



BOSTON COLLEGE
OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS

BC in Madrid: Comillas
2011-2012
Program Guide

Universidad Pontificia Comillas
www.upcomillas.es

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.
- Students should know what is happening in the news in the host city by reading the local newspaper at: <http://www.newspapers24.com/world-cities/madrid-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://www.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 experience abroad.
- 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

- Patricia Gayle Witzig, the Boston College On-Site Coordinator, is available in case of an emergency on a 24-hour-basis. Students should make a note of Patricia's contact information before they go abroad, and we encourage students to share this information with their family.

Patricia Gayle Witzig, BC in Madrid On-Site Coordinator

Office phone: 34 91 544 89 77*

24 Hour Mobile phone: 34 639 154 218*

Fax: 34 91 544 89 77*

Email: patricia.w.bc@gmail.com

*When dialing from the U.S., students must dial 011 first (and there is a 6-hour time difference).

- University Address:
Comillas
C/ Alberto Aguilera, 23 - 28015 Madrid
Despacho 406 (Ala Este)
Tel: 34 91 542 28 00
Fax: 34 91 559 65 69

- Housing Coordinator
Paloma Landecho
palandechobc@gmail.com
Cell phone: 34 692 116 473

*When dialing from the U.S., students must dial 011 first (and there is a 6-hour time difference).

Travel Information

- Students are responsible for making their own travel arrangements. BC in Madrid Comillas students will be met at the airport and picked up the *official arrival day*, provided they supply the necessary travel information one month prior to departure to the on-site coordinator, Patricia Gayle Witzig.
- Passport/Visa information:
Students will need to obtain the following travel documents in order to study in Spain:
A passport (valid at least six months beyond the estimated return date)
A student visa (students should visit the Consulate of Spain's website for information regarding student visa requirements and procedures). Their website is:
<http://www.maec.es/subwebs/Consulados/Boston/es/home/Paginas/Home.aspx>
- Students will receive visa workshop and pre-departure orientation information via e-mail. All workshops and orientations are mandatory. Drop-in hours for visas are Fridays from 2-5pm.

Academics

- **Program dates and Academic Calendar: *Spring 2012 students should not purchase airline tickets until the pre-departure orientation.**

Fall 2011	Spring 2012
September 4th : Arrival date (leave on September 3 rd)	January 21st : Arrival date (leave on January 20 th)
September 7th : Orientation	January 23rd : Orientation and Spanish level test
September 5th-8th : Required early-start Spanish program at Comillas	January 24-27th : Required early-start Spanish program at Comillas
September 12th : Classes begin	January 30th : Classes begin
October 12th : Holiday	April 2nd- 9th : Easter Holidays
November 1st and 9th : Holidays	
December 6th and 8th-9th : Holiday	May 21st - June 8th : Final exam period
December 23rd : Departure date	June 9th : Departure date

***For Fall 2012 dates, Fall 2011 dates are posted for approximate reference. Students should not purchase airline tickets until dates are posted.**

- BC-sponsored activities:
Welcome dinner
Tapas with Spanish students
Segovia, one-day trip
Madrid bus tour
Toledo, one-day trip

La Caixa Museum
Cooking lessons
Thyssen Museum
El Escorial, one-day trip
Córdoba and Granada, three-day trip
Prado Museum
Play - Golden Age literature
Bullfight
Flamenco Show

- For course selection information, please refer to OIP Program Description Course Catalog.
- 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

- Home stay and residence halls are the housing options available to students attending Comillas. Students are required to fill out housing forms included in the BC application package. BC in Madrid is responsible for housing assignments for Comillas students.
- Students will be billed by BC for housing. Additional information about the estimated cost of housing may be found at:
<http://www.bc.edu/content/bc/offices/international/financesawards.html>
- Meals:
Home-stay: All meals included.
Residence halls: Most meals included, except weekends in some residences. Most of these will close for Easter and Christmas breaks.
- Local Transportation: Transportation pass included in program for the first four months.
- Cell phones are supplied at orientation. Costs are separate from the program.

Wellness, Health and Safety

- HTH Worldwide Insurance Services is an emergency health and emergency services provider. All registered BC students are covered by OIP's 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/>
- Students are required 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, they should 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/bc/offices/international/financesawards.html>

- Banking information: Students are encouraged to use ATM machines. Please contact on-site coordinator.

- Scholarships and Financial Aid information can be found at:

http://www.bc.edu/offices/international/Scholarship_Opportunities.html

Returning to BC

- Students should complete a Program Evaluation. Upon completion of their program, OIP will e-mail the link to the evaluation
- Students may mentor an exchange student from the host university by contacting oiexchange@bc.edu
- Students may volunteer for Discovery Night, Pre-departure Orientation, Re-entry seminar by contacting the International Study Advisor, Elizabeth Goizueta at e-mail address Goizueta@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://studyabroad.com/pages/sitecontent/student_guide_five.aspx

References

- Suggested readings:

The New Spaniards by John Hooper

Spain is Different by Helen Wattlely-Ames

Lonely Planet Spain or *Let's Go! Spain* travel guidebooks

APUNE (Asociación de Programas Universitarios Norteamericanos en Espana):

<http://www.apune.org/>

www.descubremadrid.org

<http://www.maec.es/subwebs/consulados/boston/es/home/Paginas/Home.aspx>

- Student and parent guides at <http://www.studyabroad.com/guides/index.html>