

**COLLEGE OF THE HOLY CROSS  
SUMMER (MAYMESTER) STUDY ABROAD PROGRAMS  
PRE-DEPARTURE CHECKLIST  
2022**

**Please read all of this information carefully.**

***Bring a hard copy with you abroad, and keep the electronic copy in a file on your computer or flash drive and/or shared drive where it is easily accessible.***

These guidelines are intended as general information to help students prepare to study abroad on one of Holy Cross's summer ("Maymester") programs. Read the guidelines carefully. **Almost all problems students encounter abroad can be avoided by following study-abroad printed and web materials, as well as information given to students in program-specific pre-departure meetings.**

**I. PREPARATION**

**Pre-Departure Meetings:**

ATTEND THE **MANDATORY** SUMMER (MAYMESTER) PROGRAMS PRE-DEPARTURE MEETING ON MONDAY, 4/11/22 AT 4:30 PM VIA ZOOM (LINK ON [SA.HOLYCROSS.EDU](https://sa.holycross.edu) AND SENT VIA EMAIL) THE **MANDATORY** PROGRAM-SPECIFIC PRE-DEPARTURE MEETING(S) WILL PROVIDE YOU WITH MORE DETAILED INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR SUMMER (MAYMESTER) PROGRAM. See page 9 for scheduled meetings (subject to change).

**Required Documentation Submission:**

- Be sure to read and "digitally" sign **ALL** documents in the **Requirements** section of your online Holy Cross application **as soon as possible** if you haven't done so already! All requirements should be completed by May 1<sup>st</sup>.
- **EVERYONE** must complete the Medical Questionnaire on your Holy Cross online application also in the **Requirements** section
- In addition, some students may need to complete additional medical forms.
  - **ONLY IF** you see a licensed medical specialist, such as a Cardiologist, Gastroenterologist, etc., for condition you are currently under treatment for, then that specialist needs to sign the Licensed Medical Specialist form to clear you to study abroad. If you do not see a medical specialist, then you do not need to submit the form (your primary care physician DOES NOT have to sign the form).
  - Likewise, **ONLY IF** you are under the care of a licensed mental health provider, that provider needs to sign the form to clear you to study abroad as well, and if this doesn't apply to you, then no form from a mental health provider needs to be submitted.
  - The above forms are available in your Holy Cross online application as well as on our application portal landing page at [sa.holycross.edu](https://sa.holycross.edu), under the **Accepted Students** tab on the left-side menu. Tab down to Specialist Medical Forms.

It is **imperative** that for your health and safety, you disclose all medical conditions. If you do not disclose, we cannot help accommodate your health needs. Medical conditions are not considered in the application approval process.

## **Before You Go:**

THESE ARE GENERAL GUIDELINES. INDIVIDUAL PROGRAM DETAILS WILL BE PROVIDED AT THE **MANDATORY** PROGRAM-SPECIFIC PRE-DEPARTURE MEETINGS.

### **Health and Safety (International SOS):**

- All Holy Cross study abroad participants are automatically enrolled in **International SOS** (IntlSOS), a state-of-the art global security assistance and international health insurance provider. IntlSOS offers comprehensive medical, security, emotional support (counseling), as well as logistical expertise, to all Holy Cross students during their time abroad.
- Please note: IntlSOS covers you while you are abroad; however, students **are required** to maintain their domestic (U.S. based) health insurance coverage while abroad in case they need to return to the U.S. outside of the enrollment period.
- There are **three primary uses** for IntlSOS:

#### **1) PRE-DEPARTURE PLANNING**

- Review country-specific guidance on health and safety issues
- Pre-arrange medical services before you leave

#### **2) ARRANGING AND PAYING FOR MEDICAL CARE**

- Coordinate all medical services in host country using three simple steps:
  - **Step 1:** If you're sick or injured, contact IntlSOS by phone or app
    - IntlSOS can find you a medical provider/hospital OR you can choose a medical provider/hospital and inform IntlSOS (before or while receiving medical services.)
  - **Step 2:** IntlSOS contacts the medical provider/hospital and arranges for your insurance to be billed directly.
  - **Step 3:** You receive medical care and pay no out-of-pocket expenses!

#### **3) EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE AND COMMUNICATION**

- Get real-time security alerts for your host country
- **“Check-In” Travel Registration Tool**
  - Get immediate assistance and communication from Holy Cross in an emergency
    - **“Check in” on the IntlSOS app on arrival for:**
      - **Initial flight from US to Host Country**
      - **All overnight trips outside of the host city**

## HOW DO I ACCESS INTERNATIONAL SOS?

	(1) Pre- Departure Planning	(2) Coordinate Medical Care	(3) Emergency Communication
<b>Phone Number</b> (+1) 215-942-8478	X	X	X
<b>IntlSOS App</b> • Download “International SOS Assistance” in app stores • Create new app account with Holy Cross email address.	X	X	X

- **If you forget to contact IntlSOS and end up paying out-of-pocket for medical expenses, contact your Holy Cross study abroad advisor for instructions on submitting an online claim for reimbursement.** Be sure to save your receipts for any medical expenses you pay for out-of-pocket, because you’ll need receipts to be approved for reimbursement.
- Check that your medications are legal in your host country.
- Take all prescriptions for medications, eyeglasses, and contact lenses with you. If possible, take a spare pair of glasses or lenses.
- Some prescription drugs may not be available in your host country. Either take enough for the whole year, ask visitors to bring more when they visit, or work with your doctor and a local doctor to fill the prescription abroad. You cannot FedEx or UPS prescriptions without a special license. (In Ireland, regular mail is used.)
- Some prescription drugs in the U.S. are available over the counter in other countries, but **you must know the medical name**, not the brand name (e.g., not "Tylenol" but “acetaminophen”; also called "paracetamol" outside North America).
- Check with your physician and with the Centers for Disease Control ([www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)) for information on immunizations and vaccinations that are recommended or required for your destination. *It is your responsibility to receive the proper immunizations.*

### **Passports:**

- Check that your passport is valid for six months beyond the expected date of your return to the U.S. and **make sure your passport is signed**. Make copies of your passport’s signature and photo/information pages in case your passport is lost or stolen. Give one copy to your parents, upload a scan to your HC online application, or submit a hard copy to the Office of Study Abroad (you should have done this by now), and take two with you; leave one in your room and carry another with you when traveling.
- Scan your passport, save it as a file and email the file to yourself. Save the file in a Study Abroad folder in your email. Consider using a shared drive to save important documents, sharing access with your parents and/or guardian.

### **Flights:**

- By now, you should have booked your flight and uploaded your itinerary to your HC online Maymester application. As always, print a copy for yourself and keep a scanned copy on your computer/in your email for easy access.

- Details regarding airport transportation to your host residence will be provided at the site-specific pre-departure meeting.

### **Visas:**

Not all programs require pre-obtained visas, check the requirements for your specific program.

#### **Programs requiring visas (either pre-obtained or upon arrival in host country):**

- For Jerusalem, you will enter Israel with a three-month tourist visa stamp that is done at border control services at Ben-Gurion Airport upon your arrival and there is no pre-approval process. More details will be discussed at the Jerusalem pre-departure meeting.

### **Non-U.S. Citizens:**

If you are a non-U.S. citizen, you will need to check on the consulate website of the host country you are visiting to see if you will need a visa to enter that country. In the case where you will visit multiple countries during the program, you will most likely be required to acquire a visa for the country you will be in for the longest duration, but you will need to check the consulate websites to make sure. You will be responsible for obtaining your visa as well as all costs associated with obtaining a visa for the summer (Maymester) program. The Office of Study Abroad can assist in providing some documentation needed for your visa.

### **Packing:**

- LESS IS MORE! Travel light. Almost all items can be purchased abroad.
- Packing too much can be **very** costly: 1) excess baggage fees add up when you change from international to national flight limits; 2) many airlines restrict baggage weight, even if they charge a fee; 3) when you return, you will likely have new things purchased abroad. Save room for the trip home!
- Be aware that carry-on sizes are different abroad than in the U.S. You may need a smaller bag for traveling around your country or region.
- Divide up valuables and copies (passport, credit card emergency phone numbers) amongst your things. This way if you are pick-pocketed you have everything in a second, safe location. Also do this with your money and/or cards. Do not keep all your cards, cash, passport, passport copies, etc. in the same place, bag, or pocket!
- Fill out your luggage tags **and** place the same information inside your suitcases. You may want to put the name of your Maymester residence (and address) but be sure to change to your home address when you leave.
- Be sure to bring:
  - All your legal documents and valuables, the address of your residence abroad, and your credit card information. Keep this in your carry-on luggage.
  - U.S. dollars for your arrival back in the US.
  - Rain gear.
  - Two pairs of good walking shoes, not (just) flip flops.
  - At least one electric plug adapter (available at travel stores, online, and in most airports). All dual current electronics (e.g. laptop computers, smart phones, tablets) need an **ADAPTER**, not a **CONVERTER**. An adapter simply alters the plug; a converter changes the electric current, and is usually much more expensive than an adapter.
  - Remember: Do not bring anything you cannot afford to lose.
- Take your **copy of this list** and any pre-departure materials you received from your host institution and/or at program-specific pre-departure meetings.

### **Laptops:**

- The faculty leaders for your Maymester program will advise you if a laptop is required.
- If you take a laptop, bring the appropriate adapter for your country (not a converter).
- Have a tech support plan and note the general INTERNATIONAL call-in number. See if there is a specific contact number for your host country. If so, take both (you may be on the road when something happens).
- In general, it is best not to travel with a laptop. When you are away from your residence, make sure it is secure (not in plain view) in your room abroad while you're away.
- Check your parents' homeowner's policy *before you leave* to see if your laptop is covered abroad for theft and whom you should contact in the event of theft.
- Keep a copy of the serial number and other identifying information separate from your computer.

### **Mobile Phones:**

- Compare the different cell phone options available. Depending on the host country, it may be easier/cheaper to buy a phone abroad or purchase a local SIM card to continue using your current phone. You can also speak with your program director.
- If you must use your U.S. phone, research your options with your phone company before going.
- For most incoming international calls on most cell plans, the call is free after initial connection fee. Check with your provider. For outgoing international calls, it is best to use Skype or virtual phone cards, sold online, or local cards, which are sold, depending on the country, in tobacco stores or post offices, lottery stands, etc. Ask your peers, or check online. Research phone plans abroad because some call the USA at very low rates.
- Many people in the U.S. and abroad use applications such as WhatsApp to text and call.

### **Banking and Money:**

- Carry a credit card (with **4-digit** pin; Visa and Mastercard are honored more than AmEx cards) and an **ATM/debit card**.
- For added security, try to get a credit card and ATM/debit card that display your photo.
- Make sure your bank knows that you will be abroad, in which countries, and for how long.
- European credit and debit cards have a chip and PIN as opposed to a magnetic stripe. Many U.S. banks are now creating cards with both the chip and the magnetic stripe. Contact your bank to see if you can get a card with a chip. In many countries, it is often easier to pay in cash.
- Make sure your bank and credit card company know that you will be abroad, in which countries, and for how long, or they might deny the charge. Have the phone number of your bank easily accessible!
- Check on international fees for debit and credit cards and shop around for the best deal (e.g. no interest fees, no or low transaction fees or user fees, etc.). Students may be able to negotiate reduced fees.
- For both cards, determine before you leave home how you can replace the cards overseas if lost or stolen.
- Consider ordering \$200-\$300 in your host country's currency from your bank at home before you leave so that you have some money to get you started. Get mixed bills (large and small). It is also possible to order currency from AAA.
- Write down the INTERNATIONAL emergency contact numbers for the credit/debit cards and the actual card numbers on a separate sheet of paper and keep in a safe place. Keep a copy with you when traveling (separate from the cards themselves).

- Take some American dollars or host country currency with you in case you have trouble getting money out of the ATM at the airport. Be aware of what time you arrive. Exchange offices will not stay open all night.
- Never keep all your cash in the same place and do not carry your debit card around. Depending on the site, you might need to depend on cash.

## **II. ARRIVAL AND GETTING SETTLED**

Don't expect to feel at home right away. You might even feel overwhelmed at first: that's normal! Studying abroad, even a 4-5 week Maymester, is a process, and it takes time to adjust to a new environment. You will have many resources available to you abroad but you should not expect that all resources you have at Holy Cross will be available. Moreover, no two Holy Cross Maymester programs are exactly alike, so read with care and weigh this document against country-specific information you receive from Holy Cross and/or your faculty program director or host institution. You should not expect that because one service is provided at one program abroad it is automatically provided at another. Each program is unique.

### **Communication:**

- Call home as soon as you can and let your family know that you arrived safely. Note, in advance, the time difference and ask your parents if they want you to call when you arrive regardless of the time, or if you should wait until they're awake.
- Contact the on-site program director (whether it's your HC faculty program director or the director at your host institution) AND the Office of Study Abroad whenever an issue or a problem arises. Do not wait for an issue to snowball!

### **E-mail:**

- Check your Holy Cross e-mail account on a regular basis.
- **Do not ignore e-mails** from our office, your on-site advisors, or program directors.

### **Internet Access:**

- Internet access may be more limited than you are used to at home or at Holy Cross. Your housing might not include unlimited access.
- In general, although you need to stay informed, it is good to "unplug" significantly from your regular contacts and from most, if not all, on-line entertainment.

### **Academics While Abroad:**

- Class attendance abroad is MANDATORY, just as at Holy Cross. You should exhibit the same work ethic abroad as you do at Holy Cross.

### **Travel:**

For Maymester programs, travel is not recommended until your program is complete. You are in an intense course and need the time to study and get to know your adopted city/town. If you are traveling after the program ends, observe the following travel recommendations:

### **Travel Safety:**

*Please note that if you undertake personal travel before, during, or after your program, The Office of Study Abroad may not be in a position to support you should emergencies arise.*

- Never travel alone, and be aware of your surroundings.
- Do not leave bags or backpacks on the ground without having them strapped to your leg or to some non-moveable object.
- We ask that you use the **IntlSOS app** to “check-in” when you arrive to your trip destination.
- You are **REQUIRED** to register *all* of your travels with the **U.S. Dept. of State** ([www.travel.state.gov](http://www.travel.state.gov)). This only takes a moment of your time and ensures that your local US Embassy knows where you are in case of emergencies. *This is also a requirement of your Holy Cross online Maymester application.*
- Check out the **U.S. Dept. of State’s website for student travelers** at [www.studentsabroad.state.gov](http://www.studentsabroad.state.gov)
- Always inform others of your travel plans before you leave, including your on-site advisor/program director and your parents/guardians.
- Be aware that what you have learned about health and safety in your host country does not necessarily apply to other countries you visit. Talk to local friends and/or read guidebooks and the State Department travel information for that country.

### **Health and Safety Responsibilities:**

- Think before you act: don’t take unnecessary risks.
- Follow the guidelines from the State Department country information and the **mandatory** program-specific pre-departure meeting.
- Follow the advice of the on-site advisor/faculty program director(s).
- If you become sick, notify your on-site advisor/faculty program director(s) AND our office immediately (508-793-3082).
- If you know that another Holy Cross student in your group is sick or missing, notify your on-site advisor/faculty program director(s) as well as our office immediately, using e-mail ([studyabr@holycross.edu](mailto:studyabr@holycross.edu) or [jschartn@holycross.edu](mailto:jschartn@holycross.edu)). We would rather receive 10 notifications than none!
- Know how to access health services, both for routine care and emergencies. This information should be provided to you during your program-specific pre-departure meeting.
- Develop strategies for staying safe. Use the buddy system; carry your phone in an accessible place, etc.
- **Alcohol.** In most foreign countries you can purchase and consume alcohol legally. Be a responsible and safe consumer. You represent not just yourself, but your family and Holy Cross, as well as every Holy Cross student who will participate in a summer program in the future and lastly, your country. You have a vital role to play in helping us to maintain good relations with our partner schools abroad and even international good will. The Office of Study Abroad requires you to sign a **substance abuse pledge** (which is in your online Holy Cross Maymester program application – read and “digitally” sign).

### **Sexual Assault:**

- If you feel threatened or need help, immediately contact your program director. If at any point you are the victim of sexual assault or other crime, feel uncomfortable, need support, or would like more information about resources, reporting policies, etc. contact your on-site advisor and/or the Office of Study Abroad. In addition, Holy Cross’ Counseling Services is available during normal business hours to help you set up care abroad if you would like. Their website provides useful resources including emergency steps: <http://www.holycross.edu/counseling-center/emergencies>. You can call our office at

+508-793-3082, M-F 8:30am - 4:30pm EST and Mrs. Schartner can transfer you to your advisor, the Chaplain's office, or any other department on campus.

- What is considered acceptable varies from country to country. This is not an excuse for sexual harassment or assault, but it is important to be aware of cultural differences. It is best to follow cues from host peers you trust, on-site advisors you trust, and err on the side of caution.

### **Identity and Study Abroad**

- For resources on race, gender identity, disability, and sexuality in your host country, please contact the Office of Study Abroad, the Office of Diversity and Inclusion, and/or the Office of Disability Services.
- Every country has its own historical and political context that produce different social hierarchies based on race, nationality, language ability, gender identity, sexuality, and so on. Because of this, it is important to go into your study abroad experience with an open mind and a willingness to learn about and understand a world that you are new to.
- That being said, this does not mean that you should brush off racism because it's "how it is," accept sexist treatment because it seems to be normal, or be made to feel unsafe or ostracized due to any aspect of your identity. If you at any time experience discrimination abroad because of your identity and want to discuss it, find more resources on how others work with and through these experiences, or even just let us know that it exists - please reach out to us, anyone in the office you feel comfortable with. If you do not feel comfortable speaking to us, we encourage you to reach out to whoever you feel best communicating with.
- We would appreciate you making us aware of these experiences so that a) we can work to make sure you have a fulfilling experience abroad, and b) we can better understand the different experiences our students have abroad and better prepare future groups about what they may encounter.

### **Disability Services Abroad:**

- As always, know before you go. Preparing yourself before going abroad will allow you to better adjust to physical and mental challenges as well as differing attitudes and perceptions.
- Please tell us about your disability so we can help your program director, on-site staff and advisors make the necessary arrangements. Request documentation of any accommodations you receive from the Office of Disability Services.
- Mobility International is an organization dedicated to empowering students with disabilities to study abroad. Their website has helpful resources: <http://www.miusa.org/>

***Bon voyage!***  
***The Office of Study Abroad***