crs_ar/ugcourse/index.html
  - It will be exchange students' responsible to seek approval again for any course under the new code if there are uncertainties with course content and credits.

Housing and Living

- Boston College students live on campus in modern HKUST dormitories. Housing application forms will be mailed to each student's home address closer to departure. Each hall is managed by a Hall Warden and by a number of Hall Tutors who are postgraduate

students. Housing fees will be paid by each student in full to HKUST upon arrival. More information on housing can be obtained at http://www.bm.ust.hk/ug/exchange/in/.

- Additional information about the estimated cost of housing may be found at:
- **Local Transportation:**
  Buses, trams, railways and taxis run very frequently to make the city easily accessible for students. Students can purchase an "Octopus Card" in Hong Kong for easy and cheaper access to public transportation. Please see http://www.discoverhongkong.com/eng/mustknow/information/mk_info_gett.jhtml for more details.
- **HKUST Sponsored Activities:**
  The International Students' Service (ISS) operates out of the University Student Affairs Office to assist international students with non-academic matters. ISS works with the student organization, AISEC, to organize extracurricular activities for the students, and to coordinate the Buddy Program to help international students adapt to their new environment. In addition to a wide range of university clubs, sports and activities available at HKUST, exchange students will participate in social and cultural activities organized by the ISS. Typical events include a barbecue, a cultural night, visits to television broadcasts, the stock exchange, and economic/government institutions. Boston College students are often invited to the Study Abroad Fair at HKUST as BC ambassadors to speak with perspective exchange students.
- **Meals:**
  A meal plan is not provided with your accommodations, but you may use the University dining facilities on a pay-as-you-go basis.

Wellness, Health and Safety

- **Important:** BC students are required to purchase HKUST insurance plan in addition to the HTH Worldwide Insurance Services. Refer to the following link and follow the instructions pertaining to the HKUST insurance application. http://www.ust.hk/international/pre_arrival/exch/insurance.html
- Students must also fill out the insurance undertaking form and submit it with their visa applications. The form can be found at http://www.bm.ust.hk/ug/exchange/in/F09student.pdf and students should check the box that states "I have insurance and will also purchase the insurance thru HKUST…"
- 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 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. 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. 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

Finances

- The OIP website provides information about estimated expenses for study abroad: http://www.bc.edu/content/dam/files/offices/international/pdf/2011-2012 estimated student budget w housing June 2011.pdf
- 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 their program, OIP will e-mail the link to the evaluation.
- Mentor an exchange student from the host university by contacting 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
- 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
  http://www.studyabroad.com/guides/handbook/handbook5.html#shock

References

- **Useful websites:**
  http://www.roughguides.com/ travel guidebook
- Student and parent guides at http://www.studyabroad.com/guides/index.html