EGYPT

Academic Year
2011-12 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.
YOUR UCEAP NETWORK

EAP Online
Bookmark your Participants program page; it contains vital resources and requirements you need to know before you go abroad, including the Predeparture Checklist, UCEAP Guide to Study Abroad, Program Calendar, EAP Student Budgets and Payment Vouchers, and policies.

Local EAP Support
Campus EAP Office
The Campus EAP Office coordinates recruitment, student selection, orientation, 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 EAP administration for all UC campuses from its headquarters in Goleta, California. You will work closely with the following Systemwide Office staff:

Program Advisors communicate program information, both academic and operational, to students and campuses, and coordinate and provide academic and administrative support in all aspects of your participation.

Operations Specialists coordinate the logistics of the program. Document requirements, visa application instructions, health and safety precautions, placement and acceptance by the host institution, arrival and on-site orientation, and housing arrangements are examples of program details the Operations Specialists coordinate.

Academic Specialists advise on academic policies; review and record courses taken abroad for UC credit; process student registrations, petitions, and grades; and document and maintain students’ academic records.

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

Contact Information
Operations Specialist
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Goleta, CA 93117-5823
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Study Center Abroad
The program is administered on site by a UC faculty member, assisted by local staff. Together they advise UCEAP students on academic matters and assist with social, cultural, and other logistical issues as needed.

University of California Education Abroad Program
American University of Cairo
P006 Core Academic Center
AUC Avenue, PO Box 74
New Cairo 11835, EGYPT, A.R.E.

Phone: (011-20-2) 2-615-3591
Study Center Cell: (011-20) 10-100-4947
AUC Emergency Cell: (011-20) 010-006-6907
E-mail: eapcairo@aucegypt.edu

Phone Number Codes
U.S. international code ............. 011
*(dial 011 to call from the U.S.)*

Egypt country code .............. 20
Cairo city code ................... 2

Approximate Time Difference
Add 10 hours
ACADEMIC INFORMATION

University Information

Recommended areas of study include anthropology; Arabic language, history, and religion; development studies; Egyptology; Egyptian and Middle Eastern studies; and business and international relations. Strong course work for UC students is also available in international business, global economics, and international management of engineering projects. AUC offers one of the few engineering programs outside the U.S. that is accredited by the U.S. Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET).

Academic Culture

AUC provides training based on American standards and methods with an emphasis on specialties appropriate to Egypt and the Arab world. Although there are similarities between the AUC and UC educational systems, various cultural, social, and other elements make study at AUC unique.

Egyptian family background is one aspect that contributes to the unique atmosphere at AUC. Egyptian students usually grow up in a very close family setting and, unlike most UC students, have never lived away from home. Most AUC students come from elite sectors of Egyptian society; they live at home and commute to class.

English is the second or third language for most Egyptian AUC students, and almost all speak Arabic at home. However, the language barrier should not prevent you from making Egyptian friends. Egyptians often speak Arabic among themselves, but most are usually happy to speak English, even if they are shy at first. You can break the ice by speaking as much Arabic as possible and getting help with your Arabic while helping the Egyptian students with their English.

Although they may be fluent enough in English to benefit from instruction at AUC, many Egyptian students cannot manage reading extensive textbooks and writing term papers in English. Your native ability with English may give you an advantage over some of your classmates, but the Egyptian students’ knowledge of more than one language gives them new and different perspectives.

If you do not feel challenged by the required reading in a course, you may ask the professor for more reading assignments and do more extensively researched term papers than required.

Class Meetings

Most classes are held on a two-day schedule; either Sunday–Wednesday or Monday–Thursday. For most students, Tuesday is reserved for student meetings, activities, seminars, etc. However, all intensive Arabic classes in the Arabic Language Institute intensive study program meet five days a week (Sunday–Thursday), and many laboratory sessions for science and engineering classes are held on Tuesdays. Weekends consist of Fridays (the Islamic day of communal prayer) and Saturdays. AUC’s detailed calendar lists holidays and term dates. AUC closes for Egyptian national holidays, Islamic religious holidays, Eastern and Western Christian holidays, the American Thanksgiving, and New Year’s Day. There are no long vacations during Thanksgiving, Christmas, or New Year’s. A long vacation period takes place during the four-week break between semesters, and a 12-day spring break occurs during Eastern Easter and Sham
EGYPT, ACADEMIC YEAR, 2011-12

ACADEMIC INFORMATION

“EAP STUDENTS SAY...”

Discuss all academic concerns before you leave so you can pick up where you left off upon returning to UC, especially if there are concerns about your major or about which types of courses you should take.

Attending the university and dealing with exams and papers is not easy in Egypt; at the end of the day you feel completely drained of all energy, both emotionally and physically.

If you have books you think may be helpful to you during your courses, take them with you to Egypt because the library is definitely inadequate.

El Nessim. The Islamic fasting month of Ramadan, which occurs at a different time each year, necessitates a shortened workday and altered schedule for that month. However, starting in 2011 until 2016, the month of Ramadan will fall during the summer break.

Textbooks and Library Materials

The library at AUC is Egypt’s largest English-language library and the country’s second largest academic library. It is not, however, as well stocked in some subject areas as UC libraries. It is Egypt’s only academic library with open stacks. The university also has a rare book collection and the famous K.A.C. Creswell Library of Islamic Art and Architecture housed in a renovated 19th-century palace in downtown Cairo.

Western textbooks are used for AUC courses. Because the books are imported, most from America, they are not always available at the beginning of a course. You may be unable to purchase some textbooks in Egyptian bookstores due to the high cost, scarcity of supply, and slow delivery from the U.S. and Europe. These factors also affect the AUC library. You may be able to find secondhand books at AUC’s Student Union.

Program Descriptions

- Review the EAP website for additional course information (including important details and restrictions), links to host institution websites, and program search tools.

You may participate in one of two year-long options: 1) a general program; or 2) a full-time intensive Arabic language study program. Both programs begin with an orientation designed to provide an introduction to Cairo and Egyptian culture and society.

General Program

You will take approximately five courses per semester, including one course in either modern standard Arabic or Egyptian colloquial Arabic. Arabic language courses take place at the Arabic Language Unit, a component of the Arabic Language Institute that is available to AUC students.

Select your courses carefully to fit around the hours of your Arabic language classes. Choose your remaining courses from the four undergraduate schools of the university: Sciences and Engineering; Business; Global Affairs and Public Policy; or Humanities and Social Sciences. Most EAP students enroll in the School of Humanities and Social Sciences, which offers courses with an emphasis on the Middle East. All courses, except Arabic language study, are taught in English.

Optional Survival Arabic Instruction

Survival Arabic language instruction is not a mandatory component of the orientation period. However, you can choose to attend Survival Arabic as an optional feature during the orientation period. Make arrangements with the AUC New York office before departure to take this course and pay for it directly. The course is taught for five days from 3 to 7 p.m. and is designed to provide basic Arabic phrases to enable you to communicate in the local community. No academic credit is awarded for this short introductory course. The content of this course will be duplicated in the Beginning Arabic language class during the academic term.
“EAP STUDENTS SAY...
Take colloquial Arabic whether or not you’re taking classical Arabic. Colloquial is necessary for getting around. The pace is very comfortable in classical Arabic. If you put in a little time each night it’s not difficult to keep up. There’s a good balance between lecturing and student participation in classes, and all are required to participate daily.”

**Intensive Arabic Language Program**
AUC’s Arabic Language Institute (ALI) offers full-time, intensive Arabic study. Each term you will spend several hours per day studying the Arabic language and learning about Egyptian culture as you explore Cairo and surrounding areas. ALI requires that you take a placement exam that determines your level of Arabic; you are then placed according to the results. Instructors are accommodating and may adjust your placement or workload if needed. The number of courses per term will vary depending on UC unit values assigned to language courses.

**Course Information**
You are required to take a full-time course of study while on EAP and enroll in a minimum of 22.5 UC quarter units (15 AUC semester units) each term. To convert AUC semester units into UC quarter units, multiply by 1.5.

- **ALI students:** A reduced load of 18–21 UC quarter units is allowed based on the recommendation of ALI staff.

**Registration During Orientation**
You will join other incoming international students at AUC for advising and registration sessions that take place daily from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. during the orientation period. AUC faculty and staff will discuss course registration, recommended courses, living and studying at AUC, life in Egypt and the Middle East, security and cultural issues, and expectations. You are required to attend all EAP and AUC orientation sessions.

**Grades**
For information about grades, see the Academic Information chapter of the UCEAP Guide to Study Abroad.

**Language Assessment and Class Pre-Registration**
Prior to departure, you will complete an Arabic Level Assessment found on the AUC New York website for correct placement in language courses. If you do not complete the form, you will either complete it upon arrival in Egypt or be given an oral language exam for correct placement.

Similarly, you will have the opportunity to submit an early request for your AUC classes prior to arriving to Cairo by filling out an electronic Preliminary Course Planning form. Note that this process does not guarantee you the desired classes, as some may already be closed or require instructor’s approval; however, completing this form prior to departure gives you an advantage over students who wait until arrival to register for classes. If you do not complete the form, you can register for classes after you arrive during the orientation week through the end of the first week of classes.
Internships

You may participate in various kinds of field study or community service for academic credit by signing up at the EAP Study Center for a Special Study Project. You may also design an independent study project or an internship to be posted to your UC record.

The city of Cairo offers a variety of internship and volunteer opportunities, especially as they relate to refugees and human rights. Past EAP students have volunteered with refugees through Student Action for Refugees on campus. For students especially interested in matters relating to refugees, AUC’s Center for Migration and Refugee Studies has additional information about classes offered and activities on campus.

You may also want to take advantage of your time in Egypt by studying Egyptology in the land of the pharaohs. Work with leading scholars in the field of Egyptology, take seminar-type courses, and conduct field study at active Egyptian excavations.

Additional opportunities also exist to work in fields including Islamic art and architecture, women’s studies, and Arab culture and civilization.

Volunteer positions are available at organizations like the Egyptian Red Crescent and the Palestinian Red Crescent Hospital. You may also volunteer to teach English to Sudanese, Ethiopian, or other refugees.

Research

Graduate-level research at AUC is not available through EAP. In Egypt, government permission is required for most kinds of research one would do outside a library, including data gathering and audio or video interviewing.

The process of obtaining government permits for any type of field research usually takes several months and involves multiple government agencies. Because field research is highly regulated, anyone found gathering data without official permission can be arrested. Do not attempt any primary data gathering, even among students on campus, without the prior approval of the Study Center Director and supervision of a faculty member.
CULTURAL AWARENESS

Educate Yourself

Learn about Egypt and the Middle East before departure. Keep up-to-date on current events by reading articles in newspapers, magazines, and journals, such as *Egypt Today* and *Al-Ahram* weekly newspaper.

Check the AUC website for advice for international students. AUC and UCEAP sources answer most of the questions students usually have about the program.

Useful Websites

The following is a list of resources invaluable to your predeparture preparation.

- The AUC website is a valuable and informative resource (see especially the International Student Affairs page and the Road 90 page)
- Lonely Planet’s website provides good information about travel, youth hostels, etc., and is a good source of information about modern Egypt
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- U.S. Department of State Emergency Services to Citizens Abroad
- U.S. Department of State Travel Warnings

Recommended Reading

Read fiction, such as the works of Naguib Mahfouz, for insight about Egyptian culture. The following suggestions can provide historical and cultural information.

Al-Sayyid Marsot, Afaf Lutfi

*A History of Egypt: From the Arab Conquest to the Present*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007. (Written by a former Study Center Director.)

Atiya, Nayra


Baines, John and Jaromír Malék


Denny, Frederick M.


Esposito, John L.


Friedman, Thomas L.


Hassanein, Ahmed and Mona Kamel


Hourani, Albert Habib

EAP STUDENTS SAY...

You will find Egyptians very friendly, inquisitive, and willing to help. No matter what your level of Arabic, any effort made to speak it will endear you to the people and open many doors. You will be bombarded by questions—questions about money and economic issues are most common. Try not to see the questions as an attack on your morals, but simply as curiosity about your culture.

Egyptians are extremely good-natured. If a foreigner can respond in kind, everything will be enjoyable.

Lamb, David

Mahfouz, Naguib, translated by Trevor Le Gassick

Munson, Henry

Sa'dawi, Nawal, translated by Sherif Hetata

Theroux, Peter
Sandstorms: Days and Nights in Arabia, New York: Norton, 1990. (See especially chapters two and three.)

Waterbury, John

Social Conduct

The family is the most significant unit of Egyptian society. In Egyptian society as a whole, the degree of social conservatism of a woman’s background may govern where—and in whose company—she may go and what she may do. A woman, Egyptian or foreign, who ignores societal conventions is open to social disapproval and may be inviting unwelcome advances. She needs to know where and under what circumstances to behave in a particular way without stirring unwanted reactions.

Egyptian society is also conservative in areas of male-female relations, dress, religious identity, and alcohol and drug use. Unmarried men and women do not meet in private, especially in apartments. This is an absolute rule in the university dorms. In rented apartments, neighbors will complain to the landlord or even the police. Public displays of affection are unacceptable in Egyptian culture. Further, it is considered a sexual advance for a woman to speak to a man. Some tourists may get away with wearing informal attire, but they are in the country for a matter of days. Long-term visitors will be treated rudely, criticized, or harassed for inappropriate dress or behavior.

Appropriate Dress

Dress conservatively, especially in public places. Long hair and untrimmed beards on men, revealing clothes on women (including sun dresses, short skirts, and shorts), and profanity are generally unacceptable in Egyptian society.

Women should not wear shorts; rather, it is preferable to wear skirts or dresses that cover the ankles or, at the very least, the knees, and long sleeves. If you have long hair, tie it up or cover it. Men should cover their shoulders and wear long pants.

Western women who violate the dress customs are disrespected and often harassed by Egyptian men.
**EGYPT, ACADEMIC YEAR, 2011-12**

**CULTURAL AWARENESS**

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**EAP STUDENTS SAY...**

Male-female relationships at AUC are impossible. You never know if the person you’re dealing with is going by conservative Egyptian standards, more liberal American standards, or very liberal European ones. And of course, the young man who is so polite and conservative on campus may very well take advantage of you in private. Then there are all the games people play. When is it just flirting, and when is it a serious pass that you either have to reject or pick up on? My advice to other women is to avoid playing games. You won’t know the rules. Be blunt about what you expect from men you see socially. Women, you will be pestered during the first few weeks until you think you’ll go crazy. You’ll get into your room and lean on the door panting. But the volume goes away once you learn not to look into men’s eyes and to walk purposefully as if you belong there.

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**Alcohol and Drugs**

Islam forbids the consumption of alcohol, and you can get into serious trouble if you are found under the influence of alcohol.

According to the U.S. Department of State, Egyptian law defines drugs as any natural drug, including but not limited to hashish, heroin, cocaine, opium, morphine, cannabis or marijuana, or any synthetic drug without a prescription. The penalty for possession or distribution of illegal drugs in Egypt is the following: capital punishment with a fine of between LE 100,000 and LE 500,000, or hard labor for life or temporary hard labor.

U.S. citizens violating Egyptian law can be arrested, fined, imprisoned, or expelled. If arrested in Egypt, U.S. citizens will be processed through the Egyptian legal system, and neither UCEAP nor the American University in Cairo or U.S. embassy will be able to provide students with legal representation or help.

**Religion**

Religion is a powerful influence on Egyptian life. Whether Islamic or Christian, most Egyptians take religion seriously, even those who do not practice regularly. Nearly all believe in the existence of God, and someone who says that he or she does not believe is regarded as strange and perhaps untrustworthy. Such phrases as *shaa al-laah* (God willing) and *il-ham-du-lil-leh* (thanks be to God) are heard frequently in conversations among Egyptians, and they are usually spoken with heartfelt sincerity. Show a healthy respect for Egyptian attitudes toward God and religion. For example, joking about religion is an insult to devout Egyptians, whether Muslim or Christian.

Refrain from initiating conversations with Egyptians that compare other religions with your own. However, if the subject does arise, express your opinions diplomatically, remaining open to hearing another view. Tolerance and respect for differences should guide any such discussions. Terms such as “fundamentalist” and “born again” do not mean the same in Egyptian society as they do in the U.S.

**Relationships and Sexual Orientation**

Western women must proceed cautiously in relationships with Egyptian men and must keep in mind the significance of their behavior in the Egyptian social context. American women are often stereotyped as being sexually liberal or “easy” because their behavior would not be acceptable in an Egyptian woman. Be sensitive to social mores and adapt to the way of dress and behavior more in tune with the Egyptian culture. A male international student, meanwhile, may find that some Egyptian girls are willing to spend time with him on campus, but not off campus. This is because convention dictates that unmarried men and women should not mix freely in unsupervised social situations except in a few places, such as on the school or university campus, or in the workplace.

Public gestures of affection between two persons of the same sex that are perceived as homosexual behavior can provoke a strong reaction. Also, earrings on men are considered to be a sign of homosexuality. There is no gay rights movement in Egypt because homosexuality is illegal and rejected by both Islam and Coptic Christianity. For the crime of committing “disgraceful impudent acts,” the law imposes up to one year of imprisonment and a fine. Historically, when this law has been implemented with Westerners, they have often been deported instead of imprisoned. In any case, it must be stressed that homosexual relations are not welcome in Egypt.
EAP STUDENTS SAY...

The AUC student body is mostly composed of the elite, who are definitely up-to-date with the latest fashions in Europe and the U.S. The scene is markedly different from what we find at UC campuses, and in many ways, it isn't third world!

Cairo is great, but realize that it will overwhelm you no matter how prepared you are; this isn't necessarily a bad thing.

Advice on Adjusting to AUC and Egypt

The following is a letter written to UCEAP by an American resident in Cairo. The letter contains good advice about adjustment to AUC, Cairo, and Egyptian society. It is reprinted here almost in its entirety.

Too many gifted students have come here only to be discouraged and to leave primarily because they were not prepared to deal with the new environment. There are several reasons for this. First, because of Cairo’s importance as a political center in the Arab world, there is a large diplomatic community. Because of its prestige, many of the children of diplomats, military officials, and other important persons from all over the world, as well as the children of important Egyptian figures, attend the American University in Cairo. Since a large percentage of the university’s population is comprised of such people, civilian students will not be aware that their existence creates certain unique problems (security) which require definite precautions. (Think of a school in the U.S. attended by the children of the president, ranking generals, U.S. cabinet members, and foreign VIPs, and you will have the idea.) For obvious reasons, the fact is not publicized.

Second, the culture of the Middle East is vastly different from our own. Cairo is by no means the most conservative city of the Arab world. Its technology, dress, education, and fads are very modern. It has, in fact, taken on most of the sophisticated trappings of Western society. But its habits, its heritage, and its core are Middle Eastern and therefore traditional. And this, not the superficial trappings, is what affects the way Cairenes view the world.

Any newcomer, particularly from California, will find that informality, at least to the degree Americans use it, is frowned upon. No one wants to lose his or her personal identity, but behavior modification is critical.

In Egypt, everything centers heavily around authority; specifically, paternalistic authority. This is not only operational in the family, which is the core of Egyptian life, but extends to every other area: social, financial, political, or educational. To question authority of a superior, right or wrong, much less to challenge it openly, is like flouting the authority of one’s parents. In this society, it is not done. (As with anything, there are exceptions, but an American is not likely to understand the system well enough to handle the extreme subtlety involved.) In general students don’t publicly question or critique the behavior of professors, even in a friendly way. It could sabotage their academic careers. (AUC, however, does have evaluation forms and there are opportunities to critique, complain, or praise.)

There is also the matter of class. Class structure here is always existent and very apparent; who your family is, where you come from, your level of education, or your experiences in living abroad are some of the indicators. People are very sensitive about their positions; titles count. To us this may seem extreme (at least the fact that there is little attempt made to hide the class structure factor), but it exists in Egypt. American society has a democratic mindset that attempts to dampen the effects of class differences. We tend to mix with people of all classes because the ideology expects that we shall. In many countries (even other Western countries) this pattern of behavior does not exist.
Interestingly enough, coming from a Western country, particularly America, automatically confers upper-class status, and status is necessary to survive. But trying to mix classes in Egypt rarely works. Egyptians understand their culture, even if we do not.

A unique matter is the status of women. Again, superficial things get in the way. Do not be deceived just because you see a young woman in the latest Paris fashions dancing to the latest disco tunes. The overwhelming odds are that she’s dancing with her fiancé. Otherwise, it’s probably her brother. Not much dating occurs, although there are many gatherings in family homes, the best place to experience Egyptian life. Men undeniably have preference over women and deference (at least, in public) is expected. Marriages are still arranged, and the husband’s word is law.

A single woman in her twenties does not have the same freedom to come and go that Americans expect and enjoy. For women things are fundamental. There are two types of women: good (virtuous) and bad (experienced). Thanks to misconceptions spread by the media, it is often assumed that American women are collectively the latter. Any American woman would do well to go very slowly in relationships with Egyptian men so that her conduct will not be misunderstood. (Egyptian men are very protective of women whom they classify as “good,” Egyptian or otherwise.) Conversely, an American man who is “courting” an Egyptian woman may find himself unintentionally moving toward marriage. And don’t be surprised if you often find yourself explaining why you’re not married. It’s part of the mindset.

Then there is the power of connections. One cultivates relationships with people in authority and people in the upper classes because these individuals have the power to get things done. Even with friendships, a favor buys a favor. This doesn’t mean people only make friends to get things out of them. Egyptians are a friendly and generous people. They are devoted to their family and friends and assume it’s a two-way street. And it’s much easier to cut through the bureaucracy when you know who is in charge.

People are understandably curious about Americans and their lifestyle. There’s a certain magic to being an American. Unfortunately, Americans tend to be too honest and too open. Discretion about personal affairs is just as necessary abroad as at home. Our definition of privacy does not exist in this culture. Sometimes information flows even without your assistance. People tend to be very observant. Forewarned is forarmed.

Egypt is not home. And the difference can be mind staggering, but I don’t wish to discourage students from coming to Egypt. It’s stimulating, sometimes frustrating, always fascinating. (In other words, it’s fantastic!)
ARRIVAL & ORIENTATION

Travel Documents

Information about passports, visas, and other documents that are required for participation in this program is provided in the UCEAP Guide to Study Abroad, the online EAP Predeparture Checklist, and AUC’s website, which provides detailed instructions on obtaining a student visa.

Packing Tips

Contact an Egyptian consulate for information about taking cameras, computers, and other expensive electronic equipment into the country.

Identify each item of your luggage on the inside and outside with your name, home address, and destination.

When traveling always carry your passport, visa, ticket, prescription medications, and money. Never put valuables in your checked luggage. Leave extra credit cards at home and carry only what is necessary. Luggage restrictions vary by airline. Most carriers have weight restrictions.

Essential

- Layered clothing (T-shirt, shirt, fleece vest, button and pullover sweaters)
- Lightweight jacket
- Warm socks
- Flip-flops, walking shoes, casual footwear
- One dressy outfit
- Umbrella

Optional

- Bathrobe and slippers
- Beach towel
- Lightweight blanket
- Seat pad (good for train and bus travel)
- Travel-sized sleeping bag
- Empty backpack (to bring home items purchased abroad)
- Travel alarm clock and flashlight
- Heavy jacket or coat
- Small, lightweight gifts for foreign hosts and new friends (suggestions: CDs; T-shirts with city, state, or campus logos; UC pens or pencils; decals; baseball caps representing Major League teams; California postcards, posters, or scenic calendars; or scarves)
- Antidiarrhea medication

Do Not Pack

- Medications that are illegal in Egypt
- Fragile items unless they are bubble-wrapped

Don’t take too much stuff. I was a “better safe than sorry” person. Wrong move! You’ll regret it, won’t need it, and won’t want to lug excess baggage around.

Take Scrabble, chess, or Risk; warm clothes; and sturdy shoes. Take less clothing and more shoes. Take an audio recorder/radio with a converter and adapter.

Take pictures of your family, friends, and hometown to show to Egyptian friends.

Take only enough toiletries to last a month. Everything is available, but take extra contact lens supplies, which are scarce.
Insurance for Personal Possessions

The UCEAP Insurance Plan includes a personal property benefit. It is your responsibility to carefully review the benefits and ensure that the EAP policy and/or any parental insurance policy offers sufficient coverage for the items you will be taking with you. You may determine that you will need to obtain additional insurance for your personal belongings, especially for anything of high value such as a computer or camera. Obtaining additional insurance for personal belongings is your responsibility. AUC does not cover the loss of student belongings—even in university accommodations.

Climate

The average temperatures in Cairo are comparable to those in the American southwest, with hot summers and cold winters. For the most part, Californians are comfortable in Egypt’s predominantly moderate, dry, and sunny climate. The Nile River and heavy irrigation, however, create humidity disproportionate to the area’s scant amount of rainfall. Air pollution is increasing each year in Cairo. If you suffer from asthma, bring a year’s supply of inhalers and other prescription medication.

Nearly all buildings, including dwellings in Cairo, are built to shut out the heat with thick walls, high ceilings, and shutters. This makes the inside cooler without air-conditioning in the summer; however, it has the same effect in the winter, so with no central heating, room temperatures in the winter fall well below 65°F. Most students find it harder to adjust to the winter cold of Egypt than to the summer heat.

Clothing

The EAP Student Budget does not include funds for the purchase of clothing abroad.

During the summer, comfortable, lightweight, loose (but not revealing) cotton clothes are coolest. In the winter, because there is no central heating, you will need to wear layers of clothes, even indoors. Fabrics for winter should be wool or wool-synthetic blends, nylon, cotton, and polyester knits—all washable if possible. Take cotton underwear, because synthetic fabrics are uncomfortable in any hot climate and they trap perspiration and promote infection.

A typical UC wardrobe with some minor modifications is adequate. Cleanliness and neatness are important. By California standards, Egyptians dress up, but you do not need a large wardrobe to dress appropriately. Nice jeans are acceptable for campus or street wear. Consider taking a suit or dress to wear to a disco or to a formal social occasion. You will need a warm winter jacket that is both washable and versatile (down and GORE-TEX products work well).

Take comfortable walking shoes. You will likely wear out several pairs of shoes during the year, since you will be walking a lot over the rough terrain of Cairo’s streets. Shoes in special sizes (large or small sizes or narrow widths) are virtually impossible to find, and half sizes are unavailable. If you wear half sizes or have an uncommon shoe size, take a year’s supply of shoes. Egyptian sandals and shoes for men and women are moderately priced, but not sturdy or particularly comfortable.
Wool clothing tends to be heavier than woolens available in the U.S. Good quality socks are usually expensive, so both men and women should take plenty of their favorite style of socks. The bathing suits available in Cairo are expensive and flimsy.

**Women**

You will be more comfortable on the streets of Cairo if you wear long-sleeved blouses and skirts instead of pants. Even covering your head with a simple scarf will go a long way toward preventing hassles.

Dress pants and neat jeans (not tight) are common on campus, as are sweaters and skirts. Many Egyptian women take pride in being fashionably up-to-date by following Parisian and American fashion trends. Generally, women do not wear sleeveless blouses or dresses, sundresses, halter tops, shorts, tight jeans, form-fitting clothes, miniskirts, or clothes made of sheer fabrics in public. Such clothes may be worn indoors, at sporting clubs, or on the beach. On the AUC campus, daring fashions are worn by some women; however, off campus they attract unwelcome attention. By dressing and acting modestly, you can decrease the chances of being harassed. Women dressed in jeans are assumed to be tourists and attract more unwelcome attention than those wearing skirts.

**Men**

Men generally dress as they do in U.S. metropolitan centers. Shorts are not worn in public (except for sports). Although men are beginning to dress more casually, luxury restaurants and hotels still prefer a jacket and tie for meals, and nightclubs require dress attire. A suit or jacket, good slacks, and a tie are appropriate for social or official occasions. In class, men wear shirts (no tie necessary) and pants or neat jeans in hot weather. In cold weather, they wear several layers of sweaters and long underwear. If you shave with a manual razor, take extra stainless steel blades and shaving cream. Good imported razor blades are available, as are canned creams, but they are expensive. If you plan to take an electric razor, be sure it has dual voltage, or take a voltage converter.

**Electrical Equipment**

The current in Egypt ranges between 220 and 240 volts alternating at 50 cycles per second. (Standard current in the U.S. is between 110–120 volts alternating at 60 cycles.) The higher voltage in Egypt can be stepped down to 110–120 by means of a transformer. Transformers are available in Cairo. U.S. hardware stores sell smaller voltage converters. Take dual-voltage appliances if possible.

The difference between 50 and 60 cycles is not significant for operating most equipment. Appliances such as an electric razor or hair dryer will run slightly slower. However, for appliances that utilize the alteration in current to produce a given speed of running (such as clocks or tape players), the difference of 10 cycles is extreme. Take battery-operated audio recorders or those designed to run on 50 or 60 cycles. Take rechargeable batteries for pocket calculators (at 220 volts, 50 cycles), since this size may not be available.
To avoid theft, never leave your luggage unattended.

**Official EAP Start Date**

The last date to arrive in Cairo and get settled into accommodations is the Official Start Date found in the program calendar on the [EAP website](#). If you fail to appear on the official start date, you may be subject to dismissal from the program (Student Agreement, Section 10).

You are responsible for making your own travel arrangements and for reserving and purchasing your airline tickets. The Financial Aid Office is not responsible for purchasing tickets. You are strongly urged to purchase a changeable ticket; standby tickets are not appropriate.

You can request to be picked up at the airport by an AUC representative. Reserve this service well in advance through the AUC New York office. EAP highly recommends the service because the cost is about the same as a taxi and is more convenient and reliable. Also, the AUC driver can contact the EAP Study Center if you encounter any problems at the airport. Alternatively, you can take a taxi directly to your accommodations. Taxi fare is about $10 to $12 to downtown Cairo.

On arrival, contact the EAP Study Center. Contact numbers are found in the *Your UCEAP Network* chapter of this guide and in the Arrival/Orientation Information in the online EAP Predeparture Checklist.

The program start date can change due to unforeseen circumstances. You are responsible for making modifications in your travel itinerary to accommodate such changes. EAP is not responsible for any unrecoverable transportation charges you may incur for independent travel arrangements.

In order to be kept informed of program changes, update your address, phone number, and primary e-mail address in MyEAP. You are expected to check e-mail announcements from UCEAP regularly. For this reason you must maintain an e-mail account that is accessible at all times, even when traveling. There are many free online accounts available for this purpose. If you know you will be discontinuing your present e-mail account, or if you know that your present account will not be accessible after departure from UC, investigate the available online options and set up a new account as soon as possible.

Inform the AUC New York office and the EAP Study Center about your travel itinerary and keep both offices informed of any subsequent changes to your travel plans.

**Financial Aid Students**

Your financial aid package is based partly on the EAP Student Budget for the program. The estimated round-trip airfare amount is based on the cost of a changeable student fare to Egypt. If your independent travel costs are greater than the airfare estimate in the EAP Student Budget, notify your financial aid counselor. Neither EAP nor the Financial Aid Office can guarantee that the additional cost will be funded by financial aid.
Customs Duties
Do not ask other students to carry items of any kind abroad for you (laptop, camera, extra bags, etc.) and do not volunteer to do so for others. Airlines will ask you if you are carrying items for someone else, and if so, they will not allow you to take them. If you board the plane with the items, Customs abroad may charge you a high duty upon arrival. They will assume you plan to resell them, especially if you already have one of your own. This is particularly a concern with electronic goods.

Return Transportation
If you do not make round-trip arrangements, book a return flight with plenty of lead time once abroad. Study Center staff can refer you to a local travel agency for information on return travel. Flights to the U.S. fill up fast and economy-fare seats are booked early.

On-Site Orientation
The program begins with a mandatory on-site orientation that provides an important introduction to the Egypt program. Some segments are run by EAP and others by various American University in Cairo (AUC) units. It begins on the official start date found in the EAP program calendar on the EAP website. Failure to attend the entire orientation is grounds for dismissal from the program. Details concerning the orientation agenda will be available in the Arrival/Orientation Information found in the online EAP Predeparture Checklist when the information is finalized.

Updates to the orientation agenda may be e-mailed to you a few days before the program begins. Regardless of the orientation agenda, go directly to your prearranged accommodations and notify the EAP Study Center Director that you have arrived.

Field trips and meetings during orientation and throughout the year will introduce you to the people, history, and cultural background of Cairo and Egypt. Visits may be made to the pyramids and the Sphinx, Alexandria, Saqqara, Memphis, Coptic Cairo, Islamic Cairo, and the Cairo Museum. Depending on available funds, EAP may organize one or two overnight field trips to locations outside Cairo. The cost of these initial orientation tours and EAP field trips is included in your program fees. EAP participants have found the orientation field trips beneficial, noting that they provided an opportunity to make friends and to become familiar with Egyptian culture. In addition to the initial tours, AUC sponsors group tours to other parts of the country during the year. You can sign up and pay for these additional trips independently. The cost ranges from $100 to $200 per trip.
LOCAL TRANSPORTATION

See also Traffic and Road Safety in the Safety chapter of this guide.

Public transportation in Cairo is crowded and can be difficult during peak hours or in the early- and mid-evening. It is often necessary to walk long distances to get anywhere. Although Cairo’s transportation is hectic, once you learn to use the metro, microbus, and taxi services, it becomes an easy and inexpensive way to get around. Riding a bicycle in Cairo is dangerous; it should not be done.

Bus and train service is good and reaches most points within the country. EAP students recommend using only the new air-conditioned public buses.

Internal travel to areas less frequented by tourists is monitored; however, you can obtain the necessary permits from the support services office at AUC. Hitchhiking is not advised.

From Cairo to the New Campus

The new AUC campus is outside the city of Cairo and public bus transportation between the two can take an hour and a half. In addition, public buses can be an unwise choice for women. There will be a frequent AUC shuttle, but its schedule may not be convenient at all times. If you reside in the Zamalek dorms, you are required to purchase the shuttle bus pass. The cost is included in your EAP Student Budget but it is not paid to EAP in your fees. AUC will bill Zamalek students for the shuttle pass, which previous students report is less expensive than purchasing individual tickets.
FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Understanding Your Finances
Understanding your finances before, during, and after EAP 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 EAP
- EAP student account information
- Banking before and after arrival
- Fees and penalties
- Loan information
- How financial aid works while on EAP (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 home campus Financial account. It will be available as soon as you are selected for your program in MyEAP. The fees that you owe UCEAP are posted to your account, and you can make payments through this account using e-checks or credit cards (MasterCard or Discover). Fees will be applied after your program predeparture withdrawal date, which is listed in MyEAP.

EAP 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. The fees due to UCEAP will be posted to your MyEAP Student Account after your program predeparture withdrawal date. Program fees are subject to change. View your EAP Student Budget frequently.

Instructions
- Download and print your EAP Student Budget and Payment Vouchers.
- Note the deadlines on the Payment Vouchers.
- Give the EAP Student Budget and Payment Vouchers to the person responsible for paying your EAP bills. Sign them 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 are on financial aid, see also the EAP Financial Information web page.
Handling Money Abroad

The AUC website will provide additional details on money arrangements and banking services in Cairo.

The basic unit of currency in Egypt is the Egyptian pound (£E), which is subdivided into 100 piasters (pt.). Unlike the U.S. dollar, which is hard or internationally used currency, the Egyptian pound is soft currency, which may be used only within Egypt. Egyptian currency and exchange regulations are designed to protect the value of the Egyptian pound and to prevent unauthorized outflow of hard currency.

Take enough money in travelers checks (approximately U.S. $3,000) to cover normal expenses as well as some extra money to reserve for a medical emergency. Expect to spend about $300 per semester on textbooks and supplies. There are lab fees ($60 to $85) for some courses. Allow about $200 a month for other personal expenses, including laundry and daily local travel.

If you are planning to travel in the region, you will need additional funds (for example, a group tour to Luxor for an Egyptology field trip will cost approximately $450 per person). Additional independent travel usually is the single biggest expense. Students in the Arabic Language Institute will have course-related travel expenses of about $270 for the academic year. These costs may vary due to fluctuations in the currency and cost-of-living increases in Egypt, which cannot be predicted.

Since wiring funds abroad is a complex and time-consuming process, you are advised to start out with as much money as possible in the form of travelers checks. Thomas Cook and American Express travelers checks are probably the most widely accepted in Cairo, although Barclay’s, Bank of America, and Citicorp travelers checks are also recognized by Cairo banks. Personal checks are rarely used in Egypt; cash is used almost exclusively.

Banking

Handling money is easiest if you have an account with a U.S. bank that has a correspondent branch in Cairo. Before departure, find out with which Egyptian banks your U.S. banks are affiliated, and what services are available.

The Commercial International Bank at AUC offers accounts to students who are over 18 years of age.

Credit Cards

Take at least one major credit card to Cairo. American Express, Visa, and MasterCard have proven very useful. With an American Express card, you can write personal checks for cash or travelers checks at the American Express Office in Cairo.

With an American Express, Visa, or MasterCard, $100 to $10,000 can be wired within 48 hours between the U.S. and Cairo. The transaction is conducted through an American Express agent’s office. Expect to pay a fee for this service. You can use Visa or MasterCard to obtain a cash advance in U.S. dollars through some banks in Cairo. You can probably obtain up to $150 per day with Visa or $100 per day with MasterCard. The cash advance is billed to the Visa or MasterCard account and there is usually a fee for the service.
Financial Aid Students

Financial aid students should budget carefully for the year abroad. Know when financial aid checks are due, how much will arrive, to whom the checks will be sent in the U.S., and how money will be transferred to you. Arrange either to have financial aid checks deposited directly into your own U.S. bank account or sent to a person in the U.S. who has been assigned your power of attorney. This person can then deposit the money in your home bank account. The money can be wired to the corresponding bank account abroad or it can be accessed via ATM. Do not have checks mailed to you. They may not arrive safely, and if they do, banks will take 45 days to clear them before the money will be available to you. Think ahead and plan accordingly.
**COMMUNICATIONS ABROAD**

**Phones**

Phone communication in Egypt is improving. Directory services, reached by dialing 140, can find any number, but it helps to speak a little Arabic. While you can receive international calls in your flat or dorm, you cannot make outgoing international calls.

Calling the U.S. from Egypt is complicated. You cannot make collect calls. You usually have to pay for international calls in advance. It is about 40 percent cheaper to have calls made from the U.S.

Verify your EAP phone numbers with parents and friends once abroad. If people from the U.S. have difficulty reaching you in Egypt, they should contact the overseas telephone operator and arrange to place a person-to-person call. If you are staying in the AUC dormitory in downtown Cairo, the caller can dial the main switchboard at (011) 202-2-739-7040 and ask to be connected to your room. AUC has an English-speaking operator at this number 24 hours a day.

The dorms in New Cairo have two main switchboard numbers: (011) 202-2-615-4010 for female students and (011) 202-2-615-4020 for male students. In case of an emergency, family members may call Study Center staff, who will in turn contact you to request that you call home immediately.

**Skype**

Many students use Skype for long-distance calls. Family and friends in the U.S. can call you, at low rates, using Skype from their computers. You can Skype family and friends from any computer with Internet access. Computer-to-computer Skype calls are free. You will need a headset or a microphone.

**Mail**

International airmail letters from the U.S. should reach Cairo within two weeks. Letters to the U.S. will take at least as long. Letters usually make it to their address in Egypt although packages may not, and magazine/newspaper subscriptions probably will not be delivered promptly, if at all. It is best to avoid sending packages in the mail.

Students living in the **Zamalek dorms** can have mail sent directly to the residence:

- Full Name of Student
- AUC University Residence
- 16 Mohamed Thakeb Street
- Zamalek, Cairo 11211, Egypt

Students living in the **New Cairo dorms** can have mail sent to the following address. There is a mail office station in the Campus Center, open from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., where students can send and receive mail. Identification must be shown to pick up mail.

- Full Name of Student
- The American University in Cairo
- AUC Avenue, PO Box 74
- New Cairo 11835, Egypt
U.S. Postage Stamps
Because the regular mail service from Egypt is slow and somewhat erratic, past EAP participants suggest taking U.S. postage stamps for sending important letters and cards home with U.S.-bound travelers to mail when they arrive back in the U.S. You cannot buy U.S. postage stamps in Cairo. An alternative is to use the EMS, Egyptian Express Mail Service, which is available at any post office in Egypt. For approximately $6, letters will be delivered to the U.S. in about three days.

Computer Access and Use
After arrival, you can apply for a free e-mail account at AUC. The computer facilities usually are very crowded. If you have a laptop, take it abroad. Students are increasingly expected to type papers.
EGYPT, ACADEMIC YEAR, 2011-12

HOUSING & MEALS

Where Will I Live?

You may choose from a handful of options where you will live: the new AUC dorms on the new campus in Qattamy, also called New Cairo; in AUC dorms in the Zamalek section of Cairo; or you may seek accommodation in off-campus apartments in Cairo. At this time, off-campus apartments appropriate for students are limited in New Cairo.

The current group of EAP students recommends the Zamalek dorms. Although the new dorms are conveniently located on the new campus, the Zamalek dorms are situated in the heart of Cairo, where many students enjoy spending free time. (AUC will assign some students to hotels in Cairo rather than the Zamalek dorms due to space constraints.) The new dorms are in a remote suburb that will not be fully developed for several years. EAP students felt isolated there and preferred to cope with the time-consuming transportation issues rather than live in an undeveloped area. On the other hand, some students did not mind living in the new dorms to avoid the long daily commute. AUC offers a special bus service between the new dorms, downtown Cairo, Citystars shopping mall in Heliopolis, and El-Rehab City. This service is included in the AUC shuttle bus pass which most students purchase, or is available on a per-ride basis for about $4.

Renting an apartment in Cairo requires careful planning due to access to transportation and time necessary to reach the new campus. The AUC shuttle between sites in Cairo and the new campus may not be close to some apartment rentals.

Living in the AUC dorms requires flexibility to follow the strict visitor rules and hours. EAP participants recommend living in the dorms at least for the fall semester. It offers the best way to become acquainted with Egyptian students and other international students. After the first semester, you will be familiar with the AUC shuttle schedule and your class schedule and can look for apartments near the shuttle pickup sites.

It is critical to meet the housing application and housing payment deadlines set by AUC or you may be forced to live in a part of Cairo where it will be complicated to coordinate transportation to campus with your class schedule.

Housing Q&A

Q: What should I do if I want to live in AUC dorms?

A: In order to live in AUC dorms, reserve a housing space with the AUC New York office before July 1. The Office of Student Affairs in Cairo assigns rooms on a first-come, first-served basis, depending on the date AUC New York receives your housing deposit. Send in the confirmation note and deposit as soon as possible. AUC cannot guarantee dorm housing will be available after July 1.

All students, including those on full financial aid, must pay the required security deposit when making reservations. The security deposit is refundable, but is held against early withdrawals, losses, or damage of university property. Detailed housing information will be provided by the AUC New York office on their website.
“EAP STUDENTS SAY...”

The dorms have conveniences but one semester is enough! When you look for an apartment for the second semester, start your search in early December. By this time it seems every other American is in search of a place as well.

Q: Where will I stay upon arrival and during the orientation period?
A: You will stay in the accommodations you have pre-arranged for yourself. If you plan to search for an apartment upon arrival, inform the EAP Study Center and they will reserve a hotel room for you for a couple of nights.

Contact the Study Center on arrival in Cairo. This is a mandatory requirement of the Egypt program. It is a safety and security precaution as well as the means to ensure you are accommodated in the correct pre-arranged housing.

Q: What are the AUC dorms like?
A: Many foreign students are housed in the AUC dorms in Zamalek, a residential section of Cairo located on Gezira Island. The island has many shops, restaurants, and embassies. You can get to downtown Cairo from Zamalek by taxi for a reasonable cost, Minibus 49, or the AUC shuttle bus.

Zamalek houses 360 students in double rooms. Service facilities include a general lounge for receiving visitors, garden courtyard, recreation room, computer room, cafeteria, laundry area, health clinic, and security system. Each room has two beds, desks, chairs, and wardrobes. Pillows, blankets, and linens are provided. Each room has a heater and air-conditioning unit and paging equipment connected to the reception area.

There are separate quarters for men and women. In keeping with Middle Eastern customs, men and women are not permitted to visit each other’s rooms. Students will, however, be able to mingle in reception areas, the garden, recreation room, and cafeteria. No alcohol is allowed in the dorm.

You are expected to be in your dorm by 10:30 p.m.; if you arrive after 10:30 p.m., you will have to sign in. EAP students note that this policy usually is not enforced with Americans whose parents have signed a permission form. (It is mostly designed for Arab dorm residents.) Note the detailed rules governing social conduct and regulations.

The new dorms in New Cairo are well described on the AUC website. Each of the 12 residential buildings has a courtyard and roof terrace. There are workout and computer facilities, plus study rooms; 24-hour security ensures safety.

Q: How do I pay for housing?
A: You must pay the full housing fee for the fall semester to the AUC New York office by August 15. The fee may include an obligatory charge for the shuttle bus (dorm-to-campus) and local phone usage, or the shuttle bus cost may be billed separately. For spring semester the full housing fee is due by January 15. There are financial penalties for cancelation or withdrawal from the dorm. The penalties are noted in the housing fee information on the AUC website.

Q: Where can I do my laundry?
A: Laundry service is provided in the AUC dorms at no extra charge. If you live in an apartment, you will have to do your own laundry, send it out, or hire a launderer and send items out for a makwagi to iron by the piece. Non-automatic washing machines are available at Laundromats at reasonable prices. Laundering tends to be rough on clothes. Wash your delicate items by hand, including wash-and-wear clothes, underwear, and any clothes containing elastic. Regular laundry detergent is available.
Q: What if I don’t want to live in the dorms?

A: If you choose not to live in university housing, you can look for private housing once you are in Egypt. Past EAP students have had little difficulty finding apartments in downtown Cairo. In the recent past, two-bedroom, furnished apartments ranged from about $240 to $400 per month, not including utilities, phone, and garbage collection. To keep costs down, most students share apartments. Insects and rodents can be a problem, but exterminators and mosquito netting are available. Despite the drawbacks, many students prefer private housing after one semester at the AUC dorm.

Q: Will EAP or AUC automatically locate an apartment for me?

A: No. Neither EAP nor AUC can help you find an apartment or negotiate the rent. You need to make your own arrangements. The Study Center will provide you with printed information regarding what to do (and what not to do) when renting an apartment. The Study Center also maintains a list of apartments that have been rented in the past by EAP students. Private housing is advertised on bulletin boards at AUC and availability is circulated by word of mouth.

Q: What should I know before signing a lease?

A: You are responsible for knowing and complying with the terms of your lease. Neither AUC nor EAP will arrange or sign a lease for you before arrival, nor will AUC or EAP be able to assist with problems that might arise between you and your landlord. Before signing a lease, check with the landlord and find out if visitors of the opposite sex are allowed to stay overnight in the apartment. This issue has been problematic for EAP students in the past.

Meals

There are no cooking facilities in the dorms; however, you may purchase or rent appliances for limited cooking. The university operates a cafeteria in the Zamalek dorm with hot meals and snacks five days a week for about $3 to $4 per meal. On the new campus, there are restaurants and cafés, including McDonald’s and Subway. Small convenience stores on the new campus are open 24 hours.

Numerous restaurants in Cairo offer a variety of international cuisine. Afternoon and evening meals at inexpensive local restaurants cost about $6 to $10 each. Western-style restaurants are usually more expensive.

As at home, cooking for yourself is the most economical way to eat. It takes time and effort, however, to shop for ingredients. There are few quick meals and most things must be prepared from scratch. Although meat, poultry, and fish are expensive (comparable to California prices), seasonable fresh vegetables, fruits, and bread are relatively inexpensive. Dairy products vary in price depending on whether they are locally produced or imported. Imported food is very expensive, and items available one month may not reappear on the vendor’s shelf for long periods of time. When eating out, avoid eating raw vegetables and salads in most restaurants. Also, avoid eating the food sold by street vendors.

It is safe to purchase the food prepared at the numerous food carts on the new campus. These are not street vendor carts.
“EAP Students Say...”

Making Egyptian friends is not easy, but a good way to start is to frequent stores and bakeries and become friendly with the proprietors, who are usually willing to help you with your Arabic. Also try to make friends (other than Americans) in your classes; those types of friendships usually grow.

Getting involved in athletics, drama, etc., is the easiest of all ways to meet Egyptians—at least you’ll have those activities in common.

Ask your Egyptian friends to take you to mosques, bazaars, etc.; they’ll know much more than you do about them and you will get fewer hassles.

Break out and be independent. Don’t hang out in groups with Americans.

Extracurricular Activities

Get Involved

In order to integrate more fully into the Egyptian community, you are encouraged to participate in cultural activities. EAP and AUC staff have information on cultural and social events and will arrange various activities and excursions during the year. EAP participants have been active in sports, drama, journalism, photography, and have worked on excavations and in museums. Join clubs, sports, or music/art/theater groups; provide volunteer services to social organizations; participate in athletic events and religious activities; and attend lectures, discussions, and receptions in academic and community circles.

Living in Egypt, you will find certain cultural tendencies toward group activity to which you may not be accustomed. For example, Americans tend to be individualists who cooperate in groups only as long as this cooperation is serving their individual interests; however, in the Middle East the group is the basic social unit, and collective goals are more important than the individual goal.

Travel Around Egypt

The EAP Student Budget does not include funds for recreational travel.

For travel and other cultural information, refer to some of the following books and guides: Blue Guide to Egypt; Complete Guide to Archaeological Sites; Baedekker’s Egypt; Thornton Cox, Egypt; Fodor’s Egypt; Let’s Go Egypt and Israel; Frommer’s Egypt on $20 a Day; Egypt Today; Berlitz Egypt; and Lonely Planet’s Travel Survival Kit for Egypt and Shoestring Guide to the Middle East.

Although camping is uncommon in Egypt and usually requires a security approval, there are areas for camping.
HEALTH

Physical Health

Even with professional predeparture travel advice, vaccines, and medications, a person is not 100 percent protected against all diseases or injuries anywhere in the world. Practice healthy behaviors:

- Be careful about food and water (do not eat food from street vendors, drink only bottled or boiled water, or carbonated drinks in cans or bottles)
- Protect against insect and mosquito bites
- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water to prevent many common travel illnesses
- Increase your awareness of cough hygiene or respiratory etiquette (such as covering one’s mouth when coughing); it is not only a courtesy, but if generally practiced, it will help reduce transmission of respiratory and influenza-like illnesses

Maintain good health and fitness while abroad. UCEAP students have noted that they needed increased stamina to adjust to the climate and to move through busy, crowded streets with few sidewalks or traffic signals.

If you feel sick or have a medical emergency, seek medical attention and contact the Study Center staff immediately. They can recommend a clinic to visit, provide the necessary UCEAP medical insurance claim forms to complete, and assist if arrangements are needed with your professors for an extended absence from class.

In addition to the comprehensive UCEAP insurance coverage, AUC provides a limited amount of health insurance. After arrival, you will be issued an AUC health ID card, which entitles you to treatment at the AUC clinic on the new campus, and either the Al-Salam Hospital in downtown Cairo or the Al-Ahly Bank Hospital in New Cairo. The AUC insurance does not offer coverage outside Cairo. Full details will be provided at the on-site orientation.

Details about the UCEAP insurance coverage are located in the UCEAP Insurance Plan brochure. Obtain claim forms from the UCEAP website as needed during the year.

Air Quality

Cairo is one of the most polluted cities in the world. According to a World Bank report, Cairo, is the second most polluted city in the world. Air quality is a major concern to the Egyptian Environmental Agency. There are many sources to air pollution in Egypt, as in other countries. However, the formation and levels of dust, small particles, and soot are more characteristic in Egypt than presently found in industrialized countries.

Many UCEAP students have emphasized the presence of pollution and some have missed classes due to pollution-related illnesses. If you have asthma, other respiratory illnesses, or heart disease, consult a health care provider before travel and carry sufficient medications.
Prescription Medication
Make sure you have enough prescription medications to last the duration of your trip, including inhalers or allergy medication.

Keep medications in their original prescription bottles and always pack it in your carry-on luggage while traveling. Be sure to follow security guidelines if the medicines are liquids.

Some medications commonly prescribed in the U.S. are illegal in other countries. Contact Europ Assistance (UCEAP’s travel assistance provider) at (866) 451-7606 before departure to make sure any required medications are legal.

Infectious Diseases
Avian influenza A (H5N1) is endemic in Egypt. The risk of human infection with avian influenza A (H5N1) is low. It is greatest for those involved in slaughtering, de-feathering, butchering, and/or preparing poultry for cooking. Stay away from live birds and undercooked poultry. Birds excrete large amounts of the virus in their feces; avoid direct contact with surfaces or objects contaminated by bird droppings.

Egyptian Ministry of Health Requirements
The Egyptian Ministry of Health requires foreigners to submit to an HIV test within one to three months after arrival in Egypt. For the Egyptian test, blood samples will be taken by AUC’s university clinic using disposable syringes provided by the university. The Ministry of Health will test the samples. Those who test positive will take a second test administered by the U.S. Naval Medical Research Unit in Cairo. Those who again test positive will have to leave Egypt.

In light of this policy, AUC requires that you undergo an HIV test before leaving the U.S. as part of a general physical examination. Acceptance by AUC will be conditional upon receipt of a negative result from this initial test and an AUC physical examination report. The form for this report can be accessed via the online EAP Predeparture Checklist. You can schedule the AUC physical exam at the same time as the exam required for the EAP Health Clearance. Some UC campuses require the EAP Health Clearance to be completed at UC Student Health Services. If you prefer to use a private physician for the AUC physical exam, you may do so whether or not the EAP Health Clearance is completed at a UC Student Health Services location.
SAFETY

Follow Study Center and AUC directions regarding safety and security matters, which can be subject to rapid change depending on the specific tensions or issues.

Security Warnings

U.S. embassy security warnings are posted at the AUC campus and dorms and are e-mailed to you by the UCEAP Study Center. Regularly monitor U.S. Department of State warnings and statements on travel in Egypt and surrounding areas.

UCEAP Travel Warning Policy during the program: UCEAP students who are visiting Israel are prohibited from visiting the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, whether or not Israel has closed the border to one or both areas. Students who travel to these areas will be dismissed from the program.

UCEAP Contingency Plans

If a local situation requires increased caution or a program suspension and evacuation of participants, UCEAP will activate contingency plans. For security reasons, contingency plans are not public and cannot be shared with anyone except UCEAP faculty and staff.

UCEAP Program Suspension Policy

If the U.S. Department of State or CDC issue a Travel Warning after the start date of the program term, UCEAP will suspend the program. If time and local security conditions permit, UCEAP will consult with the UC Study Center Director, U.S. Department of State regional and security analysts, other organizations that offer programs in the same country, and area experts to determine the appropriate timeframe for suspending the program and/or the evacuation of the students from the host country.

Security Evacuation

The UCEAP required security evacuation will override AUC’s voluntary departure of students on U.S. government-arranged flights that require U.S. citizens to sign a promissory note with the government. The security evacuation of UCEAP students, managed by UCEAP, is covered by UCEAP insurance (there is no cost to the student). UC students must follow UC safety directives.

When possible, UCEAP will assist students in completing their academic program while minimizing adverse financial consequences.

In the Event of a Local Emergency

The Cairo Study Center Director and/or the UCEAP Systemwide Director will contact you immediately to ascertain your welfare and to provide information, instructions, and advice. You are advised to contact your parents, guardians, or emergency contacts. Depending on the emergency, the UCEAP Systemwide Office will post a message on the UCEAP website and provide updates to your emergency contacts.

You are encouraged to consider purchasing a tuition and renters insurance policy that can be applied to study abroad programs. You may also choose to purchase policies through GradGuard.
Risks
Crime is not a major threat in Egypt. However, picking pockets, purse-snatching, and petty theft are on the rise.

Demonstrations
Civil unrest is a growing concern in Egypt. Under emergency laws in place since 1981, demonstrations and protests, except those held on university campuses, are illegal.

Clashes between Muslims and Coptic Christians occur in southern Egypt on a semi-regular basis.

Photography Warning
There are restrictions on photographing military personnel and sites, bridges, and canals, including the Suez Canal. Egyptian authorities may broadly interpret these restrictions to include other potentially sensitive structures, such as embassies, other public buildings with international associations, and some religious edifices. Refrain from taking photographs of any uniformed personnel.

Traffic and Road Safety
Egypt is one of the world’s leaders in auto accidents. Roads in Cairo are congested and traffic is poorly regulated. Sidewalks and pedestrian crossings are non-existent in many areas. Traffic drives on the right, but driving on the wrong side of the road or in the wrong direction down one-way streets is alarmingly common. Pedestrians should exercise extreme caution when crossing roadways, especially in high-volume/high-velocity streets such as Cairo’s Corniche, which follows the east bank of the Nile River.

Intercity roads are generally in good condition, but unmarked surfaces, stray animals, and disabled vehicles without lights or reflectors are among the many hazards that drivers encounter on highways, especially after dark. U.S. embassy officials in Egypt are prohibited from traveling by road outside Cairo after sunset. In addition, some roads, especially in the Sinai and southeastern part of the country, are off-limits to foreigners. Traffic warning signs should be respected.

Public mini- and micro-buses are not safe; the U.S. embassy strongly discourages its officials from using them.

Taxis usually provide a more secure means of transport. Official Cairo taxis are usually black and white; in Alexandria, they are black and orange. Taxi meters frequently do not work. Pay fares in exact change; tipping is not expected. In Cairo, some drivers have established standard prices for routes. These drivers will typically tell you the fare before your journey begins. They cost more than other cabs, but the drivers usually speak English, drive well, know the city, and do not pick up additional passengers.

Metro
A clean, modern and efficient metro system services most areas of Cairo. Metro cars are not air-conditioned, but stations are. The first car on every train is reserved for women only; female passengers are less likely to encounter harassment or petty theft in the women-only cars.

If planning to use any means of public transportation, ask AUC for recommendations on the most secure means of transport.
**Sexual Harassment**

Past UCEAP participants say a woman, foreign or Egyptian, will experience verbal sexual harassment every day no matter how conservatively she dresses or how well she fits into Egyptian culture. Most instances are on the street, not on campus. Recent news reports indicate a significant increase in groups of men surrounding lone women, and in men aggressively groping women. The advice in this guide will not prevent all harassment.

Female UCEAP students have noted that they were approached and even touched by strangers, usually men. This is something to be prepared for, and something that can sometimes be avoided. Students who ignore local social conventions will be open to social disapproval and may receive unwelcome advances. A good way to learn how to navigate through day-to-day life is to observe how non-AUC Egyptian women dress and behave. Foreign women in Egypt must pay attention to where they are going, inquire whether these areas are safe, and walk with a purposeful step. For the duration of the program, it is advisable to avoid wearing clothing considered to be provocative and avoid eye contact with men.

The streets of Cairo are relatively safe, but women will receive embarrassing catcalls or unwanted advances. Although the normal reaction may be to react forcefully, EAP students recommend that you try to stay calm, remember that it is not obligatory to respond, and try to ignore the incident.

**Tips for women:**

- Try to travel with a trusted male companion.
- Avoid direct eye contact with Egyptian men.
- Sit next to a woman or alone on public transport.
- When using a taxi or chauffeured car, sit in the back seat. Do not allow taxi drivers to pick up additional passengers.
- If harassed, continue walking and enter a populated establishment, such as a hotel, shop, or restaurant. Responding to the perpetrators and politely trying to get out of the situation usually only encourages more harassment.
- Be conservative in dress and behavior.
- Remain distant when dealing with Egyptian men, as friendliness is often perceived as flirtation.
- If you feel the situation calls for a strong reaction, you might try to respond verbally, especially if there are other people nearby; scream and create a scene. This generally will be sufficient to scare the harasser away or prompt a passersby to intervene. (Egyptian men generally behave protectively toward women, including foreign women, and have been known to come to their defense.)
- Ask female Egyptian friends for advice.
- Learn a few phrases in Arabic that can be used to ask others for help with unwanted attention.

Never submit to behaviors that feel unsafe or uncomfortable. If it feels inappropriate or makes you uneasy, get yourself out of the situation. Never sacrifice yourself or your sense of safety for the sake of cultural sensitivity.
If you feel harassed, seek counsel from the UCEAP Study Center. Harassment issues may be difficult to identify abroad, where cultural norms are different than in the U.S. A fair rule of thumb is to assume that sexual harassment consists of any unwanted sexual advances and behavior of a verbal, visual, written, or physical nature in living arrangements and in educational or work environments. Read more in the UCEAP Guide to Study Abroad.

Emergency Contacts

What Constitutes an Emergency?
Emergencies are circumstances out of the ordinary, unplanned, or unexpected, which threaten the health, safety, and well-being of you and/or your fellow students. The following are considered true emergencies:

- Any situation that places a student or students at risk, including illness or harm, or other traumatic incidents that require immediate response
- A student who has been arrested
- Civil unrest or a 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 the Operations Specialist at the EAP 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 have a health or safety emergency and do not have access to local or Study Center emergency contact information, call the EAP 24-hour emergency phone number.