

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN



STUDY ABROAD HANDBOOK

SPRING 2017

The Emory College Study Abroad office and the University of Cape Town established an exchange agreement in 2000, allowing for Emory undergraduates to spend a semester or

academic year at UCT. In return, UCT graduate students or faculty are hosted on Emory's campus. The purpose of this handbook is to help students prepare for their time at UCT as well as provide valuable insight into how to maximize your experience in South Africa. Below you will find important academic, health and safety information as well as other pertinent logistical information.



BEFORE YOU DEPART

PREPARING FOR YOUR SEMESTER ABROAD

- Take at least one African or African-American studies course before you depart.
- Read some of the classic South African literature. Some suggestions include:
 - *Long Walk to Freedom* by Nelson Mandela
 - *Kaffir Boy* by Mark Mathabane
 - *Disgrace* by J.M. Coetzee
 - *Cry, the Beloved Country* by Alan Paton
 - *Tomorrow is Another Country* by Allister Sparks
 - *The Covenant* by James A. Michener
- Begin reading a local newspaper online. Check out:
 - *Mail and Guardian* (<http://www.mg.co.za/>)
 - *Cape Times* (<http://www.capetimes.co.za/>)
 - *Cape Argus* (<http://www.capeargus.co.za/>)
 - *BBC News Africa* (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world/africa/>)
 - *Business Day* (<http://www.businessday.co.za/>)
- Register with U.S. Embassy through the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) BEFORE you leave: <https://step.state.gov/step/>

VISA INFORMATION

Applying for a visa can be tedious and takes time – that's why we would strongly encourage you to *begin the process early*. There are some items which you will only receive after your confirmation letter from UCT arrives, but start getting things together now so that the moment your letter from UCT arrives you can head to the nearest embassy to apply for your visa!

First of all, where to apply:

Visa applicants are required to apply for visas in person at the South African mission. No appointment is necessary. Find the mission nearest to you in the list below.

For residents of Connecticut, Delaware, Kentucky, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Tennessee, Vermont, West Virginia:

The South African Consulate General in New York City

Attention: Home Affairs Section

333 East 38th Street, 9th Floor

New York NY 10016

Tel: (212) 213-4880

Fax: (212) 856-1575

Email: consular.ny@dirco.gov.za

Website: <http://www.southafrica-newyork.net>

For residents of Arkansas, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Wisconsin:

The South African Consulate General in Chicago

Attention: Home Affairs Section

200 South Michigan Avenue, 6th Floor

Chicago IL 60604

Tel. (312) 939-7929

Fax: (312) 939-2588

Email: consular.chicago@dirco.gov.za

Website: <http://www.southafricachicago.com/>

For residents of Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington, Wyoming:

The South African Consulate General in Los Angeles

Attention: Home Affairs Section

6300 Wilshire Boulevard, Suite 600

Los Angeles, CA 90048

Tel. (323) 651-0902

Fax: (323) 651-5969

Email: consular.la@dirco.gov.za

Website: <http://www.dirco.gov.za/losangeles/>

For residents of Alabama, District of Colombia, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, Texas, Virginia, Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands:

The South African Embassy in Washington, DC
Attention: Home Affairs Section
3051 Massachusetts Ave, NW
Washington, DC 20008
Tel: (202) 274-7992
Fax: (202) 244-9417
Email: consular.wa@dirco.gov.za
Website: <http://www.saembassy.org>

Secondly, this is a list of documents you need to include with your visa application.

Note: Each embassy/consulate may have slightly different requirements. Checking the website or calling the consulate to which YOU are applying is the best way to handle this process. It is crucial to double check that you have all necessary documents for YOUR consulate before going in to apply for your visa.

Checklist of Documents to be Submitted:

- ☐ A duly completed application form ([DHA-1738](#)) signed by applicant
- ☐ Passport valid for no less than 30 days upon completion of studies **AND AT LEAST FOUR EMPTY PAGES FOR THE VISA STAMP**. "The passports of all travelers to South Africa must contain at least two blank (unstamped) visa pages each time entry is sought; these pages are in addition to the endorsement/amendment pages at the back of the passport. Otherwise, the traveler, even when in possession of a valid South African visa, may be refused entry into South Africa, fined, and returned to their point of origin at the traveler's expense."
- ☐ Two (2) passport photos (this can be done at CVS)
- ☐ Notarized copy of birth certificate
- ☐ Proof of medical report (physical test by your physician)
- ☐ Radiological report (chest X-Ray) or skin TB test
- ☐ FBI certificate (full criminal background check report) and police clearance certificate from all countries applicant lived in since age 18 for one year or longer. Sometimes this may involve submission of your fingerprints to the FBI and may take 2-4 weeks all together. Get started on this EARLY. (Hint: first try the Decatur Police Station and be sure to bring \$20 cash).
- ☐ Proof of health coverage (health insurance)

- ☐ Round-trip flight itinerary
- ☐ An official letter from the institution in South Africa confirming acceptance and duration of the course
- ☐ An official letter of enrolment from the institution of learning concerned in the U.S. if applicable.
- ☐ Proof of financial means in the form of bank statement and notarized letter from the parents stating the financial responsibility.
- ☐ A vaccination certificate if an applicant is passing through yellow fever belt area before entering RSA. In South Africa itself, there are no instances of yellow fever. If you are traveling while at UCT into areas of yellow fever you must be vaccinated to re-enter South Africa. Check the CDC website for updated vaccination requirements and suggestions. (www.cdc.gov)
- ☐ In case of a minor, a notarized letter of consent from the parent is required.
- ☐ Proof of U.S. legal status (I-20 for F1 visa holders, copy of green card etc).
- ☐ Non-refundable fee of **\$36.00 money order** for processing
- ☐ Attention New York Applicants: The South African Consulate General in New York will no longer accept prepaid envelope/labels from FedEx and UPS with immediate effect. **Applicants are welcome to enclose only USPS self-addressed, pre-paid courier envelope for this office to facilitate return services.**
- ☐ Processing time is 5 business days, during peak season it may take up to 10 business days.

LAST BUT NOT LEAST: it is very important for you to get started on your visa application as soon as you have all the documents available. Be aware that the Consulate/Embassy may call you at some point and require additional documentation.

When speaking with them, they may have a belittling and derogatory tone – unfortunately, that seems to be part of their job description. Deal with it because they are sitting in the stronger position and ALWAYS be courteous to the embassy official. Your question will be answered eventually, though it may involve being on hold for lengthy periods of time. Be sure to scour the embassy website and check with Emory College Study Abroad for specific questions to avoid having to call the embassy.

Emory College Study Abroad has never had a student denied a visa, but some have to go through ‘harrowing’ experiences to get it. Take it as part of the study abroad experience. Don’t despair; GET STARTED EARLY!

Note: You may need to provide RETURN postage with your application packet. The South African Embassy will NOT send your passport back if you do not include return postage.

SUGGESTED PACKING ADVICE

- South Africa's seasons:
 - Summer: mid-October to mid-February
 - Autumn: mid-February to April
 - Winter: May to July (It will be rainy during the winter months!)
 - More information on South Africa's weather at <http://www.southafrica.info/travel/advice/climate.htm>
- Regardless of whether you are there for the fall or spring semester, the temperature may range anywhere between 45° and 75° so be prepared.
- While Cape Town has a fairly mild climate, central heat is rare and students are advised to pack layers. Don't make the mistake of assuming "Africa" will be hot; pack clothes for the weather as you would to come to Atlanta!
- Please view 'Tips for Studying Abroad at the University of Cape Town' document in your orientation folder for a comprehensive list of things to bring.

WHILE ABROAD

ACADEMICS

Enrollment

This is a direct enrollment program and students may choose from a wide array of high level courses offered at the University of Cape Town. Students make take courses in their major, minor and occasionally classes which will fulfill Emory's GER requirements. Due to the fact that admission to the University of Cape Town is done by major, it is necessary that students take at least one class in their major as well as having declared their major. Similar to Emory, students will select their courses from the courses offered by the University of Cape Town in their given semester. Students are advised to be aware of the fact that there is no guarantee that courses are offered until students arrive and register for the courses at UCT. Classes will transfer back with credit and grades and there is an extensive list of courses which have been given blanket approval.

N.B. You will fill out an initial course approval list as a part of your UCT application packet. When you arrive at UCT those courses will be the ONLY courses you can enroll in without obtaining faculty approval at UCT. This is done on paper at UCT, not via email or an online system, so it is

worth your time to consider carefully the courses you put on your pre-approval list as it will significantly decrease the time it will take you to register for classes at UCT.

The database for all blanket approved courses may be found on this website:
https://abroad.emory.edu/_customtags/ct_FileRetrieve.cfm?File_ID=1004

If your class is not blanket approved, you must seek course approval. In order to receive approval from other departments, please use the online forms located here:
<http://studyabroad.emory.edu/academic/semester/course.html>

Faculty will email the course equivalents to the Emory College Study Abroad office, granting Emory approval.

Students are permitted to enroll in up to FOUR courses. Please note that UCT uses the NQF credit system. A typical course is worth 18, 24 or 36 NQFs. **One NQF credit = 0.222 semester credits (multiply the number of NQFs x 0.222 and round to the nearest half credit).** See example below. The usual full load for exchange students is 72 NQFs, which equals 16 Emory credits. All students are required to take the Emory equivalent of 15-16 credits. Example of credit translation:

NQF credit values	Emory credits
18	4
24	5
36	8

UCT DANCE COURSE-Any dance course will only transfer back as 1 credit. Even though UCT gives 18 NQFs for the course Emory students will only receive 1 credit. Therefore, if you take this course you will still need to take the Emory equivalent of 15-16 credits.

University of Cape Town does not use a grade point average system. Grades are awarded on individual courses. Grades will be recorded on the Emory transcript and will factor into the GPA.

University of Cape Town Grades	US grade equivalent
80-100%	A
75-79%	A
70-74%	A-
67-69%	B+
63-66%	B
60-62%	B-

57-59%	C+
54-56%	C
51-53%	C-
50%	D
0-49% FAIL	F
DPR Permission to write examination refused	F
AB Absent from examination	F

COURSE APPROVALS

Students must obtain approval for ALL courses and must consult with the appropriate departmental Faculty Study Abroad representative at Emory for course approvals that are ***NOT*** already blanket approved. Once the overseas transcript arrives at the Emory College Study Abroad office, the transcript will not be processed until all of the approvals are in. Students will be notified via email if there are any courses needing faculty approval.

Choosing Courses and Tips for Classes

- Be aware that certain classes are notoriously geared towards international students and will not have many South African Students. These courses are typically named “History of South Africa” or “African Genocides.”
- Be open to taking a course at UCT that explores world or even U.S. history. The different perspective and interpretation may surprise you.
- The faculty-student relationship is very different. Faculty members are treated as superiors and the relationship is characterized by respect for the faculty member. Faculty members are also over-worked and over-burdened and often do not have time for lengthy discussion during office hours or after class. Take this opportunity to observe how local students behave and interact with professors and act accordingly.
- Many local students do not attend class regularly and most professors will not take attendance. Be aware that many students need only to receive passing grades in order to move on to the next level. Classes are often based on one mid-term and a final so uncertainty about grades will be common. (*N.B. Professors are aware that many students do not attend lecture regularly. Make an effort to be in lecture because often the writing assignments and exams are lecture-based*).
- There is no grade inflation in South Africa. 85% or higher are almost never given because excellence is reserved for faculty members. Receiving a grade between 60% and 80% is absolutely normal. Do not be deceived by the adjusted grading system, you will most likely have to work just as hard (if not harder) than you would at Emory.

SAFETY

Safety in South Africa is of particular importance due to the unique history of the country and the major economic and social disparities that continue to impact the population. Yet just as in every major city, a few basic precautions will help reduce any risk. Additionally, specific safety concerns will be addressed both during Emory's South Africa pre-departure orientation as well as the week-long orientation students will attend upon arrival in Cape Town. As long as students adhere to local advice and suggestions, they should not run into any major safety problems.

Our most important piece of advice is if you don't feel confident and comfortable with what you are about to do, don't do it. Listen to your instincts and follow local advice about what is and is not safe and appropriate.

When out, especially at night, avoid carrying expensive electronics or wearing expensive jewelry/clothing; for instance, do not take your iPhone out with you. Most likely there is not service (unless you're on an international plan) so there is no reason to carry it with you.

Although incidents against students and tourists in South Africa are rare, it is advisable for you to have some general numbers handy.

- Call the police emergency number (10111) and briefly explain what happened. If you are using a cell phone dial 112 for emergency services. (You will receive UCT campus police numbers and local suburb police numbers when in-country).
- Call Ida Cooper or one of her associates. She is Emory's liaison in Cape Town and you will receive her contact information upon arrival in Cape Town.

VOLUNTEERING

Cape Town is overflowing with local and international non-governmental organizations working with children, young people, adults and elderly, be it in education, IT instruction, after-school activities or health-education. UCT has its own student-run organization called **SHAWCO** (Students' Health and Welfare Organizations); during orientation, SHAWCO members will introduce the program to the students and educate students about the various community service opportunities they offer.

There will also be other organizations that will present their services. Don't be afraid to explore different options and organizations at UCT that volunteer in local communities as each organization has its own distinct feel and purpose.

Becoming familiar with a country, its heritage, history, culture and distinct aspects is most easily acquired by immersing yourself into programs, activities, and general goings-on. Volunteering, festivals, clubs at UCT, and neighborhood activities will provide fantastic insight into the people and the history of Cape Town. Getting involved is highly recommended!

HEALTH

We recommend consulting with the following sources before departure:

- The CDC website: <http://www.cdc.gov/travel/destinat.htm>
- Travel Nurse in the Student Health Center
- Your physician back home

Some additional pieces of information:

- Cape Town is malaria-free; unless you plan to travel to northern South Africa or other African countries, you will not need malaria prophylaxis.
- Malaria medication does NOT keep you from potentially contracting malaria – so always try to avoid contact with mosquitoes.
- **You can obtain all malaria medication in South Africa – it is expensive and unnecessary to purchase here. Emory College Study Abroad recommends the Webb & Savoy Pharmacy located at 34 Main Road in Mowbray or the Rustenberg Pharmacy on Main Road in Rondebosch. You may need a prescription, however, so check well in advance of your travels with the specific pharmacy.**
- You do not need Yellow Fever or Typhoid vaccination for South Africa – you WILL need one if you plan to travel to other African countries. Plan ahead – you might as well as get it.
- Cape Town has an excellent network of very good doctors and hospitals – you should feel yourself in as good of hands as you would at home.
- With any smaller or larger health issues, you can and should contact Ida Cooper. She will help you.

HOUSING

Ida Cooper and Associates will arrange student housing while in Cape Town (website <http://www.idaca.co.za>) on the basis of a contract between her organization, the UCT International Academic Programmes Office (IAPO), and Emory College Study Abroad. Speaking from personal experience and quoting returned students, Ida is both a wonderful, interesting and interested person as well as a dedicated, involved, knowledgeable and caring “study abroad mother” (no jealousy, moms, please) who both concretely arranges the logistics upon arrival, but also serves as an “interpreter” of culture and history, when asked.

Here is some general housing information:

- All accommodations are **within easy access** of the University of Cape Town – situated in Rondebosch. Adjoining suburbs are Rosebank and Mowbray. All accommodation is within walking distance of the Main Road and the railway system for easy access to buses and trains. Maps of the University and surrounding areas are available on the UCT website (<http://www.uct.ac.za/images/uct.ac.za/contact/campusmaps/big/upper.jpg>)
- All accommodations are fully furnished and equipped with basic necessities.
- The accommodations range from several rooms in large single houses with shared kitchens and possibly gardens to small apartments attached to family homes (separate entrance and

facilities) or duplex apartments. In all cases, there are either shared or single rooms available. All accommodations provide linen, but not all will include towels. The nearby Cavendish Square Mall (in Claremont) will provide ample opportunity to purchase towels. Your first week in-country one of Ida's associates will escort you to Claremont and assist in purchasing necessities. Never fear, however; Cape Town is a metropolitan city and has any and all items you will need while in Cape Town.

- Students will pay a refundable ZAR 2,000 as a damage deposit upon arrival in Cape Town; this deposit will be returned to the student before departure back home if there has been no damage to the apartment/room.
- **PLEASE NOTE:** Students have the opportunity to pay for their housing in full before they leave for South Africa – in that case, they should contact Ida Cooper to find out the exact amount and bank account information for a wire transfer. Generally she will direct you to the landlord who can give precise information. Remember to take into account that wire transfers cost money, so budget accordingly.
- You will be placed into the accommodation according to availability and at the discretion of Ida Cooper and Associates. Housing is guaranteed for the semester.
- Should you withdraw from the program before its completion, you will still be responsible for full payment of housing fees. Please contact Emory College Study Abroad for early withdrawal policies and expected payment responsibilities.
- Expect to receive information about housing in Cape Town toward the end of the semester prior to departure; either late December for the next spring or May for the fall.

Please remember:

- As there are very few single rooms available, it helps us to know if you are willing to share – and especially with *whom* you are willing to share. As well, single rooms will be more expensive than shared doubles.
- If you have questions concerning accommodations, please contact Ida Cooper at idaca@iafrica.com

CONTACTS & OTHER RESOURCES

Faculty Contact:

Pamela Scully, Program Faculty Contact, African Studies, 404-727-8818, pscully2@emory.edu

Emory College Study Abroad Contact:

Cape Town Contact:

Ida Cooper, idaca@iafrica.com

Find out more at www.idaca.co.za. Parents are more than welcome to contact her!

Embassy Information:

Citizens Emergency Center

United States Department of State

Telephone: 202-647-5225 – 24 hours per day, 7 days a week

U.S. Department of State Travel Information: <http://www.state.gov/travel>

Country-specific information: <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn>

Tips for Traveling Abroad: http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips.tips_1232.html

Electronic Currency Converter: <http://www.xe.com/ucc>

International Calling Codes: <http://www.countrycallingcodes.com>