

A Parent's Guide to Study Abroad

University of Rochester - Center for Education Abroad

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www.rochester.edu/abroad



Dear Parent or Guardian:

I am writing to you because your student has expressed interest in spending time abroad. We understand that this may be a new experience for you and you may have questions. Since 1990, The Center for Education Abroad has assisted thousands of students in internationalizing their undergraduate experience. Students say that it was a time of tremendous intellectual and personal growth; you may know this if you yourself went abroad in college, or have another student who has already done so.

Studying off-campus is an exciting opportunity, but it can also be stressful because of all the preparation that is required and the adjustments that need to be made in new settings. Our office is student centered; we are committed to international education and providing your student(s) with the tools and resources needed to gain a global perspective, expand horizons, and make their world ever better. Your student(s) will go through a number of steps in order to earn credits while abroad. They will consult with peer advisors who have had an international experience, Education Abroad advisors, faculty, and apply to one or more programs abroad.

After being accepted into a program, students are required to complete pre-departure orientation where they will be given information on how to best prepare for their time abroad. Pre-departure programming includes, but is not limited to, information about academic expectations, health and safety advice, budgeting, packing and cross-cultural awareness. There are re-entry opportunities when the students return to campus, to help them articulate their experience and explore ways to address them on their resume. This will help them reorient themselves to campus life and think about ways to extend their experiences in what they do next.

We are dedicated to providing off-campus opportunities that do not jeopardize the health and safety of our students. For this reason, we have a full time Manager for International Travel & Security that monitors global news daily. We have emergency evacuation insurance and contingency plans in the event trouble develops. We are prepared to make changes to programs and or travel at a moment's notice, if necessary. We thoroughly vet all of our programs and providers. We require health and safety training for faculty leading our programs. Although we do our best to keep students safe it is important they are aware of the role they play in avoiding risks while traveling abroad.

While your student is away, it is imperative for us to be able to reach parents and families if necessary. We have asked your student to provide your contact information through our online Education Abroad Portal. By providing this information, your student is authorizing the Center for Education Abroad to contact you in the event of an emergency. We developed this guide to help you prepare for your student's experience and become more acquainted with their next steps. We hope that you find the information in this packet useful. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to call us at (585) 275-7532. You may also reach us by email at abroad@rochester.edu

Sincerely,

Tynelle A. Stewart
Assistant Dean and Director

*Cover photo by Ryannon Starkey ('19, taken in the Loire Valley, France)
Information contained in this booklet is current as of March 2019, and is subject to change.*

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While Applying for a Program



Photo by Meghan Cerino ('20, taken in Granada, Spain)

Frequently Asked Questions

“There’s so much going on at Rochester - how can my student leave for a whole semester?”

Going away for a semester does not mean giving up all of the interests and activities they have at their own campus. For example, musicians seek out new venues to play, and athletes find new teams to join. Social media will keep them connected with their friends and the organizations in which they participate.

“Won’t spending a semester abroad cost a lot more than staying at the University of Rochester?”

The fact is that, for most students, a semester or a year abroad costs about the same as a semester at Rochester. If your student receives University of Rochester financial aid, it **will** transfer to most programs abroad. Advisors in the [Financial Aid Office](#) are there to help, and there are many special scholarships for which students may be eligible. Students are required to meet with their financial aid advisor before they go abroad.

“Will the courses transfer? Will my student have to spend an extra semester in college?”

Education abroad advisors will only recommend programs where the courses transfer, so students graduate on time. In most cases, students can even transfer courses for majors and minors by consulting with a department advisor. The [Education Abroad Advisors](#) can guide students through this process.

“Can a science or engineering major go abroad?”

There are programs in many countries that offer science and/or engineering courses. Faculty advisors will be very encouraging. The Hajim School of Engineering and Applied Sciences and the Center for Education Abroad work together to make going abroad a viable option for engineering students.

“My student doesn’t speak another language.”

Language is not a requirement in many of our programs. Students can opt to take courses in English while learning a new language, or they can choose to go to an English speaking country.

“My student is planning Take 5/med school/ grad school /law school. Won’t a semester abroad get in their way?”

Students who have clearly defined interests such as graduate or professional schools can go abroad too! They will need to plan with advisors in the Center for Education Abroad, the [College Center for Advising Services](#), and [The Gwen M. Greene Center](#). Many students have gone abroad as part of a [Take Five project](#).

“My student has learning disabilities.”

Many programs are open to students with disabilities. [The Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning](#) (CETL) and the [Disabilities Services and Support](#) staff, along with [Education Abroad advisors](#) work with students to identify programs that best suits their interests, talents and academic needs.

“I’m concerned about what employers or graduate schools will think of students spending a term abroad.”

Students who go abroad *highlight* it on resumes. Employers and graduate schools – and even medical schools - look for individuals who have gained their independence through experiences outside of the classroom. Alumni emphasize how interested interviewers are in their international background. The [Gwen M. Greene Center](#) also encourages these experiences. You will find Rochester students who went abroad for a semester, for a summer, or for a year in all fields: professors, physicians, scientists, lawyers, entrepreneurs, journalists, writers, teachers, gallery and museum administrators, human rights activists, filmmakers, and academic administrators, to name a few.

“Can international students go abroad? Will it affect their American visa?”

International students can study abroad as part of their academic program. In order to maintain their record and eligibility for re-entry in valid status, they must notify the [International Services Office \(ISO\)](#) in advance. A new immigration document will be issued to show that the time abroad is authorized. ISO will guide students and provide the necessary information about maintaining valid immigration status.

Fall and Spring Application Deadlines

In order to go abroad, your student needs to ask for the The Center for Education Abroad’s permission. This will ensure that they will be vetted and will be able to apply to a program that best fits their academic plan. All dates below refer to the internal portion of the application, each program has their own application deadlines and it’s the student’s responsibility to get information regarding the specific dates. They need to start an application [on our portal](#) by the dates below:

Fall	Spring
March 1 st for exchange programs	October 1 st for exchange programs
March 15 th for all other programs	October 15 th for all other programs

To find information on types of programs, please consult [our website](#).

Understanding UR and Non-UR Programs

University of Rochester students may choose from a wide variety of programs abroad. A UR program is one with which we have a formal agreement, and a complete current list can be found on [our website](#).

There are also more than 2500 other programs offered by other institutions and universities (non-UR programs). Your student should meet with an Education Abroad advisor before choosing a program.

The table below will help you compare and decide if a UR or non-UR program is best for your student:

	UR program	Non-UR program
Minimum GPA	2.75 and up	Varies by program, can be lower
Grades earned will be shown on the Rochester transcript	✓	Only course titles will appear on the Rochester transcript
Grades will not be calculated into the grade point average (GPA) * exceptions may apply	✓ *	✓

The application process is coordinated by our office. Students can consult with our advisors on detailed information about the program	✓	We will assist, but we may not be familiar with the program
Elective credit is transferred upon completion of approved coursework	✓	✓
Students may have credits transferred if the grade earned is C or better	✓	✓
Faculty permission is necessary if student needs coursework to count towards a major, minor, or certificate program	✓	✓
Faculty approval is necessary for elective credit	Can be approved by CEA advisor	✓
Program is vetted by the Center for Education Abroad	✓	Approval and verification of accreditation is necessary
Overall cost is about the same as what you pay at the Rochester	✓	It varies, lower/higher costs may be found
Students can use Rochester financial aid & scholarships towards tuition and housing for academic year programs	✓	No Rochester financial aid can be used
Outside scholarships are available	✓	✓
Study abroad fee is charged \$1,654 for semester and \$375 for summer programs.	No	✓ **

Financing Opportunities Abroad

Listed below are general guidelines regarding financial aid eligibility for students going abroad. However, as each student's financial situation is unique, it is their responsibility to meet with a financial aid advisor while planning a semester(s) abroad. Financial aid can be defined as a combination of any of the following: merit scholarships from Rochester, need-based aid, and loans.

Students participating in UR programs during the semester are charged Rochester tuition. Students participating in non-UR programs are charged an administrative fee: \$1,654 for semester and \$375 for summer programs.

Summer and short-term programs (during breaks), are charged outside of the Rochester tuition bill. Each program has a different cost of attendance, students should discuss with an advisor what is included in their fees.

Financial Aid For those participating in UR programs:

If your student receives need based financial aid, they will be eligible to receive their financial aid during the semester abroad. If the total program cost is less than the cost of studying at Rochester for that semester, their need-based aid will be reduced proportionately. If the total program cost is greater than the cost of studying at Rochester for the semester, their need-based aid will be increased proportionately. Merit awards will remain the same.

Students receiving need-based aid are required to meet with their financial aid advisor.

Financial Aid For those participating in Non-UR Programs:

If your student chooses to participate on a non-UR program, they will not be eligible for any University of Rochester financial aid, including merit awards. It is important for your student to discuss their plans with their financial aid advisor to determine what types of aid they will be eligible for while abroad and to ensure the continuation of their aid when they return.

Students may be eligible for federal aid and will need to complete a Consortium/Contractual Agreement in order to receive federal aid. A Consortium/Contractual Agreement involves multiple steps and requires several signatures, so your student should not delay in completing this requirement. **Your student's coursework abroad must be approved before the University of Rochester Dean can sign the Consortium/Contractual Agreement.**

Scholarships

There are numerous scholarships and other resources available. Application deadlines vary and some may be up to a year in advance of the program. Also, be sure your student checks with a financial aid advisor to discuss how these outside awards might affect their aid. The Center for Education Abroad can assist your student during the application process.

A list of all of these scholarship programs is available at [our website](#).

Preparing to Go Abroad



Photo by Rachel Yang ('19, taken Santorini, Greece)

Frequently Asked Questions

“My student has been accepted into a program abroad. What happens now?”

The program has probably given your student a deadline to accept or decline the offer. Please be aware that your student becomes financially bound when they accept that offer. So this is a good time for your student to take a few actions:

- Meet with an advisor at the Center for Education Abroad to talk about any details that remain unclear
- Meet with a financial aid advisor to get a clear picture of the costs of their program abroad
- Meet with appropriate faculty to have their courses approved

If your student is confident that the program will work for them, they can go ahead and accept the offer, becoming committed to the program. This will generally generate a deposit charge (can vary between \$300-\$500, depending on program.)

“What if my student wants to withdraw from the program?”

The answer to this question depends in which phase of the program your student is. See below:

If your student has *completed the application and has not been accepted*, there is no penalty for withdrawing.

If your student has *been accepted to the program and has not committed*, there is no penalty for withdrawing.

If your student withdraws *after committing to the program*, some fees may apply. Confirmation fees range from \$100-\$1000. Most are between \$300-\$500. The appropriate fee will be placed in the student’s UR bill.

If the program is close to start, other costs may incur from the program provider or host institution. Those costs can vary and can be consulted before the student makes the decision.

“Where will my student live while abroad?”

There are many types of housing options in the programs abroad. Some offer dorm style living, but it is more common for students to live in apartments, either with other students from US colleges and universities, international students, or with local students. Depending on the program, homestays may also be an option. Students interested in learning a new language may choose to live with families to truly immerse themselves in the culture. It is important for students to understand the different choices before committing to a program. They are required to live in the program’s housing. Typically, they will be in double-occupancy rooms.

Billing

- If your student is participating in a program abroad in the fall, the fall semester statement will be posted in [URePay](#) in mid-July.
- If your student is participating in a program abroad in the spring, the spring semester statement will be posted in [URePay](#) in mid-December.
- Your student will not receive a statement in November unless they have a balance from the fall semester.
- Students participating in a full-year program will be billed on a semester basis.
- Please note that students studying abroad will be charged the campus post office box fee, unless the post office box is closed by turning in the key and providing a forwarding address.

Student’s accounts must be paid in full from the prior semester in order to register for a program abroad. If there is a past due balance, students may settle their account with the [Bursar’s Office](#), 330 Meliora Hall, 585-275-3931.

If your student is participating in a non-UR program, a bill will be posted on [URePay](#) for the abroad fee: \$1,654 for semester and \$375 for summer programs. This fee partially covers costs incurred by the University for administrative services and guarantees that credit will be awarded for approved courses successfully completed abroad. For all other charges related to non-UR programs abroad, your student will be billed directly by the chosen program.

If your student is participating in a UR program, UR will bill them for tuition, and in some cases housing*. If your student selects UR-sponsored student health insurance plan while abroad, the charges (mandatory health fee and insurance premium) will be placed on the student's account. Contact insurance@uhs.rochester.edu to assure enrollment.

** If your student is attending an exchange program, housing fees will not be paid to the University of Rochester, but directly to the program abroad. Details of this may be discussed with a financial aid advisor.*

Taking Care of Business While Still at the University of Rochester

We often remind students to take care of *all business before they leave the Rochester campus*. It is much easier for students to contact professors and staff members, obtain necessary signatures, and sign important forms in person, rather than from a distance. Here is a brief checklist of what they should be doing prior to departure:

- Find out about banking options at their destination. The program abroad will most likely provide some information about banking in the host country.
- Meet with an advisor in the [Financial Aid Office](#) in Wallis Hall if they receive any financial aid (this includes need-based aid or merit awards, i.e. scholarships).
- Obtain course approvals for the courses they are planning to take abroad.
- Make several copies of their passport. Upload a copy to their online application on the Center for Education Abroad's portal. Leave a copy at home.
- [Research](#) the city and country where they will be traveling to.
- Visit the River Campus post office to give a forwarding address and to maintain the current CPU box.
- Obtain an insurance ID card from the insurance company.
- Sign up for [Virtual Private Network](#) (VPN) in order to have access to UR's services such as email, registration and housing lottery. **All official correspondence will only be sent to your UR email account.**
- Attend mandatory pre-departure meeting.
- Contact Residential Life regarding deadlines and options for housing upon return to Rochester.

While Abroad



Photo taken in Arezzo, Italy

Frequently Asked Questions

“While my student is abroad, who is responsible in case of emergency?”

Every program abroad has a responsible local director, and an emergency contact. The staff is required to be fluent in the local language(s). Program directors manage everything from cultural questions, mediating roommate problems, helping students adjust to local foods, registering for classes on the program, or guiding students in the event of a crisis. Information about local staff is usually given to your student at the time they are accepted into the program.

The Center for Education Abroad is always available for questions. Evenings and weekends, emergency issues can be addressed to University of Rochester’s Public Safety at 585-275-3333. University Health Service is available for emergency medical consultation 24 hours a day at (585) 275-2662. The University also has a staff manager dedicated to health & safety abroad, his contact information is below. This information is also given to your student before they leave for their program abroad:

Alan Ryon

Manager for International Travel & Security

Email: travelsecurity@rochester.edu

Office number: 585-857-1168

Emergency cell: 585-857-1168

“What if my student needs to leave the program early?”

In the event that your student enrolls in a program abroad and is unable to complete it, refunds, if any, will be based on the University of Rochester’s standard [refund schedule](#), and on recoverable costs. The refund schedule is applied according to the calendar of the study abroad program. Confirmation deposits are non-refundable, and short-term programs have their own guidelines regarding refunds.

If students enroll in a non-UR program, no refund is possible for the University of Rochester abroad fee: \$1,654 for semester and \$375 for summer programs. Student is responsible to communicate with the program sponsor about the possibility of any refund.

No college credit is awarded to students who leave the program before completion.

“Does the University of Rochester Student Code of Conduct apply to my student while abroad?”

Yes. Your student is required to read and to understand the [University of Rochester Code of Conduct](#), including the Student Sexual Misconduct Policy. The same behavior expectations exist abroad, in matters relating to student-to-student relationships, class attendance, and academic honesty. Please be advised that if your student is placed on disciplinary or academic probation before their study program abroad begins, this may affect plans to attend.

Study Abroad Status

All University of Rochester students going abroad who wish to receive academic credit for their work are placed on “study abroad status.” Study abroad status maintains the student as a full-time, matriculated, University of Rochester student. This means our students abroad are still University of Rochester students, even while enrolled in another institution.

Students may not use Inactive Status (used for a leave of absence from University of Rochester) while attending a program abroad, this will prevent them from receiving credit upon return.

Travel and Medical Insurance

University of Rochester Medical Insurance:

Students on study abroad status are eligible for continuation of University of Rochester health insurance while abroad and remain matriculated students. Students going abroad must notify the University of Rochester's insurance office if they wish to do this: insurance@uhs.rochester.edu If not notified, coverage is canceled for the semester the student is away. More information regarding health insurance while abroad can be found on the [UHS website](#).

Family Medical Insurance:

If your student is covered under your health insurance, you and your student should check your coverage to find out if they will be covered during the time abroad, and whether any special conditions apply. Be sure to ask questions about premiums and reimbursements for out-of-pocket expenses.

Program Provider Medical Insurance:

Some programs offer their own health insurance, in some cases this is optional, in others it is required. If your student selects this type of coverage, the charges will be placed on the student's account. Be sure you and your student know how this system works: how bills are paid, what happens in the case of a medical emergency, and how to access routine treatments.

For programs requiring their own insurance plan, coverage begins the day the program starts and ends the day the program ends. If your student is on a program that begins later or ends earlier than the semester at University of Rochester, please ensure there is adequate coverage through your own insurance provider to avoid gaps.

Paying for Medical Expenses Abroad:

Should students require medical attention abroad, it may be necessary for them to have sufficient cash on hand to make payment at the time of treatment. The foreign physician and/or hospital may not be able to process medical bills through an American insurance company. Check with your insurance company how the reimbursement will be processed.

Travel and Property Insurance:

All University of Rochester students are covered under University of Rochester Travel Assistance when traveling for UR or non-UR programs. There is **no additional cost for this benefit**.

Travel assistance is **different** than health insurance coverage. Thus, travel assistance has a separate ID card. Travel assistance provides support services in case of emergencies, including:

- Emergency medical services
- Security evacuation services
- Emergency travel arrangements
- Information services

Your student can log in with their NetID to see their [summary of benefits](#) and print their [ID Card](#).

Student should have travel insurance to cover any loss of money because of trip interruption or cancellation, as well as loss of baggage and other property while traveling or living abroad. In addition, we recommend that students consider purchasing personal liability insurance against injury or damage caused by or resulting from students' acts or omissions during enrollment in any program.

The University of Rochester is not liable for damage or loss of personal property. Contact your insurance agent regarding property insurance.

Safety Abroad

Safety is understandably foremost in the minds of students and of their families. Concern for student safety abroad has always been of primary importance to the University, and it remains an integral part of our standard procedures and practices.

No university can guarantee the safety of its students while abroad, any more than it can guarantee their safety on the home campus. The staff of the Center for Education Abroad has access to varied resources for information on relative political and economic stability of host countries. We are in regular contact with our partners abroad who, in turn, work closely with American consulates and embassies. We monitor international conditions daily, with information from the U.S. Department of State, our intelligence provider (WorldAware), our partners abroad, and our colleagues here at the University of Rochester. The University employs the expertise of a full-time Manager for International Travel & Security to monitor these sources, make recommendations, and manage incidents involving our students.

We require students to enroll in the [Smart Traveler Enrollment Program](#) (STEP): STEP is a free service provided by the U.S. Government to U.S. citizens who are traveling to, or living in, a foreign country. STEP allows students to enter information about their upcoming trip abroad so that the Department of State can better assist students in an emergency. STEP also allows Americans residing abroad to get routine safety information and security alerts from the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate.

Students who are well-informed about the international context of their host country will be best equipped to ensure their own safety. To that end, we provide students and families with the latest announcements and travel advisories from the Department of State. Also, prior to departure, all prospective study abroad students are required to attend a mandatory orientation meeting. Students meet with the UR Manager for International Travel & Safety who presents important information about safety, managing money, health issues, maintaining situational awareness, and much more. Through good preparation, we make the transition to living overseas as smooth as possible.

At the same time, students have responsibility for their own safety by monitoring developments on their own through public sources and by not intentionally putting themselves in harm's way.

It is important that University and program representatives are able to reach students' families quickly in case of emergency. Before students leave for their program abroad, it is important that they ensure their emergency contact information is up-to-date. They can do that in their application, on our online portal.

Visiting Your Student

With the student's travel plans well underway, it's time to plan your visit in their "adopted" country. Are you thinking of visiting your son/daughter but feel overwhelmed with the planning process? No worries –let an accredited Vacation Specialist help!

Via Mondo Travel will assist parents and their family members to create a vacation package geared around their child's program overseas as well as find the unique day trips and activities that fulfill everyone's wish list. We leave plenty of time to meander around to showcase the city's splendor and we also incorporate family activities to explore the area gems together. Take advantage of this opportunity and discover Europe, Asia and Australia together. Combine countries, itineraries or create your own package. These are the moments that every parent cherishes. Via Mondo welcomes you to peruse the possibilities.

Rosemary Mondo

rosemary@viamondo.net

315-707-4372

<https://www.viamondo.net/>

[Visit us on Facebook](#)



Travel & Wellness Vacations

Preparing to Return to the University of Rochester

Housing:

The Office for Residential Life will email your student directly regarding housing registration for the return semester. It is required that your student checks their University of Rochester e-mail while abroad. In order to have access to restricted university resources, your student will need to be connected to a Virtual Private Network (VPN). The [IT website](#) has all the information required for the download. VPN needs to be installed while your student is still in the US.

No other person can register your student for housing.

Registration:

Your student will be out of the country during the usual registration period. They will still be able to use the online course schedules and descriptions to select. Instructions for registration can be found on the [registrar's website](#).

Important Contacts at University of Rochester

In the event that you have questions that have not been answered to your satisfaction, by your student, please be sure to get in contact with the appropriate UR department. If you don't know which is the appropriate department, call the main line at the Center for Education Abroad and we will be happy to assist.

<p>Center for Education Abroad TEL 585-275-7532 e-mail: abroad@admin.rochester.edu</p>	<p>International Travel & Security Alan Ryon, Manager Tel: 585-275-8699 Emergency cell: 585-857-1168 e-mail: travelsecurity@rochester.edu</p>
<p>Parent & Family Relations Dawn L. Bruner, Director TEL 585-275-5415 e-mail: dawn.bruner@rochester.edu</p>	<p>Office of Minority Student Affairs Tel: 585-275-0651 e-mail: omsa@ur.rochester.edu</p>
<p>University Health Services TEL 585-273-5770 e-mail: ldudma@uhs.rochester.edu</p>	<p>Bursar's Office TEL 585-275-3931 e-mail: bursar@admin.rochester.edu</p>
<p>Financial Aid Office TEL 585-275-3226 e-mail: help@finaid.rochester.edu craimond@ur.rochester.edu</p>	<p>Residential Life TEL 585-275-3166 e-mail: housing@reslife.rochester.edu</p>
<p>Gwen M. Greene Career and Internship Center TEL 585-275-2366 e-mail: careers@mail.rochester.edu</p>	<p>Registrar's Office TEL 585-275-8131 e-mail: registrar@mail.rochester.edu</p>
<p>LGBTQ Coordinator Colleen Raimond Tel: 585-276-3970</p>	<p>International Services Office TEL 585-275-2866 e-mail: questions@iso.rochester.edu</p>
<p>College Center for Advising Services TEL 585-275-2354 e-mail: cascas@mail.rochester.edu</p>	<p>River Campus Parking Office TEL 585-275-3983 e-mail: rcpark@services.rochester.edu</p>
<p>UR Public Safety TEL 585-275-3333 e-mail: 4info@security.rochester.edu</p>	<p>Disability Resources TEL 585-276-5075 e-mail: disability@rochester.edu</p>
<p>Office of the Dean of Students Dean Matthew Burns TEL 585-275-4085 e-mail: matthew.burns@rochester.edu</p>	<p>Title IX Office Morgan Levy TEL 585-275-7814 e-mail: morgan.levy@rochester.edu</p>