

University of Barcelona, Summer - Questions & Answers 2024

For answers to questions regarding application procedures, program information, responsibilities of participants, pre-departure orientation materials, departure and post-departure information, registration, financial matters, grades, credits, withdrawals, cancellations, and expulsions, please read THE HANDBOOK FOR STUDY ABROAD.

General Program overview:

Barcelona is a dynamic and progressive city. In sophistication and cultural diversity, Barcelona ranks with the major cities of Europe, which can be seen in its rich traditions in the fields of painting, music, and architecture. With a population of over 2 million, Barcelona is a charming city. It has a vibrant nightlife and café scene. Because it is the capital city of Catalunya, students on this program will experience distinctive Catalan culture and language, while improving their ability to read, write, and speak Spanish (Castilian).

The University of Barcelona (UB) was founded in 1450. Today the university has four campuses in different parts of the city. UB is the oldest and largest of the six universities in Barcelona, and of the ten in Catalunya. Participants on the SUNY Oswego/University of Barcelona program will take all of their course work at the same campus, which is situated in the heart of Barcelona's famous city center, near las Ramblas, the Gaudi houses, and the Picasso Museum.

1) Can people with no language experience apply?

Yes, people without Spanish language experience can apply to this program. Before arriving at the University of Barcelona, participants will take a placement exam. Based on the results of the exam, students will be placed at beginners, intermediate or advanced language level courses.

2) What college/University will I be studying at?

You will be studying at the University of Barcelona in Barcelona, Spain. Students take their courses at the Center of Estudios Hispánicos. Classes take place at two university buildings: the historic building (Gran Via de les Corts Catalanes, 585) and in an academic building across the street (Gran Via de les Corts Catalanes, 582).

3) What is the required GPA to apply?

Students are required to have at least a 2.5 GPA.

4) Does the program provide any trips?

The program provides at least two trips, one of them being a city tour.

5) What are the exact dates of the program?

The dates are from about the third/fourth week of June until the third/fourth week of July.

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6) Will there be a pre-departure orientation and/or an in-country orientation? There will be an orientation at SUNY Oswego. For more details on the orientation go to your page on the Study Abroad website. You will be able to sign up for the orientation and let us know who will come with you to orientation. You may invite your parents, family member, or significant other. Although orientation is not mandatory, we ask that you do your best to attend. If you are a SUNY Oswego student, we would like to see you at orientation. If you are from very far away, we understand if you can't make it. All the students will receive a pre-departure packet at orientation and if you are not able to attend, a packet will be made available. Additionally, there will be an online pre-departure meeting with the coordinators in Barcelona.

There will also be an orientation starting on the day after your arrival to Barcelona, at the University of Barcelona; this orientation week also includes information and activities in the Director's Course, which is mandatory. Everything will be a learning experience, so you will need to relax and enjoy the ride :). The orientation in Barcelona is mandatory. This means that unless you are sick, you will attend all orientation meetings, activities, and educational excursion(s). We have been running this program successfully for over 15 years and the participation of all students is imperative for a successful program.

7) What if I arrive earlier than the group or stay on after the end of the program? You may arrive earlier than the group and/or stay on after the end of the program, but you must make your own arrangements. OIEP is not responsible for student(s) who arrive early or stay longer in any country.

8) Is housing provided?

Students in this program have two housing options: either (1) Residence Hall or (2) Independent housing. If you choose to live in the residence hall, the Office of International Education and Programs will work with the Housing Coordinator in Barcelona to arrange housing with the residence hall.

If you choose to live in independent housing, you must make your own housing and meal arrangements.

All students will fill out a housing preference form and, on that form, you may indicate whether you prefer to live with another student from the program or you would like to live with a Spanish student should there be such a possibility. We do our best to make the appropriate accommodations, but we cannot guarantee every request.

Residence halls are always located in town, as close to the University premises as possible. They are generally within walking distance from the University premises, and the city has an excellent public transportation service (bus and metro). If you live in the residence hall you will be staying

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with other students from the program, but the residence hall itself will have other International Students staying there. In the residence halls, there will be someone who comes in and cleans your room. **Please note that in Europe, air conditioning (AC) is very uncommon and students residing in the residence halls will not have AC.** Students may request or purchase a fan for their room. There is no smoking, drinking, or the use of illegal drugs in the residence halls. If you are caught doing so you could be expelled from the program.

9) Is the cost for housing included in the program fee?

The cost for housing and three meals per day are included in the program fee for students who choose to reside in the residence hall program. Students who choose to reside independently for the summer program will receive a reduction of \$600.00 from the program differential fee; see Program Budget Sheet online at www.oswego.edu/intled.

10) Should I bring a cell phone, or buy one once I get there?

We advise students to bring their own cell phone and check the conditions abroad with their providers. Students are advised to download WhatsApp, which is the usual means to text in Spain. You must bring your own laptop.

11) Do I make my own flight arrangements?

Students make their own flight arrangements to Barcelona and from the airport, take a taxi to their housing accommodations. The airport that students would be flying into in Barcelona is Barcelona International Airport (also known as *Josep Tarradellas-Barcelona-El Prat Aeropuerto* or *Aeroport*). The airport abbreviation is (BCN).

Airport Address:

Aeropuerto de Barcelona
08820 El Prat de Llobregat
Barcelona, Espana

All students must submit their flight details to the Office of International Education and Programs. Flight details will then be sent to the overseas coordinator.

12) Will I be met at the airport?

No, students will not be met at the airport. We will collect your flight details and provide them to the Housing and Orientation Coordinators in Barcelona, who will have a list of every student's date and time of arrival to Barcelona and will inform the residence hall front desk of your arrival so that you can be met at your housing accommodation. Students will only be able to move into their housing accommodations on the official date of arrival assigned by the program in

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13) Where are the classes held and how often per week?

Students take two courses, a language course and a culture course. You should meet with your academic advisor at your home university prior to going abroad to get approval for the two courses. Prior to your arrival in Barcelona, you will take a placement exam and then will be placed in the language course accordingly.

Everyone in the program takes the same culture course no matter what level of Spanish proficiency. Both courses will be instructed in Spanish, taken alongside other Americans or International students with professors from Spain. Your courses will take place in the Center of Estudios Hispánicos. This program is designed for students learning Spanish as a second language.

14) Are the classes different from those in the United States?

No, classes are both theoretical and practical. You will do some readings, use workbooks, and participate in different activities throughout the course. You will most likely be called on in class but don't let that make you anxious or stressed because everyone else will be asked to do the same and everyone is there to learn.

15) Will my credits be accepted at my home school?

Yes, but you will need to do your "homework". This means that you will have to meet with your academic advisor and have him or her sign off on the classes you will be taking or plan to take abroad. Once accepted to study abroad in this program, one of the forms you will need to complete is the Overseas Course Approval Form which you will complete with your academic advisor. This form is mandatory for SUNY Oswego students.

16) How do I do my laundry?

If you are staying in the residence hall, there will be washers for your use. Some of our residence halls, however, do include laundry service. If you choose independent living you will have to make your own arrangements, but there will most likely be a washer, and you can hang your clothes to dry. Dryers are not very common in Barcelona; therefore, you will most likely have to hang your clothes to dry. Also, water is very expensive in Barcelona, so please be mindful and considerate when taking showers, etc.

17) How will I get to class?

If you reside in one of the program residence halls, you will be able to walk to the University. Otherwise, the city has a very good service of buses and metro. Public transportation is an affordable option and will be necessary for some culture class visits in Barcelona.

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18) What are the public forms of transportation?

Public forms of transportation include Buses, Taxis, and the Metro. There are trains for long distance travel. You may buy a bus/metro pass inside the metro station for a month or longer, if you do not wish to purchase a ticket each time you plan on taking the bus or metro.

19) What form of currency should I bring?

Bring with you \$100 U.S. dollars in cash and 100 Euros in cash. The 100 Euros you can get at your bank in the U.S.

You will also need to bring with you a credit/debit card. Note: that you will be charged a fee every time you use your credit or debit card overseas, unless your specific card has no foreign transaction fees. Make sure you notify your bank prior to going to Spain and inform them that you may be using your credit/debit card overseas.

Another method you may want to consider is using a “cash passport.” Please go to your nearest AAA office, inform them you will be traveling to Spain and want information on the “cash passport.” With the cash passport, you will be able to put your U.S. dollars on it, and it will automatically be converted to Euros. Therefore, depending on the ATM you take money out of while in Spain, it will not charge you a fee.

The “cash passport” is like a credit/debit card that you can use at ATMs and when purchasing items in a store. Also, your family will be able to deposit more money on the “cash passport” from the U.S.

NOTE: The cash passport is only a suggestion for you to consider. You will need to do your homework and decide whether it is a good decision for you.

If you decide to use the cash passport, you should still bring a credit/debit card with you to Spain just for emergencies, but not to use unless necessary. Store it away in a safe place.

22) How much money should I bring?

That all depends on the type of lifestyles you plan on having while abroad. If you plan on traveling, going out to eat and shopping often then you will need to bring more than the suggested amount on the Program Budget Sheet of \$1,000.00. We have had students spend a lot more than the \$1,000.00 per summer, some have spent up to \$2,000-\$2,500. This is of course dependent on your lifestyle and budgeting. Just keep in mind that once the U.S. dollar is converted into Euros it will be less than what you had converted because the dollar is not worth as much as a Euro.

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23) Should I open a bank account?

Students are able to open a bank account if they wish to do so. Check with your bank in the U.S. because there may be a branch located in Barcelona. You should be able to use the following banks in Barcelona:

- 1) HSBC
- 2) Barclays ATMs which you can use if your bank is Bank of America
- 3) JPMorgan Chase Bank
- 4) Bank of America—Avinguda Diagonal 640
- 5) Chase-Manhattan—Passeig de Gràcia 60
- 6) City Bank—Carrer d' Aribau 162
- 7) Nat West—8-10
- 8) American Express—Passeig de Gràcia—93-217-00-70

24) Are there internet facilities? Should I bring my laptop?

You must bring your laptop. The residence halls and the University do have internet. If you choose independent living, you will have to check with your landlord.

25) What happens if I get sick?

Students are responsible for checking the providers in their health insurance. If you get sick, you will go to the hospital. At orientation in Barcelona, you will be informed of the nearest hospitals to the place where you are residing.

We highly advise students that when they are sick or hurt to seek medical attention right away. Also, we request that you contact one of your primary contacts at the University to inform them that you are going to the hospital or to request their assistance.

26) How can my parents get a hold of me in case of an emergency?

- a) Call Alyssa Chamberlain, Program Coordinator for Barcelona at (315)312-2118. If Alyssa is not available, ask to speak to Dr. Joshua McKeown, Director of the Office of International Education and Programs at SUNY Oswego.
- b) Call the program directors, their contact details will be provided to students accepted into this program.

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27) Will meals be provided for me? If so, how many per week?

There are at least two meals a day provided in the residence hall program (commonly breakfast and dinner) though some of our residence halls do include the three meals per day with limited variety in options (breakfast, lunch, and dinner). Europe does not have large dining halls with endless options like universities do in the U.S. Students who choose to reside independently will take care of their own meals.

28) Will I need a passport and a student visa?

All students will need a passport to travel to Spain. You will not need a student visa for the summer program.

29) Can I receive Financial Aid for Study Abroad?

Yes, you can receive Financial Aid for studying abroad. If you're a student that receives financial assistance you are to meet with your financial aid advisor to discuss how much financial assistance is available to you for the program.

Start early! Once accepted for this program you will need to bring the Financial Arrangements Form, copy of the letter of acceptance, copy of program invoice, and program budget sheet to the Financial Aid Office at your home campus.

30) What kinds of classes are offered during the summer in Barcelona? You will take one language course and one culture course. Course descriptions are located on the program brochure at www.oswego.edu/intled.

31) Is there an application process in addition to the SUNY Overseas Study Abroad Application?

There is not another application process in addition to the SUNY Overseas Study Abroad Application for this program.

32) Are there University of Barcelona, Spain specific forms to complete? There are no specific University of Barcelona forms to complete for the summer program. However, you will need to complete various forms to participate in the program. You will be informed of these forms upon acceptance to the program.