



**IMPORTANT PASSPORT *and* VISA**  
**INFORMATION**

Created by the Study Abroad Office @ UR

## ***Passport: You must have a passport valid for the duration of your stay abroad***

Note that many countries require your passport be valid at least six months beyond your intended stay.

- To apply, go to the County Clerk's Office in your area. In Monroe County: County Office Bldg, 39 West Main Street, Room 101 (corner of West Main and Fitzhugh Streets), Rochester. 9:00am-5:00pm. TEL 585.753.1600 Details and applications are at: <http://www.monroecounty.gov>
- You may also apply through the City Clerk's office: <http://www.cityofrochester.gov/index.cfm?id=660-Passport>
- Call ahead to find out if there are any regulations or fees specific to your area.
- Processing a passport application can take six weeks or longer. ***Apply for or renew yours now.***

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

1. Complete passport application, *unsigned*
2. Proof of U.S. citizenship: Certified copy of birth certificate bearing:
  - raised seal
  - file date within a year of birth
  - name correctly spelledor:
  - naturalization papers *or* old passport
3. Two recent passport photos, 2" x 2", with a white background. Medical Center Photography Center Tel# 5-5731. Inexpensive photos may also be taken at the CVS which is located at 789 Elmwood Avenue in Rochester.
4. Check or money order made payable to "Passport Services". The fee typically ranges from \$65.00-\$145.00. A money order will often expedite the process. Some offices will not take cash. There may be an execution fee (in Monroe County, it is \$30.00).
5. Identification such as a driver's license or current student ID card. Police IDs are not valid.

## ***Visas***

A visa is official permission, granted by the authorities of a country where you will study or visit, which allows you to enter and remain in that country for period of time. You must have a valid passport in order to apply for a visa. Note that many countries require that your passport be valid at least six months past your intended stay in that country. In other words, if you intend to study abroad in the spring semester (January-May), your passport should be valid at least through November of that year. Some countries require you to obtain a visa either in the U.S. or at a consulate abroad. Costs and entrance requirements vary, but expect to pay between \$75 and \$400. ***Find out now*** what visas, if any, you will need, for places where you will either live or visit. Visas can take up to eight weeks to process, and you may be required to appear in person to obtain the visa. You cannot apply for a visa until you have been admitted to a study abroad program.

It is your responsibility to determine the requirements and to apply for a visa in a timely fashion.

*If you are not a U.S. citizen:* Check **now** with the consulate of the country in which you'll be studying for any special visa requirements. Consult with an International Student Advisor about other requirements you may have.

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

Visit these websites for more information:

[http://travel.state.gov/passport/passport\\_1738.html](http://travel.state.gov/passport/passport_1738.html)

<http://www.embassyworld.com>

## **VISA APPLICATION INFORMATION**

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

- When you apply for a visa, you are dealing with the government of a foreign country. They can make and change their policies and procedures at any time.
- We are not agents of foreign countries, so our ability to help you fill out visa applications is extremely limited. It is always best to get answers directly from a Consulate employee.
- Read very carefully the application and instructions before contacting a Consulate. This will enable you to ask appropriate and informed questions.
- If you download visa application materials from a website, call/email the Consulate to be sure that it is the most recent version (unless the website states that it is).
- Consulates generally have very limited open hours both for answering the telephone and for public appearances.
- When you speak with someone in a Consulate write a detailed record of the conversation: date, time, full name of person with whom you spoke, and their comments or answers or recommendations.
- Never assume that because your friend got a visa in one week, that you will, too.
- You may have to appear at a Consulate in person to submit your visa application materials. If this is a requirement, there is most likely no way to get around it. If the NY Consulate of Spain, for example, requires you to apply there, you must be prepared to drive, fly, or take a bus or train to NYC. We cannot ask them to eliminate this requirement for you.
- Don't assume anything. If, for example, the visa application asks for your address while in [country], and you won't have that information until you arrive overseas, ask the consulate what to write in that space. Some may accept "TBA", some may accept the program address, some may not accept it without the actual address. We cannot guess how or what to answer for any question; neither should you.
- When you apply for a visa, you must submit your passport with the application. Therefore, it may not be possible for you travel outside the U.S. prior to your term abroad.
- Again, requirements vary, but in general, expect to provide the following when applying for a student visa: demographic information about yourself and your parents, including dates and places of birth; your passport; certification of health and/or certain immunizations; letter of acceptance to your study abroad program and/or host institution; letter verifying that you are currently enrolled (at UR) in good standing; detailed financial support information, notarized, e.g., bank statements (family and self), financial aid sources, etc.; proof of health insurance coverage abroad; your round-trip plane ticket to your study abroad country.

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

- Allow *at least* two weeks when requesting documents such as letters of acceptance, enrollment verification, and others.
- Most of all, be patient and be prepared. The visa application process is normally the most daunting and time-consuming part of the study abroad process. Keep in mind the end result!