

I'M GOING ABROAD???. WHAT DO I DO NOW?

A TIMELINE FOR YOUR GLOBAL ENTRY SEMESTER (GES) 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, some of the 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), **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 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 post your questions on the Facebook group for your group (Dijon or Salamanca). Thank you! Sue

MARCH/APRIL/MAY

- 1. Information Sheet for Incoming GES Students.** The link to this google form will be included in your first email. Please complete this form and submit as soon as possible. Where we ask for First, Middle & Last Name, please put your actual (legal) First name, Middle name and Last name as it appears on your passport – if you prefer to be called by another name, nickname, or to go by your middle name, please make a note on the form **BUT the name on the form needs to match your legal name (the name that is on your passport).**
- 2. Do you have a valid passport??** You must have a valid passport to study abroad (it must be valid through June 30, **2020**). If you do not have a passport, apply for one TODAY. Do NOT put this off. If you have a passport that expires before June 2020, 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
- 3. Alternate (non-school) email address?** This is requested on the Information Sheet, please be sure to list this. Make sure you check this email 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 emails to your parents for their information but it is your responsibility to complete the required forms and reply to them on time.
- 4. Join the Facebook Group for your group.** This will have updates and reminders throughout the summer. The information is for you and it is your responsibility to read, respond and prepare for your semester abroad. You can invite, and I encourage, your parents to join so that they are aware of the preparations and also are able to view/download photos throughout the semester. Remember, this is a closed group – only you, the GES student, and your parents/guardians are allowed to join. Unfortunately, there isn't any other social media or online format to have a private group where we can get information and reminders to all of you quickly and to be sure that you have all seen it. The private group also allows photos to be posted before and during the semester so that you and your parents can see them. It is private, so you have the option of downloading and keeping the photos to share as you want.
 - For Dijon: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/575679649563922/>
 - For Salamanca: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/522014691609016/>
- 5. Host family preference form.** This will be emailed to you at the email address we have on file for you. Please complete this form, following the instructions in the email, and return, via email, as soon as you receive it 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 (legal) name on all forms. Where we ask for First, Middle, & Last name, please put your legal First name, Middle name and Last name – if you prefer to be called another name, nickname, 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).** **You will be notified of your host family assignment usually in late July/early August.**
- 6. 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.

7. **Passport copy & Photos:** You will receive an email requesting some information/copies, it is important that you respond as soon as possible with the requested information including:
 - A request for a copy of your passport (must be valid through June 30 of next year) and 2 (or 3) passport-sized photos as requested in the email. The photos must be actual, real passport-type photos—scans and copies are not accepted). NOTE: If you are having photos made, please have extras made – minimum 4 (or 6). You will send some to me and will need some (1 or 2) for your visa appointment.
8. **Visa Application Appointment:** You will need a visa to study in France or Spain. **For Spain**, it can be very stressful and frustrating to book an appointment with the consulate and it is strongly recommended that you start looking at the calendar now AND book an appointment for any open slot ON OR AFTER June 14 (the earlier the better). Depending on where you live, you will need to go to the Spanish consulate for your jurisdiction. **For France**, the French visa process is in two parts. The first is CampusFrance, you need to complete this and receive confirmation/approval from them before you can book and/or go to your consulate appointment. More information on the French process will be sent to you in April/May, it is important that you read the information and follow the on-line process carefully.

MAY/JUNE

1. **Group flight information.** All GES students are required to come to Colby College for orientation and the group(s) will depart together from Waterville for the airport after the orientation program. Orientation is mandatory for all GES students and it is mandatory that all students are on the round-trip group flights to/from Madrid or Paris. If you travel independently of the group for your return, the arrangements and all extra costs incurred will be your responsibility. Please plan to arrive at Colby College on the morning of orientation (more information on orientation will be sent soon). Information on group flights will be sent by email to the email address we have on file for you.
2. **VISA APPLICATION mailing (first mailing).** This will be mailed from Off-Campus Study to your home address and will arrive in early 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). **For Salamanca:** please note that the family name given in your letter is NOT your actual host family, the name given is for your visa application only. You will find out your actual host family name in late July/early August. For the purpose of your visa application, please use the family name given in the letter you receive.
3. **Health Insurance Letters.** One of the requirements for your visa is proof of health insurance. You will need to contact your health insurance provider and get a letter stating that you are covered while abroad – your coverage should be for everything, **not** emergency visits only. IF your insurance does not cover you, you will need to either purchase a rider with your insurance provider OR purchase a short-term health insurance policy that will cover you while you are abroad.
4. **Make sure your Colby email is 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.
5. **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 consulates website for current requirements. This is your responsibility to check and be prepared for any changes to the consulate's requirements.

JUNE/JULY

1. **The second mailing** will arrive in your home mailbox from Off-Campus Study early in the first week of July. This packet will contain the Assumption of Risk form and a Student & Parent/Guardian Statement (both due by mid-July), a book (for Salamanca GES students) and other information including the iNext supplemental insurance. Colby College purchases the iNext Platinum plus security evacuation supplemental travel insurance for all GES students, you do not need to purchase this. This Platinum level supplementary insurance offers benefits such as accident and sickness expenses, some medical coverage, emergency medical transportation, 24-hour medical, legal and travel assistance, and travel document replacement. **NOTE:** This coverage is a supplement to your primary medical coverage. You should review your primary medical insurance regarding your coverage while abroad to be sure you

and your family are comfortable with the amount of coverage you have. Once iNext is purchased by us, you will receive an email directly from them. Follow the instructions to upload a photo to have an id card mailed to you.

2. **Flight confirmation & itinerary will be emailed to you.** The itinerary you receive will have your ticket number listed 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.

JULY/AUGUST

1. **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).
2. **Information on your departure** and reminders will be emailed to you in mid-August.
3. **Travel to Maine:** Colby College looks forward to welcoming you to Waterville on Saturday, August 24, when you will meet the other students on both GES groups (Dijon & Salamanca) and begin your orientation. Both groups will leave from Maine on Tuesday, August 27, for the departure airport (TBD).

******Remember to check your email frequently. You will receive information from Off-Campus Study and other Colby departments. It is important to read all materials sent to you carefully & thoroughly and to follow the instructions. It is your responsibility to be sure things are completed and returned on time.******