

Study & Intern in Buenos Aires

PROGRAM HANDBOOK 2019–2020



LEARNING ABROAD CENTER

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Important Names & Addresses

In the United States

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Emergencies

In case of emergency, contact the Learning Abroad Center at 612.626.9000 at any time. If it is after business hours, there will be a recording giving you a number to call. The Learning Abroad Center has someone on call to deal with emergencies and can contact the on-site administrators if needed.

In Argentina

Once overseas, participants should contact The Fundación Ortega y Gasset in case of an emergency.

Fundación Ortega y Gasset—Argentina
Viamonte esq. San Martín

Centro Cultural Borges, 3° Piso
C1053ABK Buenos Aires, Argentina

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Fax: 54.11.5555.5452

www.ortegaygasset.com.ar

Inés Viñuales, Director

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Telephone Codes

To call a landline in Argentina from the US, dial:
011-54 + {phone number}.

To call an Argentine cell phone from the US, dial:
011-54-9 + {phone number}

Time Differences

Argentina does not observe Daylight Savings Time. Local time in Buenos Aires is one hour ahead of Minneapolis time when Daylight Savings Time is not in effect (early November—early March) and two hours ahead of Minneapolis time when Daylight Savings Time is in effect (early March—early November).

Program Health & Safety

Program health and safety information is available at 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

With over one-third of Argentines living in and around the capital, vibrant Buenos Aires provides the ideal backdrop for the study of Argentine language and culture. As one of the foremost economic centers of Latin America, and the political and economic heart of Argentina, it is also the ideal place to delve into the complex history and present state of Argentina's government and business. Boasting several premier universities and a lively student population, Buenos Aires is renowned for its museums, theatre, restaurants, high fashion, polo events, and soccer matches that inspire passionate inter-city rivalries. Despite this larger-than-life quality, Buenos Aires still retains small neighborhoods, the barrios, each with its own unique character.

While in Buenos Aires, you will be taking classes at the Fundación Jose Ortega y Gasset. It is located next to the Galerías Pacifico on Calle Florida in central Buenos Aires. You will check email, take classes, and receive all program support at the Fundación.

There are many similarities between Argentina and the United States, but in many ways Argentine society and culture is not like our own. Although some differences may seem obvious, it is important to prepare yourself for your upcoming experience by reading the enclosed information carefully and by preparing for unexpected differences in the new culture.

While the program can provide support for you on site, the ultimate success of your experience abroad depends on your ability and commitment to make the most of the experience and to successfully adjust to the changes you will meet.

The information contained in the Program Handbook is intended to acquaint you with aspects of Argentine life that may not be familiar to you. It also addresses academic issues and considerations at your home institution. Take this guide with you to Argentina. It is not meant to be comprehensive. We encourage you to read other sources of information including books, online newspapers, and travel guides.

To help you along the way, the Learning Abroad Center provides a full range of services from preliminary program advising to assistance with re-entry. As you read through this guide, do not hesitate to contact the Learning Abroad Center or your study abroad adviser with any questions you may have.

¡Buena suerte!

Preparation & Planning

Documents

Passport

A valid passport is required to enter Argentina. If you don't have a passport, you should apply for one right away. Passports can take 4–6 weeks to process, so it's important to begin this process early. In addition, you must have a passport before applying for your visa.

More information is available at: travel.state.gov/passport/passport_1738.html.

If you currently have a passport, ensure that it will be valid for at least six months from the date you enter Argentina. If not, you will need to renew it prior to departure.

Embassy Contact Info

Always keep your passport in a safe place. If your passport is lost or stolen, contact the local police, the American Consulate or Embassy, and the on-site staff. To identify the consulate or embassy nearest you, consult usembassy.gov.

Visa/Immigration Documents

A student visa is not required for the program. US citizens may enter Argentina for up to 90 days on a tourist visa.

Summer programs do not exceed this length and semester programs visit Uruguay mid-semester such that students are never in Argentina for more than 90 consecutive days.

Non-US Passport Holders

Students who are not traveling under a US passport may have to follow different visa procedures in order to enter Argentina. Please contact the Learning Abroad Center's Visa Assistant (lacvisa@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](https://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.

Flight & Transportation Information

You will fly in and out of Ministro Pistarini (Ezeiza) International Airport in Buenos Aires (airport code: EZE). Arrival transportation from the airport into the city is provided by our partner organization, and the pick-up time aligns with the group flight arrival time.

You have two options for booking your flight: booking the coordinated group flight, or booking a flight independently with a similar arrival time.

You will arrange your own transportation back to the airport at the end of the program.

Coordinated Group Flight

Purpose & Benefits of Village Travel

The Learning Abroad Center works with Village Travel, a local travel agency, to arrange a coordinated flight for all programs. The flight is optional but strongly encouraged, and is arranged for those who want to fly with other program participants. When available, the coordinated group flight itinerary will be posted on Village Travel's website at: villageinc.com/study-abroad/university-of-minnesota/learning-abroad-center/study-abroad-in-buenos-aires.

Village Travel is a full-service travel agency and can help you extend your stay in Argentina or depart from a city other than Minneapolis. Students joining the program from other schools typically meet up with the group in the connecting US city (e.g., Atlanta or Dallas).

All students are required to provide the LAC with a copy of their flight information.

Flying Independently

You are welcome to book your own flight and travel independently of the group. However, you must arrive by the time the group flight arrives. The group is collected from the airport in Buenos Aires and immediately taken into the city (about 40 minutes away). If you arrive late and miss the group, you will be responsible for arranging and paying for your own transportation into the city. If you have extenuating circumstances and cannot meet the group in Buenos Aires, please contact the program team prior to making travel arrangements to discuss your situation.

Arriving Early

We do allow students to arrive in advance of the program. If you choose to arrive before the program begins, be aware that you are responsible for booking your flight accordingly. You also will need to arrange and pay for your own transportation into the city as well as accommodations,

since program housing is not available until the official start date of the program. Lastly, you will need to work with the Learning Abroad Center to coordinate how you will meet up with the group prior to orientation.

Staying After the Program

You are welcome to remain in Argentina after the program ends to take advantage of the opportunity to travel around the country and/or region. Since most airlines charge a fee to change your ticket once you've booked it, it's helpful to decide if you want to stay on, and for how long, before you purchase your flight.

Round-Trip Airline Tickets

For visa reasons, you must book either a round-trip ticket or a one-way flight with proof of onward travel (outside of Argentina), since you may be asked to clearly show the dates you are both entering and exiting Argentina at customs.

Packing

Packing Principles

Packing for your entire time abroad may seem like a daunting task. Keep in mind that you will be able to do laundry abroad, so it's best to focus on packing enough clothing for only 7–10 days, regardless of the length of your stay.

Due to increasing restrictions on the amount and/or weight of the luggage airlines allow, you'll want to think strategically about what you pack, and try to pack minimally. Most students overpack and are surprised by how little they actually need to get by on a daily basis. Also, remember that you will be responsible for physically managing your own luggage at all times, including excursions and transport between the airport and the program site. Pack accordingly!

Be sure to check with your airline so that you are aware of the baggage allowance in advance. Also, remember that you will accumulate things while in Argentina and will want to have extra space in your luggage for the trip home. Don't pack the maximum allowed on the way to Argentina, as it will likely mean leaving some things behind on your trip back.

Things like toiletries, school supplies, and other everyday items are easily acquired in Buenos Aires. You can save space by packing only travel-sized toiletries and one notebook, for example.

Prioritize packing things you are sure you will use, and try to leave behind at least a few things you "might" need (for example, a beach towel), knowing that you can purchase these things in Argentina if the need arises.

In general, it's best to pack versatile clothing you can mix and match, wear in a variety of circumstances, or layer as

the weather changes. Bring durable clothing that's easy to take care of; avoid packing expensive or delicate clothing.

You'll also want to think carefully about footwear. Pack shoes that are sturdy, versatile, and comfortable to walk in, as you will be doing a lot of walking—both as part of your daily commute and on the excursions you'll do with the program.

See the packing list at the end of this handbook for specific packing recommendations.

Laundry

While some host families will do students' laundry at home, most students will use a drop-off service at a local laundromat. This service is convenient and inexpensive. Most laundromats charge by the weight of the clothing and will wash, dry, and fold clothing so that you can pick it up in as little as 24 hours. Ask your family to recommend a laundromat close to you.

Weather

Don't forget that Argentina has seasons. Semester students, especially, need to pack for a range of weather conditions. Visit climate-zone.com to learn more about Argentina's climate for the time of year you'll be there.

Appropriate Clothing

Most Argentines tend to dress with a very fashion-conscious eye. They are very concerned about dress and are generally stylish and fashionable. Style and quality of clothing are important indicators of a person's status and respectability. Clothing trends tend to be more casual during the day.

However, Argentines typically do not wear sweatpants or baggy clothing when out and about in the city. You will see many people wearing brand-name clothing common in the US like Gap, Abercrombie & Fitch, and Levi Strauss.

Clothing tends to be expensive in Buenos Aires, so you should pack efficiently in order to avoid having to purchase clothing abroad. At night people tend to dress up more, typically wearing black pants or nice jeans and dressy shirts. In fact, some nicer bars and clubs enforce a dress code, and will not admit you unless you are appropriately dressed.

You should plan to dress casually during the day and dressy at night. Avoid shorts, gym shoes, and baseball hats. It also should be noted, especially for women, that Argentines tend to dress a bit more conservatively than US students.

Showing a lot of skin might invite staring and other forms of unwanted attention.

Electricity

Electrical current runs on a different system in Argentina. Their system uses 220 volts, while the American system uses 110. Without the use of a converter/adaptor, your appliance will burn out in a matter of seconds. Converters are available in most electronic stores but are somewhat expensive, approximately US \$35. Besides the converter,

you will need an outlet plug adapter. Since most types of appliances can be purchased in Argentina, there is not a need to bring any electrical appliances with you.

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 that will receive information only in the case of an emergency.

Official Communications

Your UofM email address is the official means of communication. Learning Abroad Center 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.

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.

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.

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.

Vaccinations, Immunizations, & Travel Medicine

The LAC recommends that all students visit a travel clinic before their program abroad. Make an appointment as soon as possible so that you can get a scheduled appointment in time to complete any required and recommended immunization series. Many travel clinics often book far in advance (especially around the holidays), and some immunizations need to be started months in advance of your departure. For more information, visit: **UMabroad.umn.edu/students/healthsafety/preplanning**.

Review the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention **cdc.gov/travel** and US Department of State **travel.state.gov** websites for general vaccination, immunization, and other travel medical information for the countries you will visit. However, only a travel clinic will be able to make a recommendation tailored for your specific travel plans and health history.

Malaria & Dengue Prevention

Consult with your travel clinic regarding malaria and dengue risks and prevention.

Your travel health clinic will most likely recommend that you take a prophylactic (preventive) drug for malaria. It is essential that you purchase and take the medication as recommended by your healthcare provider. Depending on your insurance coverage, malaria medication may be very expensive but it is well worth its benefits. If you get malaria, you will become very ill very quickly, may need hospitalization, and may suffer lifelong consequences.

Students in the past have inquired about purchasing malaria preventive medication in their study abroad country. The LAC strongly advises against this approach for two reasons. First, in order to be protected, you must take the medication prior to your departure. Second, exposure to malaria-carrying mosquitoes could occur as soon as you arrive in

country. While the medication cannot prevent you from contracting malaria, it significantly reduces the symptoms, allows you time to seek medical attention at a clinic in country, and facilitates a more speedy recovery.

Speak with your US travel clinic about possible side effects and alternative anti-malarials if a change needs to be made overseas. Not all overseas physicians are aware of the different types of medications available, so inform yourself before you leave. Should you experience side effects once overseas, speak with the on-site staff and your US travel clinic about next steps.

Your travel clinic will also likely suggest that you purchase insect repellent with at least 21% DEET to help ward against malaria-carrying mosquitoes as well as those carrying other illnesses. You should use insect repellent during the day and especially at dusk and in the evenings. Mosquitoes carrying dengue fever are active in the day, and malaria-carrying mosquitoes are active at night.

There is currently no vaccine or medicine to prevent dengue. Travelers can protect themselves by preventing mosquito bites.

For more information, visit:

wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/diseases/malaria and **wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/diseases/dengue**.

Rabies Vaccination

Consult with your travel clinic regarding rabies vaccination. The rabies vaccine is often recommended for travelers who may come into contact with wild or domestic animals. Keep in mind that it is not possible to initiate the vaccinations in the US and then complete them overseas. Dosage and type of vaccinations differ from country to country. For more information, visit: **wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/diseases/rabies**.

Yellow Fever

Travelers to certain parts of South America and Africa are at risk for yellow fever. Some countries require all travelers to show proof of yellow fever vaccination before they can enter the country. Other countries require proof of vaccination only if travelers have been in a risk area, so if you are visiting multiple countries, the order of travel may be important.

Proof of vaccination is not valid until 10 days after you get the vaccine, so plan to get the vaccine early if you need it. Not all travel clinics carry the yellow fever vaccination, so search for a yellow fever travel clinic at **wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/yellow-fever-vaccination-clinics/search**.

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 than 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 additional 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 Learning Abroad Center 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 implications of learning abroad, 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 (e.g., 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.

Resources for UofM Students

- Student Counseling Services (counseling.umn.edu) and Boynton Mental Health Clinic (bhs.umn.edu/east-bank-clinic/mental-health-services.htm): Staff in both settings can inform you about treatment options and offer immediate crisis counseling if needed.
- Behavior Consultation Team (BCT) (mentalhealth.umn.edu/facstaff/behavioral-consultation.html): If you are concerned about causing harm to yourself or others, call the University's BCT at 011.612.626.3030. For additional resources, visit mentalhealth.umn.edu.

Safety

Travel & Safety Considerations

State Department Travel website

Consult the United States 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 and US Department of State: travel.state.gov websites for travel and safety information.

Program-Specific Safety Considerations

As in most large cosmopolitan cities, safety should always be a concern for students. However, Buenos Aires is

relatively safe as long as you know which areas to avoid. During the on-site orientation, the staff at the Fundación will give you a rundown of the city and advise you on where and where not to go.

Petty theft is very common in Buenos Aires and Argentina. Many past participants have had digital cameras and smartphones stolen. If you go out at night, consider leaving your valuables at home. Always use caution when walking around with expensive items in hand, and always lock your doors.

Embassy STEP Registration

The LAC will register you with the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP), which makes your presence in Argentina 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.

Personal Safety

When traveling overseas, there are a number of precautions you should follow in order to travel safely. Consult the US State Department's resources and your orientation materials for up-to-date information on travel precautions for the country where you will be studying or traveling.

For more information on women travelers: travel.state.gov/content/passports/english/go/Women.html

For more information on students abroad: travel.state.gov/content/studentsabroad/en.html.

For more information on staying safe while abroad: UMabroad.umn.edu/students/healthsafety/safetyabroad.

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](https://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 location 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 with a travel advisory of 3 or higher, as determined by the US Department of State. Please visit travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/traveladvisories/traveladvisories.html for up-to-date information about travel warning countries. If you have questions about travel restrictions, please contact your study abroad adviser.

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

Arriving at the Program Site

Coordinated Arrival

You will arrive at Ministro Pistarini (Ezeiza) International Airport (airport code EZE) in Buenos Aires. Those taking the group flight and those meeting up with the group flight at the airport will be met at Ezeiza International Airport by a staff member from the program who will be holding a sign that reads “FUNDACIÓN ORTEGA Y GASSET.” This person will travel with you to the housing. After you clear customs with your luggage, the program staff member will assist you in catching a taxi to the housing.

Independent Arrival

Although we strongly recommend that students arrive with the group, it is possible to arrive independently. Please see the “Arriving Early” section on page 5 of this handbook for more information.

Program Information

Orientation in Country

Semester students take part in a weeklong orientation process prior to the start of classes, which includes orientation presentations, Spanish grammar workshops, and an introduction to the program’s core course.

Staff at the Fundación Ortega y Gasset will also help students to exchange currency, purchase a local cell phone, and obtain a transit pass, among other things.

Students participating in the May, winter break, and summer term(s) begin orientation at the Fundación the day after arrival (Sunday) and begin classes the following day (Monday).

Program Excursions

Several excursions to places like San Isidro, Tigre, San Antonio de Areco, Luján, and, in Uruguay, the historical city of Colonia del Sacramento are included in the program fee.

Specific dates and itineraries of all excursions will be communicated via the program calendar, which you will receive two weeks prior to departure. Since classes meet Monday through Thursday, this leaves a number of three-day weekends that you may use for travel. You'll also have a week-long midsemester break that you can use for a longer trip.

In-Country Staff

The staff at the Fundación Ortega y Gasset are committed to helping you have a positive experience while you are in Argentina. Beatriz Comte is the academic coordinator and Carola Bracco is the student services coordinator. Either of them can assist you with any issues you are experiencing in Argentina. Do not hesitate to reach out to them if you need support or assistance while abroad.

Program Center

The Learning Abroad Center partners with the Fundación Ortega y Gasset Argentina in order to offer this program. The Fundación is located on the third floor of the Borges Cultural Center in Downtown Buenos Aires.

The program center is home to classrooms as well as staff and administrative offices. All classes are held here.

The center is located within a popular shopping district with numerous restaurants, shops, kiosks and banks nearby, making it convenient for students.

Housing Considerations

Housing

All students will live with a local host family for the duration of the program. Host families provide both breakfast and dinner each day.

Notification of Placement

Students will typically be notified of their housing placement via email approximately one week prior to departure.

Housing Concerns

Living with a family is what you make of it. But sometimes people are just not compatible. When frustrations or concerns arise, the staff at the Fundación are there to help

you, and can even arrange a new family if necessary. Many students make lifelong ties to their Argentine families.

Homestay Families

The Placement Process

Students will be placed according to family availability and preferences indicated on the Housing Placement Form.

Homestay Conditions

Day-to-day living arrangements will be different with each family. For example, the host mother may do your laundry, or you will do it in the house, or you may go to a Laundromat to wash your clothes. Sheets and towels will be provided but you may want to bring one towel for traveling. You will also be able to use household items such as the iron, stove, refrigerator, etc. Make sure that you ask before using anything, especially before you have established a comfortable pattern of everyday interaction. It is better to be over-courteous than under-courteous.

Students may share a room with another program participant, have their own bedroom, or share a room with a host family son/daughter. As with many other parts of your new life in Argentina, it will take a little while to become accustomed to the changes, but if you are flexible it will soon feel like you have been doing it your whole life. For many people, living with a family is one of the best parts of their experience while in Argentina. Homestays offer a firsthand look at Argentine culture and society, as well as an opportunity to be immersed in the Spanish language. Your family can become a way for you to meet other Argentines. Keep in mind that families in Argentina can be as diverse as families in the US. Every family will be different. More than likely you will be living in an apartment because single-family houses are not as common in Argentina. You will have your own room and private space where you will be able to study. Sometimes a family is made up of just one or two members.

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.

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.

Academics

Policies

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

All academic courses take place on site at the Fundación José Ortega y Gasset. You will pre-register for classes prior to departure. Once in Buenos Aires, you will be placed in classes that coincide with your pre-registration plans. Students on the fall or spring semester program take 13–18 credits, generally five classes. May/summer students take one course per three-week term for a total of 3–5 credits per term.

Spanish classes meet for two hours daily from Monday through Thursday. You will have classes scheduled anywhere from 10 a.m.–2 p.m. and 4–7 p.m. Semester students do not have class on Fridays.

Classes taken by program participants in Buenos Aires will show up on transcripts as University of Minnesota credits. Grades will figure into GPA just as they would in the US. All courses must be taken on an A–F grade base. Pass-fail grade base is not an option for any class in Argentina.

The Fundación offers a wide variety of courses in several disciplines to suit a range of academic needs, including Spanish, literature, Latin American studies, and more. Most courses engage the city, people, and surroundings as a living laboratory.

Language of Instruction

The Fundación José Ortega y Gasset offers both intensive Spanish and upper-level elective courses that are taught in Spanish. A variety of English-taught electives are also available.

Global Identity

Global Identity: Connecting Your International Experience to Your Future

This optional, one-credit course will provide opportunities for you to “make meaning” of your learning abroad experience and prepare you to communicate your intercultural competence to future employers, graduate

schools, or law schools. As global connectivity becomes increasingly important, you are asked to think beyond the borders of your own perception and better understand the world based on the new ideas and experiences to which you are exposed. Your ability to work in a multicultural setting and succeed in different cultural contexts is vital to your future. This course will help you apply these skills to your post-graduation plans.

For more information, visit: UMabroad.umn.edu/students/academics/globalidentity.

Community Engagement

Service-Learning in Buenos Aires—ARGN 3640

- Fall & Spring
- 3 Credits
- *Prerequisite = SPAN 1003

This course emphasizes learning outside the classroom and reflection and critical thinking within the classroom to understand communities and social change. Community engagement means engagement in the community and learning as the highest priority. The aim of this course is that you are able to make connections between what is learned in the classroom and what is observed outside the classroom; to test theories and research against social realities and vice versa. Fulfill your on-site community engagement through nongovernmental organizations and other community service organizations devoted to helping children and adults who do not have access to basic rights such as education, health, or a home. Learn about impoverished urban areas and the situation of immigrants from border countries and groups at high risk (women, children, seniors). Each week, you will spend 1½ hours in class and 2 to 3 hours at your placement site.

ARGN 3640 has been approved for the Civic Life and Ethics core and the Global Perspectives theme.

Past internship placements have included:

- Assisting at a health center
- Working with children and young people with AIDS/HIV
- Tutoring children in elementary school
- Cooking meals, giving English lessons, or playing sports with children at a community center
- Helping inmates at a mental health hospital with vegetable garden
- Working at a children's home

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.

Maintaining Full-Time Status

Students are required to maintain full-time registration status as defined by their individual program throughout the duration of their study abroad program. Dropping or withdrawing from a class will not be allowed if it will bring a student below the required full-time enrollment.

Post-Program Registration

While abroad, University of Minnesota students and most other students will need to register for classes for the following term on their home campus. You must make any necessary arrangements prior to departure so that you are able to register while overseas. In many cases, students are able to register online.

Course Drop/Add/Withdrawal

Course Changes

These must be made in consultation with the on-site staff and per the deadlines as outlined on the LAC's Academic Policies website.

Drop/Add

You must speak with the on-site staff prior to dropping or adding a class. You will have two weeks from the beginning

of the program to drop/add classes. After the second week you will receive a "W" on your transcript if you drop and you will need the approval of on-site staff as well as the Learning Abroad Center in order to add.

UMN 13-Credit Policy

University of Minnesota students are required to maintain a minimum enrollment of 13 credits per semester or maintain the minimum credit enrollment determined by their study abroad program, whichever is greater. For certain semester programs, 12 credits is considered a full-time course load.

Academic Culture

Academic Rigor

The program is designed to be academically rigorous, and it is each student's responsibility to maintain good study habits and complete assignments on time.

Grades & Transcripts

Grades will be posted to the University of Minnesota transcript 6–8 weeks after the LAC has received them from the program. Grades will be converted into US equivalents, if necessary, prior to being posted on the University of Minnesota transcript. The LAC will provide one free transcript to the home institution of all non-University of Minnesota students. Additional transcripts can be ordered separately on the One Stop Student Services website: onestop.umn.edu.

Incompletes

Students are generally expected to complete all course requirements by the end of the term. In very rare circumstances, students can arrange an "Incomplete" in consultation with the instructor, the on-site staff, and the LAC, whereby the remaining work can be finished shortly after returning to the US.

Grade Appeals

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
- Health concerns/missed classes

Consult with your program contact in the LAC if you believe an error has occurred and you wish to complete the Grade Petition Form.



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 Learning Abroad Center or affiliated programs offered through the LAC, students should make inquiries and appeals to the appropriate University officials, in the following order: the program representative in the LAC, the Assistant Dean for Learning Abroad, the Student Conflict 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 Argentina

History

Europeans first arrived in the region in the early 16th century. Subsequent Spanish colonization led to the establishment of Buenos Aires in 1580. Independence from Spain was achieved in 1816, after which a conflict between centralists and federalists developed until a new constitution was proclaimed in 1853. Argentina was then marked by periods of internal political conflict between conservatives and liberals and between civilian and military factions. In

the beginning of the 20th century, Argentina was one of the leading economies in the world. After World War II, the country saw the rise of the populist Peron movement, which to a large extent polarized Argentina. Increasingly bloody military juntas alternated with democratic governments until 1983. Since then, four free elections have underscored Argentina's progress in democratic consolidation, even with an unprecedented economic implosion at the end of 2001.

Politically, Argentina is a federal republic, divided into 23 provinces and a federal district. This system recognizes three governments: executive (practiced by the president of the republic), legislative (congress of the nation), and judicial (supreme court justice).

The cycle of economic roller coasting, political instability, military brutality, and growing wealth divisions has continued to plague the country for decades. Since 1989 inflation has fluctuated wildly and unemployment soared; the peso was pegged one-to-one against the US dollar with disastrous consequences, leading to harsh restrictions on bank withdrawals and cash shortages.

In December 2001, Argentina defaulted on a US \$132 billion loan repayment—the largest default in history. As a result, rioting, looting, and widespread civil chaos in which 27 people were killed broke out on Buenos Aires' streets. Endemic political corruption has only compounded the economic malaise. This has led to a revolving door of leaders, until January 2002 when Eduardo Duhalde became Argentina's fifth president in two weeks.

Although the social unrest has for the most part eased, Buenos Aires' journey out of this financial pit promises to be long and perilous. The city's famed sense of sophistication and pride will be tested as never before.

If you are interested in learning more about Argentine history and culture, look for more information on Juan and Eva Peron, the Madres de los Desaparecidos, the Islas Malvinas, the Dirty War, and the history of the Tango and Carlos Gardel.

Geography & Climate

Since Argentina is in the southern hemisphere, seasons are the reverse of what they are in the United States; that is, summer occurs between December and February and the coldest months are June through August. The climate in Argentina varies greatly from the north to the south. In Buenos Aires, temperatures usually range from the 70s to the 90s during October to April and from the 40s to the 60s during May to September with temperatures rarely dropping below 32 degrees, while in southern Argentina the temperatures hover right around 50 degrees year-round. Buenos Aires also experiences little rainfall averaging less than four inches per month. Summer months—December, January, and February—are quite hot while the winter months tend to be very humid.

Language

Spanish is the official language of Argentina. You may be able to use English in the markets and airports, but communicating in English may be more of a challenge in some places. Few people outside of Buenos Aires speak English. So, you can expect to speak Spanish when travelling around Argentina. You may find it helpful to bring a Spanish phrase book along.

Useful Phrases

Yes	Sí
No	No
Good morning/day	Buenos días
How are you?	¿Como está usted?
My name is	Me llamo
Please	Por favor
Do you speak English?	¿Habla usted inglés?
You have been very kind	Ha sido muy amable
Thank you	Gracias
Too much	Demasiado
You're welcome	De nada
I beg your pardon	Perdón
Goodbye	Adiós/Chau
I don't understand	No entiendo
Where are you from?	¿De donde es usted?

The Italian-accented Argentine Spanish, called *castellano*, readily identifies an Argentine anywhere in the world. Though Spanish is the official language and spoken throughout the country, some immigrant communities have retained their languages as a badge of identity. English is studied, spoken, and understood by many Argentines, especially in Buenos Aires. Italian is the language of the largest immigrant group and also understood by some, as is French.

Argentina has over a dozen native languages, though some are spoken by very few individuals. In the Andean Northwest, Quechua speakers are numerous; most are also Spanish speakers. In the Southern Andes, there are at least 40,000 Mapuche speakers. In northeastern Argentina there are about 15,000 each of Guaraní and Toba speakers.

Argentines are very patient with foreigners who try to speak their language. They appreciate an attempt at the language and would never correct your pronunciation or grammar unless you specifically asked them to, or if they cannot understand what you want to say.

Argentines also use the *vos* verb form, which commonly replaces the *tú* verb form. Although all Argentines will understand if you use the *tú* form, many will speak back to you using the *vos* form. You will also get lessons in your Spanish classes on how to use the *vos* form.

Meals

Upon arrival in Argentina, you will encounter not only a change in culture and lifestyle, but also a change in the types of food offered. You should be prepared to adjust to the differences in meals and meal times in Argentina: *desayuno*, breakfast, is served from 7–11 a.m. and is a light meal, usually consisting of coffee or tea, toast, and/or biscuits. The main meal of the day is the *almuerzo*, or lunch served between 12:30 and 2 p.m., while the *cena*, supper, is eaten between 9 and 10 p.m. A typical Argentine *almuerzo* or *cena* consists of a soup, pasta, or vegetable dish, and meat or chicken. Argentina also has particularly high-quality beef. Fish is served, though not quite as often because it is more expensive. Some meals are accompanied by a green salad, and all are followed by a dessert or *postre*, usually consisting of a piece of fruit. Many times coffee or tea also follow a meal. You should keep in mind that you will be eating a large meal in the afternoon.

Nevertheless, if you are accustomed to having a large breakfast, you may want to pick up a mid-morning snack to supplement your breakfast.

It is also worth noting that food culture in Argentina is much different than here in the US. Meals are considered a time to relax and connect with family and friends. It is not uncommon for meals to last for up to two hours, so be prepared to set aside this time to spend with your host family. Rushing through a meal and leaving the table early would be considered rude.

Because Buenos Aires is a cosmopolitan city, it hosts a wide variety of food choices ranging from sushi to Mexican, and Arabic to Indian, in addition to any fast food restaurant you can think of.

Those of you who are fond of tasting regional food will be pleased to find that Argentina offers exquisite regional dishes such as *empanadas*, minced meat and other ingredients covered with puff pastry, and *locro*, a pork and corn stew.

Additionally, Argentina is famous for *asados*, barbecued and grilled meat dishes, mainly beef, but also pork, lamb, and chicken. *Sandwiches de miga* are wonderful dainty sandwiches made of very thin-crust white bread and filled with slices of ham and cheese. *Churros* are also worth a taste. They are like donuts and can come filled with dulce de leche or chocolate. Croissants, or *media lunas*, are also popular pastries. Be an adventurous eater.

The Argentine national dish is beef. Most restaurants serve steak at very reasonable prices and it is some of the best steak that you will ever eat.

All students should plan on buying lunch, which costs US \$8–10 for a beverage, lunch, and dessert. Be adventurous and try new dishes. You may be surprised at the new dishes for which you will acquire a taste.

Vegetarian items will be available at all meals. If you are a vegetarian, please be aware that you will have to be very specific when letting people know what you will or will not eat. Because meat is so often served with meals, make sure to inform the necessary people as soon as you are able of your food preferences. That said, because of the large variety of food served in Buenos Aires, you should not have trouble finding food to meet your needs.

Note: Argentines do not eat peanut butter and it is very difficult to find peanut butter in any Argentine store. It is possible to find it but it is often very expensive and sometimes it has been on the shelf for a long time. If you think you might miss peanut butter, bring your own.

Alcohol & Soft Drinks

Soft drinks are available everywhere in Argentina. The national non-alcoholic drink in Argentina is called *mate*, which is a tea infusion that Argentines drink any time of the day and is quite famous as an energy drink.

It may be helpful to know that when you are dining out, water is not complimentary and must be ordered.

Most Argentines drink wine. They're used to drinking wine with their families while having dinner and especially while eating *asados*. Beer and other alcoholic drinks are also quite common.



Relationships

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.

Life in Buenos Aires

Buenos Aires is like many South American cities in its central design with a central square surrounded by a church, government house, and banks. However, the city also reflects French, Italian, and Spanish architecture styles from the turn of the century. Old mansions can be seen next to high-rise buildings. Of particular interest are the famous Teatro Colón opera house, the Congress palace, the government house, Casa Rosada, the Cabildo, a municipal government house during the colonial period, and the Obelisco, a symbol of Buenos Aires, as well as the luxurious neoclassic and French Renaissance style of the Palacio San Martín and Museo de Arte Decorativo. Other attractions include San Telmo's flea market, La Boca, a brightly painted neighborhood, La Recoleta, a fashionable area of the city, and more than 150 art galleries and museums.

Buenos Aires is an athletic-based city perfect for jogging and other outdoor activities. Argentines enjoy playing soccer at the squares, as well as rollerblading and biking.

Contrary to many areas of Latin America, Argentine young adults tend to be very independent. Most adult children move out on their own in their early 20s and it is common for them to entertain in their apartments. Argentines in general like to welcome people into their homes and it is not uncommon for visitors to show up unannounced.

Transportation

Argentina has a subway system called the *subterráneo*, or the *subte*. The subte consists of five major lines that run through the city plus one that runs around the perimeter. The subway system covers the city and is an easy, safe, and inexpensive way to get around town. To obtain a round-

trip ticket, request “*Ida y Vuelta*,” which means “there and back.” Additionally, Buenos Aires has an extensive bus system. However, it should be noted that buses in Buenos Aires only accept coins (*monedas*). It is also common to tell the driver where you are going before you sit down. Taxis are also relatively inexpensive in Argentina.

If traveling after 9 or 10 p.m., taxis are the safest and most convenient method of transportation. At the on-site orientation you will take a city tour and receive more information on how to use the public transportation. Pick up a *Guía T*, available at kiosks around the city, for a map of local transportation.

Communication

Students communicate with their friends and family in the US through various means. Students are required to purchase cell phones in country, which allow for unlimited incoming calls (including from the US), text messages, and local calls. Let family and friends in the US know that you will not be able to contact them immediately upon your arrival in country. It may be a day or two before you have the time to make contact, and students frequently correspond most easily by text and email. Video calling is also an easy way to keep in touch.

Internet Access

You will have WiFi internet access at the *Fundación*, where classes are held. In addition, most host families have internet access.

Keep in mind that internet access throughout Argentina will not be as fast or reliable as you are accustomed to here in the US.

Social Media

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

Money Matters

The Argentine monetary unit is the peso (\$). The peso is subdivided into 100 centavos. Coins come in 1, 5, 10, 25, and 50 centavos and 1 peso. Paper money starts at 2 pesos denomination. Check out xe.com for the latest information on exchange rates.

Although credit and debit cards are widely accepted in Argentina, most smaller purchases will be made in cash. In general, we recommend that you bring or have access to:

- \$200 in cash
- A debit card for withdrawing cash and making purchases
- A credit card for larger purchases and in case of emergency

Debit/ATM Card

One of the most convenient ways to access money abroad is via an ATM/debit card. Most cards that are on the Cirrus or Plus networks can be used to withdraw local currency abroad as long as you know your PIN number.

Prior to departure, be sure to contact your bank to let them know that you'll be traveling and to make sure your card is set up for international use.

You'll also want to inquire about the fees associated with using your card abroad (both for purchases and withdrawing money), and if there is a limit on the amount of cash you can withdraw at once.

Credit Cards

We recommend that students have access to a credit card for emergency situations, or for making larger purchases. You will want to inform your bank that you will be traveling. If you don't, they may assume that your foreign transactions are fraudulent and may deny further transactions.

You should also inquire about any fees that would apply to using your card abroad.

Financial Planning

Despite the lower cost of living in Buenos Aires, you should still take some time to budget for your experience abroad. Since spending habits vary, it's difficult to predict exactly how much you may need. However, past students have commented that they spent anywhere from \$1,000 to \$3,000 or more during a semester.

Your main expenses throughout the semester will be lunches, daily living expenses, and the cost of any travel or shopping.

One good resource for financial planning is the Cost of Participation sheet posted under the Fees tab of the program website at UMabroad.umn.edu/programs/americas/buenosaires/fees. It lists both billed and estimated out-of-pocket costs for the program.

Safeguarding Your Valuables

Be careful with your money. Pickpockets do exist in Argentina and generally hit when you are in a crowd. Backpacks are a popular target for pickpockets. Another common place to lose money to thieves is on trains or buses when traveling at night.

In this case, be careful to sleep with valuables close at hand. A money belt is a good idea when traveling. You should not carry your passport with you unless you are planning to be staying overnight in a hotel. In most cases, carrying a copy of your passport will be sufficient.

Social & Cultural Adjustments

Student Identity

As a foreigner in Argentina you will need to take the initiative to meet people. Don't be afraid to start a conversation with others. Argentines are friendly and fairly easy to meet. If you want to become friends with the Argentines, don't be afraid to make the first move. You will be the one to benefit the most from the contact made as it will give you the chance to see what the people are really like and also enable you to speak the language more fluently.

Race & Ethnicity

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.

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

In recent years, Buenos Aires has become a popular destination for GLBT travelers. In general, the city is very accepting of homosexuality and hosts many gay bars and restaurants; most are quite fashionable and expensive.

Argentina as a whole continues to become more and more open-minded about homosexual issues and lifestyles. In fact, same-sex marriage was legalized in Argentina in July 2010. Although Argentines are quite open-minded, public displays of affection between same-sex couples tend to attract unwanted attention and comments.

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 apparent or non-apparent, should contact the LAC early in the process to discuss their particular needs. Students should plan to submit their Accommodations Request Form at least eight weeks before the start of the program. For more information, and to download the form, visit: UMabroad.umn.edu/students/identity/disabilities.

Religion

The Argentine population is predominantly Catholic. However, there is a large Jewish population, both orthodox and non-orthodox, as well as many Protestants and Evangelists. The city hosts several different places of worship and is welcoming and respectful of all religions.

Cultural Adjustment

You can minimize the stress involved with traveling abroad and a new lifestyle by preparing adequately. To gain insight, read as much as possible about where you are going. Talk to international students and veteran travelers who have been where you want to go. The Learning Abroad Center has travel tips from return travelers, many of whom are willing to be contacted and give advice in person.

Argentines meet and greet each other and part with a slight embrace and a kiss on one cheek. The usual greeting exchanged between Argentine males is a handshake. Good friends will often add a pat on the back and, if they have not seen each other for some time, will give an *abrazo* (embrace). Family names and titles, such as *señor* (Mr.), *señora* (Mrs.), and *señorita* (Miss) may be used to address older people or professionals. First names may be used among close friends and young people.

Be Open-Minded

Learn to slow down. Things move at a slower pace in Argentina. Use your free time to socialize with the people around you. Listen to what they have to say and try not to be judgmental. Find the positives in any situation and take advantage of them.



It is important that you adjust to the Argentines and don't expect them to adjust to you. Try to learn as much about the culture as possible so that you can discuss things intelligently with them. Most Americans are poorly informed about relationships between other countries as well as the countries themselves. Learn to look for commonalities between Americans and Argentines. Learning to adjust to and appreciate the common elements and differences will determine how much you enjoy your experience and how well you will succeed in adapting to life in Argentina.

Resources

CultureGrams: online.culturegrams.com/world/world_country.php?contid=7&wmn=South_%20America&cid=6&cn=Argentina

Argentina—Ministry of Tourism: www.turismo.gov.ar/

CIA World Factbook: www.cia.gov/library/publications/resources/the-world-factbook/index.html

US Department of State: travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/country/argentina.html

Looking Ahead

Career Relevance

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-rel.

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.

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

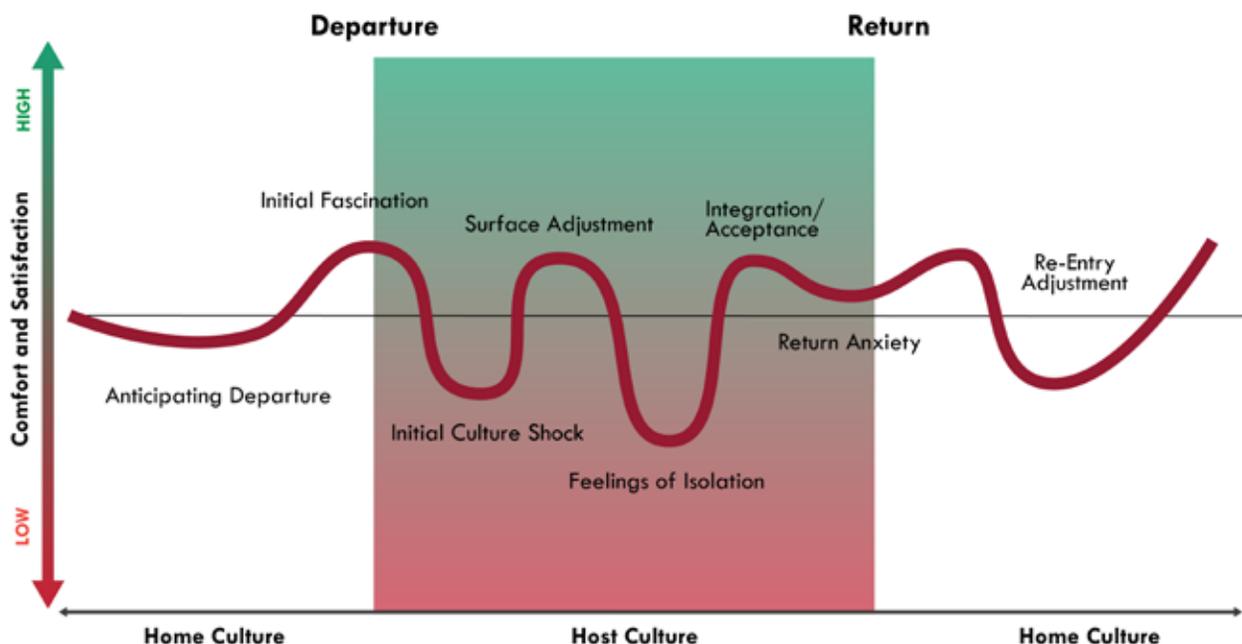
process. A sense of isolation sets in. Boredom and a lack of motivation often follow. Unresolved personal issues often surface during this stage.

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 Galloway (1963)

Cultural Adjustment Curve

Appendix

Packing List

The following is a list developed by past students and in-country staff. Adapt it to suit your own style and priorities. You will not need all the items on the packing list; they are only suggestions.

Clothing

- 2 pairs of comfortable walking shoes
- 1 pair of dress shoes
- Slippers/flip flops (for house shoes)
- 2 dress outfits
- Lots of underwear, durable bras
- Lightweight socks
- T-shirts
- Tank tops
- Skirts/dresses that extend below the knee
- 3–4 pairs of pants (jeans, khakis, etc.)
- 1–2 long-sleeve lightweight shirts
- Several short-sleeve shirts
- Bathing suit
- Lightweight waterproof jacket
- Fleece, lightweight sweaters or cardigans
- Lightweight long-sleeve, long-leg pajamas

Household/Personal Items

- Money belt containing passport, international immunization record, credit, and debit card, cash)
- 1 towel and washcloth
- Travel umbrella
- Charger for US cell phone
- Digital camera with charger, memory card, and USB cord
- Ziplock plastic bags (to vacuum-pack clothing or organize/store items)
- Flashlight or headlamp
- Reusable water bottle
- Wristwatch
- Guide book (e.g., *Rough Guide*)
- Small locks for luggage
- Zip/flash drive
- Small Spanish–English dictionary

- Copy of passport, credit cards, and any other important documents
- Journal

Health Items & Toiletries

- A full supply of prescription drugs in original bottles with a copy of your prescription
- Basic first aid kit (band aids, antibacterial ointment)
- Condoms, birth control
- Tampons (expensive or unavailable in country)
- Pepto-Bismol or similar stomach settler
- Small packages of tissue
- Pain reliever
- Sunscreen (high SPF)
- Aloe vera gel for sunburns
- Ear plugs
- Sunglasses
- Lip balm with sunscreen
- Hand sanitizer
- All contact lens materials needed for your stay
- An extra pair of glasses and a copy of your prescription
- Toiletries: soap, deodorant, shampoo, and toothpaste are all easily available in country (but take enough for first few weeks); dental floss (take enough for your stay), nail clippers, toothbrush, hairbrush or comb, razor

Homestay Gifts

Bring a gift (or gifts) for your host family. A host family gift is a nice gesture to say thank you for hosting you. Think of it as a similar gesture you would make if you were invited to someone's house for dinner and you brought a bottle of wine or a bouquet of flowers. Sometimes it is hard to think of an appropriate item. Below is a list of good options:

- Fancy soaps or lotions
- UofM/Minnesota sports memorabilia
- Clothing or items with a University logo
- Jams, chocolates, coffee, maple syrup, or other locally made goods
- Regional food to make a special meal/dessert (pancake/brownie mix)
- Local interest wall calendars or photo books
- Personal handmade items
- Candy/chocolates

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.