

**GENERAL PASSPORT and VISA INFORMATION**  
***For students applying to the EPA Internships in Europe Programs***

## ***Passports***

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

- To apply, go to the County Clerk's Office in your area.
- Call ahead to find out if there are any regulations or fees specific to your area.
- The processing of a passport application can take *10 weeks or more*. **Apply for yours now.**

### ***What you will need when applying for a passport:***

**1.** Certified copy of birth certificate bearing:

- raised seal
- file date within a year of birth
- name correctly spelled

OR:

- naturalization papers *or* old passport

**2.** Two recent photos, 2" x 2", on lightweight paper with a white background.

**3.** A check or money order made payable to "Passport Services". The fee typically ranges from \$85.00-\$145.00. A money order will often expedite the process. Most offices will not take cash.

**4.** There may be a cash county fee (in Monroe County, it is \$30.00).

**5.** Identification such as a driver's license or work pass with photo and signature. Police IDs are not valid.

**6.** Social Security number.

## ***Visas***

A visa is official permission, granted by the authorities of a country where you will study or visit, which allows you to enter and remain in that country for period of time. Some countries require you to obtain a visa either in the U.S. or at a consulate abroad. Costs and entrance requirements vary, but expect to pay between \$75 and \$200. ***Find out now*** what visas, if any, you will need, for places where you will either live or visit. Visas can take up to 10 weeks to process, and some countries/consulates may require you to appear in person to obtain the visa.

***U.S. Citizens:*** You **NEED** a visa for semester study in Belgium and Spain, and Prior Entry Clearance to study in Edinburgh and London. The Belgian government requires an FBI background check for students who are age 21 or over when they apply for the visa. This process takes approximately 18 weeks.

***If you are not a U.S. citizen or have dual citizenship:*** Check **now** with the consulate of the country in which you'll be studying for any special visa requirements.

**TIP:** We strongly recommend that you make a photocopy of your passport (and visa, if applicable). Take the photocopies overseas with you as well as the originals. Store the copies in a safe place, but in a different location than the originals. Should your passport/visa be lost or stolen, they will be easier to replace if you have a copy.

*Check out these websites for more information:*

[www.traveldocs.com/index.htm](http://www.traveldocs.com/index.htm)

[www.embassyworld.com](http://www.embassyworld.com)

[www.dipobel.us](http://www.dipobel.us)

[www.spainconsul-ny.org/index.html](http://www.spainconsul-ny.org/index.html)

[www.britainusa.com](http://www.britainusa.com)

[www.diplomatie.be/en/travel/visa/default.asp](http://www.diplomatie.be/en/travel/visa/default.asp)

[www.visa4uk.fco.gov.uk](http://www.visa4uk.fco.gov.uk)

## IMPORTANT VISA INFORMATION

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

- When applying for a visa, you are dealing with the government of a foreign country. They can make and change their policies and procedures at any time.
- We are not agents of foreign countries, so our ability to help you fill out visa applications is extremely limited. It is always best to get answers directly from a Consulate employee.
- Read very carefully the application and instructions before contacting a Consulate. This will enable you to ask appropriate and informed questions.
- If you download visa application materials from a website, call the Consulate to be sure that it is the most recent version (unless the website states that it is).
- Consulates generally have very limited open hours both for answering the telephone and for public appearances.
- When you speak with someone in a Consulate write a detailed record of the conversation: date, time, name of person with whom you spoke, and their comments or answers or recommendations.
- Never assume that because your friend got a visa in one week, that you will, too.
- You may have to appear at a Consulate in person to submit your visa application materials. If this is a requirement, there is most likely no way to get around it. If the NY Consulate of Spain, for example, requires you to apply there, you must be prepared to drive, fly, or take a bus or train to NYC. We cannot ask them to eliminate this requirement for you.
- Don't assume anything. If, for example, the visa application asks for your address while in [country], and you won't have that information until you arrive overseas, ask the consulate what to write in that space. Some may accept "TBA", some may accept the program address, and some may not accept it without the actual address. We cannot guess how or what to answer for any question; neither should you.
- Again, requirements vary, but in general, you can expect to provide the following when applying for a student visa:

Demographic information about yourself and your parents, including dates and places of birth; your passport; your round-trip plane ticket to your study abroad country; certification of health and/or certain immunizations; letter of acceptance to your study abroad program and/or host institution; letter verifying that you are currently enrolled in a degree program in good standing; detailed financial support information, notarized, e.g., bank statements (family and self), financial aid sources, etc.; proof of health insurance coverage abroad.

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

- Most of all, be patient and be prepared. The visa application process is normally the most daunting and time-consuming part of the study abroad process. Keep in mind the end result!