

Sports & Culture in France: La vie sportive

PROGRAM HANDBOOK



LEARNING ABROAD CENTER

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Important Names & Addresses

In the United States

University of Minnesota Learning Abroad Center
230 Heller Hall
271 19th Ave. S.
Minneapolis, MN 55455-0430
Phone: 612.626.9000
Fax: 612.626.8009
Toll Free: 888.700.UOFM
Email: UMabroad@umn.edu
Website: UMabroad.umn.edu

Contact Prior to Departure

Nancy Vang, Enrollment Specialist
Phone: 612.301.1571
Email: vangn@umn.edu

Maria Mantey, Associate Program Director
Phone: 612.626.7535
Email: mant0023@umn.edu

Peggy Retka, Program Director
Phone: 612.626.7134
Email: retka@umn.edu

Emergencies

In case of emergency, contact the Learning Abroad Center at 612.626.9000 at any time. If it is after business hours, a recording will give you a number to call. The Learning Abroad Center has someone on call to deal with emergencies and can contact the on-site director if needed. Once overseas, participants should contact Françoise Chaton in case of an emergency. Contact information will be given out in an email closer to your departure date.

In France

Note: Please direct pre-departure questions to the Learning Abroad Center, not to the on-site staff.

Mme Françoise Chaton, Resident Director
University of Minnesota Program
6, Impasse Cité Gelly 34000 Montpellier France
Program Emergency Cell Phone: 011.33.6.11.86.39.67
(within France, dial 06.33.11.86.39.67)

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Telephone Codes

To dial internationally from the US, you have to dial 011.

France's country code is 33. French phone numbers are listed as ten numbers, separated into groups of two, with the first number being zero. When you call a French number from outside the country, you drop the initial zero.

For example, to call the French phone number

04.55.66.77.88 from the US, dial:

011.33.4.55.66.77.88

Time Differences

France is in the Central European Time Zone. It is 6–7 hours ahead of Minneapolis, depending on daylight saving time. France observes daylight saving from the end of March to the beginning of October.

Program Health & Safety

Program health and safety information is available at <http://global.umn.edu/gosafe/index.html>.



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Introduction

Purpose of This Handbook

Before you leave the country, make sure that you have read and understood the information in your Confirmation Checklist, the Health & Safety Online Orientation (available in your confirmation checklist), and the information outlined in this handbook. These materials will guide you on a safe and successful learning abroad experience.

Valuable resources for your friends and family members can be found at UMabroad.umn.edu/parents. It discusses topics such as health and safety, program prices, logistics, and travel.

Overview of the Program

Letter from the On-Site Director

Dear Sports & Culture in France Participant:

Félicitations: vous avez été accepté(e) pour le programme de Montpellier. C'est formidable.

As the on-site director for this program, I really look forward to meeting you in Montpellier. I am sure that you will find our medieval city attractive. Montpellier is the site of one of the oldest universities in France and hosts about 70,000 students. It definitely has the flair of a student town with its population of 350,000 people and numerous cultural activities for young people. I have no doubt that you will meet lots of French people during your stay here.

Montpellier is located only five miles from the Mediterranean Sea and the Cevennes Mountains, which you will see as you land, are only one hour away. East of Montpellier you will find the beautiful region of Provence, and about four hours away by car you reach the Alps. With Paris only three and a half hours away on the fast train and Barcelona three hours away, you will have plenty to explore on weekends and during official holidays.

After graduating from the University of Liege in Belgium, I came to Minneapolis for my graduate studies. I taught for ten years at the University of Minnesota and for five years at Carleton College before I accepted the position as on-site director in Montpellier. I am also on staff at the University Paul Valéry. Do count on me to always try to do my best to help you with academic and other matters.

A très bientôt, donc.

Françoise Defrecheux-Chaton
Directrice du Programme

Preparation & Planning

Documents

Passport

A passport is required to enter France. If you do not have a passport already, apply for one right away. Passports can take four to eight weeks to process. More information is available at:

travel.state.gov/passport/passport_1738.html.

Passport and Embassy Contact Information

If your passport is lost or stolen, contact the American Consulate or Embassy immediately. The address of the US Embassy in Paris is:

The American Embassy

2 Avenue Gabriel
75008 Paris
Phone: 33.1.43.12.22.22

The address of the American Consulate in Marseilles (the closest Consulate to Montpellier) is:

The American Consulate

Place Varian Fry
13286 Marseilles
Phone: 33.4.91.54.92.00

If for any reason you should have legal difficulties in France, the American Consulate or Embassy cannot intervene on your behalf. They will assist you in contacting a lawyer if necessary.

Visa

US citizens on the summer program do not need a student visa.

Non-US Passport Holders

Students who are not traveling under a US passport may have to follow different visa procedures in order to enter France. Please contact Peggy Retka (retka@umn.edu) for assistance in determining the correct visa process.

Power of Attorney

We encourage you to consider designating someone as your Power of Attorney while you are abroad. Your Power of Attorney can act as your legal representative in a number of situations, including banking and tax issues. For more information, review the information at UMabroad.umn.edu/students/policies/finances/powerofattorney.

Safekeeping Important Documents

Copy all of your important documents and store the copies separately from the originals. Leave an additional copy with someone in the US and keep an electronic copy in a secure location.

Coordinated Group Flight

Purpose & Benefits of Village Travel

The LAC arranges an optional coordinated flight in consultation with Village Travel, a local travel agency. This flight confirms the official arrival date and time. The program staff will meet this flight at the airport. Village Travel will contact you directly when this information is available. Information, booking, and payment are handled directly by Village Travel. Consult Village Travel's website for information on the coordinated flight: villageinc.com.

The coordinated flight cost is designed to be competitive, but priority is placed on services such as routing, ticketing flexibility, and the ability to make group reservations and reserve specific travel dates. Travel can be arranged from any location in the US or internationally, and every attempt will be made to connect with the coordinated flight. While you are not required to choose this group flight, it is designed to offer travel in the comfort of other participants in the program.

If you make your own flight arrangements, select a round-trip flight that has a flexible return date, since most students change their return date. Flying standby is not allowed.

If you are not taking the coordinated flight, you are required to provide the LAC with a copy of your flight and train (if applicable) information by the date requested.

Packing

Packing Principles

Since you will be carrying your own luggage during the trip, often for long stretches in airports and bus and train stations, it is important that you pack sensibly. Take only as much as you can carry easily by yourself. One way to measure what is easily carried is to pack everything you would like to take, pick it all up, and walk around the block. If you are not comfortable doing so, you may want to re-evaluate what you've packed.

Important: Take clothing that needs a minimal amount of care (this is especially important if you plan to do any independent traveling). You may have to go a couple of weeks without doing any laundry, especially at the beginning of the program. Laundromats will be the only means of doing laundry if you plan to live in the dorms or an apartment. Laundromats are a bit expensive and complicated to use, and it may take some time to make arrangements for your laundry in Montpellier. Dryers are available in laundromats, but not usually in private homes.

Many travelers to Europe find that the most practical solution is to wash all underwear by hand and to take only such outer clothing as can be worn many times without showing soil.

Jeans are as common in France as they are here. Students dress very comfortably but with style in France. Nice jeans,

skirts (for women), nice but comfortable walking shoes, dark colors, and sweaters are all very popular items. Slippers are recommended because many French homes have tile floors throughout the house and do not use heat as frequently as most American homes.

Keep in mind that you cannot ship materials to the program in advance. Any items you wish to mail should be sent by friends or family members after your arrival.

Important Policies

Policies of the University of Minnesota and the Learning Abroad Center exist primarily for the protection and safety of LAC study abroad participants. The LAC expects all participants to read, understand, and adhere to the University of Minnesota and LAC policies, guidelines, and contractual documents. These include academic policies, finance and cancellation policies, health and safety policies, and student rights and responsibilities: UMabroad.umn.edu/students/policies.

FERPA

Under Federal Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA), Minnesota Government Data Practices Act, and University policy, college students are considered responsible adults and are allowed to determine who will receive information about them. As a result, the LAC does not share academic, personal, or financial information with a third party (including parents, spouse, guardians, etc.) without the student's written permission. As part of their application, all students designate two emergency contacts who will receive information only in the case of an emergency.

Official Communications

Your UofM email address is the official means of communication. LAC messages will be sent to your UofM email address.



Health, Wellness, & Safety

Health

Health Information Form

The purpose of the form is to help the University of Minnesota Learning Abroad Center (LAC) to assist you in preparing for your time abroad. It is critical to disclose fully any health conditions or accommodation needs you may have on the LAC's Health Information Form. If your condition changes after completing this form or you realize you forgot to fully disclose anything, contact the LAC and provide the updated information as soon as possible.

Timely disclosure allows the LAC to support your overseas experience effectively. The information provided will remain confidential and will be shared with program staff, faculty, or appropriate professionals only as pertinent to your own well-being.

For more information, visit: [UMabroad.umn.edu/students/healthsafety/healthinfo](https://umabroad.umn.edu/students/healthsafety/healthinfo).

Mandatory Health & Safety Online Orientation

The mandatory Learning Abroad Center Health & Safety Online Orientation contains important information on health precautions, taking prescriptions overseas, and the mandatory insurance policy in which you will be enrolled as a program participant. Refer to your online acceptance checklist for the link to this orientation information and contact the LAC with questions.

Health Insurance

US Health Insurance

All students enrolled at the University of Minnesota are required to have US health insurance. This includes students registered for education abroad.

The travel, health, and security insurance coverage through CISI is specifically exempt from the requirements of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) and was not intended to and does not satisfy a person's obligation to secure minimum essential coverage beginning in 2014 under the ACA. The University encourages travelers to consult with their legal counsel or tax adviser for information on their obligations under the ACA.

For more details and specific process information for students with University of Minnesota Student Health Insurance through the Student Health Benefits Office, visit the LAC's US insurance webpage: [UMabroad.umn.edu/students/healthsafety/intlhealthinsurance/ushealthinsurancerequirement](https://umabroad.umn.edu/students/healthsafety/intlhealthinsurance/ushealthinsurancerequirement).

CISI Insurance

In addition to your US health insurance, the University of Minnesota has contracted with Cultural Insurance Services International (CISI) to provide comprehensive international travel, health, and security insurance. This coverage is mandatory for all students and included in the program fee. You are covered by CISI only for the dates of the program and a few days to allow for travel to and from the US. If you plan to travel before or after your program, you should extend your CISI coverage or purchase your own insurance.

CISI does not include any preventive care, and individuals are advised to consult their medical providers for any checkups or preventive care prior to departure.

Your CISI card and insurance policy will be emailed directly to you. Carry the card with you at all times. If you have any questions or need additional information about CISI, visit the LAC's insurance webpage: [UMabroad.umn.edu/students/healthsafety/intlhealthinsurance](https://umabroad.umn.edu/students/healthsafety/intlhealthinsurance).

Medication Overseas

Prescriptions

Bring all necessary medication (including such items as birth control), for the entire term of your program, with you to your study abroad site and bring it in your *carry-on luggage only*. It is illegal to ship medication overseas and will be rejected at customs. Contact the LAC if you need an enrollment verification letter to submit to your insurance company requesting prescription medication for your entire stay abroad.

Consult with your LAC program contact if you would like to consult with CISI about obtaining any medication once abroad. Some medications, including those that are commonly available over the counter in the US, are controlled or banned substances abroad. The LAC, in consultation with CISI, will assist you in determining if you can travel with your medications or if alternative solutions must be explored.

Wellness

Wellness & Study Abroad

In addition to any medications and required vaccinations, it is important to plan proactively for how you will maintain healthy habits abroad, both mentally and physically. Consider the following guidelines for your time abroad:

- **Physical self-care:** Be physically active for 30–60 minutes daily, sleep enough to have energy through the day, spend at least an hour outdoors, and eat a balanced and moderate diet mostly of wholesome, minimally processed foods.
- **Emotional self-care:** Talk to your medical provider prior to departure about effective ways to cope with the stress that can arise from experiencing unfamiliar surroundings and lack of family and friend support, as well as to

identify new ways of centering and embracing change and new experiences. This is a valuable lifelong skill.

- **Stress reduction practice:** Participate in at least one practice to quiet your mind and body. Examples include deep breathing, time in nature, prayer, journaling, sensory grounding, meditation, yoga, tai chi, qigong, progressive muscle relaxation, autogenic training, biofeedback, imagery work.
- **Hydration:** Be certain to drink sufficient water and nutritious fluids as your body adjusts to a new climate and daily rhythm.
- **Making adjustments:** Monitor your stress levels while abroad and adjust your daily routine (sleep patterns, exercise, food balance, hydration) to meet the needs of your new location.
- **Positive attitude:** Try to keep perspective on the challenges that you may encounter and work toward your long-term study abroad goals.
- **Support structures:** Identify who in country is available to provide support and guidance when you feel confused or challenged.
- **Finding resilience:** Keep in mind that it is important to recover and grow from adversity and navigate difficult challenges with awareness, intention, and skill. Seek out healthy connections to others, focus on balanced self-care, keep an open, engaged mind, and work to address manageable challenges with patience and intention.

The following website provides suggestions: gloaled.us/peacecorps/maintaining-strong-mental-and-emotional-health.asp.

Mental Health

Learning abroad can be both fulfilling and challenging for all students and may present some additional challenges for those with mental health conditions. Even if you have no history of a mental health condition, it is possible that the impact of cultural adjustment or being in a foreign environment can influence your well-being.

The Health Information Form requires you to disclose any past and current mental health issues, family history of mental health, indications of mental health concerns, and current prescription medicines. It is imperative for LAC staff to receive this information before you study abroad to best support you and provide reasonable accommodations.

Past or current treatment for psychiatric and mental health conditions does not preclude you from studying abroad. However, if a healthcare professional recommends no travel or travel under certain conditions that cannot be met at a certain study location, you may be encouraged to focus on your health first and postpone program participation until a later time.

The following steps for managing mental health are important, regardless of where you will be traveling:

- Meet with your mental health professional prior to departure to discuss learning abroad and its implications, your plan to manage your health while abroad, and access to alternative support networks.
- Discuss a realistic communication plan for your time abroad with your support networks (i.e., family and friends).
- Understand that ups and downs are normal during study abroad. Check in with yourself often and seek support if you are feeling more intense ups and downs than expected.
- Connect with an LAC staff member prior to departure to set up on-site care with a mental health care professional, if required.
- Plan to bring sufficient amounts of prescriptions with you for the entire duration of your program. Work with LAC staff to ensure you can safely bring all necessary prescriptions abroad.

Safety

Travel & Safety Considerations

You are responsible for reviewing the US State Department's website at travel.state.gov for up-to-date information on travel to France and any other countries you plan on visiting during your term abroad.

- Female students should avoid traveling alone at night. Always walk in groups or with a male companion.
- Do not look strangers in the eye or speak to them, particularly at night, since this is considered an invitation to conversation. Use a firm "Non, merci." or no response at all to any verbal harassment.
- Do not try to defend yourself if confronted by strangers or hugglers, particularly at night. Immediately leave the setting and seek assistance from the nearest restaurant, café, or police officer.
- Keep your personal belongings hidden. Montpellier is a metropolitan city, and pickpocketing is common.
- Use common sense when giving out your address or phone number. Set up times and places to meet others rather than give out any personal information.
- If you are living with a host family, check with them before giving out their phone number or address or inviting guests over.

State Department Travel Website

Consult the US State Department Country Information sheets, travel advisories, and travel warnings at travel.state.gov for up-to-date information on travel precautions for the country where you will be studying or traveling.



CDC Information

Review the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [cdc.gov/travel](https://www.cdc.gov/travel) and US Department of State travel.state.gov websites for travel and safety information.

Embassy STEP Registration

The LAC will register you with the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP), which makes your presence in France known to the US Department of State. Once you are enrolled in this program, you will receive the travel updates and information directly as they are issued. Please carefully review these messages and contact the LAC or on-site staff with questions. For more information, visit: step.state.gov/step.

In addition, the local embassy can be a source of assistance and information in the case of an emergency. Each of our programs has information about the local embassy, and you might even have an embassy visitor at your orientation. For more information, visit the Country Information sheet at travel.state.gov for the countries you will visit and study in.

In order to ensure that all official communication from the US Department of State is sent to the correct address while you are abroad, check your official contact information prior to departure. Visit onestop.umn.edu to verify that the information is correct. If your contact information changes, you must notify the LAC.

Sexual Harassment & Sexual Assault

The University of Minnesota and Learning Abroad Center take the risk of sexual harassment and assault very seriously. This topic will be covered in orientations in more depth, and LAC staff and our colleagues on site are trained and prepared to provide support to victim survivors.

Anyone who experiences sexual harassment or sexual assault while abroad must deal with the stress of this

unwanted event in a place and culture that is unfamiliar. Being away from the support and comfort of home can exacerbate feelings of hurt, confusion, anger, and loss of control. This is normal.

Do not tolerate behavior that feels threatening or disrespectful by staff in country, faculty members, or homestay family members. When in any doubt, consult with someone with whom you feel comfortable.

Report any incidents of sexual harassment or sexual assault to in-country or LAC staff so that we can help you understand your options and supports available. The Aurora Center is a fully confidential resource for all students on LAC programs, even if you don't normally attend the University of Minnesota.

For more information on resources, including the Aurora Center, visit: global.umn.edu/travel/assault/index.html.

The University of Minnesota prohibits sexual harassment and retaliation. In compliance with Title IX, the LAC will work with the University's Title IX coordinator on any related inquiries and complaints. For more information, please contact the LAC or visit diversity.umn.edu/eoaa/titleix.

Alcohol & Drug Use

The University of Minnesota Code of Conduct and Code of Conduct for Education Abroad allow for responsible drinking if you are legally allowed to drink in your host country. Illegal, irresponsible drinking and/or misbehaving while drinking are violations of the University's policy.

The University of Minnesota has a no-tolerance approach to drug use while abroad. Students using drugs abroad may immediately be removed from the program at their own cost. You are subject to the laws of the host country while abroad, and penalties for foreigners using or possessing drugs abroad are often very strict.

For more information, visit: UMabroad.umn.edu/students/healthsafety/alcoholdrugs

Emergency Procedures

All students are required to carry a cell phone for use in an emergency. On-site staff will contact you on your cell phone, and you will utilize your phone to contact on-site staff and/or emergency services. In a life-threatening emergency, please seek immediate emergency care; otherwise, please contact on-site staff for assistance and recommendations. On-site staff are trained and have resources available to respond to all types of emergencies including, but not limited to, civil disturbance, natural disaster, illness or injury, hospitalization, robbery or pickpocketing, sexual assault/harassment, hate crimes, and mental health.

The LAC will utilize on-site resources as well as insurance and security resources, including CISI. See more details above on insurance.

For more information, visit: UMabroad.umn.edu/students/healthsafety/emergency.

Independent Travel

Independent Travel Notification

You are encouraged to travel during official program break periods, over holidays, or after the program is completed. During the program, travel on the weekends should be limited to nearby locations to ensure that you are able to maintain good rest, health, and timely completion of all coursework. Students are not permitted to travel during the program dates, including on weekends or vacations, to countries currently under a US State Department Travel Warning. See travel.state.gov for the most up-to-date list.

Consult with the on-site staff, well in advance of your planned travel, to understand if there are other locations, beyond the Travel Warning locations, that you are not permitted to visit within your host country or region. These limitations are put in place for your safety and security and apply within the program dates. If you choose to visit a Travel Warning or other banned location before or after your program, you do so at your own risk.

All LAC program participants must notify the on-site staff of any independent travel that leaves the program location overnight. The required independent travel form is provided in the appendix of this handbook. Some sites will collect this form and others will have a slightly different way of collecting the same information, so refer to your on-site orientation for more specifics.

Travel Restrictions

During the Program

Students are not allowed to visit any country currently under a US Department of State Travel warning as a part of personal travel. Please visit travel.state.gov/content/passports/english/alertswarnings.html for up-to-date information about travel warning countries. If you have questions about travel restrictions, contact the LAC.

If you are planning on traveling extensively in France before, during, or after the program, investigate the availability of student discounts before purchasing tickets. See our website UMabroad.umn.edu/students/travel for information on travel products.

Driving & Renting Vehicles Abroad

It is against University and Learning Abroad Center policy to drive or rent motor vehicles (including motor scooters or motorcycles) while a participant on an LAC program. These limitations extend from the start date to the end date of your program and are put in place for your safety and security. Traffic accidents are the leading cause of injury and death of students abroad.

Arrival Logistics

Arrival

The on-site staff will meet students at the airport on the day and time listed for the coordinated flight. The program will cover the cost of the taxi for students arriving with the coordinated flight. Other students should budget about 50 Euros in cash for transportation to the arrival hotel. Transportation at the end of the program is not provided.

Plan to arrive in France with 200 euros in cash or easily accessible through an ATM withdrawal to pay for the required cell phone, tram pass, initial meals, and other initial costs.

Let your friends and family members know that you will not be able to contact them immediately after you arrive. You will likely be exhausted and busy with your new surroundings. Most students call or email after several days. Reassure your friends and family members that the Learning Abroad Center monitors all student arrivals and will contact the emergency contact listed on your application if you do not arrive as scheduled. Given the number of students on the program, we cannot confirm individual arrivals.

Early Arrivals

You are allowed to arrive before the program to do independent travel or settle in in Montpellier. However, program housing is not available until the official program start date, so if you arrive early, you will need to make your own arrangements for accommodation until then.

Delayed Arrivals

If there are problems while you are traveling that will delay your arrival in Montpellier, call the Learning Abroad Center at 612.626.9000 or email Peggy Retka (retka@umn.edu) if you are still in the US, or call the Montpellier program emergency cell phone listed on the first page of this handbook or email Françoise Chaton (defre001@umn.edu) if you are in France. It is imperative that you inform staff of any changes in your arrival time so that the on-site staff are aware of your schedule.

Late Arrivals

Late arrivals are not allowed. You must arrive at the designated arrival accommodations by 9 p.m. on the appointed arrival day. Late arrivals run the risk of losing all credit for the program. Exceptions will be made for flight delays and cancellations.

Arrival Housing

Students move immediately upon arrival into their permanent housing. Orientation will take place the day after you arrive.

Program End

The program end date is published on the Learning Abroad Center program website, and the Learning Abroad Center is not responsible for students after the program finishes. You are welcome to remain in France after the program end date for independent travel. However, since the program has ended, you cannot continue to live in program housing and will need to move out by the final program date.

For your return flight to the US, be certain to have a printed copy of your e-ticket with you at the airport. Many European airports require a proof of your ticket at check-in and do not have boarding pass machines.

Program Information

On-Site Support

The on-site staff are available to help you in all aspects of your stay in Montpellier, whether it is an academic or personal issue. The program staff advises all students on the program, and patience will be required in order to have your questions answered. The on-site staff will inform you of the office hours and ask that you see them during these times for program questions. During the summer, the office is open three hours per day in the afternoons.

Be respectful of the fact that the on-site staff members have private lives to lead. Do not contact the on-site staff at nights or on weekends unless it is a true emergency. Most issues can wait until the next office hour to be resolved. In an emergency, call the emergency cell phone number, which you should keep with you at all times. Try to tackle minor questions and issues on your own. Your own ingenuity and initiative is also a great resource and part of the challenge of living in a new country.

Although our program office telephone number is provided, friends and family members should contact the Learning Abroad Center (LAC) at the University of Minnesota for assistance throughout the program. Let your friends and family know that the LAC staff is here to provide them with any assistance and answer any questions they may have before, during, and after your stay. It is very difficult for overseas staff to handle calls from the US when they are also attending to the needs of the students on site.

Accommodations

All students in the Sports & Culture in France program will stay in an apart*hotel—an apartment-style hotel designed for extended stays. You will have several roommates from the program, and you may share a room with a student of the same sex. The apartments include a kitchenette

(with utensils, dishes, pots and pans, etc.), weekly cleaning service, air conditioning, TV, and high-speed internet. The apartments are located in the city center area of Montpellier, close to a tram stop, the river, modern restaurants, the Olympic swimming pool, and the Polygone shopping mall.

Liability Insurance

Regardless of your housing arrangement, you should consider your insurance coverage and needs. Does your renter's or homeowner's insurance cover your items if they are lost or stolen abroad? You may also wish to buy additional insurance in case you accidentally damage your accommodations, since any damages will be yours to pay.

For more information, visit: global.umn.edu/travel/insurance/outgoing.html#personal-tab.

Visitors

Program Housing

Students' personal guests (e.g. friends, family, etc.) are not allowed to stay overnight in program housing, including apartments, homestays, and dorms.

During Program Period

Friends or relatives may visit during official program breaks or before or after the program, but not while classes are in session. Visits during this time interfere with your ability to focus on the program and host culture. Visitors are not allowed to stay with you in your official program housing.

Money Matters

Personal spending habits vary too greatly to state exactly how much it will cost to live in France during the program. The amount of money students spend depends on three main factors: your personal spending habits, the amount of traveling you plan to do, and the value of the dollar. To assist in your financial planning, review the budget estimates on the website: UMabroad.umn.edu/programs/europe/montpellier/fees.

Bring a variety of payment methods, such as cash, an ATM card, and a credit card, with you to France. If you think you might want to purchase used items, such as a phone or hair dryer, from past students via the program office, you should also bring a couple of blank US checks with you to make payment for those items.

The Euro

As part of the European Union, France's currency is the Euro (€). The official abbreviation for the Euro is EUR. Note that the value of the dollar has been fluctuating rapidly lately. You can check the exchange rate at: xe.com.

Cash

We recommend that you have 200 Euros on hand when you arrive in France. You can exchange money for a nominal fee at a local bank or at any major airport in the US or overseas.

Debit Card/Credit Card

One of the easiest and least expensive means of obtaining money is at an ATM. Make sure your PIN is a numerical code with four digits. Keypads in Europe do not have letters or have them in a different order than key pads in the US and won't accept more than four digits. Also, notify your bank that you will be travelling internationally.

If you have a debit card, this money can come directly out of your bank account and you won't have to pay interest as you would with a credit card balance.

Credit Cards

You can also withdraw money or make purchases with a credit card (Visa is best). A credit card is also a good resource for emergency situations. When using a credit card, remember that interest is charged and the purchase price is converted from Euros to dollars based on the exchange rate the day the purchase is posted on your account in the US, not the day you make the purchase.

A tip for avoiding fees is to open an account with Bank of America, which is affiliated with the French bank Paribas. Using Paribas ATMs in France can save you some money on fees.

Travelers Checks

The LAC does not recommend bringing travelers checks to France. While they are a safer form of money than cash, they can only be cashed at a bank during regular business hours and therefore are not very convenient.

Wiring Money

The LAC does not recommend wiring money from the US because the fees for this service are very high. It is more convenient to have your parents transfer money directly into your bank account.

Safeguarding Your Money & Documents

Be careful with your money. Pickpockets do exist and generally hit when you are in a crowd. Another common place to lose money to thieves is on trains, especially when traveling at night. A money belt is a good idea to have when traveling. If your money is lost or stolen, CISI can assist you in obtaining emergency cash.

Communications

Mail

Airmail between the US and France takes seven to ten days. Surface mail takes six to eight weeks. When sending postcards, place them in an envelope, since they will be processed much more quickly, and this will ensure their

delivery to the US. The rate, however, is cheaper if you send the postcard alone.

If your parents or friends at home wish to send you packages while you are in France, make them aware that they should not send expensive items that require insurance. The declared value, if any, should be minimal, since French Customs will charge a significant import tax on any packages with a significant declared value.

It is illegal to ship medication overseas. Any packages that are held at customs abroad will require payment of a high import tax before they are released. Do not plan on having your parents ship medication to you! Instead, bring all necessary medication (including such items as birth control) with you to your study abroad site. If necessary, CISI insurance can assist in determining whether and how medication can be transported to France.

Computers

Access to computers in France is more limited than in the US. The program office has about ten computers for student use. These computers are strictly intended for academic use. Due to the limited number of computers and the volume of participants on the program, do not expect the office computers to be your main computer resource. The program office does have wireless, and students can access the internet via their laptop for free. There is also wireless availability at some cafés.

Laptops

It is helpful to bring a laptop for word processing and personal use, but you should also consider the security risks. Most students travel before, during, or after the program, and keeping a laptop safe can be challenging. If you do decide to take your laptop to France, ensure that your electrical cord has a surge protector box and will adjust to European voltage. You will also need an adapter for the outlet. We also encourage students to be sure their laptop is covered by an insurance policy.

Social Media

Not all countries share the same laws about freedom of expression that we have in the US. Students should keep in mind that derogatory comments, especially on social media, can result in legal claims and have extended legal implications even after a student has returned to the United States.

Telephone

If you plan to use your US cell phone while abroad, check with your telephone carrier for international plans to reduce the cost of making calls and texting, both for you and for your friends and family. Some students insert a French SIM card into their US cell phone, but you should consider whether you want to carry an expensive US cell phone with you on a daily basis. It could get stolen.

The LAC requires all students to have a cell phone local to the country in which they are studying. Once you arrive in Montpellier, you can either purchase a new cell phone or buy

a used one left by previous students. All used cell phones will be on display in the program office. The LAC is not responsible for the condition of the used cell phones, but they are significantly less expensive than a new phone. Your France cell phone will allow incoming calls free of charge.

Communicating with Your Family

You may not be able to call home immediately upon arrival, as this may be too inconvenient, complex, or difficult. Please share this reality with your family before departure.

During certain phases of adjustment, your friends and family should be prepared to receive calls or correspondence in which you complain and talk about how frustrating everything is in the host country. While these feelings should be taken seriously, students abroad tend to call and write home when things are not going so well and do not call or write when things are going well; share the many new and exciting experiences you are having as well—offer an honest, balanced report.

Working Abroad

May session students are not allowed to work during the program.

FERPA

The Learning Abroad Center and the Office of Student Finance, in compliance with the Federal Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) and Regents policy, cannot share financial or academic information with a third party (including parents, spouse, guardians, etc.) without your written permission. You can download a Student Information Release Authorization at www.onestop.umn.edu. Complete the form and send it to OneStop Student Services, 200 Fraser Hall, 106 Pleasant St. SE, Minneapolis, MN 55455. The Learning Abroad Center must receive a copy of a notarized Power of Attorney form in order to share any program-specific information.

Academics

Students are responsible for understanding and adhering to the academic policies for study abroad as published on the University of Minnesota Learning Abroad Center (LAC)'s website: UMabroad.umn.edu/students/policies/academic-policies.

Courses

Overview of Program Courses

Students have class in the mornings taught by local expert faculty on sports and sports and culture. In the afternoon, students engage in a variety of outdoor and sports

activities. Refer to the Learning Abroad Center program web site for more details.

Students also have a multi-day guided trip to Paris as part of the program activities.

Registration

Registration through the UofM

University of Minnesota—Twin Cities Students

Before registering, you should meet with your academic adviser(s) to discuss the courses you plan to take and complete the Academic Planning form. All University of Minnesota Twin Cities students will be responsible for registering themselves using the University of Minnesota online registration system. Prior to departure, you will receive an email with all the necessary information for registration. Do not look for your class number to appear on the class schedule on the MyU website. The numbers required for registration can only be obtained from the LAC. If you register for a course that is listed online, you have registered for the wrong course and may be subject to tuition charges. Complete your registration by the stated deadline in the registration instruction email from the LAC. Check online for holds or required registration approvals that would prevent you from registering for classes and clear them before the registration deadline. The LAC cannot remove holds on student accounts. Failure to complete registration may result in late registration fees and may delay or prevent financial aid disbursement. If you do not register for study abroad, your grades cannot be processed. Failure to register before departing for study abroad may result in no credit for your study abroad program.

UMN System Students

Students from the University of Minnesota—Morris, Crookston, Rochester, or Duluth will be set up as a multi-U student by their home campus. Please contact your study abroad office to verify that your multi-U status has been set up. You can then register as a UMTC student (see above).

Non-University of Minnesota Students

Students from other institutions will be registered by the Learning Abroad Center and do not need to register themselves through the MyU website.

Course Drop

May session students may not drop any classes, since it is a set curriculum.

Books & Materials

A reading packet and course materials will be provided to you in class.

You can purchase notebooks or paper in France. They are usually more expensive than US products but are also a small part of the cultural experience that you can take home with you. If you are concerned about saving money on supplies, bring notebooks from home.

Exams

It is not possible to take exams early at the end of the program. Be prepared to stay until the end of the term listed on the program calendar. Students who leave early may not receive credit for their studies.

Grades & Transcripts

The professors in France will give you grades according to the French system, which is significantly different from the grading system used in the US. You will be given a number grade out of a total of 20 for each assignment. This number does not necessarily indicate the number correct, but is rather an evaluation of the work on a scale of 1–20. The grades will be translated to the US system in the following manner:

French Grade	University of Minnesota Grade
(1–20)	(A–F)
15.1–20.0	A
14.1–15.0	A–
13.6–14.0	B+
12.6–13.5	B
12.1–12.5	B–
11.6–12.0	C+
10.6–11.5	C
10.1–10.5	C–
8.1–10.0	D
1.0–8.0	F

W—Withdrawal; student has withdrawn from the course and will not receive a grade

NR—Not Reported; grade not received from the faculty member

I—Incomplete; granted only in case of approved request

Effort does not assure you a good grade. Just as in the US, you will earn a grade based on effort and ability, and you should not expect an A just because you worked hard.

Incomplete Grades

You are expected to complete all course requirements by the end of the term. In the case of extenuating circumstances, you may be able to request an incomplete if the faculty member and the on-site director will allow it. Consult with the on-site director and complete a Request for Incomplete Form. The approval form will include a faculty signature and timeline for completion of the course requirements. At no time may the timeline for completion exceed 12 weeks. If you fail to complete your assignments within an approved incomplete timeline, you will receive a grade of F. Some of the universities do not allow grades of incomplete and will record an F. It is your responsibility to check with your home institution to see if they will allow a grade of I. Students who fail to complete all required course assignments and who have not submitted an approved request for incomplete will receive a grade of F.

Grade Petitions

If you wish to question a grade issued for a particular course after the program is completed, you must provide evidence that the professor made an error in his/her grade calculation. The following are **not** reasonable grounds for grade appeal:

- Differences between US and host country educational systems
- Personal disappointment in the grade outcome
- Comparison with one's own prior academic record/GPA
- Failure to complete one or more assignments
- Minimum grade requirement of college/department or home university (in the case of non-University of Minnesota participants)
- Health concerns/missed classes

Contact the Learning Abroad Center to receive the Grade Petition Form if you believe an error has occurred.

Transcripts

After the program ends, the French courses will be translated into English and the French grades converted to the US grading system. These courses and grades will then appear on a University of Minnesota transcript. As mentioned previously, one transcript will be issued at the end of the program to all non-University of Minnesota students. The transcript will be sent to the address you listed on the Transcript Request Form. **Check with your study abroad office for the current address to list on your Transcript Request Form.** This form should be completed



and returned to the Learning Abroad Center prior to the start of the program.

Penn State students: Please put your study abroad office's address, NOT the registrar.

Student Grievances

Academic grievances are complaints brought by students regarding the provision of education and academic support services affecting their role as students. For grievances concerning University of Minnesota sponsored or cosponsored learning abroad programs offered through the Learning Abroad Center, students should make inquiries and appeals to the appropriate University officials, in the following order: the program representative in the Learning Abroad Center, the director of the Learning Abroad Center, the Student Dispute Resolution Center, and the Office of the General Counsel. For complaints concerning non-University of Minnesota programs, students should make appeals to the program sponsor.

Living in the Host Country

Geography & Climate

Montpellier has a much more moderate climate than Minnesota, and the winter season is much shorter. However, this is not a tropical climate, and students frequently are surprised to find that coats and sweaters are necessary.

Average afternoon high temperatures

	Oct	Jan	Apr	July
F	61°	30°	59°	75°
C	16°	-1°	20°	24°

Cultural Differences

You will encounter many differences between French and American culture while in Montpellier. Since there are too many to enumerate in this guide, we encourage you to research on your own (see the appendix for recommended resources). The broad attitudinal differences below are important to understanding French culture and will serve as an important base for your own research and observations.

- The concept of quick and comprehensive customer service is a uniquely US phenomenon. The French are used to a complex bureaucracy with multiple layers of authority. Be patient and do your best to adjust to the French sense of timing and process. Keep in mind that faculty and administrators will have limited office hours and will expect you to adjust to the French system.
- Extensive attention to individual needs and exceptions is also unique to US culture. Most other European countries

expect individuals to adjust to standard policies and procedures. Pay attention to academic and cultural guidelines in order not to miss important deadlines (such as examinations). Do not expect the French system to provide you with reminders or detailed explanations.

- The French, in general, place a higher priority on social interaction and social engagement than is often the case in the US. You will find yourself spending more time over lunch and afternoon coffee to socialize with friends and colleagues.
- Europeans, in general, are well informed about US politics and world events and feel comfortable discussing these events in daily conversation. We encourage you to read about contemporary French events and US current events so that you can engage in discussions with new colleagues and friends.

Life in Montpellier

Montpellier is a city of over 2 million inhabitants in the *département* of Hérault, ten miles from the Mediterranean coast and about 125 miles from the Spanish border. It is now the capital of the region called *Languedoc-Roussillon*. Montpellier has been famous for centuries for its university, especially its medical school. Its economic and political importance has increased in recent years by its appointment as regional capital of the new *Languedoc-Roussillon* region and by the massive influx of North African immigrants it has absorbed.

Montpellier, founded in the 10th century, is a young town by the standards of the region. Unlike many of its neighbors, Montpellier is not a Roman town. Its first moment of glory came in the Middle Ages when it was a station along the pilgrimage route to St. Jacques de Compostelle in Spain.

During the Reformation in the 16th century (when the Protestant religions were first founded), Montpellier became a Protestant stronghold; even today such towns as Montpellier and Nîmes have important Protestant populations. Whereas Protestants in the US tend to be conservative, in France they represent a minority population with long-time rebel tendencies. This liberal tradition accounts in part for the predominance of the Socialist Party in the region.

Because of this history of religious rebellion, Montpellier lost most of its medieval churches, with the exception of the cathedral. In compensation, it has the oldest Botanical Garden (*Jardin des Plantes*) in France, bestowed upon it by Henri IV (the Protestant king), and it became in the 17th and 18th centuries the object of some splendid architectural planning, which has given lasting character to the center city (*Esplanade, Promenade du Peyrou*, many mansions). Montpellier is also a noted art center containing several famous museums (*Musée Fabre, Musée Atger, Musée d'archéologie*).

Montpellier is a vibrant, student-friendly city near the Mediterranean Sea and Cevennes Mountains. Although it doesn't look like a big city in the US, it is a metropolitan area. Locals typically commute 30–45 minutes to work or class, and you should be prepared to do the same. There are also other marks of a big city, such as graffiti and diversity. In Montpellier, neighborhoods have been intentionally mixed so that people of different ethnic groups, socioeconomic statuses, etc, all live together, rather than in separate areas as often occurs in large cities. Also, the French love dogs, but picking up their soil is not a part of the culture, so watch your step!

Meals

Breakfast, *le petit déjeuner*, is continental style including a croissant with jam, and either *chocolat chaud* or *café*. For a few Euros you can go to a *café* and order a *café* (*café crème*, *café au lait*, or *express*; or a *chocolat chaud*) and a croissant or a *tartine au beurre*.

Lunch, *déjeuner*, is usually served between 12:30 and 2 p.m. If you are living with a host family, you are responsible for providing your own lunch during the week. Businesses in smaller cities close from noon to 2 p.m., and sometimes until 3 p.m.

Dinner is rarely served before 7:30 p.m. and is generally not as heavy as lunch. It may consist typically of soup and an omelet or quiche, followed by salad, fruit, and cheese. Fast food is available, but you may be happy to hear that bread and wine are considered staples by the French Government and are therefore subsidized, which makes them extremely affordable. Cheese and *pâtés* are also very affordable.

Be an adventurous eater. French cuisine is famous throughout the world and each part of France is justly proud of its own distinct regional specialties. In southern France, the Spanish and Italian influence often calls for cooking with olive oil and tomatoes. Herbs and flavorings used mainly in Provençal cooking are garlic and onion, rosemary, thyme, basil, sage, and saffron. Fish and seafood are regional specialties due to the proximity of the Mediterranean. Montpellier's own specialty is *beurre de Montpellier*, a green butter made by mixing ordinary butter with garlic and herbs.

Tipping

The tip is generally included in the bill in French restaurants and *cafés*. The term *service compris* or *prix net* indicates that the tip has been included in the total cost and no additional tip is necessary. However, it is customary to leave an additional one to three Euros, unless you received poor service. The French do not tip bartenders.

Electricity & Water

Electrical current runs at 220 volts, so US electrical appliances made to run on 110 volts will not work unless you bring a converter. Converters are **not** recommended for appliances such as hair dryers or curling irons because the

current transition can cause them to spark or burn out. These appliances may be purchased inexpensively upon arrival.

Electricity in France is very expensive, so people tend to use much less of it. People are careful to turn on only the lights they need and always turn off the lights before leaving a room. Be careful not to overload circuit breakers and risk blowing fuses.

Strikes

French workers' unions can go on strike in order to demonstrate against work policies with which they are dissatisfied. This can include university professors and administrators, the post office, the bus system, the rail system, airport workers—even students. Be prepared for this possibility and be flexible about your travel plans and activities should this occur. It is also important that students stay in touch with their parents at home and keep them calm. The US media can over-dramatize French strikes, and parents at home may find it difficult to assess student safety. In all cases, the Learning Abroad Center on-site staff ensure that students remain as safe as possible during these events. It is important for students to follow Learning Abroad Center staff instructions during these strikes, stay away from demonstrations, and avoid over-dramatizing these events to friends and family members at home.

Meeting French People

As a student in France, you will need to take the initiative to meet people. The program's cultural activities can provide a forum for meeting people, but it is up to you to take advantage of this opportunity and start a conversation. Just as you have an established circle of friends in the US, the French also have established friends and habits. Don't be afraid to start a conversation and to pursue contact in order to meet new people.

Relationships

Americans have been targeted by individuals interested in gaining a US passport through marriage. Be **very** careful about romantic relationships, and do not act quickly to formalize any relationship. Americans tend to be very naive about these issues, and our students have been used in the process and married unwittingly.

Remember that in any type of sexual relationship you are at risk for a sexually transmitted disease or AIDS. Know a person very well before developing a more intimate relationship, and always demand that you both take necessary precautions and practice safe sex.

The following vocabulary is provided for your safety:

<i>Les maladies sexuelles</i>	sexually transmitted diseases
<i>La pharmacie</i>	drugstore
<i>Un préservatif</i>	a condom
<i>Le SIDA</i>	AIDS

Dating Apps

Be cautious when considering online dating applications or other venues for meeting people. This is particularly important when seeking to meet new people because there are different cultural norms and values that surround relationships of all kinds. What might be considered a casual drink or meal with a person of interest can have a much more significant meaning in a different cultural context. Online dating applications can carry different connotations or serve different purposes than they do in the United States. It is important to remember that it is very difficult for you to safely determine who might be genuinely interested in you and who has ulterior motives (such as stealing your passport or money, or seeking a visa to the US). Given the significant cultural differences between the US and countries abroad, the Learning Abroad Center strongly encourages students to prioritize their academics and be mindful to seek out cultural experiences that are safe, such as through homestays, local staff, and program activities.

Entertainment

There are many festivals (*fêtes*), especially in the spring and summer. These events usually include markets, carnivals, or folk dancing. Montpellier has many points of cultural and historical interest. It is also within an hour's train ride from other popular tourist areas. If, on the other hand, you are looking for an active nightlife, the place to go in the city is near the *Place de la Comédie*, a large square right in Centre Ville. There you will find bars, cafés, and entertainment. Past students have highly recommended the *Médiathèque Fredrico Fellini*, which is a library of film and music. Student memberships are very cheap and movies and CDs are available in any language. Watching French movies is great for language comprehension and many of these films are difficult to find in the US.

Local Transportation

You will find it easy to get around Montpellier either on foot, by bus, or by tram. Once in France, the on-site staff will assist you in getting a free University of Montpellier student identification card. Your student ID qualifies you for a discounted monthly transit pass. The same ticket can be used for the bus or tram, and you can purchase them on-board, or at *distributeurs automatiques*. The monthly pass costs approximately 30 Euros. Bring your passport and an extra passport photo at the time of purchase.

Bus

There are several lines that serve the entire city. Most bus lines in Montpellier do not operate late at night. In addition, bus drivers have been known to go on strike rather frequently. This may be relevant for students living with host families in the suburbs who wish to go out a lot, although there is now a tram that runs until quite late at night. There

are various ways to get around this: walking with friends, bicycling, getting a ride with a French friend, or sharing a taxi fare with friends that live in the same area. Walking alone at night, especially for women, is not a good idea. It is also advised that students avoid being alone in the train station after dark.

Tram

There are four tram lines in Montpellier. Refer to the *Transports de l'agglomération de Montpellier* (TaM) homepage at tam-voyages.com for complete information on bus and tram routes, schedules, maps, fares, and more.

Biking

Montpellier is very accepting of bikers and biking. If your bike is something that you can't live without here, you may appreciate having one abroad. Many students have found it fairly easy to purchase a used bike in Montpellier. Used bikes are advertised for sale in the area newspaper and are posted at the University. They are also for sale at the flea market. Once you are in Montpellier, ask the on-site staff for more information. Alternatively, TaM rents bicycles for long or short term.



Social & Cultural Adjustments

Student Identity

As a foreigner in France, you will need to take the initiative to meet people. Don't be afraid to start a conversation with others.

Race & Ethnicity

France is a multicultural society, and people of color are generally well received. African influence is particularly evident due to the cooperative projects and business exchanges France has with numerous former French colonies in Africa. There is also a large population of North African immigrants in Montpellier.

You may wish to consult the resources available at the University of Minnesota Learning Abroad Center (LAC) related to students of color and learning abroad. For more information, visit: UMabroad.umn.edu/students/identity.

Gender

Cultural differences regarding the role of women can be challenging for female participants. In general, women in French society enjoy relative equality with men. However, it is not uncommon for women to experience incidents of cat-calling in France. While in the US we would call this harassment, in France it is not necessarily viewed in that way. Be prepared to find your US feminist values and understanding of the world challenged daily.

Montpellier, and France in general, is comparatively safe for women. Incidents of sexual assault do occur, but they are much less common than in major US cities. Use common sense and exercise the same caution you would in a US city, such as always walking with a friend at night and always being aware of your surroundings.

Sexual Orientation

Attitudes toward sexuality vary greatly from country to country. Some cultures are open about homosexuality, and strong gay communities exist in many cities. However, some cultures and peoples are intolerant of different sexual preferences, and strict taboos or laws against such relationships may exist. As a result, it is important to disclose to the program staff either through the program housing form or by contacting the LAC program staff directly for guidance. For more information, visit: UMabroad.umn.edu/students/identity.

Disabilities

Many of the disability accommodations or services that are provided at US universities may be different or unavailable overseas. Being in a new environment can also be stressful, and accommodations that you may not have needed at home may become necessary in an unfamiliar setting. Participants with any kind of disability, whether hidden or visible, should contact the LAC in advance to discuss their particular needs. For more information, visit: UMabroad.umn.edu/students/identity and UMabroad.umn.edu/students/identity/disabilities/accessibilityabroad/europe/Montpellier.

Religious Identity

While separation of church and state is very important in France, the French are, in general, very tolerant of religious difference. However, Muslim students may encounter some discrimination. French law also prohibits the wearing veils or other face coverings in public spaces. This law came about under the conservative government of President Sarkozy, and authorities see the full-face veil not only as an affront to French secular values but also as a potential security risk, since it conceals a person's identity. The law was challenged in the European Court of Human Rights in 2014, but was upheld, because it pertains not just to covering for religious reasons, but to all facial coverings (with some exclusions for safety reasons, such as masks for health reasons and motorcycle helmets). Nevertheless, this may make some Muslim students uncomfortable and it is important to be aware.

Religious-based dietary restrictions are not generally a problem, but we do advise students with such restrictions to consider the apartment option because host families may not be able to accommodate these needs.

Cultural Adjustment

The On-Site Experience

What happens when you suddenly lose clues and symbols that orient you to situations in everyday life? What happens when facial expressions, gestures, and words are unfamiliar? The psychological discomfort and adjustment period in a foreign country is commonly known as culture shock or cultural adjustment.

You will almost certainly experience some form of culture shock. It might hit you after two days, two weeks, or two months—timing varies widely for different people. Six common phases of cultural adjustment are listed below. These may be out of order for you, one phase may last longer than another, or you may skip a step entirely.

Initial Fascination: On arrival, your surroundings seem glamorous and exotic. You feel like the focus of attention and activity.

Initial Culture Shock: The initial fascination and euphoria fade as you settle in and you enter an emotional decline.

Surface Adjustment: After the initial “down” (a few days to a few weeks for most), you begin to truly adjust and settle into your surroundings. Language skills begin to improve, and you’ll feel less fatigued. Often you’ll be forming a small group of friends at this stage as well.

Feelings of Isolation: Difficulties in your new culture seem to stubbornly remain and you grow frustrated with the process. A sense of isolation sets in. Boredom and a lack of

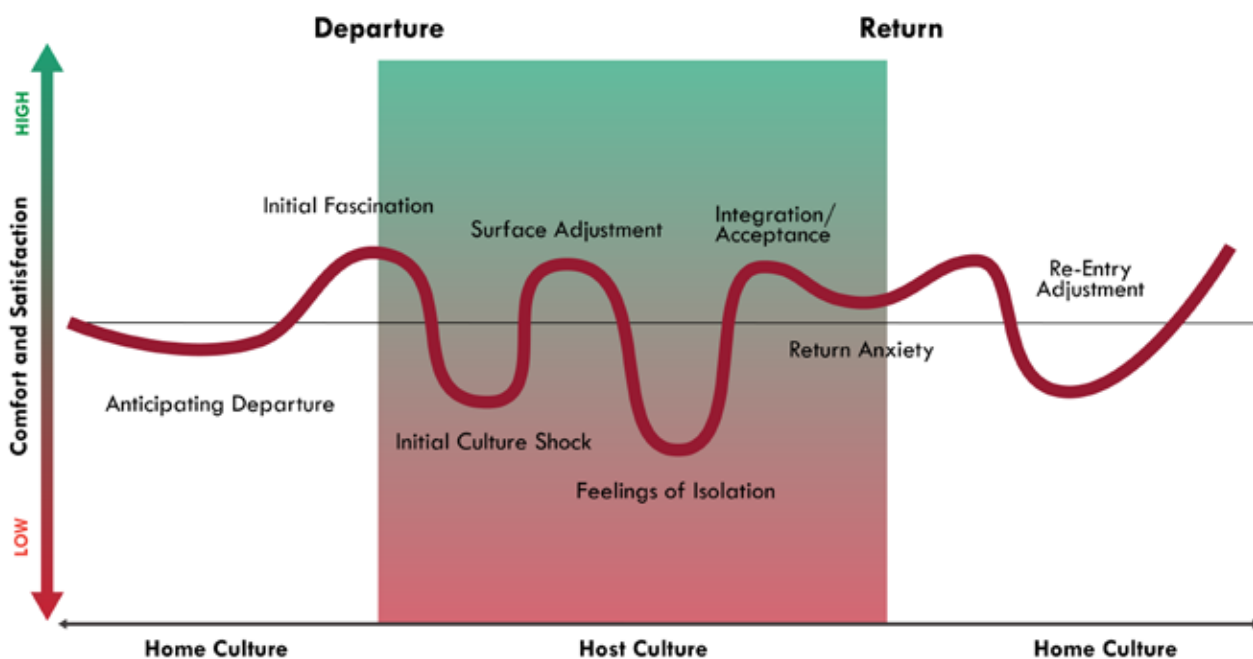
motivation often follow. Unresolved personal issues often surface during this stage.

Integration/Acceptance: After continued effort you find yourself more at ease with language, friends, and professional and academic interests. The culture you are living in is more easily examined. Differences between yourself and the society you live in become understandable and you come to accept both the situation and yourself in it, allowing you to relax and feel at home.

Return Anxiety: Just when you feel at home in the new country it’s time to go. Thoughts of leaving new friends raise anxiety similar to those felt before departure. You sense that you’ve changed as a person, and apprehension grows when you think about people at home who may not understand your new feelings and insights, yet you may feel guilty for wanting to stay.

When in any of the above phases, you may experience changes in sleeping habits, feelings of helplessness or hopelessness, loneliness, depression, unexplainable crying, placing blame for difficulties on the program or host culture, homesickness, getting angry easily, increase in physical ailments or pain, compulsive eating, or lack of appetite.

Other symptoms may manifest themselves as well. It is important to understand these are part of a normal process of adjustment; however, if uncomfortable feelings persist for extended periods or seem unbearable, seek assistance from your program’s on-site support staff.



Adjusted from Oberg (1960) and Gullahorn (1963)

Cultural Adjustment Curve

Looking Ahead

Career Information

Linking Undergraduate International Experience to Your Future Career

Learning abroad can help you develop and enhance intercultural competencies that are appealing to potential employers and graduate schools. Think about your academic and career goals before, during, and after your experience abroad. For more information, visit: UMabroad.umn.edu/students/career-info.

Re-Entry

Students often find that it is just as difficult, if not more difficult, to readjust to life in the US after studying abroad. You may find that your perspectives have changed significantly and that you may not connect with friends and family in the same way you did before going abroad. The LAC offers a variety of resources and opportunities to help you readjust to life in the US. For more information, visit: UMabroad.umn.edu/students/process/reentry.

Appendix

Cultural Resources

Books

A Year in Provence, by Peter Mayle. This novel is told from the humorous perspective of a British citizen living in southern France.

A Year in the Merde, by Stephen Clarke.

Beaux Gestes: A Guide to French Body Talk, by Laurence Wylie. Laurence Wylie is the foremost authority on non-verbal French communication.

Cultural Misunderstandings: The French American Experience, by Raymonde Carroll. Serious study of several points of contrast between French and American culture and values.

Culture Shock. France, by Sally Adamson Taylor. This is an excellent general guide to all aspects France and the French.

Fragile Glory, by Richard Bernstein. An extensive and excellent study of France today by the former cultural correspondent in Paris for the New York Times.

French Lessons, by Alice Kaplan. Memoir of a Midwestern American woman's introduction to the French language and culture.

French or Foe, by Polly Platt. A lively, practical study of how to get along with the French; explores the cultural hurdles to understanding them.

Savoir-Flair: 211 tips for Enjoying France and the French, by Polly Platt.

Village in the Vaucluse, by Laurence Wylie. A look at daily life in a small French village.

Films

Au revoir, les enfants

Louis Malle directed this film based on events that occurred he attended a boarding school during WWII.

Bienvenue chez les Ch'tis

A government worker in the south of France is transferred to the north; stereotypes fall aside, friendships are made, and relationships are renewed.

Jean de Florette and Manon des Sources

These two films give an excellent picture of the scenery and culture of southern France.

Le Fabuleux destin d'Amélie Poulain

Set in Paris, mischievous Amélie works to bring joy to those she encounters in her own quest for personal happiness.

Marseille

A French expat living in Canada returns to the city of his youth.

N'importe qui

A local comedian and stuntman engages in all sorts of antics in Montpellier and its surrounding countryside.

Taxi

An action-comedy film that takes place in Marseille in which a daredevil taxi driver helps the police to track down a band of robbers.

Web

<http://france.com> (General France site)

<http://us.franceguide.com>

Practical and tourism information about France.

<http://ot-montpellier.fr/en>

Montpellier's tourist information site.

<http://zompist.com/frenchcult.html>

Slightly out of date and a bit tongue-in-cheek, but an amusing and generally enlightening insight into French culture.

<http://languedoc-france.info>

Information about Languedoc-Roussillon.

Suggested Packing List

Since you will be carrying your own luggage during the trip, often for long stretches in airports and bus and train stations, it is important that you pack sensibly. Take only as much as you can carry easily by yourself. One way to measure what is easily carried is to pack everything you would like to take, pick it all up, and walk around the block. If you are not comfortable doing so, you may want to re-evaluate what you've packed.

Important: Take clothing that needs a minimal amount of care (this is especially important if you plan to do any independent traveling). You may have to go a couple of weeks without doing any laundry, especially at the beginning of the program. Laundromats will be the only means of doing laundry if you plan to live in the dorms or an apartment. Laundromats are expensive and complicated to use, and it may take some time to make arrangements for your laundry in Montpellier. Dryers are available in laundromats, but not usually in private homes.

Many travelers to Europe find that the most practical solution is to wash all underwear by hand and to take only such outer clothing as can be worn many times without showing soil. Jeans are as common in France as here. Students dress very comfortably, but with style in France. Nice jeans, skirts (for women), nice but comfortable walking shoes, dark colors, and sweaters are all very popular items.

Keep in mind that you cannot ship materials to the program in advance. Any items you wish to mail should be sent by friends or family members after your arrival.

Suggested Clothing to Pack

(These are only suggestions; you should adjust accordingly to your own personal tastes and style.)

- Underwear
- Socks
- 4 shirts
- 1–2 zip sweatshirts or warm jackets to wear after physical activities
- 2 pair jeans or pants
- 1 nice outfit
- 1 pair pajamas
- Comfortable walking shoes
- 1 pair running/cross-training/tennis shoes
- Shorts and T-shirts for afternoon activities
- 1 pair beach shoes or sandals
- 1 swimsuit plus beach towel
- Raincoat
- Jacket for cool weather
- 2 pairs of shorts/2 skirts

- Sunglasses and sunhat
- Accessories

Other necessary items may include:

- Toothpaste and toothbrush
- Comb/brush
- Dental floss
- Shaving kit
- Deodorant
- Feminine hygiene products
- Temporary supply of soap, shampoo (in unbreakable containers)
- Aspirin or other painkiller
- Supply of prescription medicine
- Extra pair of eyeglasses or contact lenses
- Sewing kit
- Safety pins
- Umbrella
- French phrase book
- French-English dictionary
- Lightweight sleeping bag or sleep sack (if you plan to travel and stay in hostels)
- Camera (and all necessary equipment)
- Travel alarm clock

Most of these personal items can be found in France; however, you may want to bring enough of your favorite brands to last you during your stay. Students also note that products in France tend to be more expensive than in the US.

Don't forget to also bring along the following:

- A supply of any prescription medication you take, sufficient for the duration of your time abroad. Contact the LAC for help if you are unable to obtain a sufficient supply in advance.
- Copy of your insurance policy number and medical information concerning allergies, medications, blood type, immunization history, eyeglasses, or other prescriptions
- CISI card and brochure
- Photocopy of your passport and visa (scan your passport and email a copy to yourself)
- Photocopy of front and back of any credit/ATM cards you bring with you
- Handouts from the online orientations
- This Montpellier Program Handbook
- Important phone numbers and email addresses of advisers at your home university

STUDENT INDEPENDENT TRAVEL FORM

This form must be completed for all independent travel as indicated by the release and waiver you signed prior to participation. Failure to complete in full and submit prior to departure will be grounds for review and sanctions as outlined in the Policy on Student Conduct in Education Abroad Opportunities (UMabroad.umn.edu/assets/files/PDFs/policies/rightsResponsibilities/Student_Conduct_17_web.pdf).

Note:

1. You are not allowed to travel to a country or region under US State Department Travel Advisory Levels 3 and 4 or a country or region not recognized by the US government (e.g., North Korea) without prior approval. A copy of the suspension committee approval is required with this form.
2. Independent travel should not interfere with academic work, classes, or events. On-site staff has the authority to deny travel due to such conflicts.
3. Failure to return on time may be subject to dismissal. Travel with your program contact details and keep the staff updated on any changes to your plans.

Complete one form per student, per trip.

Student name _____ Cell phone (if applicable) _____

Proposed destination(s) _____

Departure date _____ Return date _____

US emergency contact name, email, and phone number _____

Contact information while traveling (below):

Dates at this location	City and country	Name of hotel or host	Phone number	Email address

Transportation Information:

Additional Information:

Signatures

Student Signature _____ Date _____

Authorized On-Site Staff Signature _____ Date _____

Acknowledge receipt: The form must be signed and dated by both the student and the authorized on-site staff person prior to travel and kept on file for the duration of program period.