

PENN SUMMER



Penn Summer Global Institute Handbook 2022

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PRE-ARRIVAL CHECKLIST

There are several things you need to do before arriving at Penn. In order to guide you through the process, please refer to the checklist below. If you have any questions about any of the items or encounter problems, email Associate Director of International Programs, Lauren Fiori, at Lfiori@sas.upenn.edu, or Coordinator of International Programs, Hannah Simmons at simmh@sas.upenn.edu.

- Decision Form:** Submit your decision letter through the online application portal
- I-20:** [Apply for your I-20](#) as soon as you receive your PIN from International Student and Scholar Services
- Pennkey:** Set up your [Pennkey](#) as soon as you receive an email from the LPS registrar with instructions and email it to your assigned advisor.
- Penn Email:** Set up your [Penn Email](#)
- Canvas:** Accept your Canvas Course invitation to the PSGI Community Canvas Page through your Penn Email
- Course Registration:** Review the [course offerings for Summer Session II](#), talk to your academic advisor at your home institution about course requirements/credit transfer and then register for courses using [Penn in Touch](#).
- Health Insurance:** Access to the [Student Health Services](#) on campus is included in your program fee. Although it is not required, we do recommend that you also have comprehensive health insurance that covers emergency treatment. HTH Worldwide provides affordable options for international students. You can enroll online at www.hthstudents.com. Enter Group Access Code: HAE-19628 on the right side of the home page. You can also use your own travel insurance, but make sure it includes emergency treatment.
- Penn Card Photo:** Upload a 2 inches x 2 inches photo of yourself (similar to what you might find on a passport or driver's license) to Canvas under the "Penn Card Photo" assignment. The file should be in .jpeg or .png format. It should be uploaded with the file name: [lastname.firstname]
- Flight Itinerary:** Please complete the online form accessible through Canvas to indicate your flight details and arrival information.
- Gym Membership:** A gym membership is included in your Program Fee for the month of July. You may purchase a guest pass for the remaining two weeks of your program if you wish. You will also need to sign a gym waiver for your membership to be activated. The membership can be found in the Canvas site.
- ISSS Pre-arrival Information:** As you are making your preparations to come to the US, you may also find this page on the ISSS website useful <https://global.upenn.edu/iss/prearrival>

SECTION 1: PENN LPS AND PSGI

1.1 COLLEGE OF LIBERAL AND PROFESSIONAL STUDIES (LPS)

The University of Pennsylvania's College of Liberal and Professional Studies (LPS) is housed within Penn's School of Arts & Sciences, the area of the University that is home to the humanities, the social sciences, and the natural sciences. LPS offers an extraordinary education to highly qualified students. Some of our students seek to begin or complete their bachelor's degrees, but in recent years LPS has also become a magnet for students seeking post-baccalaureate study in professional master's and pre-professional programs in the humanities and the natural and social sciences.

Whatever the level of their studies, students at the College of Liberal and Professional Studies are intellectually capable adults who are fully engaged in their work, and for whom a Penn degree or individual courses serve two fully integrated aims: intellectual and personal enrichment, and career or academic advancement. These students come not only from Philadelphia and its environs but from all over the country—indeed, many of them come from abroad—specifically to study in LPS' innovative, multi-disciplinary programs.

Our students embody the values of the School of Arts and Sciences' commitment to bring knowledge, analysis, creativity, innovation, and invention to bear on society's most critical problems. These students are engaged in the world. They come to Penn with a sense of purpose and urgency and a strong sense of the problems facing the world in the 21st century, and they bring to Penn a unique combination of intellectual talent, maturity, and a broad spectrum of experience.

1.2 LPS CONTACT INFORMATION AND OFFICE HOURS

Campus Mailing Address

College of Liberal and Professional Studies
University of Pennsylvania
3440 Market Street, Suite 100
Philadelphia, PA 19104

LPS Main Office General Telephone	215-898-7326
Fax:	215-573-2053
Email:	LPS@sas.upenn.edu
LPS Website:	www.pennlps.org
Penn Website:	www.upenn.edu

LPS Student Records and Billing	215-746-7040
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Office Hours

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday	9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.
Saturday and Sunday	CLOSED

1.3 ABOUT THE PENN SUMMER GLOBAL INSTITUTE

The Penn Summer Global Institute at the University of Pennsylvania is the gateway for highly qualified international students to pursue credit-bearing course work and enjoy an academic experience at a top-ranked, Ivy League teaching and research university.

The Penn Summer Global Institute is open to international students currently enrolled in undergraduate programs. Students in the program enroll in two credit units over the course of a summer session. Penn Summer Global Institute students are not eligible for admission to the College of Liberal and Professional Studies Bachelor of Arts program.

1.4 INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS STAFF

Lauren Fiori, Associate Director of International Programs: Lfiori@sas.upenn.edu, +1 (215) 898-3197

Hannah Simmons, Coordinator, International Programs: simmh@sas.upenn.edu, +1 (215) 573-7016

1.5 ACADEMIC ADVISING APPOINTMENTS

To schedule an in-person, Zoom or telephone appointment, please contact your assigned advisor.

SECTION 2: IMMIGRATION MATTERS

2.1 OBTAINING A VISA TO STUDY IN THE UNITED STATES

After you are admitted to PSGI, you should complete the online application for the Form I-20 or DS 2019 document from Penn's International Student and Scholar Services.

<https://global.upenn.edu/iss/new-app>

ISSS (International Student and Scholar Services) will begin processing the Form I-20 or Form DS-2019 when it has received both the completed application and confirmation of admission from LPS. During the peak application period (April to July) this process can take up to 3 weeks from the time of receipt of the Notice of Admission from the admitting school and the Form I-20/DS-2019 application. Applications are processed in the order received. It is recommended that students wait to receive their visa documents before scheduling a visa interview.

We encourage students to contact their local U.S. Consulate or Embassy for specific visa application instructions, but in general, you should pay the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) fee (preferably online) and schedule an interview appointment with the nearest U.S. Consulate or Embassy upon receipt of your I-20 or DS-2019 form. Then follow the Consulate's instructions on the visa application process and required documents. Your entry visa will be stamped in your passport.

For more information, please review the websites listed below:

Locate a U.S. Embassy near you: <http://usembassy.gov/>

SEVIS fee and payment instructions: <http://www.ice.gov/sevis/i901/>

2.2 MAINTAINING LEGAL VISA STATUS

Students are responsible for ensuring that they are in compliance with Department of Homeland Security regulations which can be found under "Instructions to Students" on page 2 of the form I-20. Additionally, students should visit ISSS's website to familiarize themselves with an overview of important immigration regulations:

<https://global.upenn.edu/iss/students#enrollment>

2.3 SECURITY CLEARANCE

Each visa applicant will experience a series of security clearance checks which may or may not affect the processing of your visa. It is not possible to know ahead of time whether your application will be delayed due to a security clearance. If your visa application is pending beyond the expected processing time as a result of a clearance check, please contact ISSS via email with details of your delayed visa application: iss@pobox.upenn.edu

2.4 ENTERING THE U.S.

Students **may not enter the U.S. more than 30 days prior to the start date listed on their I-20 or DS-2019**. The program start date is governed by the student's school and may not be changed. Please plan your travel to the U.S. accordingly and contact ISSS with any specific travel questions at iss@pobox.upenn.edu.

Before boarding an international flight, students and scholars should be sure to hand-carry their passport, immigration documents, and other supporting [documentation](#) so that they can be presented to an immigration officer upon arrival in the United States. At the Port of Entry, the admitting officer will inspect the documents and give the individual a stamped and annotated Form I-94.

Once at Penn, all international students and scholars must check in with International Student and Scholar Services. **The US government requires that all students and scholars in F or J status register their presence at the University and present their documents within 30 days of the program start date. The 30-day time frame includes internal processing time at ISSS, so individuals should report to ISSS within 20 days from the program start date. Transfer students must register their presence within 15 days.**

Individuals must follow instructions issued by ISSS in order to meet this requirement. Failure to comply with the requirement will have serious consequences and may lead to a violation of immigration status.

2.5 TRAVEL OUTSIDE THE U.S. FOR ALL STUDENTS

If you plan to leave and re-enter the U.S. during your stay at Penn, you must have a valid travel signature by an ISSS staff that is not older than one year on your I-20 or DS-2019. This is required for any international travel. Since immigration regulations change often, it is recommended that you meet with an ISSS advisor before leaving the U.S. Please obtain your travel signature well in advance of planned departure from the U.S.

For a list of what is required when you travel, please see: <http://global.upenn.edu/iss/travel>

SECTION 3: PREPARING FOR PHILADELPHIA & PENN

One of the best ways to prepare for your time abroad is to learn as much as you can about Penn, Philadelphia, the United States and American culture prior to your departure. It is unrealistic, however, to expect that you will be able to prepare yourself completely so we recommend that you expect the unexpected! Your experience at Penn will largely be what you make of it. If you keep an open mind and maintain your sense of humor, it will help you greatly to meet the challenges of studying in a new country and make the most of the experience.

3.1 CLIMATE

This program is scheduled during the hottest part of the summer and sometimes we can expect the temperature to rise to around 90°F (32°C) with high humidity. You should pack accordingly, and also remember to bring clothing for rainy weather.

3.2 CLOTHING

Most students do not dress formally for class except on special occasions. On campus and in the classroom, informal attire such as t-shirts, jeans, slacks, and shirts are acceptable for women as well as men. Several clothing stores are located right next to the Penn campus with many more clothing stores a short commute by bus or subway.

3.3 CUSTOMS AND CULTURE

Customs and culture may be very different in the United States from your own. Prepare yourself for these differences, but keep in mind that understanding Americans can be complicated since we are often a mixture of many cultures and one of the things Americans value most is their sense of individuality. You may benefit from talking with people in your home country who have studied here or by purchasing a travel guidebook.

SECTION 4: ARRIVAL IN PHILADELPHIA

4.1 TRANSPORTATION TO THE UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

When making your travel plans, try to fly directly or find a connecting flight to Philadelphia. For more information about the Philadelphia International Airport, visit <http://www.phl.org/>. While at the airport, information centers are available from the ground transport counters in baggage claim areas.

Travel from Philadelphia International Airport to the University of Pennsylvania campus (University City), West Philadelphia and Center City

- **Taxi/Uber/Lyft** – The most convenient way to travel from the airport to Penn is by taxi, Uber or Lyft. Taxi, Uber and Lyft are available 24 hours a day.
- **Shuttle Service** - There are also various private shuttle services, including Super Trans Philly Shuttle, (215)333-1441, which will take you from the airport to Center City. Advance reservations for these shuttle services are not required but can be arranged by calling, 215-333-1441. The cost is usually around \$10/person.
After you pick up your luggage at the luggage claim area in the terminal, go to the Centralized Ground Transportation Counters in all baggage claim areas or call (215)937-6958 (Ground Transportation Hotline at Philadelphia Airport) for more information. The shuttle service operator will tell you when and where to meet the van.
- **Train** - In addition, there is a regional train service from the airport that stops at University City and 30th Street regional rail stations. The Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA) Airport Line costs approximately \$10 one-way and can be purchased on the train. Once you reach University City or 30th Street Station by train, you can then take a taxi to your destination in Center City or University City. Taxis are plentiful at 30th Street Station. Cost to Penn campus will be about \$5-10.

4.2 PENN SUMMER GLOBAL INSTITUTE ORIENTATION

LPS hosts an orientation specifically for PSGI students prior to the beginning of each semester. Student will receive a detailed schedule 2-3 weeks prior to their arrival on campus.

4.3 IMMIGRATION CHECK-IN

All international students are required to check in with International Student & Scholar Services (ISSS). Instructions on how to complete this mandatory check-in will be provided by ISSS. You will need your passport/visa and DS-2019 to complete the check-in.

SECTION 5: ACADEMIC LIFE

Students unfamiliar with the U.S. system may find many aspects of American education different from those in their home country. It is essential to familiarize yourself with the policies and procedures governing academic coursework and research at Penn, as you will be responsible for complying with them. As academic life is the heart of the university, these policies and procedures are very strictly enforced and respected among the university community. Please review carefully University Policy and Procedures.

5.1 REGISTRATION FOR CLASSES

You may choose any two courses from the [Summer Session II offerings](#), which cover topics as diverse as behavioral psychology, microeconomics, decision theory, astronomy, literature and neurobiology. Once you've browsed the course information, you should contact your PSGI advisor for further advice on selecting your courses. For courses that have prerequisites, your advisor will help you determine what course is right for you.

If you are unsure about your course choices, or would like to sit in on other lectures, you may do so the first week of classes. You should be aware that there are some key dates, set out below, by when you need to make decisions on your final course selections. Otherwise, there may be a financial penalty:

Summer 2022 Academic Calendar and Deadlines

	Summer Session II
Dormitory Move In	June 28
PSGI Orientation	June 29
No Classes, University Holiday	July 4
Classes Begin	June 30
Last Day to Add a Course/Drop a Course with No Financial Obligation	July 7
Last Day to Change Grade Status Please see contacts in home school for more information below.	July 15
Classes End*	August 5
Dormitory Move Out	August 6

The university uses [Penn-In-Touch](#), the online information system for Penn students; it can be accessed through the tab on the Penn Portal. This is the most comprehensive system which allows students to view the courses that they are registered for, class details, a syllabus if posted, room number, and the mapped street address, name and image of the building in which the course is offered. Courses offered through LPS may be located by selecting LPS under the Division drop-down menu in Search Options.

Course Details through Penn-in-Touch

- View details for a course, including description, instructors, credit and cross-listed sections.
- Click on a department name for the departmental webpage.
- Click on a building code for classroom locations (once room scheduling information is available, usually 2-3 weeks before each term begins)
- View important information, restrictions and required permits.
- Associated co-requisite courses/activities display at the bottom, such as lectures, recitations and labs.

Other Online Resources for Course Selection

- **Course Timetable**: This resource is updated every semester before the start of Advance Registration. It lists those courses that will be offered during the upcoming semester.
- **Course and Room Roster**: This publication is available online before the start of classes each semester, and is an updated version of the Course Timetable. It lists courses to be offered in the upcoming semester including their room assignments.
- **Penn Course Review**: This is a student-run publication that lists the numerical ratings and general comments for all undergraduate courses taught in an academic year at Penn.

5.2 FULL-TIME STATUS

U.S. immigration regulations require that F-1 and J-1 students maintain full-time status at all times. This means that you must be enrolled for a minimum of two credit units.

5.3 COURSE SELECTION POLICY

PSGI students can choose to take 2 courses through the School of Arts and Sciences OR 1 course through the School of Arts and Sciences and 1 course through the Wharton School. Please see <http://www.sas.upenn.edu/summer/programs/international/PSGI> for cost differences.

5.4 FACULTY AND ADVISORS

Relationships between students and faculty tend to be more informal than in many other countries. In most classes, students are expected to ask questions or comment on material being considered. In assigning grades, professors may consider the extent of a student's contribution to class discussion throughout the semester. This reflects the value Americans place on individual initiative and independent thinking.

Almost all faculty members maintain regular office hours when students may come and talk about individual concerns. You should use this opportunity to make sure that you are meeting course requirements. If you are uncertain about an assignment or have questions about the course material, make an appointment to see the professor or teaching assistant (TA).

You will be assisted in many aspects of your education by your academic advisor. While there will be pre-term advising, as well as an advising session during orientation, **it is your**

responsibility to set up an appointment to meet with him or her should you need further assistance. It is a good idea to meet with both the professor and your academic advisor at the first sign of difficulty with any class. Since international students must take a full course load every semester, early intervention with academic difficulties is important in helping you fulfill your immigration requirements, in addition to being sound academically. Many students at Penn also take advantage of the Weingarten Learning Resources Center. You can access more information by going to <http://www.vpul.upenn.edu/lrc>.

5.5 METHODS OF INSTRUCTION

For each class you will likely be required to buy at least one textbook from which regularly assigned readings are given. The instructor may also assign readings from other books in the library. Lectures will usually supplement these readings.

It is important to read all assigned materials and take careful notes on the lectures because examinations will be based on both. You are expected to attend all classes and laboratory sessions. Be sure that you are aware of the specific expectations for each of your classes. Most instruction is organized and conducted in one of three ways: lecture, laboratory, or seminar.

- **Lecture**
The lecture class is most frequently used at the undergraduate level, particularly for the first two years of study. Lectures are sometimes large and make discussion difficult. For this reason, a large lecture will often be supplemented with a recitation or laboratory period to permit discussion and/or scientific experimentation.
- **Recitation/Laboratory**
Often the recitation or lab is conducted by a TA who is a graduate student in the particular discipline. Students are encouraged and expected to ask questions either during the lecture period or during the recitation or laboratory period. If you wish to speak during the question period, feel free to raise your hand.
- **Seminar**
This is the most common form of instruction at the graduate level. These classes are generally smaller, permitting opportunities for direct student participation and closer interaction with professors.
- **Exams**
Exams usually fall into three categories: quizzes, midterms, and finals. Most professors will announce the format of the exams and the material it is to cover.
- **Quizzes**
These are short tests covering the material currently being studied. The instructor may or may not notify you in advance.
- **Midterm Exams**
These are exams given approximately midway through the course of a class.
- **Final Exams**
“Finals” are given at the end of the semester and may cover all the materials studied during the semester or only those covered since the midterm. The requirements for each class vary.

5.6 CREDIT SYSTEM

Academic credit is figured in “course units” (CUs). Most courses earn one CU, with some lab courses earning one-half CU. A course unit is usually equivalent to a three- or four- credit course at other institutions.

5.7 GRADES

Grades are a system for evaluating your academic work. They designate your relative standing in the class and are wholly determined by the instructor’s judgment of your achievement based on exams, term papers, class participation, etc. At Penn, the following symbols are used in most, but not all, programs:

A+ = 4.0 Distinguished	A = 4.0 Excellent	A– = 3.7
B+ = 3.3	B = 3.0 Good	B– = 2.7
C+ = 2.3	C = 2.0 Average	C– = 1.7
D+ = 1.3	D = 1.0 Below Average	F = 0.0 Failure
GR = No Grade reported for student	I = Incomplete (see below)	
NR = No Grades reported for course	P = Pass (A+ to D) (see below)	
II = Extended Incomplete (see below)	U = Unsatisfactory	
S = Satisfactory progress	AUD = Audit	
W = Withdrew	X = Academic Violation	

Pass/Fail Option

Pass/Fail is an option to encourage students to take courses in subjects that they might avoid if they were required to enroll on a standard graded basis. Regulations concerning Pass/Fail can be found here: <https://www.college.upenn.edu/pass-fail>

Incomplete Grades and Mandatory Leave

Students should request incompletes rarely if at all. It is far better to plan ahead and use [advising and academic support resources](#) to ensure finishing the coursework on time. Students with one incomplete must finish the work by the end of the fourth full week of the next term. Students who accumulate two or more incompletes (i.e., multiple Incompletes) will become eligible for a Mandatory Leave of Absence.

The decision to grant an Incomplete or not is solely that of the instructor teaching the course.

Regulations concerning incompletes and mandatory leave can be found here: <https://www.college.upenn.edu/incompletes>

SECTION 6: CAMPUS BASICS

Being new to a place like Penn can sometimes be a little disorientating, but almost everything you need can be found on Penn's website at <http://www.upenn.edu/>. If you know the office you need, you can use Penn A-Z, an alphabetical listing of recognized University entities, including departments, programs, publications, organizations, and services. It is located at <http://www.upenn.edu/penna-z/>.

6.1 PENNKEY

The [PennKey Authentication System](#) is used to prove your identity for access to many of Penn's networked systems and services. Within the PennKey Authentication System, an individual's username is known as a PennKey. In order to use this system, you need to register for a PennKey and associated password. **PSGI students will receive their PennKey and set-up code via e-mail after they accept their offer of admission.**

6.2 STUDENT IDENTIFICATION NUMBER

All PSGI students have a student ID number assigned by the University of Pennsylvania. This number will be used by the university registrar and billing system. Changes in your Penn ID number can cause problems with your PennCard, email account and campus billing. The number assigned to you by the University (e.g., 938-01-XXXX) is *not* a Social Security Number; it is a Penn ID number, used only for university-related business. You will also have an 8-digit number that appears on your PennCard. This number is being used more and more for identification purposes at Penn, so you may want to memorize the PennCard number.

6.3 GETTING A PENNCARD

All students and scholars must have a University identification card, called a PennCard. The card permits access to University buildings and allows you to use the library, recreational facilities and other University services, such as the Shuttle or Escort. You should carry your PennCard with you at all times.

All PSGI students will be given their Penn Cards upon checking into their on-campus dormitory.

6.4 E-MAIL

E-mail is the most commonly used communication system on campus. All Penn students, faculty, and staff have email access. For this reason, **it is very important for you to have a Penn email account and check it regularly.** Email accounts are arranged by the individual schools. To set up your account, please visit the Penn Computing web site at <https://www.sas.upenn.edu/computing/help/students/email/options>

Note: LPS uses email to inform you about various programs, immigration updates, and other timely information. Please read the email messages sent out by LPS carefully.

SECTION 7: PAYMENT OF FEES & WITHDRAWAL POLICIES

7.1 PAYMENT OF FEES

The Office of Student Financial Services (SFS) handles the financial charges and credits for your department or school:

Office of Financial Services

100 Franklin Building, 3451 Walnut Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104

Telephone: (215) 898-1988, Fax: (215) 573-5428

E-mail: sfsmail@sfs.upenn.edu

Web: <http://www.sfs.upenn.edu/>

7.2 PAYMENT METHODS

As a PSGI student, there are four different ways in which you can pay your bill:

1. [Online using Penn.Pay](#)
2. [By Mail](#)
3. [In Person](#)
4. [By Wire Transfer](#)

Important

The University must receive the FULL amount due on or before the due date indicated on the bill. If full payment is not received by the due date, a Late Payment Penalty of 1.5% of the amount past due will be assessed, and future registration and continuing enrollment will be jeopardized.

7.3 WITHDRAWAL AND REFUND POLICIES

If you choose to withdrawal from the program, the following withdrawal and refund policies will apply.

Before the program begins	
From program committal to 30 days before the program start date	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 100% tuition refund• 100% activities fee refund• 100% housing & dining refund
From 29 days until the program start date	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 100% tuition refund• 100% activities fee refund• 20% housing & dining refund

After the program begins	
From program start date to July 6, 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 100% tuition refund• No activities fee refund• No housing & dining refund
From July 6, 2018 – July 13, 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 50% tuition refund• No activities fee refund

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No housing & dining refund
After July 14, 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No tuition refund• No activities fee refund• No housing & dining refund

SECTION 8: HOUSING & DINING

8.1 CAMPUS HOUSING

While you are with us, you will live on-campus in one of the [residence halls](#), which is furnished and in a secure environment. The residence halls will have coordinators that you can liaise with if you have any questions relating to your assigned living arrangements.

You will receive your housing assignment via email from Penn Hospitality Services approximately 2 weeks prior to your arrival to Penn. For any questions regarding housing, please contact bsd-confsvcs@pobox.upenn.edu.

The rules governing on-campus housing are available in the [Residential Handbook](#).

8.2 DINING ON CAMPUS

Enrollment in a dining plan is optional. Meal visits will be in one of our all-you-care-to-eat dining halls. Each time you eat, one visit is subtracted from your allowance. Dining Dollar\$ can be used in any Penn Dining location. Each purchase amount is subtracted from your Dining Dollar\$ account balance. If you decide to enroll in a dining plan, you will have the option to choose from available Summer Dining Plans. You must notify your PSGI advisor in order to be enrolled in the Dining Plan of your choice.

For café hours, locations, and menus see: <http://cms.business-services.upenn.edu/dining/hours-locations-a-menus/dining-locations-a-menus.html>

8.3 DINING DOLLAR\$

Dining Dollar\$ are funds on your PennCard used to purchase items at any [Penn Dining location](#). Each time you make a purchase, that amount is subtracted from your Dining Dollar\$ account balance. You can add Dining Dollar\$ to your PennCard at any time via [Campus Express](#).

SECTION 9: TRANSPORTATION

9.1 PENN TRANSIT SERVICES

Penn Transit Services provide a comprehensive transportation system on and around campus within specific boundaries. Services include things such as buses, shuttles, walking escorts, bike sharing, and more. For more information, please see [Penn Transit Services](#).

9.2 PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION: SOUTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA TRANSIT AUTHORITY (SEPTA)

SEPTA is Philadelphia's public transportation system with buses, trolleys, the subway, Regional Rail lines, and the Market-Frankford Line (the EL). SEPTA costs \$2.50 in cash each way, except for Regional Rail lines, which vary in price according to your destination. City Hall allows free interchange between the subway (Orange Line), the Market-Frankford EL (Blue Line), and the trolleys (Green Line) once you are within the station. Schedules for all public transportation routes vary between weekday and weekend, with Saturday and Sunday usually having less frequent service. Visit the SEPTA's website at: <http://www.septa.org/> for information on commuter rail trains, buses, subways, and LUCY (the Loop through University City).

9.3 TAXIS

Taxis can be found throughout Center City and all major transportation centers. In order to get a taxi, just wave your hand. The base fare is \$2.70. A trip from campus to Center City by taxi costs between \$10 and \$12, and you should tip the driver 10-15%. It is a good idea to take a taxi if you must travel late at night and your route does not fall within the boundaries of Penn Transit Services. Most taxis accept credit cards but prefer cash. You can also look into taking an [Uber](#) or [Lyft](#). You can download the Uber or Lyft apps to your phone.

9.4 RENTING A CAR

There are several websites where you can rent a car including <http://www.hertz.com/>, <http://www.alamo.com/>, <http://www.budget.com/>, and <http://www.enterprise.com/>. We remind you to use *extreme* caution when driving in the United States. Regulations vary by company but all will require you to have a driver's license in order to rent a car and may charge higher prices because you are under 25 years of age. Booking online will typically save you more money than calling or just walking into an office. Prices for car rental are usually per day with required insurance being an additional charge. The Sheraton Hotel at 36th and Chestnut has an Enterprise Car Rental office on the ground floor that is open to anyone and can help with renting a car. Enterprise also offers a car share program which accepts international drivers' licenses. For more information, visit [Enterprise CarShare](#).

SECTION 10: BANKING

One of the first things you might do after arriving in Philadelphia is open an account at a local bank. Investigate various banks before choosing which one you wish to use, as all banks have different charges and fees for services, such as Automatic Teller Machine (ATM) access, checking and overdraft protection. You should read the small print carefully before signing up with any bank. To open an account, you must present two forms of identification, such as your passport and your PennCard. Some banks may require you to provide your Social Security number.

Because Penn is located in a city, there are not only several banks on campus but there are plenty that are in Center City within walking distance. **ATMs are located all over campus; however, most of them are for PNC bank and will charge a fee for users that do not belong to PNC. There are no ATM fees at any WAWA!**

Here are some local banks for you to consider:

- **[Citizens Bank](#): 134 South 34th Street**
- **[TD Bank](#): 3735 Walnut Street**
- **[PNC](#): 3535 Market Street and 34th and Civic Center Boulevard**
ATMs can be found at Houston Hall, Hill College House, the CVS at 39th and Walnut, Penn Bookstore, the WAWA at 38th and Spruce Street and the WAWA at 36th and Chestnut Street.
- **[Santander Bank](#): 3131 Market Street**

10.1 CHECKING ACCOUNTS

Opening a checking account will assure safe and quick deposit of foreign checks and free you from carrying large amounts of cash. A checking account will also provide you with an accurate, monthly record of your finances.

You must keep an accurate record of your account to make sure you have enough money in your account for each check you write. It is a serious matter to write a check without having sufficient funds in your checking account. In addition to various fees your bank will charge, you may suffer serious financial consequences and will be vulnerable to legal action.

10.2 AUTOMATIC TELLER MACHINES (ATM)

Basic banking, such as deposits, transfers and withdrawals, is available 24 hours a day at computerized banking machines (ATM or MAC machines) at most banks. These machines can be found throughout the city. You should only use those located in a safe and secure place indoors, and avoid making withdrawals after dark. You may be charged a fee each time you use your ATM card. Check with your bank for details.

10.3 CREDIT CARDS

Credit cards are popular in the U.S., but are sometimes difficult to obtain for international students who have not yet established good credit in the U.S. You may want to apply for a

credit card in your home country rather than in the U.S. Major credit cards in the U.S. are Visa, MasterCard, American Express and Discover, but businesses do not always accept all cards. Use caution in using credit cards as a means of postponing payment for purchases. Almost all credit cards charge interest, which may range from 12% to 22% per year. **If your credit card is lost or stolen, notify the company that issued the card *immediately*.**

SECTION 11: HEALTH CARE AND MEDICAL INSURANCE

Health care and health insurance are important aspects of your life here and require careful thought and planning. The U.S. health care system differs from that in other countries, and it is your responsibility to protect yourself from the exorbitant costs of health care. There is no national health program, and international students are not eligible for financial assistance from the U.S. government or from the University to pay medical bills.

11.1 THE U.S. HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

- The system is privately funded, not government sponsored.
- Payment is the responsibility of the individual, with or without health insurance.
- Some doctors providing services at a hospital may bill the patient separately.
- Payment is usually expected at the time the care is given. Therefore, you should always check that your insurance will cover the treatment before it is given.
- You are responsible for seeing that bills are submitted and that claims forms (used to request payment from the insurance company) are properly completed.
- The reimbursement process takes time and incomplete forms can cause further delays.
- Copies of all bills and papers should be kept for at least one year.
- It is appropriate to seek an opinion about your case from a second doctor before deciding on a course of treatment.
- Be aware of your own health needs and background. Keep copies of your past medical records with you. It is very helpful, for example, to tell the doctor which medications you have taken in the past.
- It is appropriate to ask questions about your condition and your treatment. Take a friend to the doctor's office with you to translate or help with forms if you feel that will help.

11.2 MEDICAL INSURANCE

Access to Penn's Student Health Services on campus is included in your program fee. Although it is not required, we also recommend that you also purchase comprehensive health insurance that covers emergency treatment.

HTH Worldwide is an insurance provider that offers affordable options for international students. If interested, you can enroll online at www.hthstudents.com. Enter the Group Access Code: HAE-19628 on the right side of the home page for a discounted rate. If you prefer to use your own travel insurance, be sure it includes emergency treatment.

11.3 WHERE TO GO FOR MEDICAL CARE

If you are feeling sick, do not hesitate to get help--even if you are nervous and have never seen a doctor outside your own country. The longer you wait the greater risk you run for developing a serious problem from what may have been minor and easy to treat. Unless you have a real emergency, such as uncontrolled bleeding or a broken bone, do not go to a hospital emergency room for treatment. Emergency rooms are very expensive and, if your condition is not life threatening, you may have to wait a long time for care. You should go to the [Student Health](#)

[Service \(SHS\)](#), which is located at 3535 Market Street. It is best if you call first to make an appointment in advance. Students may make an advance appointment either online or by contacting SHS. More information can be found at <https://www.vpul.upenn.edu/shs/contact.php>. Same-day appointments are available, but if there are no same-day appointments, SHS will offer you the next available appointment that works with your schedule. If you have an urgent issue they will try to see you as soon as possible. Sometimes patients will have a nurse evaluate them to provide care while they wait until the next available provider appointment (could be later that day or the next day).

For Emergencies

Students with illnesses requiring emergency treatment may obtain care at a local Emergency Room. They may also call the Student Health provider on-call for phone consultation. This provider may give medical advice over the phone, or may decide that the student should seek emergency medical attention. We recommend students go to the Emergency Department at HUP (1st floor Silverstein Building on 34th Street).

11.4 WHAT TO EXPECT WHEN SEEING A DOCTOR

Most clinics in the U.S. are staffed by physicians, nurse practitioners (registered nurses qualified to evaluate, diagnose, and treat many common conditions), midwives (registered nurses specializing in prenatal and childbirth practice), registered nurses, and a variety of health care workers. You may not see a physician when you first seek medical care. Depending on the severity of your symptoms, you may receive care immediately, later the same day, or the next day. You may be offered a choice of doctors or health care providers. Consider ahead of time whether you would prefer to see a man or a woman, an older practitioner or a younger one, etc. Even if you are not asked, you should make your preferences known.

American-trained physicians generally expect their patients to participate actively in making decisions about medications and treatment choices. If you ever have difficulty understanding anything about your medical status or treatment, ask for clarification. You can ask workers to talk more slowly, to repeat, or to write something down. If you think you will need a translator, ask when you make your appointment if someone can assist you, or ask a friend to accompany you.

The time you spend with health care providers may seem very brief, with little opportunity for conversation. The doctor or nurse will ask you many questions; some may appear unnecessary or intrusive, but you should try to answer them as completely as possible. You may think the approach is abrupt and impersonal; however, the workers are only trying to be efficient and thorough. It is expected that patients will ask questions about their health, diagnosis, treatment, and costs.

11.5 DRUGSTORES/PHARMACIES

Stores like CVS and Rite-Aid are known as drugstores or pharmacies because they are places where you can buy medicine. They also have “over-the-counter” drugs (aspirin, cold medicine, etc.) that you can buy without a prescription from the doctor. If you are not sure about the

different kinds of “over-the-counter” drugs, do not hesitate to ask one of the pharmacists there. In addition, these stores carry many items for personal and home use, such as greeting cards, batteries, clothes hangers, shampoo, and laundry detergent. They sell drinks and snacks, and sometimes offer a small selection of groceries. The bigger drugstores are usually open early and close late.

CVS	3923 Walnut Street	215-662-1333
Rite-Aid	2301 Walnut Street 4341 Chestnut Street	215-222-1536

11.6 MENTAL HEALTH

International students often hesitate to consult a professional about mental health problems. You may never have had the need to talk to a psychologist, psychiatric social worker, or psychiatrist at home, and you may think only people with severe mental problems are treated by such professionals. It is not uncommon in the U.S., however, for people with emotional needs to seek professional help. As you are far from home and lacking the usual support system of family and friends, you may find it helpful to consult a mental health professional when dealing with issues of adjustment, depression, strain or stress. Students may consult a professional for free at the [Counseling and Psychological Services \(CAPS\)](#) at Penn.

As a student, you may also wish to contact the **Reach-A-Peer Helpline**. It is a peer support telephone service established by and for Penn students to provide information, peer support and referrals. The Helpline is open to all students who wish to share a problem, need information or just want someone to talk to. It is a confidential, anonymous and free phone service. Student Active Listeners can provide callers with their objective, undivided attention. However, RAP-Line is not a professional crisis hotline.

11.7 IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS

The University of Pennsylvania requires all students to be compliant with certain immunization requirements. Your program advisor will provide you with information about immunization requirements including the Covid-19 Vaccine.

SECTION 12: STAYING SAFE

Living in Philadelphia has many advantages: cultural diversity, historical areas, and night life attractions. However, like other big cities in the U.S., Philadelphia also has some disadvantages, one of which is the problem of public safety. Being aware of and taking appropriate safety precautions can help you avoid problems.

12.1 PENN SECURITY

Penn has an excellent security force on campus with officers patrolling campus at all hours of the day and night. At the entrance to every dormitory, there is a security guard 24 hours a day, seven days a week. There are also several phones throughout campus that connect students to Penn Police. These phones are inside a bright yellow box, have a blue light above them which can be seen from far away and are constantly under surveillance by security. Dial **511** from any of these phones to contact Penn police. To contact Penn Police from any other phone, dial **215-573-3333**. To contact the Philadelphia Police Department, dial **911** from any phone in the city at no cost. There are also several services that Penn Police provide which provide protection for students all the time. For more information about these services, see:

<https://www.publicsafety.upenn.edu/safety-initiatives/>

12.2 PERSONAL SAFETY TIPS

Familiarize yourself with the [Division of Public Safety Top 10 List](#) to stay safe on and off campus while studying at Penn.

Do not carry your passport as your ID. This is not required in the U.S as it is in some other countries. Instead, use your PennCard. You may also wish to carry a photocopy of your passport information page, visa stamp page, and I-94 card, though it is rare that you would be asked for immigration documentation.

12.3 PERSONAL PROPERTY INSURANCE

If you plan to bring valuable items to the U.S. such as a laptop, iPhone, or a musical instrument, you should consider purchasing insurance to cover potential theft or damage to the item(s).

SECTION 13: PENN RESOURCES

Penn has an extensive network of programs, services and resource centers that enables its support teams to meet the specific academic, social, health, and personal needs of every student.

13.1 ACADEMIC RESOURCES

From academic support and immigration assistance to the convenience of managing academic information online, you will have all the resources you need to realize your highest academic potential at Penn. These resources include:

- [University Registrar](#)
- [Penn in Touch](#)
- [Academic Support](#)
- [Office of Learning Resources](#)
- [Student Conduct](#)
- [International Student and Scholar Services](#)

13.2 HEALTH AND WELFARE

To ensure your safety and health while at Penn, there are a large variety of services and support available to you which include:

- [Counseling and Psychological Services](#)
- [Division of Public Safety](#)
- [Student Health Services](#)
- [Penn Violence Prevention](#)
- [Office of Student Disabilities Services](#)

13.3 RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

Penn has many outdoor and indoor facilities for sports and exercise. Your program fee includes a [Basic Campus Recreation](#) membership. This includes:

- Facility Access:
 - [Pottruck Health & Fitness Center](#)
 - [Sheerr Pool](#)
 - [Fox Fitness Center](#)
 - [Ringe Squash Courts](#)
 - [Franklin Field Track](#)
- Towel Service:
 - [Included](#) (shower towels only)

13.4 COMMUNITIES: GROUPS & CLUBS

Social, political, artistic, and multicultural groups are abound on campus. Whether you are looking to connect with others who share the same interests, meet others from different backgrounds, advance social change, or get involved in student government, there is a group at Penn that will expand your horizons in new and inspiring ways.

- [AARC \(African American Resource Center\)](#)
- [Civic House](#)
- [Family Resource Center](#)
- [GIC \(Greenfield Intercultural Center\)](#)
- [La Casa Latina](#)
- [LGBT \(Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender\) Center](#)
- [MAKUU \(The Black Cultural Center\)](#)
- [PAACH \(Pan-Asian American Cultural House\)](#)
- [Penn Student Agencies](#)
- [PWC \(Penn Women's Center\)](#)
- [Platt Student Performing Arts House](#)
- [Performing Arts Council](#)
- [Student Activities Council](#)
- [Student Clubs & Organizations](#)

SECTION 14: RETURNING HOME

Leaving your new home in the U.S. and returning home to your own campus is often as confusing a time as going abroad. Below are some important steps and options to keep in mind as you go through the third phase of study abroad.

14.1 BEFORE YOU LEAVE

It's important before you leave for you to take time to say goodbye to your new friends and the places you have become fond of while studying abroad. There are also some practical things you'll want to remember to take care of:

- Be sure to return all library books and equipment you borrowed throughout your stay at Penn.
- Turn in all required coursework. Do not plan to send coursework back to the U.S. except in very unusual circumstances. If you do send important documents, send them by express mail and keep copies.
- Check out of your dorm room if you live on campus. Please review the check-out procedures at <http://cms.business-services.upenn.edu/residential-services/services-a-support/move-out.html>

14.2 PAYING YOUR BILL

Please make payment on your Penn account before you leave, but be advised that additional charges for the summer may appear later. Examples of charges that often appear after students leave include Wharton Reprographics charges, bookstore charges, additional dining hall charges, etc. You must make payment on your account before the University of Pennsylvania can send your official transcript to your home university.

14.3 TRANSCRIPTS

To obtain official copies of your transcript, log in to [Penn-in-Touch](#) to complete the request form.

14.4 REVERSE CULTURE SHOCK

Many people say that returning home is even more difficult than going abroad. Students often remark that they feel removed from family and friends who have not had similar experiences.

You can probably expect to go through the initial state of euphoria and excitement as you are overwhelmed by the sheer joy of being back at home. However, as you try and settle back into your former routine, you will soon recognize that while you were abroad, you developed new ideas and opinions and that these differences provide you with a new view of your own culture. You have become a new person (after all, that is what education is all about), which means that you can expect a period of disorientation as you adjust to the "new" environment at home.

The adjustment period, however, should be rather short-lived, since the environment is not "foreign" in the same sense as that to which you had to adjust when you left your home country, and since your experience of culture shock abroad will have provided you with the psychological tools for making the adjustment quickly and smoothly. Keep in mind that the

amount of change that you have undergone during your time at Penn will play a role in how you adjust back to your own culture. It is often helpful for readjustment if you reflect on your experiences from abroad and the changes that have occurred within you.