

IMPORTANT PASSPORT and VISA INFORMATION

Passport: *You must have a passport valid for the duration of your stay abroad*

Many countries require your passport be valid at least six months beyond your intended stay.

- To apply, go to the County or City Clerk's Office in your area.
In Monroe County: Details and applications are at: <https://www2.monroecounty.gov/renewmonroe>
City Clerk's office: <http://www.cityofrochester.gov/article.aspx?id=8589938026>
- Processing a passport application can take six weeks or longer. ***Apply for or renew yours now.***

What you will need when applying for a U.S. passport:

<http://www.travel.state.gov>

1. Complete passport application, *unsigned*
2. Proof of U.S. citizenship: Certified copy of birth certificate
or: naturalization papers *or* old passport
3. Two recent passport photos, 2" x 2", with a white background.
Medical Center Photography Center Tel# 275-5731. Photos may also be taken at the CVS in College Town.
4. Check or money order made payable to "Department of State". Some offices will not take cash. There may also be an execution or local fee.
5. Identification such as a driver's license or other Government issued photo ID. Police IDs are not valid.

Visas and Residence Permits

A visa or residence permit is official permission, granted by the authorities of a country where you will study or visit, which allows you to enter and remain in that country for period of time. You must have a valid passport in order to apply. Note that many countries require that your passport be valid at least six months past your intended stay in that country. In other words, if you intend to study abroad in the spring semester (January-May), your passport should be valid at least through November of that year. Some countries require you to obtain a visa either in the U.S. or abroad. Costs and entrance requirements vary, but expect to pay between \$60 and \$600.

Although you cannot apply for a visa or residence permit until you have been admitted to a study abroad program, ***find out now*** what visas or permits, if any, you will need, for places where you will either live or visit, and when you need to apply. Visas can take up to three months to process, and you may be required to appear in person to obtain the visa.

It is *your* responsibility to determine the requirements and to apply for a visa in a timely fashion. Failure to apply for a visa in a timely may jeopardize being able to go abroad.

You may be able to use the services of Visa Central to process a visa application. Go here for information: <http://visacentral.com/?login=rochester>

If you are not a U.S. citizen: Check **now** with the consulate of the country in which you'll be studying for any special visa requirements. You may be able to apply for your visa in the U.S. Some countries require recent proof of English language proficiency, e.g. TOEFL or IELTS exam scores. *Click [here](#) for information*
Consult with an International Student Advisor about steps you'll need to take to stay in status.

(turn over)

VISA APPLICATION INFORMATION

Visa or residence permit application requirements and processes can vary greatly from country to country, and even from Consulate to Consulate. In other words, the Spanish Consulate in New York may have different requirements than the Spanish Consulate in Los Angeles. The process can be time-consuming and complicated and we provide the following tips to help you know what to (possibly) expect as you begin the process.

- When you apply for a visa, you are dealing with the government of a foreign country. They can make and change their policies and procedures at any time.
- We are not agents of foreign countries, so our ability to help you fill out visa applications is extremely limited. It is always best to get answers directly from a Consulate employee.
- Read very carefully the application and instructions before contacting a Consulate. This will enable you to ask informed questions.
- Consulates generally have very limited open hours for answering the telephone and for public appearances.
- When you speak with someone in a Consulate write a detailed record of the conversation: date, time, full name of person with whom you spoke, and their comments or answers or recommendations.
- Never assume that because your friend got a visa in one week, that you will, too.
- You may have to appear at a consulate in person to submit your visa application materials. If this is a requirement, there is likely no way to get around it. If the NY Consulate of Italy, for example, requires you to apply there, you must be prepared to drive, fly, or take a bus or train to NYC. We cannot eliminate this requirement for you. Some consulates require appointments; others do not.
- Don't assume anything. If, for example, the visa application asks for your address while in [country], and you won't have that information until you arrive overseas, ask the consulate what to write in that space. Some may accept "TBA", some may accept the program address, some may not accept it without the actual address. We cannot guess how or what to answer for any question; neither should you.
- When you apply for a visa, you must submit your passport with the application. Therefore, it may not be possible for you travel outside the U.S. prior to your term abroad.
- Requirements vary, but in general, expect to provide the following when applying for a residence permit or visa:
 - information about yourself and your parents, including dates and places of birth; your passport; certification of health and/or certain immunizations; letter of acceptance to your study abroad program and/or host institution; letter verifying that you are currently enrolled at UR in good standing; detailed financial support information, notarized, e.g., bank statements* (family and/or self), financial aid sources, etc.; proof of health and travel insurance coverage abroad; your round-trip plane ticket to your study abroad country. Some countries require an FBI background check as part of the application. This process can take 16 weeks or more. Plan accordingly.

*Expect to show proof of \$4000-\$5000 for a semester abroad.

Don't be surprised if this is not all that is required. This is why *it is absolutely essential that you determine your specific requirements early on in the study abroad application process.*

- If your visa application requires proof of evacuation and repatriation, you may request a certificate of coverage here: <http://www.rochester.edu/global/travel/student-travel/> (See #2)
- If your application requires proof of financial aid/scholarships, contact Lucinda Snyder in the [Financial Aid Office](#)

- Allow at least two weeks when requesting documents such as letters of acceptance, enrollment verification, etc.
- Most of all, be patient and be prepared. Your study abroad program provider will likely provide you with visa application details for your program. The visa application process is normally the most daunting and time-consuming part of the study abroad process. Keep in mind the end result!
- Some countries or consulates may allow you to use the services of a visa processing firm. The University has partnered with Visa Central: <http://visacentral.com/?login=rochester>

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