

SPANISH  
STUDIES  
ABROAD

The Center for Cross-Cultural Study

# Student Handbook

FOR STUDENTS ABROAD



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## Mission Statement

The mission of SSA is to promote in-depth understanding of Spanish-speaking countries for our students through specifically designed academic and cultural travel programs. We consider all of our students to be willing to cross cultural boundaries, to live as members of another culture, and to thus learn about others as they learn about themselves.

In accordance with our mission, SSA promotes equal opportunities within our programs and does not discriminate on the basis of an individual's race, religion, ethnicity, national origin, age, physical ability, gender, sexual orientation, or other characteristics. We believe in educating students on cultural tolerance and sensitivity, acceptance of differences, and inclusiveness.

## Travel Information

### Booking Your Flight

In order to allow flexibility to our students in making flight arrangements, we do not offer a group flight option. You may opt to explore search engines or contact a local travel agent for flight arrangements. Please note that when booking your flight, you should always refer to your program calendar which is located in your acceptance packet link.

Note: Most flights to Spain are overnight. Students should plan to depart the U.S. the day before the program start date indicated in your program calendar. Students should make their flight arrangements from their departure city to the city of Barcelona and must be sure to check their baggage the whole way through to Barcelona.

Once you have your itinerary, you must submit your arrival information to SSA via your online account. If you have any delays or last-minute changes in your itinerary, please email [info@spanishstudies.org](mailto:info@spanishstudies.org) and your parents. If you are en route to Barcelona, you will also need to inform the Barcelona Resident Director, María de la Viña, at [maria.delavina@spanishstudies.org](mailto:maria.delavina@spanishstudies.org).

Note: Your SSA program at Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona and ELISAVA is academically rigorous and you will have class from Monday through Thursday with holidays throughout the semester. At Universitat Pompeu Fabra your schedule might differ. If you intend to do extensive traveling while in Spain, we encourage you to do so at the end of your program so plan your return flight home accordingly. Housing through SSA ends the last day of the program.

### Arrival

You will be responsible for making transportation arrangements to your homestay on your own and for all costs involved.

SSA staff will be at the airport on the program start date, typically between 9 am and 1 pm, in order to assist you in getting a taxi to your housing. Please note the time the staff will be at the airport is subject to change and will be confirmed in your Departure Newsletter that will be sent out a few weeks before the start date of the program.

Please look for the SSA signs and staff once you get your luggage at the Barcelona airport.

You should plan on arriving at your housing no later than 5 pm. If you arrive earlier than 9 am or later than 1 pm, please take a taxi directly to your housing address. There are detailed instructions in the Departure Newsletter, which you will receive via email prior to the start of the program. A taxi from the airport to the center of Barcelona should cost 35-50 Euros approximately. If you choose this option we recommend that you ask the taxi driver for a receipt. There is also a bus (Aerobus) leaving every 15 minutes from the airport to the center of Barcelona, which costs approximately 6 Euros. Both taxi and Aerobus can be paid by card, though you cannot pay with American Express. You should have at least 100 Euros with you, just in case. If you want to carry it in cash, which is recommended, it is best to exchange it before you arrive in Spain. Cash machines are available at the airport, though they will very likely charge extra fees.

If you lose your luggage, you must file a claim at the "lost luggage," or "equipajes perdidos," desk in the airport.

You should have them send your luggage to your housing in Barcelona. You will be provided with your address about one week prior to your departure for Spain.

## **Orientation**

When you first arrive in Barcelona, you will have a brief orientation at our Center (*Address: Carrer de Casp 46, 5-H, 08010, Barcelona*) where you will have an opportunity to meet your fellow students and the Resident Director. You'll receive additional information about orientation and your arrival in Barcelona in the Departure Newsletter, which will be emailed to you before the start of the program.

Orientation is mandatory for all students.

Note: Orientation is a busy time, and you may not get a chance to call home immediately upon arrival. If your family would like confirmation of your arrival, they should contact our U.S. office, where we will have information on the safe arrival of our students.

## **Getting Ready to Depart for Barcelona**

We are sure you are excited about your experience abroad, but before you depart, there are a few things you need to take care of, so please read carefully!

### **Online Account**

All students studying with SSA have an online account. Please use your online account to complete important pre-departure tasks. To access your account, go to [www.spanishstudies.org](http://www.spanishstudies.org) and click the login link at the top of the page. You will then be prompted to enter your username and password. If you have forgotten your password, you may request a new one on the login page.

### **ITEMS YOU MUST UPLOAD TO YOUR SPANISH STUDIES ABROAD ACCOUNT**

In order to finalize your acceptance in a SSA program, you must submit the following items via your SpanishStudies.org account as soon as possible. All pre-departure items will be due within 2 weeks of the application deadline. Please note that without your passport and digital photo the staff in Barcelona will not be able to register you at your university in Barcelona.

- Program Deposit (due within 10 days of acceptance)
- Passport Information and Copy
- Course Selection
- Housing Questionnaire
- Health Form
- Academic Pledge and Program Conditions & Release Statements
- Arrival Information
- Speaking Partners Form
- Digital Photo

### **Passport**

To travel to Spain, you need a valid passport. For U.S. citizens, the most convenient place to apply for a passport is at your local post office. If you do not yet have a passport, apply for one immediately! It can take up to 4-6 weeks to receive your passport. If the start of your program is less than 90 days away and you have not yet applied for your visa (see below), you will have to pay for expedited service of your passport. Expedited service requires about 2-3 weeks. The U.S. State Department's website provides details on passports and current processing times.

Students who are not U.S. citizens should contact the appropriate government agency in their home country for passport information.

Students who already have a passport should verify that it will be valid through the program dates and for at least six months after the SSA program concludes.

## Student Visa

The visa is an endorsement on the passport allowing residence in Spain for 6 months or a year. Most semester or academic-year students are required by Spanish law to obtain a student visa. You must apply for your visa at the Spanish consulate holding jurisdiction over your home address. Check the *Line-by-Line Instructions for the National Visa Application* that you received in your acceptance packet link to see which consulate you should use.

If you have not yet provided your passport information to SSA, please contact us right away. This information must be included in the letter to the Visa Officer of the Spanish Consulate, which will be provided to you by SSA and which must accompany your application for a student visa.

Please be aware that some Spanish Consulates will not issue a student visa for programs under 90 days, even if you plan on staying longer. It is your responsibility to learn the policies of your Spanish Consulate before applying for a visa.

When applying for a student visa, please note that the Spanish Consulates in North America impose tight time restrictions on the student visa process. The most recent information from the Spanish Consulates indicates that it typically takes 6-10 weeks to issue a student visa once your application has been submitted. If you are going to Spain for a semester or academic-year program, you should contact the Spanish consulate immediately. Keep in mind that if the Spanish Consulate nearest you requires an appointment, you must make one now. If the consulate does not allow/require you to make an appointment, you must apply for a student visa at least 7 weeks before the program departure date.

Note: Most consulates will still allow you to make an appointment even if you don't have your passport yet! However, you need a passport in order to apply for your visa, so make sure you have plenty of time if you need to apply for both.

Some consulates allow students who attend a college or university in their jurisdiction to apply there, even if the student's permanent address is in a different jurisdiction, but you should check with the consulate directly about your particular situation.

Note: Each consulate requires different materials for the visa application process. Students should always follow the instructions given to them by their specific consulate over anything they are told by another person or by SSA. While we are familiar with the student visa application, we may not be aware of all the different requirements of each consulate or any changes to their policies. If you notice conflicting information, you should do what the consulate tells you.

Academic-year students *must* get a head start on their visa applications. All Spanish consulates require an FBI background check with Spanish translations and apostilles for students staying in Spain longer than 6 months. Visit <https://www.fbi.gov/services/cjis/identity-history-summary-checks> to learn how to obtain an FBI background check. These background checks can take up to 12 weeks to be processed, so please apply early!

U.S. citizens attending a summer term program do not need a visa. Non-U.S. citizens may be required to apply for a visa, even for short term programs in Spain. Consult the Spanish consulate in your home country about visa requirements well in advance of the program start date.

## Budgeting for Your Trip

Below you will find a detailed estimate, which explains how to budget for personal expenses and other costs not covered by your SSA program fees.

We estimate the average student will spend about \$150-200 per week while in Barcelona. Of course, some will spend more and others will spend less. Think about your lifestyle and budget accordingly. For a weekend of independent travel (SSA-sponsored study trips are included in the program fees) students should plan to spend approximately \$250-450, depending on the location and preference of travel. A drink and *tapa* at a *café* cost approximately \$8. you should plan on spending about \$80 per month for mobility. If you stay out late at night, you should plan to take a taxi home. The cost is about \$10-15 per ride, depending on the distance.

	<u>Semester</u>	<u>Short-Term</u>
Books*	\$350	\$100
Bus Transportation	\$250	\$100
Every-day & going out expenses	\$1,600	\$500
Theater/concert evenings	\$150	\$50
Weekend trips on your own	\$1,000	\$350
Flight	\$1,250	\$1,250
Miscellaneous	\$800	\$200
Total	\$5,400	\$2,550

\*You will not need to purchase books prior to your arrival in Spain. Your professors will inform you of the materials you will need and where to purchase them.

In total, we recommend that students budget a minimum of about \$1,000 per month for expenses in Barcelona. Although lodging, some meals, study tours, trips and SSA cultural activities are included in the program fees, students will also want to have extra spending money for going out with friends, making a special weekend trip on their own, or buying gifts to take back to friends and family at home. These figures are general guidelines and may be different for each person's budget and lifestyle in Barcelona.

For students who opt to live in the student residence in Barcelona, since meals are not included, we suggest a budget of approximately \$400 per month for groceries.

Note that the costs given above are estimates and daily fluctuations in the official rate of exchange between the U.S. dollar and the Euro will affect the purchasing power of U.S. dollars in Spain. Remember that, right now, the euro currency (€) is slightly stronger than the U.S. dollar. You can check the latest exchange rates at [www.xe.com/ucc](http://www.xe.com/ucc).

### **Income Taxes**

U.S. residents who are abroad during the spring semester will need to make arrangements for filing federal and state income taxes. Individuals who are temporarily living abroad can request an extension on the deadline for filing their federal income tax return. This extension is generally until June 15th. Please note that if money is owed to the government and an extension is filed, interest will be charged on the amount, if it is not received by April 15th. For more information on federal income tax laws and regulations, please consult the IRS official web page [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov) or call (800) 829-1040. Individuals should contact their state government for information on extending state taxes.

### **Power of Attorney**

If your signature will be needed for any official or legal document while in Spain, you should make the necessary arrangements for a "power of attorney" to be held by parents, guardians, or another appropriate person to act on your behalf. This can be done by writing out in detail the specific duties that this person will have, (i.e. signing a check; corresponding with the school or university about financial or academic matters; or obtaining medical records and information, in case of an emergency). This letter should then be notarized so that it is legal and official. Public notaries are available at many banks, post offices, public libraries, and town halls.

### **Absentee Voting**

Voting is a privilege and right for all U.S. citizens. If you are abroad during an election, SSA urges you to take advantage of this right by voting via absentee ballot. You should apply to do this before you leave home. U.S. citizens can get more information, as well as the forms needed to apply for the absentee ballot, by visiting the Federal Voting Assistance Program website at [www.fvap.gov](http://www.fvap.gov) or by calling your local city clerk's office.

### **Social Media**

You may have already joined the SSA Instagram page ([@spanishstudiesabroad](https://www.instagram.com/spanishstudiesabroad)). This page is for alumni, current students, and prospective students, so it will be a great resource to you as you begin to prepare for your program

and meet fellow Barcelona students. We also have this account to share our pictures, cultural activities, trips and useful tips during your time in Barcelona. We encourage our students to share and follow our community in this passionate journey you're about to start.

### **Pre-Departure Orientation**

Students accepted into a Barcelona program will be invited to participate in a pre-departure orientation. During this video call, students will be able to meet with SSA staff, and sometimes alumni, to get a run-down on how to prepare for your trip and what you can expect when studying abroad in Barcelona. These meetings usually take place around 2-3 weeks before the program start date.

### **Pre-Departure Newsletter**

SSA students receive a pre-departure newsletter by email several weeks prior to the program start date. The newsletter contains important travel and arrival information, such as emergency contact information (also included in this handbook), SSA in Barcelona address, taxi and baggage tips, and contact information for fellow participants. Make sure to read it thoroughly before departing to Barcelona!

## **Emergencies and Emergency Contact Information**

### **In the U.S.**

433 West Street, Suite 8  
Amherst, MA 01002  
Tel: (413) 256-0011  
[info@spanishstudies.org](mailto:info@spanishstudies.org)

### **In Barcelona, Spain**

Calle Casp, 46-5ºH  
08010 Barcelona, España  
Tel: (011-34) 689 766 723  
[maria.delavina@spanishstudies.org](mailto:maria.delavina@spanishstudies.org)

Should an emergency arise, family members may call the Barcelona Resident Director, María de la Viña, at (0034) 689 766 723, or the U.S. office telephone, (413) 256-0011. The U.S. office is open Monday through Friday from 9 am to 5 pm EST.

### **Emergency Numbers Within Spain**

General Emergency – 112  
Ambulance – 061

### **U.S. Embassy in Barcelona** (24-hour service)

Passeig de la Reina Elisenda de Montcada, 23,  
08034 Barcelona  
Phone: 932 80 22 27

Website: <https://es.usembassy.gov/barcelona/>

Full list of embassies and consulates in Spain:

<https://es.usembassy.gov/services/conserv-info/>

In the unlikely event of an emergency, please be sure to check these web pages. Up-to-date information on Procedures and Security can be found on our website: <https://spanishstudies.org/safety-and-security-abroad/> or Department of State website <http://studentsabroad.state.gov>.

## **Health Insurance and Medical Care**

### **Program Health Insurance**

All students attending SSA programs are provided with health insurance for the duration of the program through [CISI Worldwide Insurance](#). All SSA students are required to participate in the medical insurance program, whether you have insurance at home or not. If you are ill and need medical attention, contact our Barcelona office and a staff member will help to make an appointment with a physician. A physician may also visit you at home if you are not well enough to make a trip to the doctor. In case the student needs accompaniment, an SSA staff member will provide the assistance required.

Although we provide medical insurance while in Spain, if you also have medical insurance at home, it is a good idea to take along one or two claims forms. These would be used if you need treatment for a pre-existing medical or psychological condition; medical attention while traveling outside of Spain; or encountered health issues while traveling outside of the program dates. Please note that you are only covered through SSA for the dates of the program, so you should also plan to bring claims forms if you are traveling before or after the program. If you have dental insurance at home, you should also bring some dental insurance claim forms with you, in case you need dental treatment while you are abroad.

If you are under medical or psychological treatment at home, you should speak with your doctor about the possible effects of study abroad and cultural change on your condition. If you have any pre-existing medical or psychological conditions, you should bring a copy of your medical records, in case you need treatment in Spain. It is important to note that eating disorders are considered medical conditions and must be reported on your health statement. Withholding medical information could result in your dismissal from the program.

## **Prescriptions**

If you take any prescription medication, be sure to bring enough for your entire stay. These should be in their original containers: that is, labeled with your name and the name of the prescription drug. For safety's sake, you should take a written prescription for replacement of the drugs should they be lost. The prescription should bear the generic name (chemical composition) of the drug, NOT the brand name, since medicines purchased in other countries usually have different brand names than the same medicine in Spain; though this prescription may not be enough at pharmacies, it will help a Spanish doctor make a valid prescription. Also, if you wear glasses, you should take an extra pair.

## **Refill Your Medicines or Treatments**

If you are taking any mental or physical treatments and you are going to continue taking it in Barcelona, you must inform us. One of the most important things for the wellbeing of students is to have enough medicine during their stay. As a medical procedure we need to go to the doctor to ask for the prescription of any medicine. Sometimes medicines are illegal and we need to find the most similar one. If you need to refill your medicines for any treatment, we need to know as soon as possible.

Your U.S. doctor needs to send us a signed document with the following information:

- What is the treatment? Name of the medicine and its ingredients
- What is the treatment for? Reason why you are taking this medicine
- How are you taking it? Quantity and times

Medicines must be in their original containers: that is, labeled with your name and the name of the prescription drug. In the case that you are unable to acquire enough for the entire stay, or just in case your medication is lost, you should take a written prescription for replacement of the drugs. The prescription should bear the generic name (chemical composition) of the drug, NOT the brand name, since medicines purchased in other countries usually have different brand names; though this prescription may not be enough at pharmacies, it will help a Spanish doctor make a valid prescription.

If you wear contacts you should bring enough for the entire stay plus extras, and if you wear glasses you should bring an extra pair.

## **Injections**

If you require regular medical injections, you should bring syringes with you from home; needles in Spain are usually a larger gauge. The cost of having injections administered by a healthcare professional is not covered by your SSA insurance, so be prepared for that expense. In order to get your injections at a clinic in Barcelona, your doctor at home must write you a letter with the following information:

- Directions on how to administer the injection
- How often the medication is administered
- Generic name of the medication



- Components of the medication
- Exact dosage of medication needed
- Any possible side effects
- Any other relevant information for administering the injection

Email a copy of this letter to SSA, and take another copy to Spain. Again, you must have a written prescription and/or letter from your doctor to get through airport security with your injection materials.

### **Health Information for Travelers to Spain**

Please check the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website for up-to-date information on required vaccinations and tips on staying healthy in Spain: <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/traveler/none/spain>.

The CDC website also has health information available for other countries to which you may choose to travel during your time abroad.

## **Academics**

### **Universitat Pompeu Fabra**

SSA offers programs in Barcelona in cooperation with the [Universitat Pompeu Fabra](#) (UPF), through the [International Program Office](#), which caters to international students at UPF. Semester and academic-year students may select from different programs: BaPis, Integrated Studies, ESCI, STEM.

Students can choose to take an optional course about Barcelona culture in order to learn more about the culture of their new city. Students are presented with at least four different options of courses that range from literature to Catalan language and art history: <https://www.upf.edu/web/incoming/education-abroad>.

Students at Barcelona Programs for Interdisciplinary studies (BaPis) take their classes with international students, while students in the Integrated Studies, ESCI, or STEM programs choose a combination of these courses and regular UPF classes alongside Spanish students.

Note: Because your International program at Universitat Pompeu Fabra is academically rigorous, you will have class from Monday through Friday with a few holidays throughout the semester. If you intend to do extensive traveling while in Spain, we encourage you to do so at the end of your program so plan your return flight home accordingly.

Remember you will need to take into account your final exam dates to plan your return flight accordingly. Housing through SSA ends the last day of the program. Please reference your program calendar to confirm these dates.

### **Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona**

SSA offers programs in Barcelona in cooperation with the [Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona](#) (UAB) through the Studies Abroad Department. This program is designed for international students wishing to stay in Barcelona studying subjects taught in English or Spanish with the option of Spanish and Catalan language courses, between 6-15 weeks period.

International students study at the World Heritage Campus of Sant Pau, building Casa de la Convalescència. Credits are fully transferable to the student's home university. Programming is academically rigorous. Monday through Thursday, you can expect one to two hours of study at home for each hour of class time. This is probably comparable to the amount of work you have at your home institution. What will be especially challenging, at first, is that some classes are taught in Spanish. The beginning of those classes will probably be the most frustrating in that respect. Just stick with it and remember that all the other students in your class feel the same way you do. Before you know it, you'll be following your classes taught in Spanish without any trouble at all.

### **ELISAVA - Universitat de Vic (Universitat Central de Catalunya)**

The [ELISAVA](#) Engineering and Design Program is a 15-week program designed to allow you to complete coursework in English without (Track A) or with (Track B) a design background. This program offers a comprehensive look at design and the new opportunities that are appearing with it.

The ELISAVA campus is right in the heart of the city on one of the most famous streets in Barcelona: La Rambla. For more information on this program, please head to our [website](#).

### **More on classes at UPF/UAB/ELISAVA:**

- It's one of the best ways to improve your Spanish
- Discussion and debate are encouraged. Teachers encourage participation in class
- Class size is from 20 to 35 students
- Grade is a combination of class work, attendance and the final exam
- Students are expected to take notes
- It's also a great opportunity to meet locals

### **Barcelona Spanish Placement Exam**

Students attending Spanish courses (upper beginner) take a Spanish language placement exam. The university will then place students in appropriate language courses (Beginner, Pre-Intermediate, Intermediate, Advanced, Proficiency, and Heritage Speakers) as determined by the placement exam results. For this reason, please note that the courses you choose in your Course Selection form of your online account are simply used for pre-registration and will not be finalized until after the start of the program. (Consult instructions with your SSA advisor).

### **Course Registration**

The Course Selection you submitted with your application was the first step in selecting your classes for the program. Please consult our website for descriptions and other instructions. A few factors may change your original course selection:

- If you have not met the prerequisites for a class you have chosen.
- If the class you want is already full.
- If you have too many or too few credits and need to alter your schedule accordingly.
- If a particular course is canceled due to under-enrollment.
- If the course is a first, second, or third term-
- If your performance on the Spanish placement exam in Barcelona indicates a need for a change.
- If the class you want doesn't suit your schedule.

Any changes that you would like to make to your course preregistration once your Course Selection Form has been submitted must be sent via email to [info@spanishstudies.org](mailto:info@spanishstudies.org), after consulting with your academic advisor.

If the enrollment period has ended and you still need to make any course changes, you will need to wait for the add/drop week (UAB and ELISAVA students). UPF will assess the situation in each case.

### **Course Withdrawal Policy**

The course add/drop period is usually 1 week after classes have started. Students cannot drop a course without adding another, otherwise they could be penalized for dropping a course. If you think you would like to make changes to your schedule and are unsure of when the add/drop period ends, please speak with the Barcelona Resident Director or professor of the course right away. Once the add/drop period is over, students that drop a course will receive a "W" for "Withdrawal" on their SSA transcript, which will appear as "No presentado" on the host university transcript. Any student who is not present for the final examination and has not previously withdrawn from the course will receive a grade of "No presentado" on the transcript from the host university. In this case, "No presentado" translates to the grade of "F."

### **Program Transfer Policy**

Please be aware that students who transfer programs (e.g. Integrated Studies to International Studies) for any reason, must follow the calendar of their new program. Regardless of the original program that a student chose,

housing through SSA expires on the date of the new program. Students will be responsible for adjusting travel arrangements and paying any associated fees that may arise due to the program transfer. This policy applies to students transferring programs either before or after their departure date.

### **Academic Honesty**

SSA holds students to the highest standards of academic honesty. Academic dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated. This includes, but is not limited to, plagiarism, fabrication, and cheating. Any student who acts dishonestly will face disciplinary sanctions, which may range from a failing grade on the assignment to dismissal from the program. Incidents of academic dishonesty may be reported to the student's home campus.

### **Final Examinations**

For the dates of final examination week, refer to the calendar included in your acceptance packet. You must take your final exams as scheduled, so your flight should depart on or after the program end date.

### **Your final course grades**

Most of your final grades will be published in your host university online platform after your program is over and you have returned to the U.S. Therefore, keep an eye on the publication of your grades so, in case you do not agree with them, you may request the host university or professor to review them. Once the grade revision period is over (it generally lasts only a few days), you won't be able to make any claims regarding your grades.

### **Transcripts**

UAB, UPF and ELISAVA process grades at the end of each program. SSA will mail or e-mail your official transcripts accompanied by an SSA transcript to the address provided in your Home School Approval Form and a student copy will be emailed to your email address. If there is an outstanding balance on your account, your transcript will be held until the balance is paid.

SSA transcripts show course numbers and titles, the number of contact hours and credits, and the grades for all coursework undertaken on an SSA program, including Independent Research Projects (IRPs) and coursework completed. Grades and credits are reported according to the semester-hour system.

Please note that IRPs will also appear only on the SSA transcript, not university transcript.

If your school requires that your grades be reported on a transcript from a U.S. degree-granting institution, you may receive a transcript from our School of Record, Heidelberg University in Tiffin, Ohio.

Additional fees are charged by Heidelberg University for this service. Please contact our U.S. office for more information about this transcript option.

Students need to have all courses and co-curricular studies approved for transfer credit by their home institution before the start of a program. This can normally be arranged through a study abroad advisor or registrar.

If you need an official transcript in the future, we charge a fee of \$10 for the initial transcript and \$5 for each additional transcript per batch. If the receiving institution requires a copy of the UAB transcript from Spain, the student is responsible for international postage. You should submit the SSA Transcript Request Form to our U.S. office with the following information:

- Your name and the program you attended
- Your birth date
- Your current contact information, including email address and phone number
- The name and address of the person/institution to whom/where you would like the transcript sent

You may either choose to pay by check made payable to: The Center for Cross-Cultural Study, Inc. or fill out a credit card authorization form that is available on our website.

This form is available on our website at: <https://spanishstudies.org/students-parents/transcripts/>.

Note: If you received a transcript from a U.S. degree-granting institution, you will need to contact Heidelberg University to request an additional transcript. Please visit the university's website for a transcript request form and information about associated fees.

## Experiential Learning Opportunities

SSA semester or academic year students with an advanced level of Spanish are strongly encouraged to pursue one of our Experiential Learning opportunities. These include completing an internship, a service learning project, volunteering, or conducting an independent research study. If you have any questions, you can find more information <https://spanishstudies.org/destinations/barcelona-spain/> or you may contact SSA.

### Internship or Service Learning Course Option

Qualified semester or academic-year students are strongly encouraged to pursue one of our Experiential Learning Opportunities, such as volunteering. In some cases, students who participate in the summer term may also have time to take advantage of one of these opportunities.

Qualified students enrolled in the Spring Semester have the opportunity to pursue an unpaid internship or service learning experience in Barcelona. Internships and service learning are available in local businesses, educational institutions, and nonprofit organizations. A high level of Spanish is required for the Internship or Service Learning Course Option.

Your performance will be evaluated in the following ways:

- Regular meetings with the Resident Director, in which students discuss progress and brainstorm solutions to issues encountered in the field
- Workplace supervisor observation and evaluation
- Anthropological tools, such as blogging, dialog, and memoir, which enhance understanding of the process of integrated and the local culture
- A written report submitted at the end of the internship/service learning experience
- Additional criteria for evaluation, grading, and granting of credit may be established by your academic advisor on your home campus.

### Internship and Service Learning Deadlines

If you would like to be considered for an Internship or Service Learning Course Option in Barcelona, you will need to submit the corresponding application to SSA in advance of the deadlines listed below.

Please reach out to your SSA Advisor to inquire about internship and service learning opportunities.

Deadlines For submission of Internship Course Option and Service Learning Applications:

Fall Semester – May 15th

Spring Semester – October 15th

NOTE: Internships and Service Learning projects are not guaranteed. Students must select an alternate course or an Independent Research Project in the event that the requested course option is not available.

### Volunteer Opportunities

Volunteer opportunities give students a chance to get to know the local community and improve their Spanish in the process. Past volunteer projects have been available in schools and non-profit organizations. While a volunteer opportunity is more flexible, since it is not-for-credit, students are still expected to make a solid commitment and to maintain a set schedule. Interested students may inquire about this opportunity while on site.



## Group Meetings and Activities

The Barcelona Resident Director periodically holds group meetings with students. These meetings give you the opportunity to discuss any questions or concerns that arise, as well as to share experiences and information.

In addition to group meetings, SSA sponsors a number of mandatory activities throughout the course of the program. Some of these activities include:

- Biweekly cultural activities and workshops.
- Modernist Tour
- Day/overnight trip options to Figueras, Cadaques, and Girona

SSA sponsors a number of activities throughout the program, including Speaking Partners with Spanish students; international festivals; round tables; and various workshops. There are also opportunities for cultural visits in Barcelona, excursions to other Spanish cities, and more. More information will be made available at orientation and throughout the course of the program. Some activities may entail an additional cost. Please also be sure to follow the Instagram [page](#) and check your email for weekly activity postings from your Resident Director.

Note: Due to insurance regulations, it is not possible to bring guests, including visiting family members and friends, on official SSA program excursions and visits.

## Speaking Partners Program

In order to provide a deeper immersion experience and connect students with locals, SSA has developed the Speaking Partners Program. This is a mandatory conversation exchange program, where students learn and practice Spanish with a native speaker, in turn helping them to learn and practice English. Our goal is to encourage cultural exchange and promote long-lasting friendly and cordial relations between the Speaking Partners.

Speaking Partners should plan to meet at least once a week (more for short-term programs) and speak one of the languages (Spanish or English) alternately at each meeting. In addition to these regular meetings, which students and Speaking Partners are responsible for coordinating independently, SSA will also host group activities throughout the program.

SSA staff will be available for students whenever they need advice and, if requested, will assign new or multiple Speaking Partners.

## Travel and Visits from Family & Friends

During the Summer Term, classes are held Monday through Thursday with some mandatory and supplemental class activities/trips on Fridays. Cultural visits in the afternoons and weekend travel will provide plenty of opportunities to get to know Spain outside the classroom. There are plenty of towns near Barcelona that make for great day trips during the weekend.

For semester programs, classes are held Monday through Thursday or Friday. This means you may have plenty of time to plan trips and weekend outings and will not need to miss any of your scheduled classes, which could affect your final grade.

You received a program calendar in your acceptance packet to which you can refer for academic dates, holidays, vacation dates. Though most of these dates are firm, some of the holiday dates are subject to change by the Spanish civil authorities, which may force us to change some of the vacation dates. Therefore, you and your family should make only tentative plans for independent travel until you arrive in Barcelona. At the beginning of the program, you will be given a more definitive calendar. We request that you not plan trips with your family when classes are in session. Please be aware that if you transfer programs (e.g. Integrated to International) for any reason, you must follow the calendar of the new program, adjusting travel arrangements accordingly.

Note: Travel and excursions that are included in the program are mandatory for all students.

## Vacations and Long Weekends

Vacations and long weekends are a great chance to travel to places that may be hard to get to on a regular weekend. You may want to take this opportunity to travel around Spain and become acquainted with other regions of the country, or you may prefer to travel to other countries if time permits. Refer to the program calendar in your acceptance packet for vacation dates. If you, or your family, plan to purchase a Eurail Pass for travel between semesters or programs, be sure to purchase it before leaving home. At this time, the pass *cannot* be purchased in Europe.

Note: Do not forget to fill up an Independent Travel form to track your trip details in case of emergency.

## Consequences of Not Submitting this Form

Students who don't submit this form before the deadline will take full responsibility for any injury, loss, damage of any kind that may be caused to them (physically and mentally) and their belongings.

## Packing Suggestions

The most important advice we can give is to bring half of what you had originally planned to pack. If you find that you need something you didn't bring, nearly everything can be found in Spain.

### Fashion

The fashion in many Spanish cities, including Barcelona, is very similar to that in the United States; however, there are certain key differences you will want to be aware of. Spaniards tend to be more trendy and polished in their day to day outfits. When going to university, it is common for women to wear nice jeans or pants with boots (nice boots, preferably not Uggs) or flats in the winter and fall. Men should also wear nice shoes or fashionable sneakers.

Running sneakers and exercise clothes (including sweatpants and yoga pants) are usually only worn when exercising, and pajamas should never be worn to university. In general, Spanish students dress very stylish when going to class and oftentimes women will be dressed up. In summer months, the fashion is similar to the United States; however, students should keep in mind that flip flops are only worn to the pool or beach. When going out at night, the dress is often formal at clubs or *discotecas* while smaller bars may be more casual.

### Clothing

- Casual pants (jeans are okay)
- Several shirts, long- and short-sleeved
- Plenty of underwear and socks
- Pajamas according to season
- Slippers to wear around the house
- Comfortable shoes for walking
- One pair of sneakers
- One nicer pair of shoes for dressing up
- One dressy outfit
- A couple of sweaters for the winter
- Lightweight jacket and heavy winter coat
- Gloves, hat, and scarf
- Bathing suit
- Shorts, capri pants, and/or skirts.

Pack as lightly as possible, since you'll have to carry everything. Keep in mind that you'll probably buy some clothing in Barcelona as well, and you will do laundry once a week. Most of your usual clothing brands, local boutiques and a variety of vintage stores can be found in Barcelona, so keep in mind: "(packing) less is more!"

### Other Items

- Laptop or tablet
- Beach towel
- Washcloths, if desired
- Backpack (or book bag)
- Any cosmetics/products you use
- Medicines for cold and upset stomach
- Vitamins
- \*Prescription medications, if needed
- Sunscreen (SPF 25 and higher. It's sunny!)
- Umbrella

All of these items can be found in Spain, though it is advised to bring your own medicine and cosmetics, if you use any specific products.

\*If you take any prescription medication or wear contacts, be sure to bring enough for your entire stay. Refer to "Prescriptions" under the "Health and Wellness" section of this handbook.

## Security and Personal Care

We suggest taking a suitcase that locks so you can keep valuable items secure at all times. This would be the place to keep your passport, airline tickets, traveler's checks, extra cash, and anything else of value that you don't want to leave lying around. You should also know that your things might get moved around (if your room is cleaned by your host family).

You will be able to find a lot of the everyday products you need in Barcelona, so there is no need to stock up on shampoo or feminine hygiene products. Take just enough for the first part of the trip so you'll be able to get settled in, but don't over pack this kind of thing. You may want to pack your favorite cold and upset stomach medicines, just to be prepared. You can get medicines at pharmacies in Barcelona, but they'll be different from what you're used to and when you're sick, you may feel better using what you know works for you. However, if you are trying to save room in your suitcase these products can be left out.

## Plug-in Appliances

The general rule is don't bring them. The electrical current in Spain, 220V, is not the same as the current in North America. If you only need a hair dryer, curling iron or flat iron, you'd be better off purchasing an inexpensive one in Barcelona, rather than risking destroying the appliance and/or the outlet when you plug it in. Unless you have a

whole slew of hair styling appliances that you just can't live without, you are better off not having to purchase a converter and adapter. If you do decide to bring hair styling appliances, you should consider whether they are really needed for the program in Barcelona. If so, then you will need to purchase a converter and plug adapter set at a travel or electronics store.



This rule may or may not apply to laptops. Some laptops have built-in converters, in which case you would only need the adapter for the plug. Voltage in Spain is generally 220V, while it is 110V in the U.S. The wattage of the converter must match the wattage of the appliance. Please make sure that your laptop's voltage range, found on your power cord, will be compatible with Spain's electrical current.

## Housing

The best advice we can give you in order to get the most out of your housing experience is to communicate.

The Barcelona Resident Director chooses housing placements very carefully based on the answers provided in your Housing Questionnaire. Note that in the interest of meeting the goal of cultural immersion, it is SSA policy not to pair students from the same school in the same homestay during our semester and academic-year programs. Also, it is SSA policy that visiting friends and family members may not stay at the homestay.

You will live with a Spanish family or at a dorm and perhaps with a roommate. Families usually live in *pisos*, or apartments, instead of large independent residences. Therefore, you may be living in a space that is smaller

than what you are used to, and you probably will not have your own bedroom. Spanish homes do not usually have central heating or air conditioning, which might come as a surprise to you in the months when you want it most. You just have to dress for the seasons and see how your host family deals with the different temperatures.

Your family will give you a set of keys to your house, so you will be able to go out and experience Spanish life on your own schedule. With that comes the responsibility of keeping your family informed of your plans; let them know if you will be home late or if you plan to miss a meal.

Lots of students decide that they want to bring gifts for their host families. If you want to take a gift, we suggest bringing something that represents where you live, what you enjoy, or your hobbies—basically something that will give your host family some insight into you as a person. Another good way to share some of your life in your home city with your new family is to bring photos from your family and university.



decide if you would like to move to another home.

Housing assignment information is generally provided about a week or two before the start of the program. Please note that assignments may be subject to last-minute changes. If you ever have a problem with your housing assignment, tell the Resident Director right away, so that she may help you to resolve the difficulty. The Resident Director will assist you in working out whatever problems come up, and if things don't get resolved, help you to

Note to all students: SSA does not offer housing in the private homes during the days prior to the start of the program or days beyond the end dates of the program. If you are arriving early to Barcelona or planning on staying later, you should book your own hotel or hostel.



Note to academic-year students and students participating in multiple programs: Students participating in an academic year or other programs combining two or more terms of study may choose to travel between terms or stay with their host family at no additional cost.

### **Housing Norms for Students at the Dorm**

When you check in, the student residence will provide you with the dorm norms. The residence offers you unlimited Wi-Fi so you are always connected, water and electricity, heating and air conditioning, with individual thermostat, 24/7 reception, daily cleaning in common areas and weekly in your room. If something does not work, tell us and we will take care of it. Wheelchair accessible. Activities designed so that everyone feels included. They also offer other services to make things easy for you at very reasonable prices: such as coin laundry, printing or photocopies, vending machines, and parking.

Meals are not included but you'll have a shared kitchen and monthly vouchers that you can use in the residence cafeteria. You won't need to bring your own sheets and towels.

### **Housing Norms for Students and Host Families**

To ensure a correct and cordial relationship between the host families, students, and SSA, a series of norms and recommendations have been established. There are minimum conditions designed for all homes in general; it is normal for personality differences to exist between host family and student; there will be certain differences also between one home and another. If you have any concerns, don't understand a certain norm, or would like to make a comment regarding housing, be sure to consult with the Barcelona Resident Director.

#### Your bedroom will have:

- A comfortable bed with a mattress, sheets, blankets, pillow and pillowcase
- A nightstand
- A table or desk



- A lamp to provide adequate lighting
- A shelf or similar storage space for books
- A chair
- A closet or wardrobe with drawers and hangers for clothing
- A heater in winter and a fan in summer. The student must not leave the heater on at night, but may use the fan at night in warmer weather, as long as he or she gains prior approval from the host family.

The bathroom will have:

- A clean toilet
- A clean towel to be used only by the student
- The student will have the right to shower once a day with hot water. Students should be allowed to shower whenever they want (between 7 am and 10 pm), limiting their time in the bathroom and not using hot water for more than 8 minutes.

Laundry:

- The host family will replace bed linens and the towel once a week. They will wash each student's laundry at least once a week (one load of white clothes and one load of colored clothes).
- The clothes will be folded.
- It is not the host family's obligation to iron the student's clothing.
- If the students have more laundry than stipulated, they will have to wait until the following week to have it laundered.
- If the students have delicate clothing, they should notify the family or take it upon themselves to launder it.

Meals:

- Students will eat with the family. In the event that the host family cannot be present for a meal, prepared food will be left for the students.
- Students should respect the eating hours in the home; a day when they will not eat or sleep at home, they should communicate this to the host family in a timely fashion.
- Bottled water, milk with meals, between-meal snacks, fruit juices, beer and wine are not included in the housing fee.
- The meals that the host family will prepare for the student are:
  - o Breakfast: Toast with butter or something similar and coffee, tea, hot chocolate or milk
  - o Lunch: won't be a proper meal but a picnic that the student will be able to take away with him/her.
  - o Dinner: Two dishes and a dessert. One of these dishes may be soup, and at least one of the two must be a hot meal and include meat, fish, egg or cheese.
- Eggs should not be served more than three times a week.
- The menu must be flexible and varied, taking the students' preferences into account.
- If students do not consume certain foods due to religious reasons, the host family will respect their preferences.
- Students may request, 24 hours in advance, that a cold lunch be prepared for them to take on field trips.

Doctor:

- If students don't feel well, need a doctor or medication, they should call the Resident Director to make an appointment, or the student may go to the medical clinic: Hospital el Pilar (Calle Balmes 271, tel. 932 36 05 00). The host family will not give medicine to the student
- If students miss class due to medical reasons, they or the host family should contact the Resident Director.

Housing Changes:

- If irreconcilable differences should arise between the student and the host family, the Resident Director will move the student. In this case, the Resident Director will let the host family know 10 days in advance. Once the host family is informed of the change, the host family will not discuss this subject with the student as this could cause discomfort.
- If the host family desires that the student be moved, the Resident Director will be notified 10 days in advance.
- In the event that the Resident Director must move the student because some or any housing requirements have not been fulfilled, SSA maintains the right to move the student without previous notice to the household.
- In case of any indication of sexual harassment or inappropriate behavior on the part of the host family members, the Resident Director will move the student(s) to a different home immediately and with no previous warning. SSA will also stop working with a host family where an issue like this arises.

Miscellaneous:

- The student's room may not be rented out during weekends or any school break, even if the student is not present in Barcelona during these times.

- The host family will not discuss financial matters related to housing, as this is very uncomfortable for everyone and causes uneasiness.
- If it is necessary for the host family to be absent overnight for any reason, the host family must inform the Resident Director. Both the Resident Director and the student must agree to this.
- There should be a pleasant environment in the house, where the student feels comfortable and welcome.
- More than two U.S. students will not be allowed to live in the same home, whether they are from SSA or a different U.S. study center. Housing more than a total of two U.S. students in the same home will be considered a failure to abide by the norms outlined above.
- The student may not have guests staying overnight.
- Should the student not leave the home on the program end date, SSA is not responsible for paying the host family for extra day(s).
- Students may not take their friends to the home without previous permission from the host family.
- If the student's house keys get lost or stolen, for fear that the missing keys may be used to rob the home, the host family may ask the student to pay for a new lock. A new lock costs between € 30 and € 300.
- The house may not have a charcoal, coal-dust, gas, or similar type of heater.

## Eating Abroad

### Mealtimes and Food

Your host family will provide you with three meals per day: *desayuno*, *almuerzo*, and *cena*. Here is what you can expect from Spanish meals:

#### Desayuno

This is not a major meal in Spain. You get up in the morning, and have a small amount of food—probably just toast—and either coffee or hot chocolate/chocolate milk. You would be hard pressed to find a Spanish person who has ever eaten eggs for breakfast instead of lunch, and pancakes are very rare (although pancake mix and maple syrup as a gift can make you a hit with your hosts for the entire stay)!

- Coffee (café) is served many ways: solo (black, more like espresso), cortado (just a hint of milk), con leche (half milk, half coffee; like a latte).
- The other morning beverage of choice is Cola Cao, a powdered chocolate milk mix that can be served hot or cold.
- Toast will be served with olive oil, butter, margarine, or jam. The bread will most likely be fresh from the neighborhood bakery, not store-bought sliced bread.

#### Comida

*Comida* or *almuerzo* is the biggest and most important meal of the day. It is generally eaten between 2 and 3 pm and consists of two dishes. One is usually vegetables or a soup and the other may be some sort of meat, fish, or eggs usually with fried potatoes or a salad. You will also most likely have either fruit or yogurt for dessert.

Siesta - You've heard of siesta before, but you may not be familiar with what it really means. We generally take it to mean "nap." Really, siesta is a time to rest, stay out of the heat, and spend time with family. It generally starts around 1:30 pm—when most shops begin to close—and lasts until 5 pm. However, in Barcelona you won't see shops close during the day.

#### Cena

Cena is another small meal, although more substantial than breakfast. It is generally served between 9 and 10 pm and usually includes a bowl of soup, fish, a Spanish tortilla, or possibly a sandwich.

### What You Might Expect from Spanish Food

Spaniards tend to rely heavily on locally raised and grown food which helps explain the differences in regional Spanish cuisine and the seasonal availability of certain foods. Although this may restrict your diet in certain ways, the food you eat will probably be fresher than what you are used to in North America, given that it has not traveled

very far to get to your table!

- You can expect to have bread with every meal. Many of the foods you will eat are fried in olive oil, and olive oil is used as a topping for bread or toast as well. Spanish food will probably seem strange to you at first. You've probably never eaten fried eggs and hot dogs together in your life, let alone for lunch. Your salads may be made of just iceberg lettuce with olive oil and vinegar. Trust us: it will grow on you. Sooner than you know, you'll be back home and pining away for a *bocadillo de jamón serrano* or a few churros.
- You can't expect to get the same things you'd have at home. Your host mother won't provide you with soda, juice, milk, or beer and wine at mealtimes. Most Spanish families drink water at lunch and dinner—usually tap water, which may have been chilled in the refrigerator. If there is yogurt in the refrigerator, it's probably for dessert at lunch or dinner, so don't take it for a snack without asking first! In fact, always ask your host mother's permission before taking anything for a snack.

There are a number of foods that will become a part of your daily life in *Barcelona*. Below you will find a description of some of the most important foods you may have while in Spain, but many you'll have to discover once you arrive. Don't worry: it will be a pleasant surprise.

### **Tapas**

*Tapas* could be anything – this is a way of eating rather than a type of food. *Tapas* are small servings of food. You'll typically have them at a party or out at a restaurant with friends, when you just want to have a bite to eat while socializing. You'll get to try all sorts of things at once. (See photo below).

### **Jamón serrano**

*Jamón* is a very important food in Spain. You will probably be surprised at how much ham there is in Spanish cuisine. The favorite ham product in Spain is *jamón serrano*, a salted, cured ham that is sliced thin and is typically served either on its own or in a *bocadillo*. *Jamón serrano* is often compared to prosciutto. It is such a big part of life there that you will see it everywhere. You'll probably see a leg of *jamón* in your kitchen; you'll certainly see one in bars and restaurants around the city.



**Tortilla** (*tortilla española* or *tortilla de patatas*) – This is one of the favorite and most common dishes in Spain. It is, for all intents and purposes, an omelet, but not the type of omelet you are accustomed to. This *tortilla* is chock full of fried potatoes (sometimes onions or another vegetable as well), and very thick and dense. It is served everywhere and for everything. You can get it in little pieces for *tapas* at a party, it will be served in big wedges at your place of residence

for a meal, or it can even be sliced up and stuck between two halves of a baguette for a sandwich or *bocadillo*.

**Bocadillo** – A *bocadillo* is a sandwich served on a baguette. It usually only has one filling, which can be ham or pork, sausage, tuna, cheese, *tortilla*, and a few other items, depending on where you go. A *bocadillo* may be served with mayonnaise, ketchup, or spicy *salsa brava*.

**Paella** – One of the most popular dishes in the coastal region consisting of rice, vegetables, and either meat or seafood.

## **Special Dietary Needs: Vegetarians, Vegans, and Gluten-Free**

Being vegetarian or vegan is not very common in Spain. As you will notice from the descriptions of Spanish food in our Know Before You Go Guide, Spanish culture is not particularly vegetarian-friendly. It is possible, however, to be a vegetarian or vegan in Spain. Along with the variety of salads, available at most restaurants, Spain offers some delicious breads and cheeses (like the famous manchego-sheep's milk cheese), and a number of great vegetable dishes. But be warned, you should be very careful in restaurants and make sure that a bean dish you are ordering doesn't have ham in it anywhere. Some vegetarians will opt to eat fish while in Spain; this will give you more options and might allow you to eat more healthily while abroad. All-in-all having a meat- or animal-product-free diet should be nothing to worry about, Spain is more welcoming to vegetarians and vegans by the day, and you will see that supermarkets have most of your usual substitutes and many cafés and restaurants are offering

veggie-friendly options. If you enjoy dining out, we recommend using the website or App Happy Cow to find amazing vegetarian and vegan eateries.

If you plan to change your diet and begin eating fish, meat, or even dairy, you should start incorporating these foods into your diet before you leave, so that you will not be sick at the start of your program in Barcelona.

Students requiring a gluten-free diet should let us know right away, so that our Resident Director may find an appropriate homestay that can provide such meals. You must let us know about any dietary restrictions or food allergies by emailing [info@spanishstudies.org](mailto:info@spanishstudies.org).

Note: Some dietary accommodations may require an additional fee.

## Being a North American Abroad

Before you travel abroad to a new and unknown place, it is helpful to be aware of the different stereotypes and predispositions that Spaniards may have about you as a North American. North Americans and other foreigners in general may have a bad reputation in parts of the world. They can be perceived as demanding, noisy, not speaking the local language and expecting everyone else to speak theirs—and that doesn't even begin to cover whether people in other nations agree with your home government's policies and actions. It is important to recognize that these stereotypes exist, but it is also your job to represent your country in a positive light and try to demonstrate that not every North American fits the above stereotypes. Below are some helpful tips to think about before you go abroad so that you can come across as knowledgeable and culturally aware.

- Educate yourself about Spain and its culture - You can find resources online and in books to assist you with learning background information and the cultural norms of the country before you go.
- Read basic factual and historical information on your host country – Also, be prepared for questions that Spaniards may ask you about the United States or Canada such as basic history, politics, and current events.
- Learn about current events in Spain - It is also helpful to be aware of what is currently going on in the country in regards to the economy, politics, news, etc. Remember, Spain is part of the European Union, so it wouldn't hurt to know a little bit about that as well.

### Culture Shock

Culture shock is a natural and common feeling that many students may experience when they study abroad. Basically, it is a feeling of being overwhelmed and confused by how unfamiliar your new surroundings seem. Although it might feel unconquerable when you experience it, you'll get through it as everyone does. Culture shock is generally broken down into a number of stages:

1. **Honeymoon Phase:** You arrive in Spain and you think, "This is great! Everything is new and exciting and I love it here!" You're having tours of the city, you're meeting new people, getting to understand the language more easily; everything is going really well and you're so glad you decided to study abroad.

0. **Hostile Phase:** After the excitement of being in Barcelona starts to wear off, you may start to feel negative and frustrated with adjusting to the culture. You might feel like it takes forever to get anything done, you can't talk to your parents as much as you like, you're tired of all the new foods, locations, daily routines, and having to speak Spanish all the time. You might even start to wonder why you ever decided to study abroad in the first place.

0. **Understanding/Sense of Humor Phase:** After a while, you accept the cultural differences that surround you, and things start to feel okay again. As you get to be more familiar with the Spanish culture and lifestyle, you start to appreciate it more and become more confident in your surroundings. You are able to laugh at the misunderstandings that once made you so angry.

0. **Integration Phase:** You become accustomed to the good and bad aspects of Spanish culture and you incorporate them into your own life. The Spanish lifestyle becomes part of your lifestyle; you like afternoon *siesta*,



you love olive oil on your toast, you feel comfortable and happy in Barcelona. This phase will last for the rest of your time abroad.

0. **Re-Entry Shock:** When you go home again, you will experience another type of culture shock. You find that things at home have changed and that you have changed too. You don't know any of the songs on the radio or the phrases people are using. You may feel frustrated by others' lack of knowledge about issues that affect the country you've grown to love. You will miss your daily life in Spain and worry that you're talking too much about your experiences abroad.

0. **Reintegration Phase:** You will get comfortable at home again soon; you'll be happy to see your family and friends, and you'll always remember your time in Barcelona. You'll be able to express to people what was so meaningful about your experience and will be able to take the lessons you've learned abroad with you as you go on in life. You'll find that you are a changed person, more mature, more experienced, and with great memories of Spain.

If you feel like your culture shock is overwhelming you to the point where you need to talk to somebody about it, please speak directly with the Resident Director. Our Barcelona staff is very supportive and always available to help you get through any difficulties you may experience while you're abroad.

## Gender Relations

Although it is slowly changing, you may notice that in Spain men and women still tend to carry out traditional gender roles. In your Spanish home, it wouldn't be uncommon to see that oftentimes your host mother does all of the cooking and cleaning; and it may appear that men in the family take that for granted.

## Catcalling, or the *Piropo*

You will likely encounter a cultural phenomenon called the *piropo* (something like a catcall). What this means is that, if you are a woman, you may get shouted at on the streets of Spain. "*Eh, guapa, ven aquí...*" It is almost always harmless, but it can make you feel uncomfortable nonetheless. The best way to deal with a man who shouts a *piropo* to you is to just ignore him and keep on walking. Remember that *piropos* are only annoying shouts. Physical contact and/or incessant harassment is never okay and is not acceptable no matter where you are.

Things to remember when it comes to *piropos*:

- They're inevitable. Some are worse than others but all are annoying.
- Forget your manners; it is best not to make eye contact and smile at strangers on the street, especially to strange men yelling at you on the street.
- Keep on walking and don't respond. If the person is persistent, say *Déjeme en paz* or something similar.
- It's a part of the culture, so the men don't necessarily think that what they're doing is offensive.

If a *piropo* turns into physical contact or you experience any other uncomfortable incident, talk with SSA staff; always feel free to call the emergency number.

## LGBTQIA+ Students Abroad

Spain is often considered to be relatively friendly towards LGBTQIA+ individuals. Federal laws have been enacted to protect the rights of LGBTQIA+ citizens and same-sex marriage has been legal throughout Spain since 2005. Many Spaniards view homosexuality with a sense of passive indifference; if you are respectful towards them, they will respect and accept you. LGBTQIA+ communities and some social scenes are present in several of the country's major cities, including Madrid, Barcelona, Valencia, and other locations.

Still, it is worth noting that LGBTQIA+ acceptance is a relatively new concept in Spanish society. Some traditional conservative values do exist, particularly among the older generations and among those residing in rural areas of the country. If you identify yourself as LGBTQIA+ and you intend to share this fact with others while studying abroad, be prepared to answer occasional frank questions from your Spanish peers. Spaniards can sometimes be very direct and so these types of questions are simply their way of expressing interest and meeting their curiosity.

When talking with others about your sexuality, it is up to you to decide whom to tell and when to tell them. The Resident Director, as well as our staff in both Spain and the United States, is always available to answer your questions and concerns, so you can feel comfortable speaking with them on this subject. The SSA program is a safe space in which diversity is respected. Whether or not you identify as LGBTQIA+, recognize that there may be gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender students on your SSA program and in your classes in Barcelona. It is important to be respectful and to approach this reality with an open mind.

Please visit this [website](#) for more resources for the LGBTQIA+ community abroad.

## Religious Diversity

The religious makeup of Spain reflects its ethnic homogeneity. Though the majority of Spain identifies as Roman Catholic, a sizable portion of Spaniards are non-practicing Catholics. Although the Roman Catholic tradition has helped form modern-day Spanish values, you will find that many Spaniards do not adhere strictly to the policies set forth by the Catholic Church.

If you are observing religious traditions different from Roman Catholicism, it is important to explain to your host family and Spanish friends what the tradition means to you. Keep an open mind about people's reactions to your religious beliefs; it is possible that they've never met someone with of your religious persuasion before. If you are respectful of other people's spirituality, they will be respectful of yours. Communities of religious minorities can be found in metropolitan centers. It is possible to become involved in any religious community while studying abroad, just ask our staff and they'll point you in the right direction! Follow [this link](#) for one student's take on religion in Spain.

## Race and Ethnicity

A former SSA student was once asked by a Spanish friend about her ethnic background. She went into detail about all the different countries her ancestors had come from. The Spanish friend responded: "That's the difference between us. When I think about my heritage, I see Romans and Arabs." Spanish society is fairly homogeneous—or at least they like to think of it that way. Spaniards are Europeans and, generally, they do not use terms like "Latinx" to refer to themselves.

Barcelona is a cosmopolitan city, with a number of tourists and international students there at any given time. In recent years, Barcelona has seen an increase in its foreign population; however. The majority of the immigrant populations come from Northern Africa, South America, and Eastern Europe. You will find that most people of color in Barcelona are from Northern Africa. As is the case in most European countries, Spain is slowly adjusting to the impact of immigration on society. Black and Asian students especially may find that they feel very different in Spain. You may get stared at in the streets or asked ignorant questions. You may overhear some of the frustrating racial stereotypes that are built into the Spanish language (the term "*trabajo de negros*" is often used for physical work, while "*trabajo de chinos*" is used to describe detail-oriented work; Muslims of all backgrounds are often referred to as *moros*, referring to the Moors of modern-day Morocco who controlled parts of the Iberian Peninsula during the Middle Ages).

Just as women should ignore strange men who shout and stare at them, as a racial minority in Spain, it is not your responsibility to change the views of the whole country. Comments and rude behavior from strangers do not merit a response on your part; on the other hand, we don't want you to pretend that nothing has happened. One way to get through the discomfort you might feel is to talk about it. If you feel uncomfortable in any situation or if you just need to talk about your feelings, contact the Resident Director, and let her know what is going on. Crossing cultural boundaries always involves some degree of social discomfort, at some point or another. Students of color have told us that while they have encountered isolated instances of racial prejudice in Spain, these incidents did not make their overall study abroad experience any less enjoyable.

## Comments from African-American Students:

Students of African ancestry sometimes ask if they will face unique challenges in Spain. We thank the following alumni for their comments directed to fellow African-American students:

- "Compared to the United States, some cities in Spain are not as culturally diverse. You might receive stares or certain looks from people, perhaps out of curiosity because of physical appearance. Whatever the case may

be, don't let these things hinder you. In the beginning, you may be annoyed, but try to turn the situation around by speaking to them, or just ignore it." Erecka Matthews, Xavier University-New Orleans.

- "While in Alicante there were several instances when locals spoke to me in Arabic or French on the street. Many people from northern Africa settle in Alicante and I thought that it was interesting to blend in as a local. Although you may encounter negative stereotypes for these groups of people living in Spain, it can also enrich your cultural awareness during your time abroad." Holley Quisenberry, Heidelberg University
- "Remember to purchase all of your hair care and hygiene products before you come to Spain. Although there are different varieties, not all of them are offered here." Felicia Jamison, Mercer University.
- "For the males: If you want a good haircut, go to a peluquería. Since these are professionals, I believe they have the training and equipment to cut hair, including a tape up, no matter what nationality one may be. If you go to a small barbershop and/or a shop with one man and one chair, you may not receive the same results as those from a peluquería. There is a peluquería named Koupas on Calle Bailén." Carlos M.Parker, Clemson University.

## Everyday Safety

As a visitor in another country, it is always a good idea not to draw attention to yourself, but it is especially helpful not to draw attention to yourself as a foreigner. Many Spaniards perceive North Americans to be affluent, so you may feel that you're treated differently. At the same time, travelers of all nationalities are targets of petty theft. To avoid being labeled as a typical tourist, there are a few rules you should follow:

- Don't speak English loudly in the streets. This can easily attract pickpockets and scam artists, and could get you in even more trouble late at night—especially if you are in a less safe area of a city.
- Don't walk by yourself at night. Just as in any large city, nighttime is when many thieves will try to target tourists who are heading back to their hotels. Either walk with a friend or take a taxi any time you are out late. Any restaurant or club will call one for you.
- Don't wear clothes that will instantly identify you as a tourist (short shorts, flip flops, baseball caps).
- Don't invite thieves by wearing expensive jewelry or by carrying cameras, cell phones, or other expensive devices. In Spain it is common wisdom not to take out your wallet on the street. Also, if you are at a restaurant, never put your purse on the back of your chair or on the floor where it can be easily snatched up. Try to keep it in your lap or somewhere where you can keep a close eye on it.
- Don't leave your belongings unattended—no wallets placed on bars, no purses left at your table, no jackets left on the backs of chairs, and don't leave anything on the ground next to you.
- Be extra cautious while using public transport (subway, bus, train) and hold on close to your belongings. Backpacks and purses are easy targets, so make sure to have your zippers somewhere where you can see them.

Students unaccustomed to city life will learn to be more cautious when walking the streets of Barcelona. Spain is a safe country, but while living in Barcelona, you should still follow the same safety precautions you would in any big city in North America, and basic common sense should rule your actions. Although petty theft is the most common type of crime in the city, this does not mean that you are immune from any other type of dangerous situation. If an emergency situation does arise, please contact the Resident Director immediately.

## Personal Safety

Barcelona is a safe city. However, crime exists but it's almost non-existent. The common crimes seem to be robberies (never with a gun), purse snatchings and cell phone theft. These common crimes are mostly committed late at night, in crowded places or festivities that involve a large group of people together. Sadly, foreigners are often the target.

Here are some recommendations for your own personal safety:

- Make a lost document kit. Make photocopies of your passport, credit cards, ATM card, driver's license, student ID, and/or other valuable documents. Put these photocopies in an envelope and leave it at your home. If your documents are lost or stolen, having these photocopies will make the process of getting replacements much easier.

- Drink responsibly. Students are very easy targets when they get drunk. Cases of excessive drinking that have kept students from remembering what happened during an incident make it difficult to file an accurate police report or receive adequate help.
- Do not resist. If you are robbed, give up your valuables. Documents and belongings can be replaced, your physical safety is much more important.
- Don't walk alone at night. Particularly if you are a woman. We recommend going out in groups and never going out alone with a man you have recently met. Never walk alone after dark on solitary streets. Take taxis home after midnight and ask the driver to wait until you enter your building.
- Do not wear expensive jewelry.
- Within Spain, carry a copy of your passport or your resident permit, not the original. Keep the originals safe in your home.
- Carry in your wallet or purse only what you need. Unless you are going out to shop, carry only a little more money than you think you will be spending. Carry your house keys in a pocket, not a purse or backpack.
- Keep your personal belongings with you at all times.
- Do not hitch-hike or accept rides (car or motorbikes) from strangers. You don't know them and you don't know if they can be under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- Always wear the seatbelt. Besides your own safety, police will fine you for not wearing a seatbelt.

## Public Transportation

### Getting around Barcelona

Like your Spanish friends, you will be taking the bus or metro often to reach the University, and to explore the attractions around Barcelona. During orientation, at the start of the program, you will learn the details of the buses and metros available at various times. This will help you organize your route and any transfers you might wish to make. The center of Barcelona is very pedestrian friendly, which makes walking a practical and efficient means of transportation.

### How to get to UAB

Ask your host family about the best way to get to the university from your homestay. The closest bus stops to the University are Sant Quintí – Hospital de St Pau and Sant Antoni Maria Claret - Independència. The closest metro stops are Sant Pau/Dos de maig and Guinardó/Hospital de Sant Pau.

Metro: L2, L3, L5 Train: R2N, S1 Bus: 24, 67, 7, B24, H8, L95, V15

### How to get to UPF

Ask your host family/dorm about the best way to get to the university from your homestay. The UPF campus is stretched around the Barceloneta and Ciutadella area. The closest bus stops are Moll de la Fust, Hospital de Mar and Pg Lluís Companys/Arc de Triomf. The closest metro stops are Drassanes, Barceloneta or Arc de Triomf. Check which stop is closest to the building you need to visit.

Metro: L1, L3, L4 Train: R1, R3, R4, R7 Bus: 59, D20, H14, H16, V13, V19

### How to get to ELISAVA

Ask your host family about the best way to get to the university from your homestay. ELISAVA is located by La Rambla, close to the port. The closest bus stops are La Rambla – Pl del Teatre and La Rambla – Santa Mònica. The closest metro stop is Drassanes. Remember that the center of Barcelona is walkable! It might be nice to stop a station away (Barceloneta or Pl Catalunya for example) and walk to ELISAVA, if you have the time.

Metro: L3 Bus: 59, V13

### Prices

Individual ticket 2.40€, T-Día ticket (one-day) 10,50€, T-10 ticket (ten rides) 11,35€, T-Usual (unlimited rides or 30 days) 40,00€, T-Jove (3 months and unlimited rides for youth younger than 25), 80€. Depending on how much you plan to use public transportation, the Usual or T-Jove will give you more “bang for your buck.” For more information on the bus and metro lines in Barcelona, visit: [www.tmb.cat/en/home](http://www.tmb.cat/en/home).

While the bus lines run 24/7, the last metro arrives shortly after midnight on weekdays. On Saturdays it gets you from A to B all night long!

## Taxis

Taxis are available and affordable but are of course more expensive than taking the bus or metro. Taking a Taxi is a great option if you want to catch a ride home and the Metro is not running anymore. Barcelona Taxis are yellow and black and have a green light on the top. You should plan on spending around 10-15€ for an average taxi ride.

## Getting Around Europe

Since all of Europe is only about half the size of the continental U.S., it is very easy to see many different places during your time in Spain. The train is always a popular option since they often have overnight options for longer trips as well as discounts for those under 26. Train stations are generally located in the city center making travel easy once you have arrived at your destination. Trains also serve smaller cities and towns that may not be easily accessed by planes.

Barcelona is served by a major airport. You will find that airlines like Ryanair, Vueling, and EasyJet provide very inexpensive direct flights to many destinations around Europe. Keep in mind that they may charge for bags and other things that may not be included.

- Ryanair – [www.ryanair.com](http://www.ryanair.com)
- Vueling – [www.vueling.com](http://www.vueling.com)
- EasyJet – [www.easyjet.com](http://www.easyjet.com)

## Keeping in Touch with Family and Friends

### Mail

Your mailing address will be that of your homestay. You will receive your homestay address via email 1-2 weeks prior to the start of your program.

Mail service is generally reliable in Spain. Be sure that friends and family send letters by airmail, since surface mail can take up to three months. One can expect airmail letters to take between seven and fifteen days to be delivered. For urgent letters, it is best to use Express Mail or Global Priority services (3-7 working days), or a delivery service such as UPS, DHL, or Federal Express (3-5 working days).

### Information on Packages

If you or your parents plan to send a package to Spain, you should know that the Spanish Customs Office will levy an import tax before you can collect it.

- Any package sent from North America to Spain via USPS will be checked in Madrid and are subject to the following charges:
  - 3% on the value of the package contents if the content exceeds 150€ worth of products.
  - 16% tax on the value of the package contents.
  - 4.41€ for a Custom Fee.
  - 20.18€ for SPEEDTRANS (mailing from customs in Madrid to final destination).
- All medicine needs to be sent with a letter from the student's doctor back home. Medicine sent via regular mail needs to have a letter from a Spanish doctor stating that the medicine in the package cannot be found in Spain. This is extremely difficult to obtain.
- **IMPORTANT:** Packages sent via private mailing companies (UPS, DHL, etc.) are not subject to the charges or rules specified in numbers 1 and 2 above.
- To ensure that your package delivery is not delayed, please plan to be as specific as possible in your customs declaration. For example, write "used cotton shirts" instead of "used personal items."
- If in doubt, contact the nearest Spanish consulate.

\*SSA does not recommend receiving parcels from the U.S.



## Cell Phones

You have a few options when it comes to cell phones in Spain:

- You may activate an international plan through your cell phone carrier in the U.S.
- You can purchase a Spanish SIM card once in Barcelona to use in your U.S. cell phone. If you choose this option, please contact your U.S. cell phone carrier so they can unlock your cell phone (this will enable your cell phone to work with any SIM card regardless of the carrier).
- You can purchase a Spanish cell phone once in Barcelona. These phones work just like a prepaid calling card; when your saldo (balance) runs out, you can purchase more.

## Messaging Service

WhatsApp is the most common messaging service used in Spain. We recommend you download WhatsApp before your arrival to communicate with your host family.

iMessage will usually continue to work over WiFi. In Spain, iMessage isn't free, so you have to activate the airplane mode and connect to WiFi if you decide to use it with a Spanish SIM card.

## Making Phone Calls

Most students find that the easiest and cheapest way to call home is through Skype, Zoom, etc. However, if your family needs to know how to call your landline or cell phone number in Spain, or if you need to be able to reach them from a regular phone, here is some calling advice below.

The major calling codes you will need to be aware of are:

- Spain's country code is 34
- Barcelona's area code is 93

## Landlines

Spanish landline phone numbers total nine digits: a two- or three-digit area code and a six- or seven-digit phone number beginning with the digit 9 (or sometimes 8) but excluding 90 and 80.

This is what a landline number in Barcelona will look like:

Area Code	Phone Number
93	xxx-xxxx

To make a call from landline to landline in Barcelona or somewhere else in Spain, you will need to dial the 2-digit Area Code + Phone Number.

If your friends or family need to call Barcelona from a landline from the U.S., they should follow these instructions:

Exit Code	Country Code	Area Code	Phone Number
011	34	93	xxx-xxxx

## Cell Phone Numbers

Spanish mobile phone numbers are assigned a 3-digit mobile code based on the provider and usually begin with the digit 6 (or sometimes 7), followed by 6 digits.

This is what a mobile phone number will look like:

Mobile Code	Phone Number
6xx	xxx-xxx

When making a call to or from a Spanish mobile phone the same rules apply as in North America. You must dial the Area/Mobile Code + Phone Number.

## Calling North America

As we said before, using Zoom, Skype, Whatsapp, or Facetime will probably be the easiest and cheapest way to call North America from Spain.

If you ever need to call a U.S. or Canadian phone number directly from Spain, follow these instructions:

Exit Code	Country Code	Area Code	Phone Number
00	1	xxx	xxx-xxxx

## Computers and Internet Access

SSA guarantees internet access in all homestays. If for any unexpected reason the student has problems accessing the internet, talk to your Resident Director.

## Billing Details

SSA is affiliated with over 80 colleges and universities. For most affiliated schools, payment is made to SSA directly by the school. However, billing arrangements vary between universities, so we ask that you pay close attention to the information received with your acceptance email and in the View/Pay Bill section of your online account.

### Payment of Fees

The non-refundable deposit is due within 10 days of your acceptance to the program. In cases where the school is sending payment directly to SSA, you should ask your college or university to discuss this with us directly. Note: The due date for the non-refundable deposit may not be deferred.

Payment must be received by our U.S. office no later than the due dates listed in your online account. You will not be admitted to housing or classes until all payments have been received. Special arrangements are made only in exceptional cases and may include interest rates and service charges. Your transcript will not be released until all financial obligations you incurred during the school term have been satisfied, including payment for unreturned library books and for cell phone charges.

If you anticipate that you will have financial aid to use toward your program payment, please contact the U.S. office regarding the necessary paperwork to defer your final program payment due date. Please note that the due date for the non-refundable deposit may not be deferred.

Note: All checks should be made payable to The Center for Cross-Cultural Study, Inc

### Financial Aid

You must speak with the financial aid office at your home university regarding the school's policies for the transfer of financial aid for study abroad. If financial aid will transfer, there are some forms that must be completed in order to coordinate transfer of funds and the deferment of the final payment due date if aid will be disbursed after that time. The non-refundable deposit due date may not be deferred, even if the amount is covered by financial aid.

The SSA Financial Aid Deferment Form, included in your acceptance packet, should be submitted to your home university's financial aid office to be completed and returned to SSA before your program final payment due date. You will also need to make sure that the financial office is able to coordinate with SSA regarding any forms that they need completed by SSA to transfer financial aid, such as a Consortium Agreement.

## Scholarships

### SSA Scholarship Program

The SSA Scholarship Program is open to all students enrolled in all of our Barcelona programs. We offer four \$1500 scholarships for semester programs, five \$500 scholarships for summer programs, and one \$500 scholarship for the January Term. Students may apply for only one of the two scholarship options: the Merit-Based Scholarship or the Diversity Scholarship.

Award recipients are chosen based on the submission of one original essay in English. For more information about the scholarship program and to download the application, visit [www.spanishstudies.org/scholarships](http://www.spanishstudies.org/scholarships).

While all eligible students are encouraged to apply, the SSA Scholarship Program is very competitive and only a handful of awards are made per term. Students will be notified before leaving for Spain if they will receive a scholarship. A check is sent to the student's permanent home address after arrival in Barcelona and is not used toward payment of program fees.

### SSA Alumni Scholarship Fund

The SSA Alumni Scholar Fund was developed in 2004 and designed to benefit returning students wishing to embark on an additional cross-cultural adventure with SSA. SSA now offers all alumni students a stipend to apply towards another SSA experience in Spain, Argentina, Puerto Rico, or Cuba. Please note that all SSA Alumni who choose to attend an additional program with SSA will automatically receive the Alumni Scholarship. Alumni who receive an Alumni Scholarship are also eligible to apply for the SSA Scholarship Program. Alumni scholarships are as follows:

- Semester: \$1,500
- Short Term: \$500

### Outside Scholarship Opportunities

For a list of other study abroad scholarship opportunities not offered through SSA, please refer to our Scholarships Page at [www.spanishstudies.org/scholarships](http://www.spanishstudies.org/scholarships).

## Possible Additional Fees

### Transcript Fees

Students whose home institution requires a transcript from a U.S. degree-granting institution may obtain academic credit and a transcript from our School of Record, Heidelberg University in Tiffin, Ohio; an additional fee of \$250 is charged by Heidelberg for this service. If the student has requested this transcript service due to a home institution requirement, a request form is included with the SSA acceptance packet and must be returned to SSA before the start of the program. In order to facilitate the issuing of the transcript the student may be billed by SSA on behalf of Heidelberg University for the additional fee. SSA will then pay Heidelberg University for issuing the transcript.

### Housing between Programs

Students participating in an academic year or other programs combining two or more terms of study may choose to travel between terms or stay with their host family. Housing between terms is included in the program costs.

## Refunds

If you decide not to attend an SSA program after you have been accepted, please send us a written notification immediately. You can inform us of your decision via email at [info@spanishstudies.org](mailto:info@spanishstudies.org).

Penalties for withdrawal from a SSA program are assessed based upon the length of time between notice of your withdrawal and the start of the program. Unless SSA cancels the program, the deposit is always non-refundable.

In addition to the deposit forfeiture, withdrawal from an SSA program incurs the following penalties:

- 25% of program fee for withdrawals between final payment due date and 30 days prior to the start of the program.
- 25% of the room and board fee and 100% of the tuition, study tours, general education, and orientation fees for withdrawals between 29 days prior to the start of the program and 1 day prior to program start.

There is no refund for any portion of the program on or after the program start date.

Should SSA cancel a program before the start date, we will apply any payments made (including the deposit) to a future program, or we will reimburse the full amount paid, including the deposit. There will be no refunds in case of program interruption once a program has started; instead, provisions will be made to ensure that students are able to complete their credits, such as: students will be accommodated in their residence abroad and tuition will be delivered virtually with assistance by SSA professors and staff.

In the case of homestays, SSA may change unsatisfactory lodgings but will not refund any portion of room and board fees after a student's arrival at a home. If students find their housing to be unsatisfactory, they should notify the program's resident director or staff immediately.

## Places to Stay in Barcelona

### Hostels

Kabul Party Hostel  
 Plaça Reial, 17, 08002, Barcelona, Spain  
 Tel: +34 93 318 51 90  
[info@kabul.es](mailto:info@kabul.es)  
[www.kabul.es](http://www.kabul.es)

The Hipstel - Paseo de Gracia  
 C/ de Valencia 266, 08007, Barcelona, Spain  
 Tel: +34 931 745 417  
<http://thehipstel.com/>

St. Christopher's Barcelona  
 C/ de Bergara 3, 08002, Barcelona, Spain Tel:  
 +34 931 75 14 01  
<https://www.st-christophers.co.uk/barcelona/>

Sant Jordi Hostel Gracia  
 C/ de Terol, 35, 08012, Barcelona, Spain Tel:  
 +34 933 424 161  
[gracia@santjordihostels.com](mailto:gracia@santjordihostels.com)  
<https://www.santjordihostels.com/es/>

Sant Jordi Hostel Sagrada Familia  
 C/ Freser, 5, 08026, Barcelona, Spain Tel:  
 +34 934 460 517  
[sagradafamilia@santjordihostels.com](mailto:sagradafamilia@santjordihostels.com)  
<https://www.santjordihostels.com/es/>

Sant Jordi Hostel Rock Palace  
 C/ de Terol, 35, 08012, Barcelona, Spain Tel:  
 +34 934 533 281  
[rockpalace@santjordihostels.com](mailto:rockpalace@santjordihostels.com)  
<https://www.santjordihostels.com/es/>

## Hotels

The Park Hotel  
Avinguda Marquès de l'Argentera, 11, 08003, Barcelona, Spain  
Tel: +34 933 196 000  
[info@parkhotelbarcelona.com](mailto:info@parkhotelbarcelona.com)  
[www.parkhotelbarcelona.com](http://www.parkhotelbarcelona.com)

The Mirror – Barcelona  
C/ Còrsega 255, 08036, Barcelona, Spain Tel:  
+34 932 028 686  
[info@themirrorbarcelona.com](mailto:info@themirrorbarcelona.com)  
[www.themirrorbarcelona.com](http://www.themirrorbarcelona.com)

Andante Hotel – Barcelona  
Av. Drassanes, 23-25, 08001, Barcelona, Spain  
Tel: +34 93 441 25 45  
[info@andantehotel.com](mailto:info@andantehotel.com)  
[www.andantehotel.com/en/](http://www.andantehotel.com/en/)

Catalonia Ramblas  
C/ Pelai, 28, 08001, Barcelona, Spain Tel:+34  
932 360 059 [ramblas@cataloniahotels.com](mailto:ramblas@cataloniahotels.com)  
[www.hoteles-catalonia.com](http://www.hoteles-catalonia.com)

Hotel Regina  
C/ Bergara, 4 - 08002, Barcelona, Spain Tel.  
+34 93 301 32 32  
[frontdesk@reginahotel.com](mailto:frontdesk@reginahotel.com)  
[www.reginahotel.com/en](http://www.reginahotel.com/en)



# After the Program Ends

## Alumni



Studying abroad is an experience that transforms you long after you have returned home. We help our alumni to develop their new found skills as they continue their adventures through life. Whether in developing their careers, returning abroad, or continuing their education, SSA is committed to helping students maximize the benefits from their time abroad. Always feel free to keep in touch with us, and if you have an incredible story to share, email [info@spanishstudies.org](mailto:info@spanishstudies.org) with the details!

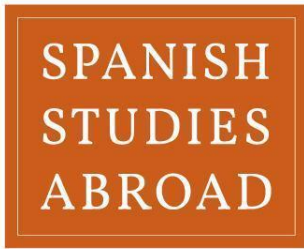
Our website also has many important resources for alumni, such as information on reverse culture shock, re-entry conferences, and our Alumni Ambassador Program.

## Additional Transcript Requests

After the program ends, you will receive an official transcript sent to the designated recipient on your Home School Approval Form and you will be emailed a student copy. Please see the section called “Transcripts” on page 18 of this handbook.

If you need an official transcript in the future, please visit our [website](#) for detailed information.

Note: If you received a transcript from a U.S. degree-granting institution (Heidelberg University), you will need to contact Heidelberg University to request an additional transcript. Please visit the university’s [website](#) for information on how to request a transcript and for information about associated fees.



# The Center for Cross-Cultural Study

## Program Conditions and Release Statement

I hereby release and discharge Spanish Studies Abroad/The Center for Cross-Cultural Study Inc. and The Center for Cross-Cultural Study, S.L. (CC-CS) and its agents, employees, and representatives from all suits, claims, or liability of any nature arising out of or related to my participation in an SSA/CC-CS program including, without limitation, claims for personal injury or property damage.

As a program participant, I authorize SSA/CC-CS to share details of my program with my family, my home school, and my host school, as needed. I also authorize SSA/CC-CS to share details of my academic record, such as my home school transcript, with my host school abroad. Furthermore, I authorize SSA/CC-CS to provide my home school with a transcript of the coursework I complete as an SSA/CC-CS participant. I understand that if I am rendered ineligible for a program after my initial acceptance, I am not entitled to any refund from SSA/CC-CS. I acknowledge that it is my responsibility to maintain the minimum eligibility requirements from the point of my acceptance until the commencement of my program.

I release all materials from my experience abroad to be used by SSA/CC-CS and its affiliates exclusively for promotional reasons. This includes, but is not limited to, photo, print, video, digital mediums and social media posts or pictures. I understand that I can be removed or dismissed from the SSA/CC-CS programs at any time, either prior to or after departure, for violating the Academic Pledge and other published SSA/CC-CS policies.

In the event that program participants become incompetent for any reason, including (but not limited to) injury, accident, mental illness, disease, or loss of consciousness, they appoint SSA/CC-CS as their guardian, and authorize SSA/CC-CS to take any action which it deems appropriate under the circumstances, including (but not limited to) arranging for medical or psychiatric treatment, administering prescription drugs, or transporting them to their home country.

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

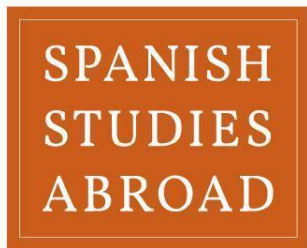
Student's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**[Note: If applicant is under 18 years of age, a parent or legal guardian must sign the following declaration and release]**

I, the undersigned [father] [mother] [guardian] of \_\_\_\_\_, a minor, do hereby consent to their participation in the SSA/CC-CS program and do forever release, acquit, discharge, and covenant to hold harmless Spanish Studies Abroad/The Center for Cross-Cultural Study, Inc. and The Center for Cross-Cultural Study, S.L. and its officers, agents and employees from any and all actions, causes of action, and claims on account of, or in any way growing out of, directly or indirectly, all known and unknown personal injuries or property damage which I may now or hereafter have as the parent or guardian of said minor, and also all claims or right of action for damages which said minor has or hereafter may acquire, either before or after they have reached their majority resulting from participation in any SSA/CC-CS programs.

Parent/Guardian's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian's Signature: \_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



# The Center for Cross-Cultural Study

## Academic Pledge

### SSA Code of Conduct

Studying abroad requires a significant commitment to personal responsibility. While on an SSA program, you are, in effect, a cultural ambassador for your home country, a representative of your home institution, and a member of your adoptive community.

In addition to the Program Conditions and Release Statement that all students sign as part of the application process to SSA, you also agree to apply the same standards of conduct and academic integrity while abroad as you would at your home institution. These standards include, but are not limited to:

1. Following honest academic standards and maintaining your commitment to academic growth.
2. Strict adherence to host country laws and customs.
3. Respect for your host families and fellow program participants.
4. Respect for SSA property, professors and staff.
5. General personal and academic practices in line with those outlined by your home institution.

### Spanish-Only Language Policy (Applicable to students in the Spanish Studies Program and the Integrated Studies Program only)

The Spanish-Only Language Policy is fundamental to the educational philosophy of SSA. It is a tool that promotes cultural integration and active learning, where students put into practice what they are learning. This is the best way to develop both fluency in Spanish and a deeper understanding of Spanish culture. The benefits of adhering to the Spanish-Only Language Policy, no matter your initial language level, are great:

- You will improve your ability to understand and express yourself in Spanish.
- As fluency increases, you will gain a greater awareness of the local culture as you develop relationships with your host family, professors, and friends.
- You will experience a greater feeling of accomplishment in your integration, while demonstrating a higher level of respect towards the local culture.

Living abroad provides an opportunity for total immersion in the language and culture – but only if each and every student actively seeks out this experience. The immersion experience begins NOW, as you get to know your fellow students on the SSA program. You may find that speaking only in Spanish is awkward and even somewhat isolating at first, but years of experience have proven that it is the best way to improve your language ability. While each student makes an individual commitment to using only Spanish, this is also a collective effort that contributes to the progress of every student. To help you get the most out of your

experience, you and all of your fellow students attending programs with SSA are required to adhere to the Spanish-Only Language Policy.

Students are expected to use Spanish in all written and verbal communications while abroad. Students are NOT expected to speak in Spanish when they are faced with an emergency, when speaking with family members, and on occasions when it is absolutely necessary to use English. However, speaking English in the presence of other SSA students is considered a violation of the policy and must be avoided at all times.

### **Academic Pledge**

1. In signing this Language Pledge, I agree to use Spanish as my sole language of communication while participating in SSA programs. I understand that failure to comply with this Pledge will result in a five-point deduction from the final grade of the mandatory course required of that program and may also result in expulsion from the program without receiving a refund or academic credit.
2. I have read and understood the Academic Pledge and agree to the conditions.

Student's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Student's signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_