

FRANCE

Paris

Summer, Fall, Spring, and Academic Year



2012-2013 Program Guide



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The University of California, in accordance with applicable Federal and State law and University policy, does not discriminate on the basis of race, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity, pregnancy,* disability, age, medical condition (cancer-related), ancestry, marital status, citizenship, sexual orientation, or status as a Vietnam-era veteran or special disabled veteran. The University also prohibits sexual harassment. This nondiscrimination policy covers admission, access, and treatment in University programs and activities. Inquiries regarding the University’s student-related nondiscrimination policies may be directed to the campus Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action office.

*Pregnancy includes pregnancy, childbirth, and medical conditions related to pregnancy or childbirth.



► Scan to get this guide on your Smartphone.

YOUR UCEAP NETWORK

Local UCEAP Support

Campus EAP Office

The Campus EAP Office coordinates recruitment, student selection, orientations, and academic advising; and serves as your primary contact during the application process.

UCEAP Systemwide Office

The UCEAP Systemwide Office establishes and operates programs and coordinates UCEAP administration for all UC campuses from its headquarters in Goleta, California. You will work closely with the following Systemwide Office staff:

Program Advisors provide academic and operational program information to you and your campus as well as administrative support for all aspects of your participation.

Operations Specialists manage the logistics of the program. They coordinate document requirements, visa application instructions, health and safety precautions, acceptance and placement by host institutions, arrival and on-site orientation, and housing arrangements.

Academic Specialists advise on academic policies, review courses taken abroad for UC credit, and document your registration, grades, petitions and academic records.

Student Finance Accountants assist primarily with UCEAP statements, program fee collection, and financial aid disbursements (in conjunction with your campus Financial Aid Office).

Contact Information

Program Advisor

Carly Salvadore

Phone: (805) 893-4255; E-mail: csalvadore@eap.ucop.edu

Operations Specialist

Jill Harrison

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Sylvestre Blondiaux

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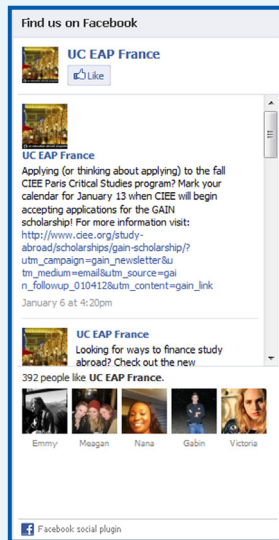
UCEAP Systemwide Office

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► **Join the Conversation!**
Meet fellow UCEAP participants and alumni on Facebook.



UCEAP Online

Bookmark your **Participants** program page. This resource lists requirements and policies you need to know before you go abroad, including your Predeparture Checklist, *UCEAP Guide to Study Abroad*, Program Calendar, UCEAP Student Budgets, and payment instructions.

Connect with us! Join our Facebook network via the **UCEAP France page**.

Study Centers Abroad

UCEAP programs in Paris are directed by a UC faculty member at the UC Paris Study Center. The Study Center Director and staff will advise you on academic matters, assist with housing, and provide information on cultural opportunities. Student services and activities for the UC Center program are provided by ACCENT (International Consortium for Academic Programs Abroad) in consultation with UCEAP.

Paris Study Center

Professor Jean Marie Schultz, Study Center Director
 UC Study Center
 89 rue du Faubourg Saint-Antoine
 75011 Paris, France

Phone (calling from the U.S.): (011 33) 1 49 28 54 00
Phone (calling from Paris): 01 49 28 54 00
E-mail: center@ucparis.fr

Institut d'Etudes Politiques (Sciences Po)

(Under direction of the Paris Study Center)
 The American Center
 13, rue de l'Université
 75007 Paris, France

École Normale Supérieure

(Under direction of the Paris Study Center)
 45 rue d'Ulm
 75230 Paris, Cedex 05, France

Phone Number Codes

U.S. international code **11**
 (dial this to call from the U.S.)
 France country code **33**
City code: Included in city phone number.
 Drop the initial 0 when dialing from the U.S.

Approximate Time Difference

Add 9 hours (between September 30 and October 30, add 8 hours)

Office Closure

The Study Center office in Paris is closed from August 6–16, 2012.

UCEAP STUDENTS SAY...



French university students are independent and responsible. There is no regular control over their workload. They have fewer assignments, but that doesn't mean they don't work. They're expected to work at home on their own, and the bibliographies provided by professors enrich the coursework.

Speak as little English as possible, even with American friends.

Library access is limited. You may have to photocopy excerpts from library books.



ACADEMIC INFORMATION

Academic Culture

The following information on French academic culture pertains to courses at Sciences Po and other French universities and does not apply to courses taken at the UC Center Paris, which follow the academic structure of UC courses.

Course Structure

French classes are organized into cycles for first-, second-, and third-year students. Classes are usually large. There are two main types of courses within the French university system. One type, called *cours magistraux*, consists of a series of lectures held in amphitheaters for 200 to 400 students. The lectures present a broad theoretical analysis of major issues and trends in the given field. Unlike practices at UC, syllabi, course readers, and published course notes are rarely available.

Although assigned homework is rare, professors do provide extensive bibliographies from which you are expected to select books to read. You will not receive a schedule of reading assignments such as you might receive at UC. On the final exam, you may be asked to present a broad, conceptual analysis of a given question based on lectures and independent reading. You must obtain a comprehensive knowledge of the subject through judicious reading.

The *cours magistraux* are supplemented with *travaux dirigés* or *conférences de méthode*. These are conducted in smaller groups and follow more closely the pedagogical pattern practiced in American universities.

Generally, French courses meet once a week for two hours. The *cours magistraux* combined with *conférences de méthode* add another two hours to the week over the 12- to 13-week semester. French courses often have a general title, but the specific content, methodologies, and approach may vary each year. It is common for a course to follow an irregular meeting schedule. You are expected to remain informed about class meeting times and report the total number of anticipated meetings to the Study Center.

You may have the false impression that homework is not required because there are no detailed syllabi, reading requirements, and few references to the course bibliography; however, for the final (and sometimes only) exam, you will be expected to know your course notes in depth and to have read as much of the course reading material as possible.

The small group classes are comparable to classes at UC, with a lot of participation, required exposés, continuous assessment, papers, a midterm, and a final exam. Participants report that lectures are comparable in size to UC and sometimes smaller, though the teaching style is drastically different. Professors expect you to take more notes than at UC, which requires strenuous effort since courses typically last for two hours with only a short break.

Instructors

French professors tend to be less accessible than UC faculty members. They occasionally cancel classes or change meeting times without prior warning. Outside class, there is not as much help as at UC. Office hours, if they exist, are limited, and usually there are no teaching assistants or discussion sections. These are the inconveniences of the French lecture classes, but once you get accustomed to this change in academic culture, you will find that the system teaches you to become intellectually more independent and improves research skills. Take responsibility for pursuing your own learning during any breaks in regular class meetings.

Academic Challenges

You will likely find that overcoming the language barrier in the context of your courses is the first main challenge you have to face. It is also difficult to master the various French academic writing styles, such as the *dissertation* with its *plan détaillé* and the *commentaire composé*, especially when writing under pressure. Overall, the dominant feeling for most UCEAP students is that the benefits outweigh the challenges.

Libraries & Textbooks

Generally speaking, all books from the reading lists may be found at the university libraries. However, libraries usually have limited hours and do not offer the option of late evening studies. It may be difficult to check out or reserve books. As a result, you may need to purchase books from the reading lists (though it may not be too expensive, as usually there is less required reading than at UC). The situation varies from one university to another.

The UC Paris Study Center library has a good selection of books in English on French history, political science, and culture.

- ▶ **Bring familiar reference books and key works that are important for your major; these materials may not always be readily available in English.**

Grades

For detailed information about grades, see the [Academic Information](#) chapter of the *UCEAP Guide to Study Abroad*.

Graduate Studies, École Normale Supérieure, Paris (Rue d'Ulm)

Select Host Institutions on the [program page](#) to learn more about ENS.

Course Information

This program is designed for graduate students. Student status and integration varies according to need and the proposed research.

You may take courses and do research in natural and physical sciences, humanities (antiquity, classics, foreign literature, French literature: Middle Ages, and 18th to 19th century), geography (contemporary problems in Europe, Asia, Africa, and the environment), and social sciences.

It is essential that you fully integrate into the life and intellectual activities of the school. You can do this in various ways, including enrolling in seminars, giving some formal academic lectures, and accomplishing a major piece of academic work under supervision.

You will be assigned a faculty tutor in your discipline or field who will assist in matching you with the appropriate seminars, establishing connections outside the school to facilitate research, and finding the research documentation needed to undertake the work.

Requirements

You are expected to participate in at least one or two ENS seminars and to produce a substantial paper or research report by the end of the year. You must have enough knowledge of French upon arrival to understand what is being said in seminars, communicate with officials, and do research. You may continue to perfect your French during the year through ENS-arranged courses.

Your unit requirements are determined by your Graduate Student Agreement and decided upon by your graduate advisor.

Political Science, Sciences Po

University Information

As an applicant for Sciences Po, you should have a solid background in political science or related coursework and be prepared to devote all of your time to the curriculum of the school. Final selection is made by Sciences Po.

Select Host Institutions on the [program page](#) to learn more about Sciences Po.

Welcome Programme

The Sciences Po program begins with the *Welcome Programme*, which includes an introduction to French culture and the structure of the French educational system, with special attention to the structure of the academic program at Sciences Po. There is no UC credit for this program. While it is optional for some international students, UCEAP considers this an important part of the program, and it is mandatory for UCEAP students.

Course Information

The academic program at Sciences Po explores a number of questions facing European societies and compares contemporary France in a European and international framework.

You may choose to study on a French or English track, or a mixture of the two. Consult the [Sciences Po website](#) for specific details. There are two types of courses at Sciences Po, lectures and electives/seminars. The lectures are worth 10 ECTS credits while the electives/seminars are worth 6 ECTS credits. Available subject areas include business and economics, European studies, history, political science and international relations, journalism, law, and science and sustainable development.

Requirements

You are required to take a full-time load of 30 ECTS credits, which translates to 24–28 UC quarter units. The recommended course load is 1–2 lecture courses and 3–4 electives/seminars, for a total of 5–6 courses including a French language course. Please note that regardless of the track you choose, you are required to take a French language course during the semester unless you are a native French speaker.

Registering for Courses

You will sign up for your courses through your online Sciences Po student portal prior to the start of the semester. You will receive an e-mail from UCEAP informing you of the date and time for the registration window. You will have a 24-hour window to register for courses, so be prepared to sign up as soon as the window opens in order to have the best chance of getting the courses you want. The registration window is the same for all students and courses fill up very quickly so make sure you have 2–3 alternate courses in case your first choices are already taken.

French and European Studies, UC Center Paris

Course Information

The curriculum is designed by UC faculty with the objective of providing an academic foundation for French and European studies.

An eleven-day French language and culture practicum provides an introduction to Paris and the practical use of French. For the semester, you will continue to study French and enroll in two or three upper-division program courses in the humanities and social sciences. Courses emphasize the city of Paris, France, and European studies, and are taught by scholars from institutions in the Paris area. Recent course offerings include:

- Histories of Paris
- European Integration
- Cultural Identities in France
- French Cinema
- Paris in Literature
- French Art 1715–1914
- France and Its Empire
- French Media

These courses may fulfill general education and breadth requirements as well as major requirements in the fields of art history, literature, communications, history, political science, and economics. See the [Paris Study Center website](#) for complete course descriptions and syllabi from previous years.

Requirements

You must take the French language and culture practicum worth 4.5 UC quarter units, an intensive French language course worth 6 UC quarter units, and two or three culture courses worth 5–6 UC quarter units each. Expect to take a full-time load of approximately 21 UC quarter units on this program.

Registering for Courses

You will complete your course registration prior to departure. The Academic Coordinator will e-mail you instructions on how to sign up for your courses. There will be a language evaluation test prior to departure for students who are above the introductory level of French.

Grades

Grades for the French and European Studies, UC Paris program are usually available in February. For detailed information about grades, see the [Academic Information](#) chapter of the *UCEAP Guide to Study Abroad*.

Language and Culture, UC Center Paris

Course Information

The curriculum in this summer program is designed by UC faculty with the objective of providing first-year French language skills to students with little or no experience with the language. This language-based curriculum provides you with approximately two quarters of French.

See the [Paris Study Center website](#) for complete course descriptions and syllabi from previous years.

Requirements

You will take one French language course worth 10 UC quarter units. In addition, you select one of two elective courses worth 4 quarter units that present topics in French culture with an emphasis on either the humanities or social sciences.

Registering for Courses

You will complete your course registration prior to departure. The Academic Coordinator will e-mail you instructions on how to sign up for your courses. There will be a language evaluation test prior to departure for students who are above the introductory level of French.

Grades

Grades for the Language and Culture, UC Paris program are usually available in September. For detailed information about grades, see the [Academic Information](#) chapter of the *UCEAP Guide to Study Abroad*.

EXTENDING UCEAP PARTICIPATION

Extension Opportunities

Extending your UCEAP participation may be possible. The following extension options are available in France:

- UC Center summer (language and culture) to UC Center fall semester (French and European studies)
- UC Center fall semester (French and European studies) to Language and Culture Program, Bordeaux spring semester

Eligibility: In order to extend from the UC Center fall semester to the Language and Culture, Bordeaux program, you need to have completed 2 quarters/1 semester of French at your UC campus before you start the Paris program

- UC Center fall semester (French and European studies) to the University of Bordeaux spring semester (immersion)

Eligibility: In order to extend from the UC Center fall semester to the University of Bordeaux spring semester immersion program, you need to have completed one year of French at your UC campus before you start the Paris program

If you are planning to extend from the UC Center Paris fall semester program to either the University of Bordeaux spring immersion program or the Bordeaux spring Language & Culture program, be mindful that the progress you make with your French in the fall program will determine whether you can extend to Bordeaux and into which option. The Paris Study Center will conduct an evaluation before your extension to Bordeaux is approved.

Plan Ahead to Extend

If you are considering extension, have a Departmental and College Preliminary Approval to Extend (DPA) form approved prior to departure.

The UCEAP Systemwide Office and the Study Center must approve your extension request once you are abroad in order to finalize the extension. Approval is based on a number of factors, including academic performance, the support of your UC campus department, language acquisition, and available space at the host institution. To initiate the extension process once abroad, make an appointment with the Study Center.

Note that due to France visa restrictions, you must have a preapproved DPA form to extend your stay in France, and you will need to apply for a long-stay visa that covers the entire length of your anticipated stay, including the extension term. (This does not in any way obligate you to extend; there is no penalty if you get a visa for a longer period of time and later decide not to extend.) It is not possible to extend a visa after arrival in France. Instructions for obtaining the student visa are included in the Student Visa Instructions in your UCEAP Predeparture Checklist.

Once your extension has been approved, UCEAP will notify your UC campus registrar, Financial Aid Office, and Campus EAP Office. For information about the steps you need to take in regards to finances, see the [Extension of Participation](#) chapter in the *UCEAP Guide to Study Abroad*.

UCEAP STUDENTS SAY...



The French love to go for coffee and have elaborate three-course meals. They know how to enjoy life and relax. Take advantage of this opportunity to learn about their culture.

Don't go with romantic notions about France. Think of it as a chance to observe another culture, and do just that. You won't be disappointed.

Beware of all the strikes. Be patient, things do not run smoothly here. Give yourself a few days to do errands. Start way before you would in the U.S.

Expectations will always change and evolve daily as you change. Just enjoy your experience for what it is—an exciting and new way of life!



CULTURAL AWARENESS

Etiquette

The French are very attached to certain formalities, such as shaking hands frequently, exchanging kisses several times when meeting friends, and using expressions of courtesy like *bonjour*, *au revoir*, and *merci*, followed by *monsieur*, *madame*, or *mademoiselle* when in public situations. You can avoid misunderstandings by observing closely and conforming to some of these customs.

The student society is more relaxed than the society at large, and once initial contact is made, you should have little difficulty socializing with young French people. Students frequently go out in groups.

Educate Yourself

Get acquainted with your new host city, country, and culture before you leave the U.S. Travel guides and travel-related websites are excellent resources. Many guides provide background information about the region's history and culture. The following guides provide a wealth of travel information: *Lonely Planet's France: A Travel Survival Kit*, *Shoestring Guide to Western Europe*, *The Rough Guide to France*, *Michelin Guides (Red and Green)*, *Baedeker's France*, *Fodor's France*, and *Frommer's France*.

French literature majors are encouraged to read a few books in French before going abroad. The following titles are often studied in class: *Le Lys dans la Vallée* (Balzac), *Madame Bovary* (Flaubert), *Les Fleurs du Mal* (Baudelaire), *La Peste* (Camus), *Le Rouge et le Noir* (Stendhal), and *La Chartreuse de Parme* (Stendhal).

Keep up with current events by reading articles in newspapers, magazines, and journals. You will also need to understand the local culture and history. The following resources will help you prepare before departure.

Recommended Periodicals

- *Le Monde*, France's premier daily (read it at least twice a week)
- *Libération*
- *Le Point*
- *L'Express*
- *Le Nouvel Observateur*

UCEAP STUDENTS SAY...

“ You’ll feel like you are living amongst millions of foreigners who all speak a foreign language—eventually, it may dawn on you that you are the foreigner, not them.

Be understanding and realize that you are a guest in someone else’s country.

Manners and formalities are very important in France. People do not look others in the eye on the street—eye contact signifies that you want to be noticed, which can be dangerous.

Take advantage of the opportunity to live a different daily routine; that’s why you came, right? Don’t think too much about what you miss back home, it will be there when you go back. Learn to appreciate all the things that are different and seek them out.

”

Recommended Books

Asselin, Gilles and Ruth Mastron

Bailey, Rosemary, John Ardagh, Deni Brown

Birnbaum, Pierre, trans. by M. B. DeBovoise

Edmiston, William and Annie Duménil

Fenby, Jonathan

Howarth, David, and Georgios Varouxakis

Mermet, Gérard

Nadeau, Jean-Benoît and Julie Barlow

Potel, Jean-Yves

Price, Roger

Whittaker, Andrew

Au Contraire! Figuring Out the French, Yarmouth: Intercultural Press, 2001.

Eyewitness Travel Guide to France, DK Publishing, 2010.

The Idea of France, New York: Hill & Wang, 2001.

La France Contemporaine, 4th Ed. Boston: Heinle Cengage Learning, 2009.

France on the Brink: A Great Civilization Faces a New Century, New York: Arcade Publishing, 2000.

Contemporary France: An Introduction to French Politics and Society, New York: Oxford University Press, 2003.

Francoscopie, Larousse, Paris, published annually.

Sixty Million Frenchmen Can’t Be Wrong: Why We Love France but not the French, Naperville: Sourcebooks, 2003.

L’Etat de la France, Paris: Edition La Découverte, published annually.

A Concise History of France, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005.

France: Be Fluent in French Life and Culture (part of the Speak the Culture series), London: Thorogood Publishing Ltd., 2008.

UCEAP STUDENTS SAY...

“ Practice reading, writing, and speaking French as much as possible beforehand.

Don't be afraid of making a mistake while talking; everybody makes mistakes, even the French. The only way you're going to improve is by practicing. I've found the people extremely helpful, and most are anxious to practice their English.

Make vocabulary lists—ten words a day. Read aloud when you read something in French.

”

Concealment Act

The French Concealment Act prohibits the wearing of the full-face veil in public places in the territory of the French Republic. However, hijabs are very common and unlikely to lead to any specific harassment in France. Students wearing hijabs in France may encounter stares, though not likely any outright hostility. If you encounter any kind of hostility, contact the UC Study Center staff immediately.

Improve Your Language Skills

The more French you know before leaving for France, the easier your time abroad will be. Prior to departure, spend 45 minutes a day, or at least five sessions a week, working to improve your French. Even though you may know the language, you may have trouble understanding people initially because they may speak fast, have a regional accent, use colloquial terms, etc. To prepare for this, go beyond reading and studying French and look for opportunities to speak and listen to the language. In addition, try to improve your writing skills.

The following are some effective methods to prepare linguistically:

- Go on a regular basis to the UC language lab and listen to audio recordings of French conversation. Some campus language labs have good collections of unrehearsed, spontaneous conversations with written transcripts, which provide a good basis for practicing aural comprehension.
- Read magazines, cover to cover, using an all-French dictionary. Using such a dictionary is difficult at first, requiring a certain amount of discipline, but it will prove beneficial when you get to France.
- Read newspapers, French and American, as often as possible. (The French are generally better informed on world affairs than most Americans.)
- Read French websites, especially French news websites.
- Read at least two difficult books in French: one fiction and one nonfiction.
- Read at least one book in your major in French.
- Keep a daily journal in French.
- Keep a notebook with French phrases, expressions, whole sentences, and structures that you would like to add to your vocabulary.
- Watch French movies; listen to French tapes, CDs, or broadcasts on the Internet; and seek out French-speaking people.
- Read aloud (anything in French) for 20 minutes at a time. Strive for correct pronunciation; read progressively faster, maintaining correct pronunciation.
- Practice phrases picked up from conversation and reading.
- Try to speak with native French speakers (students, professors, etc.) on a regular basis.

- ▶ Additional information about required documents is provided in the [UCEAP Guide to Study Abroad](#) and in the UCEAP online [Predeparture Checklist](#).
- ▶ Be sure to get a student visa—not a work visa.

ARRIVAL & ORIENTATION

Travel Documents

Visa

If you are a U.S. citizen staying in France beyond 90 days, you need a visa to study in France. In order to obtain a visa, you must first possess a current passport that is valid at least three months beyond the end date of the UCEAP program. If you are participating in the UC Paris summer program and are definitely not going to extend to the fall semester program, then you do not need to obtain a visa.

The UCEAP Systemwide Office provides information about obtaining the appropriate visa in the UCEAP [Predeparture Checklist](#). It is not possible to apply for a visa after your arrival in France (i.e., if you enter the country as a tourist, you cannot switch to a student visa after arrival). You must obtain the appropriate visa before leaving the U.S. If there is even a chance you may extend your participation in UCEAP France, you must apply for a long-stay visa that covers the entire length of your anticipated stay, including the extension term. (This does not in any way obligate you to extend; there is no penalty if you get a visa for a longer period of time and later decide not to extend.)

You will submit various documents to the French consulate when you apply for a visa. The documents submitted should be returned to you. If the documents are not returned, request them immediately. Since you must take these documents to France, make copies of all documents before submitting them to the French consulate. You will need the documents after arrival.

Non-U.S. Citizens

If you are not a U.S. citizen, contact a French consulate immediately to determine your specific visa requirements. Requirements may differ depending on your country of citizenship, and the process may take longer than it does for U.S. citizens.

OFII Form

You will be required to submit an OFII (Office Français de l'Immigration et de l'Intégration) form when you apply for your visa if you fit one of the following descriptions:

- You will be staying in France for more than six months (180 days or more).
- You are considering extending to a spring semester or academic year program, so that your potential stay in France will be more than six months (180 days or more).
- You will be staying in France for a period of time between four and six months (for a total duration of 91–180 days) and wish to be allowed to work in France while studying (see the Working in France section of this guidebook to find out whether this is a possibility for you).

Refer to the Student Visa Instructions in the UCEAP Predeparture Checklist for instructions on how to complete the OFII form, and bring it with you to your visa appointment at the French consulate (if required). The French consulate will complete their section of the form and return it to you. It is essential that you bring your completed OFII form with you to France. Do **not** send the OFII form to the Prefecture de Police upon arrival in France. Depending on which host university you attend, you will be instructed to either give this form to the Study Center administrator or to another office that will handle your *titre de séjour* processing.

Titre de Séjour (Residence Permit)

If you are required to submit the OFII form with your visa application (see previous section), you will need to obtain a *titre de séjour* after arrival in France. The *titre de séjour* may be either a sticker placed in your passport or a wallet-sized card. It must be carried at all times. Study Center or host institution staff will provide the necessary instructions for obtaining the *titre de séjour*.

As part of the *titre de séjour* application process, you are required to have a medical exam after arrival. This is in addition to the health clearance you are required to obtain before departure. You will have to pay for the French health exam. The cost is neither covered by the [UCEAP Insurance Plan](#) nor the UCEAP student fees. The cost of the exam is expected to be about €58 and is paid in the form of a tax stamp (*timbre fiscal*), which you can purchase online, at a *tabac*, or at a local *trésorerie générale*. The *titre de séjour* is provided when the health exam is completed at the OFII office. Once you receive your *titre de séjour*, your visa will become valid through the date indicated on the visa.

If you are not required to submit the OFII form (i.e., your stay in France will be within 91–180 days and you will not work in France), you will receive a visa that says “*dispense temporaire de titre de séjour*” (temporary waiver of *titre de séjour*), and you will not need to obtain a *titre de séjour*.

Without the *titre de séjour* or *dispense temporaire de titre de séjour*, you can leave France but cannot reenter if there is a passport inspection at the border once your visa has expired. Identity checks occur frequently; you risk being deported if you do not have a *titre de séjour* or *dispense temporaire de titre de séjour*. You must carry your passport and *titre de séjour* at all times. The French are becoming increasingly stringent about immigration and foreigner status in France. Even those with student status are subject to the laws.

UCEAP STUDENTS SAY...



A backpack is essential for traveling (and if you fill it, that undoubtedly will be too much stuff). Take only the bare essentials.

Don't buy new clothes before you get here, just stick with what you're comfortable with; you can buy new clothes in France.

The weather gets pretty cold in the winter. Your summer clothes won't get worn very much except during the first and last months. People don't wear shorts or tennis shoes.

If possible, take a computer.



Packing Tips

When traveling, pack your passport, visa, ticket, prescription medications, money, and other important travel documents in your carry-on luggage. Keep photocopies in a separate location. Scan the first pages of your passport in your carry-on luggage and e-mail yourself the document; keep the file in your e-mail inbox and not on your computer desktop so that you can more readily retrieve a copy if it is lost or stolen.

Never put valuables in your checked luggage. Leave extra credit cards at home and carry only what is necessary. You will not need to carry your California driver's license or your Social Security card.

The [UCEAP Insurance Plan](#) does offer some coverage for personal property; however, it is your responsibility to determine if the plan provides enough coverage to suit your needs. You must research this yourself prior to departure to decide whether or not you should purchase additional coverage. To avoid personal property theft, never leave your luggage unattended.

Essential

- Photocopies and scans of important documents (first page of passport, receipts for travelers checks, etc.)
- One extra change of clothing and toiletry kit (packed in your carry-on)
- Warm clothing (thermal underwear, waterproof winter coat, etc.)
- Items of clothing with multiple uses that can be easily layered
- Comfortable and sturdy walking shoes
- Reference French grammar book
- Towels
- Prescription medication (packed in carry-on); see the [Health](#) chapter for more information

Optional

- Dressy outfit for evenings, formal events, and outings (museums, theater, etc.)
- Laptop and recovery disks (see Computers in this chapter for details)
- Lightweight gifts for new friends and hosts (suggestions: Frisbees; T-shirts with city, state, or campus logos; UC pens or pencils; baseball caps; California postcards, posters, or scenic calendars; sealed local food products such as California almonds, honey, Ghirardelli chocolate)
- Umbrella

Travel lightly and avoid shipping surplus supplies to France. You will have to carry all of your luggage through customs. Baggage allowances have changed significantly and continue to change, so be sure to check with your airline to determine their restrictions. Most U.S.-based airlines charge a fee for each bag you check. Oversized and overweight luggage (typically defined as over 50 pounds) also requires an additional fee. Ideally, aim to travel with one large suitcase, but make sure it does not go over the weight limit.

You will be responsible for carrying your own bags quite some distance, including to your final residence. Many apartment buildings do not have elevators. In addition, most cities in Europe are not set up with wheelchair ramps. Consequently, rolling luggage may need to be carried up flights of stairs or lifted frequently. Keep your luggage with you at all times while traveling. It is expensive to ship bags home or consign them at an airport or train station, and most students find that they can get by on much less than they brought. In addition, many students find that a large backpack (not an external frame backpack) is more convenient than a suitcase. Backpacks are especially handy when traveling by train.

Clothing

If you are in a summer, fall, or year program, it will be warm when you arrive in France. Temperatures sometimes reach the 80s and low 90s (°F), depending on the location. However, France will become cold and wet later in the fall and throughout the winter. Snow showers are also likely during the winter. If you are in the spring program, it will be cold when you arrive. Pack the appropriate clothing based on the months that you will be in France.

Typically, California winter coats are too thin for cold winters in France. Be sure to take a durable coat or buy one in France. However, be aware that clothing is often more expensive in France and the UCEAP Student Budget does not include funds for the purchase of clothing abroad.

Europeans tend to dress up more than Americans. Generally, they do not wear sweatshirts, sweatpants, athletic shoes, or jeans with holes or tears. You may feel more comfortable if you dress to fit in. Wearing dressy clothes is obviously not practical for everyday purposes, and you can get by wearing shirts, blouses, or sweaters with pants or nice jeans.

Laundry facilities are expensive in Europe (approximately \$5 per load of wash) and are often hard on clothes. Pack easy-to-care-for clothing that can be washed at home and drip-dried.

Between cultural activities, excursions, on-site lectures, and traveling, you will be doing a lot of walking. Comfortable shoes are a necessity; make sure they are well broken-in before departure. Sturdy walking shoes (preferably with thick rubber soles), boots, and tennis shoes are recommended.

Women

Good jeans, skirts, sweaters, and other casual attire are sufficient for everyday wear. You will need a warm dress or skirt and blouse for more formal occasions, such as the theater, opera, or dinner with a French family. Most French women do not wear shorts, halter tops, or revealing clothing in the city. If you dress this way you are likely to attract unwanted attention and rude remarks. Such clothing is acceptable and common, however, at the beach and recreational areas.

Men

Jeans and permanent-press shirts are practical. Many French men wear sweaters over their shirts in cooler weather. You will need some formal attire for dressier occasions, such as the theater, the opera, or dinner with a French family.

► See [Computer and Internet Access](#) in this guide for more information.

► You are subject to dismissal from the program if you fail to appear on the official start date (per Student Agreement, Section 10) unless your flight is delayed or canceled. Attendance at all orientation sessions is mandatory.

Electrical Appliances

As in most of Europe, the current is 220 volts at 50 cycles in France, instead of the 110 volts at 60 cycles found in the U.S. Travel irons, curling irons, hair dryers, and electric razors that can operate on all currents are available both in the U.S. and abroad (a plug adapter may be required). Voltage converters and plug adapters are available in the U.S. for European current and outlets (the same items cost more in France).

Computers

Taking a laptop has advantages, especially if you are unaccustomed to writing papers any other way. Disadvantages include the risk of theft and access to printing facilities. Commercial outfits that provide printing are neither numerous nor cheap. There may be lines to use university printers. Past students who took laptops and printers were generally pleased they did.

If you are in a UC Center Paris program, take a laptop if possible. Limited printing and Internet services are available at the UCEAP Study Center and ACCENT Center in Paris.

Books

Not all books can be found easily in France. Pack a reference French grammar book with which you feel comfortable. The grammar books for foreigners available in France do not concentrate on the usual difficulties and particular problems of native speakers of English. If you do not have a grammar book, get a recommendation from your current French instructor. Once in France, you can purchase a French dictionary.

There are some English-language bookstores in France, but it is typically cheaper to order books through [Amazon.fr](#) (go to the “*livres en anglais*” section).

Travel to France

You need to make your own travel arrangements to France. Purchase a changeable airline ticket if possible. Standby tickets are not appropriate.

The UCEAP program calendar, which is located on your Participants program page online, lists the official start date for your program. You will need to arrive at the specified location in France on time on the official start date. Detailed arrival information is provided in the Arrival Instructions in your UCEAP online Predeparture Checklist.

Flights are routinely changed or canceled. Confirm your flight schedule about two weeks before departure. Your UCEAP insurance includes coverage for certain travel-related contingencies such as delayed flights and late or lost baggage. Review the [UCEAP Insurance Plan](#) brochure thoroughly for details.

The start date of the program can change due to unforeseen circumstances. You are responsible for making modifications in your travel itinerary to accommodate such changes. UCEAP is not responsible for any unrecoverable transportation charges incurred for independent travel arrangements. In order to be kept informed of any program changes, update MyEAP with any changes in your address, phone number, or e-mail address. Your program requires that you submit a Travel Itinerary Form (see the online Predeparture Checklist).

► Even if you are on full financial aid, you are responsible for reserving and purchasing your ticket. Your Financial Aid Office will not do it for you.

► UCEAP strongly discourages couch surfing, defined as using an online social network to organize free places to stay.

Financial Aid Students

Your financial aid package is based partly on the UCEAP Student Budget for the program. The estimated round-trip airfare is based on the cost of a changeable student fare to France. If your independent travel costs are greater than the airfare estimate in the UCEAP Student Budget, notify your financial aid counselors. Neither UCEAP nor the Financial Aid Office can guarantee that the additional cost will be funded by financial aid.

Avoid Travel Hassles

Do not ask others to carry any items abroad for you (laptop, camera, extra bags, etc.) and do not volunteer to do so for others. Airlines may not allow you to take them, or customs abroad may charge you a high duty. This is particularly a concern with electronic goods.

Identify each item of your luggage on the inside and outside with your name, home address, and destination. To avoid theft, never leave your luggage unattended. UCEAP recommends that you pack your prescribed medication in your carry-on luggage.

The [UCEAP Insurance Plan](#) includes a personal property benefit; however, it is your responsibility to review the benefits before departure and determine whether or not the coverage will suit your needs. You may decide to purchase additional coverage.

Craigslist France is not as legitimate as Craigslist USA and should not be used to secure housing, be it temporary or permanent.

Return Travel

If you do not make round-trip arrangements, be sure to book a return flight with plenty of lead time once abroad. Flights to the U.S. fill up quickly and economy-fare seats book early.

► The UCEAP Student Budget does not include funds for recreational travel abroad.

LOCAL TRANSPORTATION

Travel within France

Public Transportation

You will most likely have a 15- to 60-minute commute from your place of residence to your classes. A 25- to 35-minute commute is average. Transportation options include walking, the metro, and the bus within Paris. You can purchase a *Navigo* or *imagine "R"* pass, which allow you to ride both the metro and the bus. The cost of the Navigo pass is approximately €62,90 per month. Single metro tickets cost about €1,80. If you are staying for the year, you may purchase the *carte imagine "R"* for about €306,50 to last the entire school year. You may also purchase a weekly pass for about €19,15. Prices are subject to change.

Bikes

Paris has a rent-a-bike program, called the Velib. For information, go to the [Velib website](#). Velib does not accept credit cards that do not contain a microchip.

Trains

When traveling between cities and countries, many students use the train. A train ticket from Paris to Lyon costs approximately €75 to €125, and you can receive a 25 percent student discount. There are also high-speed trains (TGV) between Bordeaux and Paris. To find routes, fares, and departure and arrival times, visit the website for France's train transportation system, [SNCF](#).

► It is important that you carefully read all of the information available in the [UCEAP Guide to Study Abroad](#) and discuss it with the person who will assist you with your finances while you are abroad.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Understanding Your Finances

Understanding your finances before, during, and after your program is crucial to having a successful time abroad. The following list outlines just a few of the many things you will need to know before departure.

Detailed information on the following topics can be found in the [Money Matters](#) chapter of the *UCEAP Guide to Study Abroad*:

- Contact information for finance questions
- How to estimate the cost of your program
- Budget instructions and information
- How to and who can make payments to UCEAP
- UCEAP student account information
- Banking before and after arrival
- Fees and penalties
- Loan information
- How financial aid works while abroad (how do I get my financial aid from my home campus and how are my fees paid?)
- Various forms (e.g., direct deposit, etc.)

MyEAP Student Account

Your MyEAP Student Account is similar to your UC campus financial account. It will be available as soon as you are selected for your program in MyEAP. You can make payments through this account using e-checks or credit cards (MasterCard or Discover). The fees that you owe UCEAP will be applied to your account after your program predeparture withdrawal date, which is listed in MyEAP. For the amount due to UCEAP prior to fees being posted on your account, refer to the UCEAP Student Budget Payment Vouchers. Program fees are subject to change.

UCEAP Student Budget

Carefully review your [UCEAP Student Budget](#).

Your UCEAP Student Budget lists the fees you will pay to UCEAP and an estimate of the personal expenses you will need to plan for. It does not include the cost of recreational travel or personal entertainment. Review your UCEAP Student Budget frequently. The Payment Vouchers are on the second page of the UCEAP Student Budget.

Instructions

- **Download** and **print** your UCEAP Student Budget and Payment Vouchers.
- Note the deadlines on the Payment Vouchers.
- Give the UCEAP Student Budget and Payment Vouchers to the person responsible for paying your UCEAP bills. Sign this person up for Third Party Authorization so they can make payments online.

For further information see the [Money Matters](#) chapter of the *UCEAP Guide to Study Abroad* and the Money Matters tab of your Participants Portal. If you will be receiving financial aid, see also the [UCEAP Financial Assistance](#) web page.

- ▶ Do not carry large amounts of cash (American or European).

Handling Money Abroad

It is imperative that you review the UCEAP Student Budget and determine your program costs. You can find the budget in the Money Matters section of your Participants program page. As noted in Section II of the UCEAP Student Budget, you are responsible for your finances while abroad. Before you go, make sure you completely understand your financial needs for study abroad and verify that your personal funds and/or financial aid meet these needs. Plan carefully, as recreational travel expenses and entertainment are not included in the program budget.

The Euro (€)

The official currency of France (and of the European Union) is the euro (€). As with all currencies, the value of the euro relative to the U.S. dollar fluctuates daily. Depending on these fluctuations, your actual living expenses (in terms of U.S. dollars) can rise or fall over the duration of the program.

There are 100 cents in 1 euro. Coins (*la monnaie*) come in denominations of 1, 2, 5, 10, 20, and 50 cents, and €1 and €2. Much like the U.S. dollar, euro bills (*les billets*) come in denominations of €5, €10, €20, €50, €100, €200, and €500.

In writing numbers, commas and periods are reversed in Europe. For example, 1,00 is what we would consider 1.00, and 1.000 is what we would consider 1,000.

Additional information about the euro is available on the [European Central Bank](#) website. To find out the current dollar-euro conversion rate, visit websites with currency calculators such as [Google Finance](#) or [OANDA](#).

Cash Upon Arrival

It is wise to obtain €150–200 before departure from the U.S. In addition to allowing you to become familiar with the currency, the funds will be useful for snacks, transportation, and unexpected purchases when you first arrive in France. You can purchase foreign currencies from most U.S. banks; the process may take a week or more, so plan ahead.

It is also possible to exchange dollars for euros at international airports (both in the U.S. and abroad), although exchange rates are less favorable and exchange offices are not always open in the late and early hours of the day. ATMs can be found at the airport, and you will have the opportunity to withdraw euros from your American bank account as soon as you enter the arrival hall.

If you set up a bank account in France, you may not have access to money in the new account for up to a month, so be prepared to access cash from another source for your initial financial needs (see *Obtaining Cash Abroad*).

If you are in an immersion program, the Sciences Po program, or Bordeaux Language & Culture, take enough money (U.S. \$2,000 to \$2,500) to cover initial living expenses (rent, meals, and incidentals) that will be incurred shortly after arrival. If you are a UC Center Paris or Lyon Language & Culture student, you will need less money initially (U.S. \$1,000–\$1,500). If you are required to obtain a *titre de séjour* (see the [Travel Documents](#) section of this guide for details), you will also need €58 to cover the cost of the fiscal stamp required by France. This is payable when you go to complete the *titre de séjour* process later in the semester. Alternatively, you can pay for the fiscal stamp online prior to attending your medical visit at www.timbresofii.fr

Obtaining Cash Abroad

The Study Center recommends the following forms of handling money: debit card, credit card, travelers checks, international money orders for AmEx members, and wire transfers. How you divide your money into the various forms is entirely your choice; choose the options with which you feel most comfortable. UCEAP recommends that you choose multiple methods of accessing funds so if there is a problem with one, you can use another.

Credit Cards

Credit cards generally offer the best international exchange rates. Visa, known as Carte Bleue in France, is the most widely accepted credit card in Europe. With a Visa card, usually you can get an immediate cash advance by presenting your card and passport at a major bank. Four-digit PINs are essential in order to use credit cards at ATMs. MasterCard is also widely accepted, as is American Express (AmEx), though to a lesser extent. You can use an AmEx card to purchase travelers checks abroad. The Discover card is not commonly accepted.

If you take a credit card, set up an online account (if possible) so you can track expenses, receive statements, and pay your bills online. You may also arrange to have your statements sent to France, or for your parents or a responsible person to receive and pay your bills from the U.S.

Past students have found it useful to bring an additional credit card strictly for emergencies.

Travelers Checks

Travelers checks are rarely used nowadays in France, so they are not practical for everyday use. Landlords and shops will not accept travelers checks as payment, even if they are in euros. However, immersion students may need to bring travelers checks in order to pay their first months' rent and security deposit (after which you can withdraw euros from your bank account during the month to pay your monthly rent without exceeding your daily/weekly limit on withdrawals).

If you do bring travelers checks, you will need to exchange them into euros at either American Express or any bank marked "Change." AmEx travelers checks are the most widely accepted. Be sure to make two copies of the check numbers and give one copy to a family member or friend. Keep the other copy for yourself, separate from the actual checks. If you lose your checks, you will need to provide these numbers and the receipts in order to obtain replacements.

ATM Transactions

A good way to obtain cash is through an ATM. In most cities in France, it is easy to use an ATM. To get an ATM card, you must first have an account at a bank or credit union in the U.S. before departure. Most ATM cards are connected to a checking or share draft account. The bank will issue you an ATM card and a personal identification number (PIN). The PIN must have four digits in order to work in France. Keep in mind when choosing a PIN that ATMs abroad do not have letters on the keypads. Most cards carry the symbols for the Cirrus and Plus systems on the back, which are common ATM networks throughout Europe. It is helpful if your ATM card has a Visa or MasterCard logo on it. Once abroad, the ATM card and PIN can be used to withdraw money from the U.S. account.

There is no waiting period, and money deposited in your account in the U.S. is immediately available for withdrawal abroad. There may be limitations on the amount of cash accessible per transaction, and there may be fees depending on your U.S. bank. Ask your bank about sister banks in France; you may be able to avoid extra fees. Be sure to keep track of your account balance at all times so you do not overdraw funds from your account.

ATMs are available at most French banks and commercial centers and accept all major ATM and credit cards.

Check with your bank to make sure your ATM card can be used to access funds in France. Be sure to notify your bank that you will be using your credit and debit cards abroad so they do not freeze the accounts when you try to use them overseas. Increasingly, banks block the use of American ATM cards abroad to prevent fraud.

International Money Orders and Gift Checks

AmEx international money orders and gift checks provide an inexpensive way to receive money from home. However, relying on this system requires planning and knowing some time in advance that you will need funds. Allow at least two weeks for the money order or gift checks to arrive by airmail. You may cash them at an AmEx office.

Personal Checks

U.S. bank checks and cashier's checks cannot be cashed in France. Therefore, this is *not* a recommended option.

Wiring Money

One option for wiring money is the MoneyGram from Thomas Cook. The transfer generally takes about ten minutes and all fees are paid in the U.S. For more information, contact a Thomas Cook office.

AmEx also maintains a wire service, and transfers from the U.S. generally take two business days. (Higher fees are associated with AmEx wire services.) You may receive funds directly in travelers checks, if desired. AmEx also permits cardholders to charge travelers checks to their account and cash personal checks.

Another option for wiring money is to use the international transfer services operated by **Western Union** (phone in the U.S. is 800-325-6000). As with the Thomas Cook MoneyGram, all fees are paid in the U.S. You may pick up the money at one of many post offices within two or three hours from the time it was sent.

Credit Card Advances

You may obtain a cash advance with your Visa or MasterCard from a bank offering *Dépannage*. Your PIN is not usually required if the transaction is conducted inside the bank, but you must show your passport. Remember that interest begins to accrue the day that you take the cash advance, not at the end of the billing period as is the case with purchases. Also, the interest rate charged on cash advances is usually higher than that charged on regular purchases.

If you plan to use your credit card for cash advances, check with the issuing bank in the U.S. to make sure that the card will be accepted by European banks and ATMs. A credit card with an international PIN comes in handy if you need to obtain a cash advance after hours.

Banking

During your UCEAP orientation, the Study Center will provide information about banking. It is important to be aware of French banking regulations.

Summer and Semester Students

Due to the fact that you are on a short-term program, you will not be able to open a bank account in Paris.

Year Students

To open an account, you need to deposit money in a negotiable form (e.g., euros, travelers check, U.S. currency, bank draft). You will need a permanent address in France and your passport to open an account. You may also be asked for your *titre de séjour*. Unlike in the U.S., you will rarely need to show official identification when you write a check or withdraw cash at the bank once you establish an account.

After you open an account, you can make deposits by transferring funds via cable, Telex, or by depositing checks. Money orders are not advised. In order to avoid excessive processing charges, money for the year should be wired in a few large sums rather than frequent small payments. Personal or bank checks and money orders from the U.S. need to be cleared before funds can be drawn on them. Clearing checks can take six weeks. Overdraft penalties for checking accounts are extremely high.

ENS

Inquire at the Study Center for recommendations about opening a bank account in Paris.

Sciences Po

If you are a year student, Sciences Po will invite local bank representatives to meet with you during the Welcome Programme. These representatives will help you open a bank account. Students have also found that the post office, *La Poste*, offers checking accounts with cheaper fees than a commercial bank. Due to the short duration of the spring program, you may not be able to open a bank account.

UC Center

Due to the short duration of the program, you may not open a bank account. Neither ACCENT nor the Study Center can facilitate the process. You are advised to access money from abroad using your ATM card.

Closing Accounts

At the end of the year, you may be entitled to a refund for certain items, such as the housing security deposit (this usually requires that the landlord inspect the apartment and verify that all bills have been paid). Do not have reimbursements sent to you in the U.S. in the form of a check. By French law, checks from a French bank account cannot be accepted for deposit in the U.S. (A local California bank will likely be unaware of the French law and may initially accept the check, but eventually it will bounce.)

If you expect reimbursement:

- Leave your French bank account open until all checks are deposited. Once all reimbursements are completed, write to the bank and have them close the account. You can request that the French bank transfer the balance to a U.S. account. There will probably be a transfer fee of \$25.
- Have the person who owes the money transfer it through his or her bank directly to a U.S. bank account. International bank-to-bank transfers are allowed by French currency regulations.

Late Withdrawal Penalties & Fees

If you withdraw from the program after the deadline noted in the UCEAP Student Agreement, you will incur financial penalties. These penalties vary according to the host institution and date of withdrawal. UCEAP cannot waive or assume the expenses of penalties assessed by the host institution. You will be required to pay the amounts assessed by the host institution and UCEAP.

UCEAP is not responsible for reimbursing airfare expenses; therefore, do not buy a plane ticket until your UCEAP participation is confirmed.

UC Center

In addition to UCEAP penalties, ACCENT will charge withdrawal penalties based on the withdrawal date. Refer to your online Student Budget and the online Predeparture Checklist for more information. The effective withdrawal date is the date that ACCENT is notified of the withdrawal. It is important that your Campus EAP Advisor notify the UCEAP Systemwide Office of the withdrawal immediately.

COMMUNICATIONS ABROAD

French Postal System

French mailboxes are yellow and readily available in public places and on the outer walls of post offices and tobacco shops, called *tabacs*. Collection times are indicated on each box. In general, mail sent within France that is posted before the last collection will be delivered the next day, unless it is sent economy rate. Mail sent abroad will take longer, and delivery times depend on the destination—on average it takes between one to five days. Anticipate five days for letters to reach the U.S. Stamps are available in post offices, which are open from 8:30 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday through Friday, and on Saturday mornings until noon. In Paris, the main post office, located at 52 rue du Louvre (metro station “Louvre”), is never closed. It is the only post office in France open 24 hours a day, every day of the year. Domestic stamps are also available at *tabacs*, which charge the same rates as the post offices. These shops are identified by a red or orange diamond-shaped sign.

Sending parcels home from post offices is generally convenient and reliable. Sturdy shipping boxes with self-fastening systems are available in all sizes at moderate costs.

Another safe and reliable way to send large items, parcels, or luggage within France is by using SERNAM. This forwarding service operates out of all major train stations. For a reasonable charge, SERNAM will forward an item by rail and immediately deliver it to its final destination. Parcels can be delivered to the SERNAM office at the train station or be picked up by their courier service.

Mail

Have mail sent to the Study Center during the Practicum/Welcome Programme and to your private address once you are settled in your permanent residence. It is not advisable to have mail sent to your temporary residence (this mail may not be distributed and is not forwarded).

Sciences Po

You can receive mail at the following address during the Welcome Programme:

[Student Name]
c/o UC Center
89, rue du Faubourg Saint-Antoine
75011 Paris
France

The Study Center administrator will e-mail you to let you know you have mail.

UC Center

Have your mail sent to the ACCENT Paris Center. Address mail as follows:

[Student Name]
c/o ACCENT
89 rue du Faubourg Saint-Antoine
75011 Paris
France

► Approximate time difference: add 9 hours (between September 30 and October 30, add 8 hours)

Shipping

Do not ship computers, cameras, or valuable items to France unless the shipping agent and French customs confirm that you can receive your shipment without import duty taxes. It is common to pay a fee as high as \$100 for something as simple as a coat or camera. Furthermore, even inexpensive items that are correctly marked “For Personal Use Only/No Commercial Value” sometimes incur customs charges. Keep all your receipts for electronic equipment and register the items with U.S. customs to make it easier to bring equipment back to the U.S.

If things have to be shipped, all packages will go First Class and the rates are fairly expensive.

When shipping important documents, it is often worthwhile to use such shipping services as FedEx and DHL. These companies, along with the U.S. Postal Service, have special additional services that help to ensure that the documents reach their proper destination. All of these options usually require a physical address (no P.O. boxes) along with a phone number.

Remind your parents, friends, and others who might send you a package to declare “For Personal Use Only/No Commercial Value” on the customs slip.

Phones

Public phones work with prepaid cards (known as a *telecarte*) that can be purchased in post offices, *tabacs*, bookstores, newsstands, some cafés, and numerous other locations. However, with the increase in cell phones, public phones are becoming scarce. Many students choose to obtain a cell phone shortly after arrival. A wide selection of cell phones is generally available. You may be required to have a bank account in order to buy one, but if you buy a “Mobicarte” (cell phone with prepaid minutes) you can avoid this. If you already have a cell phone, check with the manufacturer to see if it will operate in France (it will need to be a tri-band phone to operate in Europe). More information will be available after your arrival at the Study Center.

Due to the recent and significant increase in theft (violent and other) of smart phones, students have found it better to avoid using a Blackberry, iPhone, or other costly device in a public place, instead replacing it with a cheap (€20–30) pay-as-you-go cell phone that does not attract thieves when used in public.

One of the most popular means of communication when calling internationally is using the Internet to make phone calls at an inexpensive rate. **Skype** is a free option for computer-to-computer calls made through the Internet. You are advised to buy a headset in the U.S., where electronics generally cost less. SkypeOut is a Skype service through which you or your parents can charge the account to make calls to regular landlines and cell phones. Currently, SkypeOut costs 3 cents per minute to a French landline, American landline, and American cell phone, and 24 cents per minute to a French cell phone.

Sciences Po and ENS

You will be informed about renting or purchasing a cell phone during your orientation in Paris. You may also set up an individual phone line in your apartment. Most students purchase cell phones while in France.

► Numerous Internet cafés are located near universities, student residences, and within city centers.

UC Center

Most students find a cell phone particularly useful. You will be informed about renting or purchasing a cell phone during your orientation in Paris.

In the Daumesnil residence, you will have a phone in your room. On this line, you can receive incoming calls from anywhere for free and make unlimited free calls to any landline in the Paris region (phone numbers starting with 01 or 09) and any landline in the United States. You will need a phone card to call any cell phone (the card access phone number should start with 01).

In the Cité residence, you can activate the phone in your room by paying a small fee at the front desk of the residence, and then you will need a phone card to call out.

Homestays have limited phone access.

Computer & Internet Access

In most cases, computer access will not be as extensive as it is at UC. If possible, take a laptop. Carefully consider security risks and other precautions. Laptops, cell phones—particularly smart phones—and other electronic devices are among the most frequently stolen items from travelers. Keep all your electronics within reach at all times. Do not place your cell phone on the café table—it can be quickly swiped. For your laptop, it is advisable to have updated virus protection. The [UCEAP Insurance Plan](#) offers a personal property benefit, which covers theft; however, it is your responsibility to review the insurance details and determine whether or not it is sufficient to cover your laptop. You may decide to purchase additional coverage depending on your needs.

Most laptops are equipped with a voltage converter allowing the use of the 220-volt electricity in Europe. Read your manual to confirm. The converter is usually part of the “box” located halfway down the power cord. You still need an adapter to use the outlets.

In order to have Internet access on a laptop in Europe, you will need:

- **Access to a phone jack.** If you have access to a phone jack and can make outgoing calls, you will need a dial-up number for an ISP (see below). If you are living in a homestay, you will likely be restricted from using the phone jack for Internet access.
- **European phone cord.** The phone plugs are shaped differently in each country in Europe. You will need to buy a phone plug for France. These are inexpensive and available in the U.S. and Europe.
- **European ISP (Internet Service Provider).** Talk to your American ISP to see if you can use your service while abroad. If not, you will need an ISP in Europe. Some services require a monthly subscription; others are more flexible. Note: An ISP from the U.S. may exist in Europe but will require a different billing and payment setup (for example, AOL).
- **Wireless cards and 3G.** If your laptop or smart phone has a wireless card or 3G installed, you will be able to access WiFi in Europe where it is available.

UCEAP STUDENTS SAY...



Be as open with people as possible, and be willing to try new things.

The studios were great, but I wish I stayed with a family to practice my French more.

You may have to walk up a lot of stairs. Conventional toilets and air conditioning aren't always available.

You have to walk to the grocery stores. A customer isn't always right. Returning items to stores takes more effort. Stores aren't open 24 hours a day or on Sunday.

Never buy or sign anything from door-to-door salesmen.

Be prepared for strikes in all public services.



HOUSING & MEALS

Where Will I Live?

ENS (Rue d'Ulm)

You are responsible for room and board costs and will use an agency to find lodging. You will most likely be required to pay a one- or two-month rental deposit in advance. This is returned within one month after you move out, depending on the condition of the apartment. ENS can also provide you with dormitory housing for approximately €230 per month. Many students have housing included as part of their stipend.

Sciences Po

You are responsible for finding and securing your own housing in Paris, though the UC Paris Study Center administrator is available to help you assess the legitimacy of postings, review a lease before you sign it, and answer any questions. You should plan to either find housing before departure or live in temporary housing for the first couple of weeks to a month while you look for permanent housing (more information on housing is in the UCEAP online Predeparture Checklist). The cost of the temporary housing is not included in the UCEAP fees. You must also pay for your own meals.

If you do not secure housing before you arrive in Paris, the most pressing concern upon arrival may be locating permanent housing. During the UC-specific orientation, the Study Center staff will cover the topic of apartment searching in Paris to help you locate desirable neighborhoods, learn specialized vocabulary, and feel more comfortable dealing with leases and making payments for deposits, rent, telephones, and utilities. Be flexible in all of your expectations, especially with respect to location, space, and price, and be prepared to spend time finding a more suitable place. Many accommodations lack the familiar conveniences of home. Parisian apartments are notoriously small and expensive, especially in the city center.

Before beginning the housing search, assess your priorities:

- Is it more important to live in one of the expensive areas or to have more space but live further from the center of Paris?
- If your budget is tight, can you live with a toilet or shower down the hall?
- Can you share with another person to lower the cost of rent?
- Are you willing to live with a family, or is personal freedom important?

Students often ask about the best neighborhoods: Paris is divided into 20 districts, or *arrondissements*. All the *arrondissements* have interesting parts to explore. Familiarize yourself with the different neighborhoods and search the Internet prior to arrival. Choosing a neighborhood is a question of personal taste; however, generally the farther away from the center and to the east, the cheaper the rent. Still, you are encouraged to take an apartment within Paris, rather than out in the suburbs, to allow for participation in Parisian evening cultural events. Although the suburbs may seem less expensive up front, there are hidden costs such as transportation and travel time. Be mindful that during transportation strikes, it will be difficult to walk to class if you are living outside of the city.

UC Center

Language & Culture, Summer: Upon arrival, you will move into your homestay or the Daumesnil residence hall. If you extend from the UC Center summer program to the UC Center fall program, you must live in a homestay during the fall semester in Paris. ACCENT, not the Paris Study Center, manages all the student housing for their programs. Housing costs are included in your UCEAP program fees.

French & European Studies, Fall: Upon arrival, and for the duration of the UCEAP orientation and practicum, you will stay at the ACCENT residence hall (Daumesnil), the Cité Universitaire residence hall, or a residential hotel in Paris. You will then either move to a homestay or remain at the Daumesnil or Cité Universitaire residence hall. If you are planning to extend to the Bordeaux spring program, you must choose the homestay option for your semester in Paris. ACCENT, not the Paris Study Center, manages all the student housing for their programs. Housing costs are included in your UCEAP program fees.

Residences—Daumesnil and Cité Universitaire

As in the U.S., European residence halls and student hotels tend to be simple. The student residences in Paris consist of single and double studio rooms and are furnished with the necessities: a bed, a desk, a closet or armoire, sheets, pillows, and blankets. Each studio has its own bathroom (toilets and shower), and you will need to bring or buy your own towels and toiletries, including toilet paper. In the Daumesnil residence, each room also includes a kitchenette with a hot plate, a sink, a small refrigerator, basic dishes and utensils, and a microwave. In Cité Universitaire, each hall has a common kitchen with these amenities. Pay-per-use laundry facilities are located within the buildings. Living in a residence hall requires sharing space and being respectful of the needs of others. European residences tend to be much quieter, as students generally socialize off campus. Dorms require that quiet hours be observed between 10 p.m. and 8 a.m. Overnight guests and excessive noise are prohibited—the French are quite serious about this. Parties are not allowed within the residences, and violation of these rules may lead to expulsion. There are numerous cafés and restaurants near the student residences where you can gather socially.

Homestay

Homestay accommodations provide the opportunity to observe firsthand how the French live. As in a residence hall, living in a homestay requires respect and sensitivity to others. You will receive a set of “Family Living Guidelines” upon arrival in Paris to help you adjust to your accommodations.

The host family will provide sheets, blankets, pillows, and towels. The number of meals provided per week will depend on the meal plan you have chosen with your host family. Phone usage varies from home to home, but students are generally allowed to receive calls in the home and may make short phone calls. You may need to pay for outgoing calls. All homestays have Internet, although wireless (WiFi) is not guaranteed.

ACCENT Housing Contract

The housing contracts, costs, roommate preference forms, and detailed instructions are available in the ACCENT Enrollment Forms found in your Predeparture Checklist. Complete the forms and return them to the San Francisco ACCENT office by the stated deadline. If you choose the homestay option, you will get the name and address of your host family during the UCEAP orientation in Paris. This information will not be available prior to departure from the U.S.

Rent Payment

In addition to rent, you are responsible for housing expenses such as cleaning, utilities, and phone bills that are charged after the program is over. If you fail to pay such bills, your UC course registration and ability to obtain UC transcripts will be blocked upon return to the U.S. You will pay rent either directly to your landlord or through UCEAP student fees, depending on your program.

ENS: You pay your own housing throughout the program.

Sciences Po: You pay your own housing throughout the program. Temporary housing is not part of the student fees and is an out-of-pocket expense.

UC Center: Homestay and dormitory rent is paid through the student fees.

Renting Apartments in France

The following information applies only if your program allows renting apartments. See *Where Will I Live?* at the top of this chapter for housing options in your program.

To rent an apartment, one normally must have enough funds available upon arrival in France to cover:

- the equivalent of one month's rent for a security deposit
- *taxe d'habitation*, if you will be the renter of the apartment on January 1 of a given year
- renter's insurance (if not included in your program's UCEAP fees)
- possible agency fees
- first month's rent

Apartment Fees

If you rent an apartment under your name (shared or not), you must pay the *taxe d'habitation*, which is equivalent to about one month's rent and is billed annually by the government. Sometimes the *taxe d'habitation* is calculated by the landlord and is included in the rent. The *fisc* (French IRS) is increasingly more computerized and efficient. If the *fisc* sends an inquiry, it must be answered. Be aware that it is often sent after your departure from France.

Renting an apartment may require the payment of an agency fee (typically one and a half months' rent) and a security deposit equal to one month's rent. These factors can increase the monthly housing expense by one-third. The security deposit should be refunded after termination of the lease, generally after the landlord has made sure that the utilities have been paid and there is no damage to the apartment. The landlord has up to two months to refund the security deposit. The security deposit cannot be applied toward the last month's rent. In accordance with the housing agreement, sufficient notice (typically one month for a furnished apartment and three months for an unfurnished apartment) is required before vacating the apartment. Notice must be sent via registered mail with return receipt requested, or "*lettre recommandée avec avis de réception*."

Leases

Although a lease usually covers 12 months, French law provides a procedure for early termination. To terminate a lease, the owner must be notified by a registered letter (receipt requested) at least one month in advance for a furnished apartment and three months in advance for an unfurnished

UCEAP STUDENTS SAY...

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The homestay is absolutely wonderful. Experience another side of French culture, and save bunches of time not having to worry about grocery shopping, cooking, and cleaning. The costs come to about the same in the end.

It's definitely the best idea to live with a family. I'm truly happy with the choice I made.

My stay with a host family is the only reason I now have passable French.

”

apartment. After giving notice of early termination, you must allow the landlord to show the apartment. If these requirements are fulfilled, you are freed of the lease. If you decide to move without following this procedure, you may be fined up to one month's rent for a furnished apartment and up to three months' rent for an unfurnished apartment, or you may have to pay the rent until the official procedure has been fully completed. By law, the landlord has two additional months to return the security deposit, less any damages. There is little chance of finding someone to sublet an apartment. Ask the Study Center staff for help with these important matters, especially when you receive and sign official documents.

Renter's Insurance

Under French law, you are required to have renter's insurance, which can cost from €80 to €140 for the year. This insurance covers fire, water damage, accidents, and theft (only from your home). Review the UCEAP Student Budget online to determine if the renter's insurance is included in your UCEAP fees. If it is not, you will be required to pay for the insurance out of pocket once in France.

Utilities

Depending on the type of housing, utilities (gas, water, and electricity) may be included in the rent, but phone, Internet, and cable services are not; plan on paying for these services yourself. More and more phone contracts are now bundled with phone, TV, and Internet for one monthly fee (around €30). Ask for a package that includes unlimited and free phone calls to the U.S.

Homestays

There is probably no better way for you to be immersed in French culture than to share everyday life with a family. The homestay is intended to be a mutually convenient social arrangement, a cultural experience, and a financial agreement between the host family and you. The home is intended to be more than just a place to stay. However, conforming to someone else's rules, especially if they seem strict, may be a strain if you have lived on your own for a few years. You may need to accept some limits to your independence. The homestay family may require that you be home by a certain hour each night, keep your room reasonably tidy, or have different rules governing phone usage, food, and utilities. Some families place restrictions on visitors. In some homes, students have their own entrance and considerable privacy.

Although you may be made to feel like a part of the family, some families are more distant and will establish a more impersonal and businesslike arrangement. The degree of interaction with other members of the household varies in relation to the diversity of the households in France. You may well find yourself living with a single individual and one or more family members (collateral or direct kin) instead of a traditional family unit. Retired single individuals (usually retired women) frequently enjoy hosting students. Do not expect a traditional French nuclear family or the dynamics that you might otherwise experience with such a family.

You will need to be flexible. The responsibility to adapt is on you, not on the host family. Being in a family setting, it is imperative for you to take into account local customs as the family comes to know you personally. The homestay coordinators are careful about matching you with the best family, but a perfect match is difficult. Dialogue, patience, cooperation, and

UCEAP STUDENTS SAY...

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Quotes here.

”

consideration are usually the best vehicles for good results. While the program attempts to place one student per household, occasionally another student might be present from another program. In order to be placed in the most suitable situation, fill out the pre-departure housing questionnaire carefully and accurately by the required deadline.

The primary purpose of being with a host family is to interact socially and culturally, and to improve language proficiency. It is expected that everyone, including other guests in the home, will speak French at all times. If a host family requests that you speak English, it may be beneficial to work out a reciprocal arrangement in which you occasionally speak in English to help the host family with the language, while remaining committed to using the host family's help in your own acquisition of French.

There may be some unspoken conditions and responsibilities to a homestay involving everything from use of the kitchen to possible curfews. To avoid any confusion, communicate with your host family about the following when you arrive:

- **Keys:** Will you be issued keys to the house? Does the family expect you to be home at a certain time of night?
- **Bathroom privileges:** What are your rights and responsibilities concerning the bathroom facilities? If possible, set up a schedule, especially for the morning.
- **Meals:** How many meals per day will you receive? What should you do if you know you will miss a meal? What should you do if you miss a meal unintentionally? Discuss any special dietary needs and scheduled meal times, and inquire about access to the kitchen and the household's food. Be flexible if you are a vegetarian.
- **Towels and linens:** Will they be provided? Who will launder them? How often will linens be changed?
- **Your room:** Who is to clean the room? Make the bed? Change the linens?
- **Laundry:** Who is responsible for the laundry? In some situations, the host family will do all laundry except underwear.
- **Water:** Conservative usage is highly recommended. You may be limited to one shower per day.
- **Guests:** Are you allowed to have guests, including overnight guests? What about parties and social gatherings in the home? Always inform the host family about any out-of-town trips and times when you expect to arrive home late, in case of an emergency.
- **Payment:** Clarify how payment for room and board is to be made. When is payment due? In some programs, homestay payment is included in the UCEAP fees.
- **Phone:** Ask your host family about the use of the phone and how to reimburse them for phone bills, and follow the set guidelines. Leave some money to cover charges that have not yet been paid before you leave France. Procedures and expectations vary by program. Most students obtain cell phones, which avoids this problem altogether.
- **Internet access:** If the host family does not have wireless, make sure you understand how to access the Internet. If you will be using a computer

UCEAP STUDENTS SAY...

“
 Cuisse de Grenouilles,
*frog legs, are good if
 you try not to imagine
 the frog. They taste
 like chicken, and the
 French will be pleased
 and surprised if you eat
 them.*
 ”

belonging to the host family, assume access will be limited. Seek out other ways to get online, such as computer labs and Internet cafés.

- **Other utilities:** Do not leave lights, computers, or other items running when not in use, and check with your host family regarding use of heat, etc. The French are conservative about the use of electricity and hot water. Respect host family expectations with regard to use of utilities.

Do not hesitate to report difficulties to the Study Center staff. Concerns should be aired immediately to avoid having a small instance build up into a major annoyance. Often, an upsetting situation is the result of a cultural misunderstanding that the Study Center may be able to explain.

You are responsible for any damage that you cause in the homestay and you will be expected to replace the items or pay for the damages before departure.

Meals

ENS & Sciences Po

The most economical options are to eat at university cafeterias, *restaurants universitaires*, or to shop and cook for oneself. When choosing an apartment or private room to rent, ensure that you will have access to full kitchen facilities. Be prepared to make some of your own meals. Food is also available at the many small shops and bakeries near the university, or at the university restaurant, which serves lunch and dinner.

UC Center

If you live in a homestay, you will be provided with some meals. The summer program homestays offer daily breakfast and one dinner per week. The fall program homestays have two options: 1) daily breakfast and dinner four days per week; or, 2) daily breakfast and dinner one day per week. Meals are not provided during the midterm vacation. During this time you must prepare or buy all other meals yourself (you will have kitchen access). Report any meal issues immediately to the UC Center staff.

If you live in a residence (dorm), no meals will be provided. If you live in the Daumesnil residence, you will have a kitchenette with a microwave, sink, refrigerator, and hot plate in your room. If you live in the Cité Universitaire residence, you will have access to a common kitchen with these amenities that you will share with other students in your hall.

Dining Out

Meals in student restaurants (the “CROUS”) are substantial and only cost about €3 each. If you eat primarily at student restaurants, you can keep within the estimated budget noted in the UCEAP student budget. If you cook some meals and eat at restaurants often, plan on spending at least \$100 more each month than is noted in the UCEAP budget. Eating out in France is generally a lot more expensive than it is in the U.S., and students report grocery shopping in general is more expensive than at home.

UCEAP STUDENTS SAY...

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If you can, avoid going home to the U.S. for the holidays. After being abroad for four months you'll finally find a rhythm, and a mere two weeks' vacation home will break that rhythm. You may find yourself more homesick upon return.

Take advantage of invitations for excursions, meals, and events with French friends and host families. It'll be fun and enlightening for you. You'll discover insights that you might not be able to gain on your own or with your American friends.

Meet French people; don't be afraid to call them, and don't be afraid to ask for help.

If you go to a coastal city, try the regional specialty, les huîtres, live oysters. The French eat them raw with a bit of lemon juice. It's a wonderful delicacy, and locals will be thrilled to see you eat them.

Take risks with the language and try to speak French whenever possible. Observe what others are doing and follow their example. Say 'Bonjour, madame' to a shopkeeper and 'Merci, au revoir' when you leave.

”

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Get Involved

Participating in extracurricular cultural and social activities while on UCEAP is an excellent way to meet people, improve your language skills, and integrate more fully into the community.

Join sports, musical, theater, or arts groups; volunteer at local organizations; attend lectures and receptions held in academic and community circles; and get the most out of your time abroad.

Working in France

Only students in the Lyon immersion and Sciences Po, Paris programs may legally work in France. French law dictates that international students have the right to work while studying in France as long as they are enrolled in an institution that participates in the national student health care plan. Students who are not EU citizens must also hold a valid *titre de séjour* (see the Travel Documents section of this guide for details). It may take four months or more to receive your *titre de séjour* after your arrival in France, so working may be more feasible for year-long students.

The law allows students to work 964 hours in a given year, which corresponds to 50% of full-time employment for the year (approximately 20 hours per week). Your work schedule should not interfere with your class schedule and coursework.

If you decide to work abroad, do not rely on that source of income to subsidize the UCEAP program; you must have other means of support. Student jobs are difficult to find, especially for foreigners, and even more so if you are not fluent in French. A few students in the past have found jobs teaching English and babysitting.

Contact the French consulate for more information about working abroad and applicable visa requirements.

Volunteer Opportunities

There may be volunteer opportunities available in your host city. Talk to the staff at your UCEAP Study Center to discuss whether volunteering is feasible for you and for suggestions on what organizations may be in need of volunteers.

UCEAP STUDENTS SAY...

“

Finding a church and people I connect and relate to made my experience a lot better. Meeting people from so many different cultures was amazing.

Travel! Go north at the warmest times and south in the winter. The outdoor market (I frequented Marche d'Aligüe) is great for practicing your language.

Exclude yourself from American groups; this is the best way to avoid English.

Keep an open mind; it makes all the difference.

Just be yourself. Don't pretend to be French because you're not. Be respectful, friendly, and keep your frustration with French inefficiency and administrative and cultural differences to a minimum.

Most valuable: learning that Americans are not the center of the world—that there are so many other cultures out there, ways of living, and so much to learn.

Planned activities by UC were extremely good.

”

- ▶ In addition to the following, read the **Health** chapter of the *UCEAP Guide to Study Abroad*.
- ▶ The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) **Travelers' Health** website provides valuable health information for all destinations.

HEALTH

Medical Facilities

Medical care in France is of comparable quality to that found in the U.S. If you feel sick or have a medical emergency, seek medical attention and contact the Study Center immediately. Study Center staff can recommend a clinic to visit, provide the necessary UCEAP medical insurance claim forms to complete, and make arrangements with your professors if an extended absence from class is expected.

Keep the following numbers handy in case of a medical emergency:

Medical emergencies and SAMU (24-hour ambulance)	15
Police	17
Fire department and other emergencies.	18

If you are in need of counseling, the International Counseling Service is a group of 11 English-speaking clinical psychologists and psychiatrists in Paris. Additional information is available at the UCEAP Study Center.

If you have questions, concerns, or feel that you need to be tested for a sexually transmitted disease, the Institut Alfred Fournier is the leading clinic in Paris for information and testing.

Institut Alfred Fournier
25, bd Saint-Jacques
75680 PARIS Cedex 14

The clinic is located off of the following exits:

Métro ligne 6: Glacière ou St-Jacques
RER ligne B: Denfert-Rochereau
Bus n°21: Arrêt Glacière
Bus n°38: Arrêt Denfert-Rochereau

Culture Shock & Psychological Health

There may be times when you wonder why you decided to study in France, especially when you miss your family and friends, or you are struggling with financial problems, feeling alone, or unable to communicate easily with others. There could be any number of things that might make you feel unhappy or worried and perhaps being in France makes it much harder to cope with such stresses. Most students expect to quickly adapt to the new culture—and they need to adjust rapidly if they are to effectively meet the academic demands placed upon them. Culture shock is a normal developmental phase of adjustment to a new cultural environment. It is not a psychological disorder. Reactions to culture shock can mimic more severe psychological problems such as clinical depression and anxiety. Typical reactions to culture shock include feeling helpless, out of control, vulnerable, fearful, anxious, and confused. Sadness may set in with periods of crying or sleeplessness.

Most students who experience culture shock function reasonably well under the stress and are able to keep up with the responsibilities of school and everyday life. However, a high level of stress can cause unusually strong emotional reactions and can interfere with effective functioning either at that time or later. Such reactions are normal responses to abnormal situations and are to be expected under the circumstances. They are usually transitory—

lasting a couple of weeks—and do not imply mental illness or an inability to cope. Nevertheless, there are occasions when the experience of culture shock can stir up deeper emotional issues. If you find that you need help, talk to the experienced local UCEAP staff who can help you identify a professional who can help you. They can also help you with the UC travel assistance provider, Europ Assistance, to set up direct payment for any counseling sessions that you may need.

Medications

If you take any medicine regularly, take enough with you abroad to last through the program, if possible. It is against the law to send prescription and over-the-counter medications through the mail. Medicines will be stopped at French customs if you try to ship them to France. Take an extra copy of the prescription for any medication, eyeglasses, or contact lenses. Your prescription should also list the generic name of the medication you are currently taking. Consider bringing your favorite brand name products that might not be available in France (familiar brands of shampoo, antiperspirants, pain medication, other over-the-counter remedies, particular brands of contact lens supplies, etc.). Although a brand may be difficult or impossible to find, it is almost always possible to find a local equivalent. Remember, French people wear contacts, have headaches, and sweat, too.

The UCEAP assistance provider, Europ Assistance, can provide information about whether a specific prescription medication is legal and available in France, and whether there are any restrictions on transporting the medication into the country. Call them before your trip (1-866-451-7606) with the name of the medicine.

Birth Control

Condoms are the only type of birth control available over the counter. Oral contraceptives and other pharmaceutical forms of birth control are available only with a prescription. The UCEAP Insurance Plan covers birth control up to U.S. \$500.

Insurance

The cost for the required [UCEAP Insurance Plan](#) is paid by UC.

To be reimbursed for expenses that are covered by the insurance plan, submit a claim form to the insurance carrier along with itemized bills within 30 days. See the [Insurance Information](#) tab on your [Participants](#) program page for claim forms and details.

French National Health Insurance

If you are enrolled in the immersion programs in Lyon or in Sciences Po, Paris, you are required to obtain French national health insurance (*sécurité sociale*). Sciences Po students must pay these fees directly to Sciences Po after arrival. The Lyon Study Center pays the *sécurité sociale* for Lyon students and the cost is included in your UCEAP fees. All other students are exempt.

Sécurité sociale covers about 70 percent of basic medical costs as long as you are treated by a designated category of doctor.

SAFETY

There are some strategies you can practice anywhere in the world to minimize your risks. Personal safety starts with awareness. To be alert to potential dangers and risks to your well-being, you need to be aware of what is going on in your immediate environment. The choices you make with your behavior, attire, travel, personal property, relationships, etc., can directly influence your exposure to risk. Follow your instincts. If a situation is uncomfortable, remove yourself from the situation. Carry official ID and a charged cell phone with you at all times.

Crime & Personal Safety

France is a relatively safe country, with most crimes being non-violent. The majority of crimes directed against foreign visitors, including Americans, involve pick-pocketing and theft.

Crime in Paris is similar to that in most large cities, but violent crime is fairly uncommon in the heart of the city. Pickpockets are by far the biggest problem. In Paris, they can be any gender, race, or age and are commonly children under the age of 16, as they cannot be prosecuted. Pickpockets are very active on the rail link (RER B) from Charles de Gaulle Airport to the city center. In addition, passengers on the Metro line 1, which traverses the city center from east to west, servicing many major tourist sites, are often targeted.

A common scheme is for one thief to distract the victim with questions or disturbances, while an accomplice picks pockets, a backpack, or a purse. Thieves often time their pickpocket attempts to coincide with the closing of the automatic doors on the Metro, leaving the victim secured on the departing train. Many thefts also occur at the major department stores (e.g., Galeries Lafayette, Printemps, and Le Bon Marché) when victims leave wallets, passports, and credit cards on cashier counters during transactions. The crowded elevators at the Eiffel Tower, escalators at museums, and the area surrounding Sacre Coeur Basilica in Montmartre are all favored by pickpockets and snatch-and-run thieves.

The area around the famous Moulin Rouge, known as Pigalle, is best avoided after dark, unless with a tour group headed for a show. Pigalle is an adult entertainment area known for prostitution, sex shows, and illegal drugs. Unsuspecting tourists have run up exorbitant bar bills and been forced to pay before being permitted to leave.

Pickpockets are professionals and they are good at what they do. They prey on tourists and can usually spot one easily. Then they will wait for the one moment when your attention is elsewhere to steal your purse or wallet.

Travelers should also beware of thefts that occur on both overnight and day trains, especially on trains originating in Spain, Italy, and Belgium.

Thieves operate on the rail link from Charles de Gaulle Airport to downtown Paris by singling out jet-lagged, luggage-burdened tourists and students.

If a pickpocket steals your wallet or purse, do not let it affect your sense of personal safety. It can happen to anyone and possessions are much less important than your overall safety and good health.

► For additional information, see the U.S. Department of State pamphlet, *A Safe Trip Abroad*.

Personal Safety Tips

- Be inconspicuous. Try to dress to blend in with locals. College sweatshirts, sweatpants, baseball caps, white sneakers, and shorts are all associated with Americans and will make you stand out.
- Act like you know where you are going, even if you do not. Plan ahead when you are in an unfamiliar part of a city so you will not have to pull out a map and reveal that you are lost.
- Always walk with a friend.
- Carry your purse or bag with the strap diagonally across your chest. Do not store a camera or other valuables in backpacks where they can be removed without notice.
- Leave items that you do not need on any given day at home.
- Do not carry your passport. Copy the first page of your passport to use as a form of ID and leave your actual passport safe in your room. Before departure, scan the first page of your passport and e-mail the file to yourself. If your passport is stolen while you are traveling, you can access it online and print out a copy, which will help in obtaining a replacement from the embassy. If you lose your passport, or if it is stolen, immediately notify the nearest American embassy or consulate, local authorities, and UCEAP Study Center staff; go to the consulate immediately and obtain information about passport replacement.
- Do not use ATMs in isolated, unlit areas or when there are people loitering in the vicinity. Avoid using the ATMs in train stations, especially at night. Beware of people standing close enough to the ATM to read your personal identification number (PIN) as you enter it into the machine. Thieves often conduct successful scams simply by observing the PIN as it is entered. If your card gets stuck in the ATM, be wary of people who offer to help, even those who seem to be helpful and ask for your PIN so they can “fix” the machine. Legitimate bank employees never have a reason to ask for the PIN.
- If using your laptop or smart phone in a public space, be sure to remain aware. Many laptops, cell phones, and smart phones are swiped by agile thieves watching you and waiting for you to turn away for a moment. If using a laptop in a restaurant or café, do not sit near the doors where a thief could run in, grab the computer, and run out easily. Sit in a back area and remain aware of the people around you. Do not place your cell phone or smart phone on the café table; always keep it in your purse or pocket.
- Do not text or phone while walking down the street or waiting for the metro; do so in a discreet place where no one can see the phone you are using.
- Use common sense and use the same personal safety precautions that you would use in a large city in California.
- Lock your door and secure your bike to prevent theft.
- Do not leave your residence room unlocked and/or open, even when just visiting a friend down the hallway.
- On buses and in crowds, secure your wallet and purse. Carry your wallet in a front or breast pocket, never in your back pocket.

► Drug use is strictly forbidden by law.

Common Scams Affecting Travelers

A common scam in Paris involves persons working in conjunction to distract a foreigner by asking directions or the time. While the person is distracted, one of the scam artists steals from the victim.

Another common scam involves a thief throwing a ring or a key on the ground and stealing your wallet while you are distracted.

In another scam, one thief sprays a person with a substance. The victim is then robbed by people offering to help. Safeguard belongings before reacting to any situation or before attempting to clean up.

In many bars and restaurants, males are targeted by women who work in conjunction with the establishment. They will ask the traveler to buy them a drink. Later, the traveler will be billed for the drink at an exorbitant rate. Management will frequently claim that the customer is also being charged for the services of a conversation hostess. This is most prevalent at cabarets in the Pigalle district.

Demonstrations & Strikes

For your safety, avoid all protests and demonstrations, including student and labor rallies.

Political violence in Paris and throughout France is still relatively rare, however, this past year has seen outbursts of violence and lawlessness in Lyon, western Paris, and other French cities due to a change in French law regarding the minimum age of retirement for French workers. Large demonstrations in Paris are generally managed by a strong police presence, but such events have the potential to become dangerous and should be avoided. In addition, the congestion caused by large demonstrations can cause serious inconveniences for a visitor on a tight schedule. Likewise, some sporting events, such as soccer matches, have occasionally degenerated into violence that continued into the streets.

Police

The police are well equipped and trained. Many officers speak more than one language. Main police stations, whether National Police or Gendarmerie, are located in each *arrondissement*.

Substance Abuse

You will find different practices and attitudes towards drinking in France. Alcohol can be purchased by anyone over 16 years old. Familiarize yourself with the UCEAP [Substance Abuse Policy](#).

Fire Safety

France has low fire safety requirements for both single-family dwellings and blocks of flats.

There is a law requiring every home in France to be equipped with a smoke alarm by year 2015. Around 800 people die each year from domestic fires in France and it is estimated that only 1–3% of homes in France are currently equipped with a smoke alarm.

Have a working battery-operated smoke detector and know all emergency exits. Form a mental map of your escape route. Identify the possible fire hazards in your room and eliminate them.

For more information, read the [Fire Safety](#) section in the *UCEAP Guide to Study Abroad*.

Emergency Contacts

What Is an Emergency?

An emergency is a serious, unexpected, and often dangerous situation requiring immediate action. The following are considered emergencies:

- Any life/death situation
- A traumatic event requiring immediate assistance
- An arrest
- Civil unrest or natural disaster in the host country

In an Emergency

Contact local emergency services first and then contact the following:

If you are in the U.S.

- During office hours (8 a.m.–5 p.m. Pacific Time): Contact your Operations Specialist at the UCEAP Systemwide Office
- After office hours: Call the 24-hour emergency phone number at (805) 893-4762

If you are abroad

Carry the local emergency contact information at all times:

- If you need immediate emergency assistance, call **112** for Police, Ambulance, or Fire Department:

Police **17**

Ambulance **15**

Fire Department **18**

- If necessary, call the emergency number of the U.S. Embassy in Paris: 01 43 12 22 22

U.S. Embassy in France

American Citizen Services

4, avenue Gabriel

75382 Paris Cedex 08

Phone: +33 1 43 12 22 22

Fax: +33 1 42 66 97 83

Website: france.usembassy.gov

If you have a health, travel, or safety emergency and do not have access to local or Study Center emergency information, contact the UCEAP travel assistance provider, Europ Assistance, available 24/7:

- **Call international collect:** 1+202-828-5896
- **Call within the U.S.:** 1+866-451-7606
- **E-mail:** ops@europassistance-usa.com