



BOSTON COLLEGE
OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS

University of Hong Kong
Academic Year 2013-2014
Program Guide

University of Hong Kong
<http://www.hku.hk/>

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://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
- 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

- **Camille Gutierrez**
Tel: +852 2219 4128
Email: cag59@hku.hk

Travel Information

- A “buddy” will be assigned to pick up the students and travel to the hall of residence. Students can register for a buddy at <http://www.als.hku.hk/admission/exchange/buddy-program>
- **Visa Information:** All exchange applicants without a Hong Kong Identity Card need to apply for a student visa by one of the following ways: (1) Apply on your own at the local Chinese embassy (2) Apply through CEDARS
Please see details at <http://cedars.hku.hk/nonlocal/visa/visaprocedure.pdf> and <http://beta.cedars.hku.hk/sections/campuslife/VisaMatters/VisaPolicy.php>

Academics

Program dates and Academic calendar	
Fall 2013	Spring 2014
August 26-29: Expected date of arrival and dorm check-in	TBD: Expected date of arrival and dorm check-in
August 30: Orientation program	January TBD: Orientation program
September 2: Classes start	January 20: Classes start
November 30: Classes end	May 3: Classes end
December 23: Exams end	May 31: Exams end
December : Hall check-out date	TBD: Hall check-out date

- Check in at <http://www.adqa.hku.hk/dates-of-semesters.php> for updated dates and information.
- Students can find out more about orientation here: <http://beta.cedars.hku.hk/sections/International/ISArrivalOrientationActivitesMain.php>
- For course selection information, please refer to <http://www.adqa.hku.hk/course-selection.php>
- 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
- For more information about life at HKU, check their incoming student program guide: <http://cedars.hku.hk/nonlocal/publication/prepguide1314.pdf#nameddest=tableofcontent>

Housing and Living

- Boston College students live on campus in modern University of Hong Kong dormitories. Students will receive an email regarding housing details. Check out dates and procedure vary by dorm and students should check with their particular dorm.
- Information about dormitory choices and costs can be found here: <http://cedars.hku.hk/nonlocal/publication/prepguide1314.pdf#nameddest=tableofcontent>
- **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.
- **Meals:** Some halls have compulsory meal plans, others do not (see “Hall Charges” for details). For those residents whose halls do not provide compulsory meal plans, they can have meals on the campus catering outlets

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 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://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
- 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 phone number for emergency services in Hong Kong is 999.
- 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/2012-2013%20estimated%20student%20budget%20w%20housing%20Aug%202012.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 oiexchange@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>

References

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