



BOSTON COLLEGE

OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL
PROGRAMS

Al Akhawayn University Ifrane Fall 2009 Program Fact Sheet

Al Akhawayn University is a modern institution inaugurated in 1995 as Morocco's first English-language university. Located in the resort community of Ifrane, AUI is nestled in the Middle Atlas Mountains of Morocco, just sixty kilometers from the historically rich imperial cities of Fez and Meknès. Grounded in the strengths of African, Arab and Islamic culture, AUI is modeled after the American system of higher education in its organizational structure, curriculum, methods, and language of instruction. Boston College students will spend a semester or an academic year taking courses alongside other university students.

I. PRE-DEPARTURE PLANNING:

Travel Requirements

You must have a passport to study in Morocco, valid at least six months beyond your estimated return date. You may apply for a passport at any major U.S. post office (<http://travel.state.gov/passport>). We recommend that you obtain a valid passport well ahead of time. American citizens do not need to obtain a visa before leaving for Morocco. Residency documents will be processed during orientation; the cost will be \$15. The AUI Office of International Programs will advise you on this matter once you arrive.

What to bring

By all means it is recommended that you pack light, and remember to leave more room in your luggage for necessities such as medical supplies, toiletries, electricity converters, and a camera. If you already have a tri-band GSM phone, you can unlock it with your US service provider to use in Morocco with a locally purchased SIM card. All personal hygiene products are locally available. If you bring clothes you won't mind leaving behind, you will have room in your return baggage for souvenirs. Check airline luggage requirements and weight limits. Plan to have a larger back-pack or small luggage piece with wheels for short-distance traveling within Morocco. You should also bring towels as they are not supplied in the dormitories. Lower end hotels in Morocco may not supply towels so you might need one when traveling. It is not recommended to ship personal belongings or clothes by post because it takes too long. It is a good idea to bring at least 12 passport sized photographs as these will be needed to build your identification cards and residency permits. Bring copies of your health and immunization records if you have not already submitted them with your application. If you are under special medical treatment, bring the prescription medicines that you use clearly marked in the containers from your pharmacy. This will also ensure easy customs passage. Bring your preferred occasional medicines for allergies or other mild ailments. Solutions and cleaners for contact lenses are hard to get so bring a six month supply with you. Distilled water is available in pharmacies if you have soft lenses. You can also access the internet from your dorm room so you might want to bring your laptop with you.

Meeting other BC students on the program

We recommend that you be in touch with other BC students who will be studying at AUI. You may wish to plan your travel to Morocco together. You will have an opportunity to meet

everyone during the break-out session at Pre-Departure Orientation. The Office of International Programs will also provide you with a list of all students studying abroad for your consideration. We recommend that you also speak with returned students prior to your departure. Visit the Resource Room at Hovey House to review program evaluations.

Suggested readings & websites

We strongly recommend that you carefully review all materials from AUI received with your acceptance letter. Read each sheet carefully and use the AUI International Student Handbook as your main guide and companion to study in Morocco. On p. 7 you will find a comprehensive reading list as a general introduction to Moroccan history and culture.

Be sure to review the [HTH Worldwide Insurance Services](#) information that you will receive during our Pre-Departure Orientation and specifically your coverage dates. You are advised also to visit the HTH website before you go abroad to observe health, safety and other practical information specific to your country of study and other destinations you may plan to visit. Become familiar with the site and know how to access HTH services from abroad.

In addition, you should be familiar with the following websites:

1) Al Akhawayn University Ifrane:

<http://www.aui.ma>

2) AUI Office of International Programs:

<http://www.aui.ma/international/home.html>

2) AUI International Student Handbook On-line:

<http://www.aui.ma/international/1.Incoming/Incoming.html>

3) US Department of State Website and Consular Travel Sheet on Morocco:

http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_975.html

4) The Lonely Planet Guide to Morocco:

<http://www.lonelyplanet.com/worldguide/destinations/africa/morocco>

II. ARRIVAL – WHAT TO EXPECT UPON ARRIVAL:

Transfer from Airport

It is best to arrange to fly into the city of Fez (approximately 1 hour from Ifrane). As part of a study abroad or exchange program, students can be met at the Fez airport or Train Station. You must complete the arrival information form and return it to the AUI Office of International Programs in Morocco at least one month prior to your arrival. There is a pickup fee as follows: Fez Airport or train Station 200 Dirhams per student Or 360 Dirhams per university vehicle. We recommend that you do not attempt to get to Ifrane on your own unless you are spending a few days with friends who can assist you. Once you arrive on campus, you will be given a packet including your room key, ID card, maps, orientation schedule, and other information. Please note that transportation cannot be guaranteed by AUI at the end of the semester. However, grand taxis, busses and trains are readily available.

On-Site Contacts Information

May Hamouie
International Programs Coordinator
Office of International Programs
Al Akhawayn University in Ifrane (AUI)
Avenue Hassan II, PO Box 104
Ifrane, 53000 Morocco

Office of International Programs
Security (24 hour emergency contact):
+212 3586 2222
Housing (24 hour English Speaking):
+212 3586 3333
University Switchboard: +212 3585 2000

Tel: + 212 35 86 2010
Fax + 212 35 86 2148
Mobile: +212 7889 0203
Skype: aui.oipc
e-Mail: OIPC@au.ma
Website: www.aui.ma

In case of a medical emergency (illness, injury, etc.) during the day, contact the University Health Center in Building 26 extension 2057. After hours men should call 555 or women call 3333.

Housing

The Al Akhawayn Community is housed in a residential area of 21 dormitories, 17 of which are for students. Some faculty and staff also reside on campus. You will be housed in a single or double room and provided with the following: a wardrobe, a desk, a chair, and a twin size bed. All exchange students are issued a mattress pad and a set of sheets, a pillow and blanket (ask housing if you need more blankets). The en suite bathroom is equipped with a shower. Student rooms are cleaned once every two weeks free of charge. The dormitories at AUI are strictly segregated by sex. There is no visitation of the opposite sex in the residences at any time. Students are also not allowed to host overnight guests other than family. There is a laundry room on the ground floor of Building 36, as well as on the ground floor of Building 38 with token-operated washers and dryers. Tokens are sold in the campus store at 7 DH each. After you settle in, please remember to update your contact information with OIP online at: <https://htmlbprod.bc.edu/cippstudent>

This is very important, so please be sure to do it as soon as possible.

Meals

The university offers 3 self-service restaurants and a coffee shop for the AUI community. The Moroccan and International Restaurant serves a variety of Moroccan Tajines every day, and couscous is also available on Fridays. In addition to Moroccan specialties, the Moroccan and International restaurant offers a variety of international cuisine. Besides pizzas, The Pizzeria at AUI also features an Italian daily special. The Café is the place for games and socialization; you can also find a variety of hot and cold drinks, pastries and sandwiches. Students can choose between a partial or full meal plan. Most students chose the full plan since a refund is issued at the end of the semester. The Campus Store has a small selection of groceries and snacks like cereals, different types of pastas, canned foods, ice cream, chocolate, and other snacks. It also sells office supplies.

Practical Information

Most Moroccans speak the Moroccan dialect called Darija, while the classical Arabic called Fus'ha is the official language. French is the second language and is widely used in commerce, especially in central and southern Morocco. In northern cities like Tangier and Tetuan, Spanish is common. There are also three regional dialects of Berber in Morocco, but these are spoken less frequently. One of these Berber dialects, Tamazight, is used in Ifrane and throughout the Middle Atlas Mountains.

The basic unit of currency in Morocco is the Dirham (Dh). There are approximately 7.5 DH to \$1 U.S. and 11 DH to €1 but as with all currencies, there are fluctuations. Check with your bank to obtain the current exchange rate. You should budget approximately \$3,000 per semester for meals and other on-site expenses (books, supplies, local transportation, personal expenses, and limited travel). Funds should be carried in the form of traveler's checks and/or credit or debit cards (VISA or Master Card). The only cash you should carry with you is a limited amount of Moroccan currency (about \$100 worth) to cover expenses during the first days of your program. There is no need to open a bank account while in Morocco. Below is an easy guide of what costs

students will have to cover while abroad (these will be billed through AUI and you will need to remit payment directly):

Restaurant access	1,600 Dirhams
*Restaurant meal plan	4,000 – 7,000 Dirhams
Medical Insurance (mandatory)	660 Dirhams
Books (estimated)	3000 Dirhams
Housing Deposit (refundable)	1,000 Dirhams
Residency Service	90 Dirhams

*There is a choice of meal plans available

In addition, it is recommended that students bring a minimum of 11,250 dirhams (approximately \$1,500) for personal spending money per semester.

Electricity in Morocco is the same as in Europe - 220 Volts at 50 cycles. If you bring any personal electrical equipment, make sure you have an international voltage regulator/transformer. Voltage transformers are available in Ifrane. The electrical sockets in Morocco take round pins like those in France, not the flat pins of the U.S.A. Plug adapters are available in Ifrane but you may want bring some international plug adapters.

Program Orientation

While at Al Akhawayn, BC students will have an assigned academic advisor and will receive comprehensive orientation.

III. ACADEMIC PROGRAM INFORMATION:

Fall 2009

August 27-30: New & International student registration and orientation

August 31: Classes begin

September 21-22: Aid Al Fitr (Holiday)

September 30-October 2: Aid Al Fitr/Mid-Semester Break

October 19-23: Mid-Semester Exams

November 6: The Green March (Holiday)

November 18: Independence Day (Holiday)

November 26-30: Aid Al Adha (Holiday)

December 13-18: Final Exams

December 18: First Moharram (Holiday)

Please consult (<http://www.aui.ma?DSA/registrar/dsa-registrar-academic-calendar.htm>) for an updated AUI semester calendar.

Cultural Activities

You are encouraged to participate in clubs, sports activities, and events while at Al Akhawayn. There are over 40 clubs offered at AUI; the activities of these clubs range from recreation, music, theater, and arts to humanitarian action and sports. You can also take day trips to the imperial cities of Fez and Meknès and to the weekly markets of Azrou and neighboring towns. The office of Student Activities offers a couple of trips each semester to various regions of Morocco. Check with Ms. Amy Fishburn for volunteer and teaching opportunities in Ifrane.

Reminder of BC policy

Please remember that all Boston College academic regulations need to be observed while abroad.

Study Abroad Course Approval/Academic Policies

Students are responsible for following all BC academic regulations while abroad. Please see the OIP web site for further information on study abroad academic policies

(<http://www.bc.edu/offices/international/advisingservices/academics.html> - see the left hand menu items and course approval

(<http://www.bc.edu/offices/international/advisingservices/academics/courseapproval.html>).

Transitioning back to BC

We encourage students to think about their return to BC in the final stages of their study abroad experience. Senior year holds many opportunities for returning study abroad students, such as the Global Proficiency Program. Remember also that it is not unusual for students to find adjusting back to BC and American culture a lengthy process, especially coming back from Morocco.