I’M GOING ABROAD?? WHAT DO I DO NOW?

A TIMELINE FOR YOUR FIRST-SEMESTER ABROAD (FSA) PREPARATIONS

CONGRATULATIONS!! You’ve accepted Colby College’s offer to study abroad your first semester. Now what?? The timeline below will show you, by month, important information and/or tasks that will be sent to you and must be completed by the requested dates given in the mailings.

This information will be sent to you (not to your parents) so it is your responsibility to be sure to read your emails, check your mailbox and complete forms on time. You are the one traveling and studying in Dijon or Salamanca and you should be aware of the information and procedures needed to get you there.

The information below is shown, in order of priority, to help you prepare and look ahead to your study abroad experience. As eager as you may be to accomplish some things ahead of time, there is an order in which some things must be done. Please follow below and do not rush ahead.

If you have questions over the next few months, please send me, Sue Forbes, an email at smforbes@colby.edu or you may ask your questions through the Facebook group for your group (Dijon or Salamanca). Thank you! Sue

APRIL

1. **Do you have a valid passport??** You must have a valid passport to study abroad (it must be valid through June 30, 2016). If you do not have a passport, apply for one TODAY. Do NOT put this off. If you have a passport but it expires before June 2016, apply for a renewal TODAY. (YES! That is one year from now....passports must be valid for 6 months past your return date, which will be in December) http://travel.state.gov/passport/passport_1738.html

2. **Alternate (non-school) email address?** Please send your alternate email address (other than your high school email) to me, smforbes@colby.edu, as soon as possible. Make sure you check this email address frequently to be sure you do not miss any important information. Emails will be sent to this address until your Colby email has been set up. You should, forward these emails to your parents for their information but it is your responsibility to complete the required forms and reply to them on time.

3. **Join the Facebook Group for your group.** This will have updates and reminders throughout the summer. Please invite your parents (if they have FB) to join also. This is a closed group — only students (FSAs) and their parent/guardian will be allowed to join.
   For Dijon: https://www.facebook.com/groups/352063944981494/
   For Salamanca: https://www.facebook.com/groups/632445070222723/

MAY

1. **Host family preference form AND an Information Sheet.** These will be sent by email to the email address we have on file for you. Please complete these forms, following the instructions in the email, and return, via email, as soon as you receive them but no later than the date given in the email (usually May 15). Also, it is very important that you give us your full, actual name on all forms. Where we ask for First, Middle, & Last name Please put your actual First name, Middle name and Last name — if you prefer to be called another name or to go by your middle name, please make a note on the form BUT the name on the forms need to match your legal name (the name that is on your passport).

2. **Group flight information & travel reply form.** This will be sent by email to the email address we have on file for you. Please review this information and complete the travel reply form as soon as possible but no later than the date given in the email (usually May 15). This is necessary for us to hold a seat for you on the group flights.

3. **Activate your Colby email address** as soon as you receive the information to do so, please do not delay. You will start receiving lots of information and much of it will be sent to your Colby accounts so the sooner you activate and start using this account, the better. Please notify me, Sue Forbes, when you have done this. Send me an email FROM your Colby email address to smforbes@colby.edu.

4. **First packet** will arrive in your mailbox from Off-Campus Study (OCS) in mid-May. NOTE: This packet will be sent to the address I have on file for you at this time — if you live home, it will be sent there. If I have your
boarding school address, it will be sent there so please watch for this and open immediately. This packet contains:

- A request for a copy of your passport (must be valid through June 30 of next year) and 2 passport-sized photos (the photos must be real photos—scans and copies are not accepted). NOTE: If you are having photos made, please have at least 4 made — send 2 to OCS and the other 2 you will hold and use later for your visa.
- 2 medical related forms. Permission for Emergency Treatment form should be completed and returned by May 29 with the information sheet mentioned above. The second form is a Release of Information Form and need only be completed if you have used a counseling service. The form must be completed by you and your Counselor and should be returned to OCS no later than June 15.

**JUNE**

1. **Second packet** will arrive in your mailbox from Off-Campus Study early in the first week of June. This packet will contain information, instructions, and forms you will need for your visa application. KEEP IN A SAFE PLACE & DO NOT LOSE! The letters included are your original letters (and copies) you will need along with a list of the other students going with you and your pre-departure handbook. It is EXTREMELY IMPORTANT that you open this packet when you receive it, look over the letters carefully and make sure your name is spelled correctly. If not, let me (Sue Forbes) know as soon as possible so I can get the letter(s) corrected. Read the information and start the process, do not delay. For Dijon: please note that the Colby letter included with this mailing is the letter you will need for both your visa appointment and CampusFrance—be sure to keep the original for the visa appointment & a copy should go (as the requested acceptance letter) to CampusFrance (the letter is signed by Nancy Downey and dated June 1).

2. **Make sure your Colby emails are activated and check this account daily.** Information will be sent to your Colby email address not just from OCS (Sue Forbes) but other departments on Campus.

3. **REVIEW the website of the Consulate you will be going to.** Be sure you have the latest information on what you need for your visa appointment (Consulates change their requirements frequently, do NOT only go by what we sent to you but double-check the consulate’s website for current requirements. This is your responsibility to check and be prepared for any changes to the consulate’s requirements.

**JULY**

1. **The third packet** will arrive in your mailbox from Off-Campus Study early in the first week of July. This packet will contain your first-year book (summer reading), Assumption of Risk form and a Student & Parent/Guardian Statement (both due by mid-July) and also information from LINK, COOT and iNext. The Basic iNext insurance will be purchased for all first-year students studying abroad by Colby, you do not need to purchase this. The information card enclosed with this mailing is for your information only. You will soon receive an email directly from iNext and will be asked to upload a photo to have an id card mailed to you.

2. **Flight confirmation & itinerary will be emailed to you.** All “tickets” are electronic so this will have your ticket number shown near your name. Be sure to print this off and bring with you to the airport. Some of you may also need to provide a copy of this when you go for your visa appointment at the consulate.

3. **List of email addresses** of all students going with your group will be emailed to you.

4. **Host family assignments** will be emailed to you at the end of July or early in August. If, after you receive your assignment, you would like more information about your host family, please contact your program director directly (either Jon for Dijon or Julia for Salamanca)

**AUGUST**

1. **How are you getting to the airport?** Send me, Sue Forbes, an email letting me know how you will arrive at the airport: POV (parents will drive); bus; connecting flight (give airline, flight number, departing from, and arrival time).

2. **Information on your departure** will be sent to you, via email, at least a week before you departure. This will include who will be meeting you at the airport, reminders, etc.

***Remember to read over all materials sent to you carefully and to follow the instructions. It is your responsibility to be sure things are completed and returned on time.***