

**STUDENT GUIDE**  
**TO**  
**SUMMER STUDY ABROAD**  
**IN**  
**SWITZERLAND**  
**WITH**  
**THE WIDENER UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW**

*In cooperation with  
The University of Lausanne*



**SWITZERLAND 2013**  
**A Student Guide to**  
**The Widener Summer Institute**  
**Lausanne, Switzerland**  
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## INTRODUCTION

Congratulations on your acceptance to Widener's Lausanne International Law Institute. We hope to provide an enriching academic experience, opportunities to enjoy the history and culture of Lausanne and the surrounding countryside, and to expand your horizons for personal growth. The Institute will offer international law classes, tours of various international organizations, and an introduction to Swiss culture. But the most lasting impressions from the summer may well be the friendships you make and a newfound appreciation for Europe and its role in the global community.

### *Recent Program Changes*

In recent years, we have made changes to our program with a view to offering you more options and improving your educational and cultural experience. You may complete a number of courses in just one or two weeks, and then move on to our program in Venice. Our program is in Lausanne, where our host is the law school of the University of Lausanne, <http://www.unil.ch/central>. Lausanne is a beautiful city located on Lac Léman (Lake Geneva in English), just 30 minutes away from Geneva, and is a vibrant and cosmopolitan city that is the home of many international organizations. Because of Geneva's importance as a legal and diplomatic center, we will be visiting that city for a field trip. You may also want to spend some of your free time there.

### *Your Preparations*

This Guide contains useful advice on planning your trip. Be sure to consult the PREPARATIONS and DEPARTURE FOR EUROPE Sections at your earliest convenience. You need to plan ahead for passports and lodging.

We hope that you will take time to read through this Guide. The more thorough your preparation for the trip, the more enjoyable it will be. In addition to the information provided here, there are numerous travel books that will provide you with information on Switzerland and other countries you may want to visit. A list of travel books is contained in **Appendix B**.

## **PREPARATION**

### **A. Passports, Visas & Other Important Documents**

**1. Passport.** In order to travel outside of the United States, you will need to have a valid passport. If you do not already have a passport (or do not have one already in process), you need to act at once. Currently, requests for expedited passports are being processed within 2-3 weeks, so you must act right away. Go to this site to learn about the process for obtaining an expedited passport. [http://travel.state.gov/passport/hurry/hurry\\_831.html](http://travel.state.gov/passport/hurry/hurry_831.html). From there, the State Department website will direct you to the various offices through its passport page, [http://travel.state.gov/passport/passport\\_1738.html](http://travel.state.gov/passport/passport_1738.html). If you have a passport, make sure it is valid for at least 6 months from the date you will *leave Europe* (not from the beginning of your trip). If your passport will expire before the end of the 6-month period, renew before you go. Renewal information is also available on the passport website. Applications can also be obtained from many local post offices and selected local, state, and federal courthouses.<sup>1</sup>

The quickest way to obtain a passport is to apply in person at one of the fourteen U. S. Passport Offices across the United States. Offices are located in Aurora, Colorado; Boston; Chicago; Honolulu; Houston; Los Angeles; Miami; New Orleans; New York City; Norwalk,

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<sup>1</sup> Students in the Wilmington, Delaware area can obtain a passport application at the Talleyville Post Office on Concord Pike, about 1 minute south of the Law School on Route 202. Students in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania area can get passport photos at the AAA office at the corner of Progress Avenue and Paxton Church Road [and Passport Applications], and processing at either the Dauphin County Courthouse at 1705 North Front Street or the U.S. Post Office at the corner of Elmerton Avenue and Crooked Hill Rd.

Connecticut; Philadelphia; San Francisco; Seattle; and Washington, D.C. You can also get information from a 24-hour recording by the National Passport Information Center by calling 1-877-487-2778. To be on the safe side, you should call the office prior to going in to determine office hours and to be sure that you bring all necessary documents with you. Most offices require appointments for accepting the passport application. Whether you mail your application or apply in person, you will need to produce the following documents: (1) proof of U. S. citizenship (certified birth certificate); (2) proof of identity – items that contain a signature and physical description/photograph (such as a driver’s license); (3) two passport size photographs; (4) and fees ranging from \$75 to \$100 for standard passport issuance (fees are higher for expedited passport issuance). When applying in person, the required/accepted methods of payment (cash, certified check or money order) should be verified with the acceptance facility. You can have passport photographs taken at many AAA offices and at numerous photography shops.<sup>2</sup>

**Protect your passport at all costs!** It is your most vital document while traveling in Europe. You will need to show it many times, *e.g.* during airport check-in, when going through customs, or when cashing traveler’s checks. If you are planning to stay in small hotels during weekend traveling, be wary of hotel keepers who may wish to “hold on to your passport for a little while.” Don’t trust anyone when it comes to your passport. Without your passport, you cannot reenter the United States. You may enter France without a passport, but will be unable to reenter Switzerland without your passport.

**If your passport is lost or stolen,** go to the nearest U. S. embassy or consulate and to local police authorities. If you can provide consular officers with the information that was

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<sup>2</sup> AAA offers a set of passport photos historically costing \$8.55 for members and \$12.84 for non-members. It is recommended you purchase two sets of passport photos, the second set to be used if you obtain a bus pass in Switzerland.

contained in your passport, they may be able to issue you a new one. We strongly suggest that you photocopy your passport, your birth certificate, and other important identification documents and keep the copies separate from your passport (perhaps in your luggage) as you travel. Another copy should be left with someone you can easily contact in the United States. In addition, we strongly recommend that you take extra passport photographs with you. Should you lose your passport, having the photographs may save you hours of time.

**2. Visa.** A visa is a stamp put on your passport by a country's government allowing you to visit the country for a specific period of time and for a specific purpose. For American citizens, it is not necessary to obtain a visa to enter Switzerland or travel in Western Europe, so long as you stay no more than 90 days. If you are not an American citizen, you should call your own consulate for visa information regarding travel in Europe.

If you plan to travel outside of Western Europe, you should check the entry requirements of the countries that you propose to visit to determine whether you need a visa. Visa information can be obtained by calling the embassy of the country you wish to visit (located in Washington, D.C.) or by visiting the country's website, if available. Most visas cost between \$10 and \$30. You can also use a private company to obtain your visa for a fee. You may wish to call Visa Center, Inc., 507 Fifth Avenue, #904, New York, New York 10017 (tel. 212-986-0924), or World Visa and Document Services, 1413 K. Street N.W., Washington, D.C. (tel. 202-289-6251). For more information on visas, see, *Foreign Entry Requirements*, on the U.S. State Department's website [http://www.travel.state.gov/travel/cis\\_pa\\_tw/cis/cis\\_4965.html](http://www.travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_4965.html).

**3. International Student Identity Card (ISIC).** We recommend that you obtain an international student identification card. You must have the card in order to qualify for reduced rate rail passes and many student airfares. It is the most widely accepted form of student

identification. This card does exactly what the name suggests – it identifies you as a full-time student. The card also provides an e-mail account and student discounts on museum admissions, and, sometimes, local transportation. It may also provide discounts around Europe at places that offer “student discounts.” In addition, you are provided with \$3,000 in emergency medical coverage, plus hospital coverage of \$100/day for up to 60 days. Go to the STA website at <http://www.statravel.com/> to find more information on the services offered to students who purchase an ISIC and how to apply for the card.

The card can be obtained from student travel agencies, such as Council Travel (a division of the Council on International Educational Exchange), Let’s Go Travel, and STA Travel.

- Apply for the card early so that you may book your flight (the earlier you book, the better the price and availability).
- Cards are also available for teachers or faculty of an accredited institution, as well as children at least 12 years of age.

Applications may be made in person or through the mail, and should include 6 items: (1) current, dated proof of full-time student status (photocopy of current school ID, verification from the registrar, or a photocopied transcript); (2) a 1 ½" x 2" (passport size) photo with your name printed on the back; (3) proof of age; (4) proof of nationality; (5) name and address of beneficiary (for insurance purposes); (6) certified check or money order for the applicable fee.

**4. International Youth Hostel Membership Card.** If you plan on doing a lot of traveling and want to stay at youth hostels, you may want to purchase an International Youth Hostel Federation (“IYHF”) card (previous students recommend the card only if you are staying almost exclusively at hostels). There are many independent hostels in Europe; however, those affiliated with the IYHF are regulated and more consistent in quality. You may stay at most IYHF affiliated hostels without the card, but you will have to go through an initiation process to get validation stamps, and you will have to pay a supplemental fee. The IYHF card may be

obtained from Council Travel at STA or directly from American Youth Hostels, P. O. Box 37613, Washington, D.C. 20013-7613 (tel. 202-783-6161). The cost is approximately \$20.00 and you may apply for it at the same time you apply for an ISIC card. Hostelling International, [www.hiusa.org](http://www.hiusa.org), also offers hostelling membership benefits.

**5. Eurail Pass.** You may want to check into a rail pass for weekend traveling. There are many options, so to see which might work best for your travel plans, visit their website: <http://eurail.com/eurail-passes>. According to the Eurail website, you should buy the Eurail pass in the U. S. before you go to Europe, because not all passes are available in Europe and the cost of the pass will be higher in Europe.

**6. Inexpensive Air Travel within Europe.** EasyJet, which some compare to our own Southwest Airlines, provides cheap air travel from Geneva to several European cities, and may be an option for your weekend travel. See <http://www.easyjet.com/EN> for details.

## **B. Packing and Luggage**

Remember that you will be in Europe for at least two weeks, so plan carefully before you pack.

**1. Luggage.** The type of luggage that you should bring depends upon how you wish to spend your time in Europe. If you plan on doing a minimal amount of travel, then a knapsack, book bag, small backpack or similar item, in addition to your other luggage, will suffice for carrying around your necessities. Backpacks allow you to carry necessities for long weekend trips, and the frame makes carrying the backpack easier. As a general rule, pack light.

- There are packs that are designed for this type of travel. These packs may include an internal frame and shoulder harness that can be tucked away so they won't get caught in airport luggage systems.
- They usually include a detachable backpack that can be used for day trips and school.

**2. Clothing.** Dress in Switzerland tends to be more conservative than in the United States and even other parts of Europe, although students tend to dress more casually than others. Jeans, tops, and sweaters will suffice much of the time. Shorts are appropriate for the country, but not always in the city. When traveling, women may not enter some churches with bare shoulders, or wearing shorts above the knee. One travel author suggests putting a wraparound skirt or shawl in your knapsack, just in case. Be sure to bring a range of clothing as temperatures will vary throughout Europe. You may want to bring your swim suit as well.

- For class, students should dress appropriately, *i.e.*, **no** sweatpants, short-shorts, jeans with holes, or revealing clothing.
- Do not wear shorts on field trip days. The Swiss tend to be more formal than Americans, and we will be visiting places of business.

In the evening, it is common for men to wear a sport jacket, even over a pair of jeans. Only at the most exclusive restaurants, the theater, or the opera is a tie required. Do not bring valuable jewelry.

The best scheme to follow is to bring outfits that you can mix and match, preferably made of cotton or a cotton blend. We recommend clothes that are easily washed and dried because you will have to either wash them yourself, or take them to a Laundromat (*salon-lavoir* or *buanderie*).

- Laundry facilities will probably be available in student housing; however, learning how to use them may take time, so be prepared to be patient. Detergent can be purchased in Lausanne.

**\*\*\* Comfortable shoes are a must!** In Europe you will walk much more than in America. Sneakers are necessary. Hiking boots are recommended for Alpine exploration. Sunglasses are also important for trips to the mountains because glaciers can be blinding in the sun.

The weather in Lausanne tends to be changeable, influenced by its proximity to Lac Léman and the Alps. Temperatures in June can range from the low 60s to the mid 80s during the

day, cooling off almost every evening. Rain is common in the summer. Humidity is lower than in the United States, and air conditioning is uncommon and generally not needed. If you hope to visit the mountains, be certain to bring a few warm things. If you ascend to a level of 14,000 or 15,000 feet on Mont Blanc or the Matterhorn, you will want all the warmth that you can bring, because even in the summer, there will be snow. Sweaters, a light jacket and perhaps a hat and gloves should be adequate. Hiking boots or shoes are invaluable.

### **C. Foreign Customs, Language, Culture, and Time Designations**

Many things in Europe are familiar. Others are quite different. For example, the Swiss, and Europeans, in general, are much more formal than Americans. With the exception of fellow students, who may be more informal, you should not address people you meet by their first names unless invited to do so. *Madame* or *Monsieur* is the appropriate form of address. Despite what you may have learned in your high school French class, *Mademoiselle* is rarely used to address an adult woman, in fact, many find the term offensive because it refers to women by their marital status.

The Swiss also are impeccably clean, tidy, and orderly. Every day, city crews are out cleaning not only the streets but the sidewalks as well. Public facilities are generally shiny and scrubbed. This attitude toward cleanliness and efficiency is important to remember, particularly if you share a bathroom and other public facilities in student residence apartments.

Generally, you should be guided by the awareness that you are a guest in a foreign land, and as such you should observe and respect the customs of your hosts. When you return to the United States, you may be surprised at how much your perspective has been enriched and changed.

**1. Respect for a foreign country in general.** A basic principle that is often overlooked when traveling overseas is that YOU are now the foreigner. Although the Swiss and other Europeans tend to be very gracious, polite, and helpful, you should not expect them to bend over backwards to help you out just because you are an American. **Make an attempt to speak the language of the country that you are in as often as possible; the courtesy will be appreciated.** Although most Europeans speak more than one language, often including English, **do not assume that everyone can speak English.** If you need assistance, ask people in their own language whether they speak English. In French the phrase is “*Parlez vous anglais?*” You will gain more respect that way. The purchase of a French-English dictionary, particularly one designed for travelers, may be helpful if you do not speak French. Keep in mind, however, that the French-speaking Swiss use some different words than the French. For example, the word for seventy in French-speaking Switzerland is *septante*, not *soixante-dix*, and the word for ninety is *nonante*, not *quatre-vingt-dix*.

- Respect local habits and customs.
- When visiting attractions, obey warnings not to touch artifacts and to be quiet.
- Often there are no posted warnings, but it is assumed and expected by Europeans that these rules will be heeded.

**2. Swiss Customs.** Switzerland maintains many of the customs common to France. For example, when entering a store or greeting anyone, always begin “*Bon jour [bon soir], madame [or monsieur].*” When you leave, be sure to say “*Au revoir, madame [, or monsieur].*” Never use first names unless invited to do so. Relationships among students are less formal, but certainly with regard to non-students in shops and other places around the city, always observe formality unless invited to drop it.

**3. Cleanliness.** One of the joys of being in Switzerland is that it is an incredibly clean country. It often is said that there is no such thing as a bad hotel room in Switzerland, and that is

generally true. The most inexpensive room can be immaculately clean. Hence, you can expect extraordinary cleanliness in the bathrooms, public rooms, etc., at the residence halls and in other public buildings. Daily, you will see public employees out cleaning the sidewalks and streets, both with vehicles and brooms and dustpans. Similarly, public restrooms are usually immaculately clean. Many contain a toilet brush so that each occupant of the facility can leave it as clean for his/her successor as he/she found it.

**4. Language.** Switzerland is an international country where four languages are spoken: French in the west (including Lausanne); Italian in the southern canton of Ticino; Romansch in certain cities in the eastern part of the country; and Swiss German (*Schweizerdeutsch*) everywhere else. Because of the large number of foreigners in the city, many persons in Lausanne speak English, as do many people throughout Europe. In addition to being able to speak French, the ability to speak German can be very useful since the majority of Switzerland is German-speaking and many Europeans speak German.

**5. Swiss Time.** Lausanne is 6 hours ahead of Eastern Standard Time; thus, when it is 2 p.m. on the U. S. East Coast, it is 8 p.m. in Lausanne. (This six hour time difference also applies during the summer, because the Swiss use a form of daylight savings time, as well.) The Swiss use 24-hour military time designations instead of A.M. and P.M.

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>To convert TO Swiss P.M time – simply add 12 to any American P.M. time designation. To convert FROM Swiss P.M. time designations, subtract 12 hours.</b></li><li>• Thus, what is 1:00 p.m. to us is 13.00 hours for the Swiss; 9:45 p.m. is 21.45 hours. You will need to know this for train and bus timetables, store opening and closing times, and other matters.</li><li>• Most shops and businesses close from 12.00 hours until 14.00 hours for lunch.</li></ul> |
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## D. Safety Tips

1. **For travel safety information**, you can consult the U.S. Department of State’s webpage on International Travel, [http://travel.state.gov/travel/travel\\_1744.html](http://travel.state.gov/travel/travel_1744.html). You might also consider the U.S. Department of State’s Smart Traveler Enrollment Program, [http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/registration/registration\\_4789.html#](http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/registration/registration_4789.html#). The State Department webpage also has other “Tips for Traveling Abroad” that are helpful. **For travel safety information specifically for Switzerland**, you should consult the U. S. Department of State Consular Information Sheet on Switzerland, [http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis\\_pa\\_tw/cis/cis\\_1034.html](http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1034.html). (The latter two webpages are reproduced in **Appendix G**.) If you are visiting other countries while in Europe, you may wish to check the Consular Information Sheets on those countries as well.

2. **Crime.** Lausanne and Geneva are considered among the safest cities in Europe, and you generally will feel safe walking almost anywhere. However, you should always practice the same general safety precautions you would at home. And, remember the rule: *If you don’t feel safe, you probably aren’t*. The most common threat is from pickpockets and other petty thieves. Be especially careful when in airports, train stations, or subways. The best way to protect your belongings is to avoid looking like a tourist. (Dark knee socks are out!)

- Do not stand in a busy subway station looking at a map to figure out where you are going. A thief will recognize you immediately as a tourist who is preoccupied and, therefore, a prime target.
- Also, be wary while traveling on subways or buses of a person who begins talking to you or asking you questions. This may be a diversion to allow a pickpocket to act.

3. **Protect your valuable documents at all times.** We cannot stress enough that **all your valuable documents** – passport, Eurail Pass, International Student ID, Youth Hostel Membership card, and traveler’s checks (which are less necessary than they once were,

especially if you travel in metropolitan areas where ATMS are plentiful)– **should be kept on your person at all times while traveling.** Although most of the documents can be replaced, you will be wasting valuable time, effort, and funds if you have to do so. A useful safety tip is to make photocopies of all your valuable documents and credit cards, leaving one set at home in Lausanne, and keeping another set separately in your luggage.

- We recommend either a money pouch, which is hung around your neck and hidden under your clothes, or a money belt.
- Women may want to use a pouch in lieu of a purse.
- If you do get robbed, call or visit the nearest police station and report it immediately. (In Lausanne, dial 117.) You may need a copy of the police report for insurance claims.

**4. Use your common sense; be street-wise.** Do not ever flash money; always keep it well hidden. It is wise to keep money in different places on your person, *e.g.* some in a wallet, some in a pocket. Avoid looking like a tourist; try to look like the locals. When in Italy and Spain, use ATM machines and only carry small amounts of cash at any given time. Students who dress casually do not often get bothered by thieves, unless they make themselves susceptible to a robbery, *e.g.* by wearing an expensive watch, jewelry, large purse, or a bulging wallet in the back pocket. Purses or bags should be carried on the side away from the street; men’s wallets should be kept in a front pants pocket, not a rear pocket. Beware of gangs of innocent-looking children who huddle around you; they could be well-trained thieves who will take off with your valuables before you know what’s happening. Innocent beggars may turn out to be not so innocent after all. Also, it’s wise to travel in pairs, or in groups, *especially at night*. A lone person makes a much easier target for a thief than a group.

## **E. Travel Guides**

There are a multitude of travel books that are available in almost every bookstore which can give you a great deal of information on Europe in general, and Switzerland in particular. We like

any of the *Rick Steves* series, *Let's Go Europe!* and *Let's Go Austria and Switzerland!*. The *Let's Go!* series has been referred to as the “student bible” when traveling in Europe. *Let's Go* is an extremely comprehensive student guide, listing the best sites to see, where to eat and sleep inexpensively (with explicit directions to get there), historical information, and maps.

Two additional travel books are *Fodor's: Switzerland*, and *Frommer's Switzerland and Liechtenstein*. *Fodor's* is a travel guide that is more sophisticated than *Let's Go!*, with listings for more expensive hotels and restaurants. For city specific traveling, Dorling Kindersley (DK) publishes a “Top Ten” series for a variety of popular cities you are likely to visit, and includes all the essentials you will need to know such as metro, bus, and attraction maps, descriptions of major museums, and the most popular sightseeing destinations.

You will be able to find plenty of information about Lausanne, including free maps at the Lausanne Tourism Office located at the main rail station (Lausanne CFF). There is another tourist office in the lakeside quarter of Ouchy, across from the M2 metro station.

## **F. Finances and Budgeting**

**1. Plan a budget before you arrive.** It is important that you take some time to plan your budget before you arrive in Europe. Remember that Switzerland can be very expensive, as are most major European (and U. S.) cities. The costs will be similar to those found in New York, Chicago, or San Francisco.

The most reasonable places to eat usually are cafeterias. Many restaurants in Lausanne offer a reasonably priced *plat du jour* (dish of the day). You also may have access to cooking facilities in your residence. Please see the **Housing and Meals** section of this manual for suggested cafeterias and restaurants.

You should also estimate where you will be traveling on weekends and what your meals and accommodations will cost for your excursions.<sup>3</sup> Scheduling overnight train trips will allow you to save on hotel bills, and they are ideal if you are able to sleep on a train. Consider spending an extra \$20 or more to reserve a *courette* (bed) for overnight train trips.<sup>4</sup> Youth hostels are an inexpensive alternative to staying in hotels. Don't forget the cost of souvenirs and admissions to museums, castles, and other attractions you may want to visit. **Bring a credit card with a good balance, or more funds in other forms than you think you will need; many students have run out of money and it is often difficult to have money wired.**

**2. Credit Cards.** By far the very best way to pay for things in Europe is by credit card. You can charge at many stores and restaurants with VISA, MasterCard, and sometimes American Express. American Express can cash personal checks and have money wired through its office. Your transaction is then converted at a rate very close to the official bank rate - the more that you can use your charge card, the better. Also, many credit cards offer buyer protection plans that provide coverage for lost or stolen items.

You should be able to obtain cash advances with your card if you have your PIN number. Be warned, however, that cash advances on most credit cards begin to accrue interest immediately; there is no grace period.

- **ATMs** – The banks networks of automatic teller machines are now connected with European machines, so that in most places you can use your ATM card to withdraw money in Europe directly from your American bank account.
- Machines can be found fairly easily and most now accept American cards.
- You will get a very favorable exchange rate.

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<sup>3</sup> If you travel in groups in which 2 or 3 persons can share a room, your daily travel cost, exclusive of transportation, can be kept to \$80 or less, if you travel frugally.

<sup>4</sup> It may be as much as \$40 - \$50 on top of your Eurail pass if traveling in one of the Train hotels. These trains book weeks in advance, so plan ahead.

**3. ATM Cards.** ATM cards are the best for traveling. When traveling, you may use your MAC card in the train station to obtain the local currency. They offer a better exchange rate and avoid the risk of carrying too much money at one time. However, some small bank cards may not work internationally. You may want to consult your bank on the card's international accessibility and any rates that may apply to international use. Most major bank ATM cards are accepted within Europe with no extra fee. Also, in case of loss or theft, you may want to bring a back-up card or a credit card. You may also want to ask your bank for an international helpline number before leaving. You should also make copies of your cards and write down the account numbers, card numbers, and customer service numbers for all credit cards and bank cards.

- ATMs are usually called Bancomats.
- UBS signs are an indication of the location of ATMs.

• One word of warning regarding traveler's checks. Merchants in Europe do not accept traveler's checks for payment as readily as American establishments. Some may still wish to carry traveler's checks as a way to have cash on hand in the event you have problems with your ATM card. Cash them at a bank or American Express office as you need them.

**4. Exchange rates and where to exchange money.** The unit of currency in Switzerland is the Swiss franc (CHF). (Switzerland is not a member of the European Union, and therefore does not use the euro.) Each Swiss franc is worth 100 centimes. Paper currency is issued in denominations of 10 to 1,000 francs, while coins are issued for 10 and 20 centimes, as well as for CHF ½, 1, 2, and 5.

- As of May 14, 2013, the exchange rate was approximately USD \$1.04 = .1 Swiss Franc (CHF) (almost 1:1).
- As of May 14, 2013, the rate for the Euro, the currency used in most other European countries, was approximately USD \$1.30 = 1 Euro.

Exchange rates vary daily and are posted outside banks and exchange booths. Current exchange rates can also be found in the major English newspapers in the U. S. and Europe, such

as the *Wall Street Journal Europe*, and on many websites, including [www.xe.com](http://www.xe.com). When you first arrive in Switzerland, or in any foreign country, you may want to get local currency at an ATM or exchange some of your money at a bank, at the airport, or train station. Before leaving on weekend excursions, it is advisable to get some currency (mostly Euros) of the countries to which you will be traveling for layovers, meals, or taxis in case the money exchange is closed when you arrive. Look for counters with the sign “*Change*.”

There are several banks within minutes of where you will be staying. Exchange rates at the rail and bus stations are almost as good as those at the banks. The *Change* office at the rail station may not be open between 9:30 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. The *Change* office also provides excellent travel information for busses, car rentals, and trains. This is also where you get your bus pass and picture (make sure to bring a passport-size photo from home because it may save you \$10). When you become settled, shop around for banks with the best exchange rate, and monitor the rate daily. Banks are open weekdays from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. on Wednesdays.

**Note that 2 exchange rates will be posted for each currency:** Buy (*achat*) and sell (*vente*). “Buy” and “sell” refer to what the moneychanger is doing. Thus, when you exchange American dollars (or U. S. dollar traveler’s checks) for foreign currency, the moneychanger is **buying** U. S. dollars from you, so the *achat* rate applies. If you are obtaining dollars for your foreign currency, the moneychanger is **selling** U. S. dollars to you so the *vente* rate applies.

**Study the posted exchange rate signs very carefully!** Often there will be a commission or fee charged in addition to the exchange rate. These charges often are listed in smaller print or on other signs. These charges can offset a favorable exchange rate. Thus, the place with the best exchange rate may not be the best place to exchange your money. Compare rates and charges.

A pocket calculator is useful for making the comparison and for confirming that you received the correct amount. *Again, please note that the ATM machines are your best option to obtain local currency.*

It is also wise before leaving the United States to obtain a little currency of the country to which you will be flying first. Because your arrival airport is likely to have ATMs and currency exchange offices, you may wish to wait until you arrive to receive the best exchange rate. However, if you choose to convert money before you go and your local bank cannot provide this service, contact Travelex Worldwide Money (formerly the Thomas Cook Currency Service), [http://www.travelex.com/?utm\\_medium=cpc&gclid=CMSW9tiv1a4CFecQNAod\\_h-pfA](http://www.travelex.com/?utm_medium=cpc&gclid=CMSW9tiv1a4CFecQNAod_h-pfA), for the Travelex office nearest you. Some AAA offices also sell “Travel Packs” of foreign currency. Do not, however, get more than \$25 or \$50 worth of foreign currency in the U. S. because you will be paying a significant premium above the official exchange rate. The worst exchange rates are usually found in the United States.

You will want to visit nearby France at some time during your stay in Switzerland. Visits to Chamonix, Mont Blanc, and Annecy are suggested. You will need Euros for those visits. You can obtain a few Euros in Lausanne, but you will probably obtain a better rate if you use an ATM card in France. You need to cash your traveler’s checks in France at a *Bureau de Change* or a local bank. Be aware that many places in France (and elsewhere in Europe) are closed on Sunday, and some close for a long lunch hour from noon until 2:00 p.m. Plan accordingly.

Many Europeans carry multiple coin purses (both men and women) because so much of the European currency is in coins. You will find that a sufficient quantity of 1, 2, and 5 Swiss franc or Euro coins will wear out your pockets quickly. We recommend 2 or 3 small change

purses (1 for the currency of each country) that will fit conveniently in the front pocket of jeans or into the small corner of a purse.

**5. Wiring money.** Even though you may have planned a super budget, something unexpected might happen: unanticipated expenses such as finding an unforeseen souvenir, going out for a special evening, or losing your ATM or credit cards. You may wish to leave bank deposit slips for the account from which you will be drawing most of your funds via your ATM card with a family member. The person can then put additional money in your account if you run short and you will avoid the hassle of wiring money. However, if this is not an option, you may have money wired to you in Europe through Western Union (tel. 1-800-325-6000) or MoneyGram (tel. 1-800-926-9400), both of which have instant international money transfer systems. If you visit one of their overseas offices, or call them and charge your credit card, you can pick up the cash at the office within minutes. MoneyGram fees start at \$14.00 to wire up to \$100.00. Western Union fees start at \$20.00 to wire up to \$100.00. Fees increase with the amount transferred. You will need identification to pick up the money. Other alternatives include wiring money from a U. S. bank to a foreign bank, or contacting the Department of State's Citizen's Emergency Center (tel. 202-647-5225) *as a last resort only!* It is very difficult to have money wired – the safest way seems to be by using Western Union.

## **DEPARTURE FOR EUROPE**

### **A. Getting Your Tickets**

If you don't already have your tickets, we recommend going through a student travel agency, your own travel agency, or one of the many online travel sites such as [www.expedia.com](http://www.expedia.com), [www.orbitz.com](http://www.orbitz.com), or [www.travelocity.com](http://www.travelocity.com). See **Appendix D** for additional travel information. The major travel agency that serves students, and generally provides excellent fares to Europe, is

STA Travel, [www.statravel.com](http://www.statravel.com). *Do this right away*. When making your reservation, determine whether you are able to make your seat reservation at the same time. Getting your preference for an aisle or window seat will make your travel much more comfortable.

Also, check with your travel agent and several online sites regarding fares with the various carriers. Their fares are frequently competitive with the student fares. The biggest advantage that we find with the student/faculty fares is the freedom to make changes in tickets up until the last minute without any charge, and even to make changes in the itinerary after leaving the United States for a modest charge. You may want to ask about Frequent Flyer points when making your air carrier decision (some student tickets do not qualify for Frequent Flyer mileage).

**If you have special dietary needs (vegetarian, kosher, etc.), tell your airline when making your reservation.**

The closest airport to Lausanne is Geneva's Cointrin airport, which is approximately a 45 minute train ride from Lausanne. If you have already decided to buy a Eurail Pass and you want to travel before going to Lausanne, you may want to consider flying to another city and then taking the train to Lausanne. The least expensive gateway cities are Amsterdam, Brussels, London, Paris, Munich, and Frankfurt. Please note, however, that you will need to factor in the cost of the train fare (or the loss of a day from your rail pass) from your gateway to Lausanne to determine if the alternative arrival city offers a meaningful savings. If you fly into London and plan to take the train to Lausanne, your Eurail Pass does not cover Britain. You will have to buy a train ticket to get you to France where your Eurail Pass is effective.

## **B. Airport Check-In**

Arrive *early* – a *minimum* of 2 hours before your plane is scheduled to depart. It may sound like a very long time to wait (especially if the plane is delayed), but you may have to stand at the

check-in line for a very long time. You will also go through a security checkpoint. **DO NOT** try to carry any knives, razors, nail-clippers, etc. onto the plane. These items should be packed in your checked luggage. For a current list of items prohibited on airplanes, go to [www.tsa.gov](http://www.tsa.gov). Remember to remove these items from your carry-on bags before check-in or they will be confiscated. Furthermore, if you have not been able to select your seat in advance, an early arrival will give you more choice.

Upon arrival, go to the check-in counter of the airline that you will be flying. They will ask you for your tickets and passport, and will issue you a boarding pass in return. This is also where you will check your luggage. Most airlines will allow you to check only 1 piece of luggage without charge, and to take 1 or 2 pieces of carry-on luggage onto the plane. The size and weight restrictions of the airlines vary, but are usually 50 pounds each. Check with the airline or your travel agent for your airline's guidelines.<sup>5</sup> Make sure that you have identification tags attached to the outside of all of your bags, as well as identification cards *inside* each bag. You may find it helpful to put something unique on the outside of your luggage, *e.g.* a decal or fluorescent tape, particularly if your luggage is a very popular brand. This will make it easier for you to recognize your luggage at the baggage claim area. You will also be issued luggage tickets, which usually are stapled to the jacket containing your boarding pass. **At some airports you will have to produce those tickets, which must correspond to the tickets on your checked luggage in order to recover your luggage.**

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<sup>5</sup> Excess luggage will require you to pay an additional charge payable to the airline.

### C. The Flight

For those of you who have never flown to Europe before, be prepared for a long flight. It takes approximately 8 hours from New York to Geneva. Some airlines will keep you posted on the location of the plane via a video screen or announcements from your captain.

If you can sleep on the plane, then you are fortunate. Otherwise, you will have to keep yourself busy with books, magazines, and an often staggering array of in-flight entertainment choices. In order to enjoy all this, however, you will need headphones. They are free on British Airways and most major airlines, but some carriers may charge a nominal fee. You could, of course, bring your iPod, CD, or MP3/4 player if you like.

- Most flights leave the East Coast in the early evening, so remember you may arrive the next day.

You will be served at least 2 meals on the plane, usually dinner and breakfast. Drinks (both alcoholic and non-alcoholic) are served throughout the flight. Some airlines charge for alcoholic beverages, while some do not on international flights. We encourage you to avoid consuming too much alcohol during the flight. When you arrive, you will have a 6-hour time difference to deal with, (if it is 8:00 p.m. in the United States, it will be 2:00 a.m. in Lausanne), and alcohol consumption exacerbates jet lag. Also, jet lag and soreness can be mitigated by drinking lots of water and by “moving about the cabin” from time to time. Don’t be afraid of odd looks if you decide to do some stretching exercises at your seat, either. It’s all the rage, as depicted here: <http://seanogle.com/travel/airplane-exercises>

If you are prone to motion sickness, be sure to have Dramamine (or one of a variety of medications you can get at your local drug store) on hand. If you have any problems with congestion, get a decongestant from your doctor or pharmacy. Congestion can cause pain in the

ears when taking off and landing. Chewing gum is also helpful. (Remember that four out of five dentists recommend sugarless gum for their patients who chew gum.)

## ARRIVAL IN SWITZERLAND

### A. What To Do When You Arrive

If you are flying directly into Geneva, you will fly into *Cointrin*, Geneva's airport. Follow the signs, which will be in English, toward the baggage claim area. When you pass through passport control and collect your luggage, exit the baggage area through the green doors, unless you have goods that must be declared to customs agents.

#### Lost Luggage

- Some of you may lose your luggage on your way to Geneva. Don't be alarmed!
- The Lost Luggage Dept. will take down your address and the number in Lausanne, and deliver it to you the following day or that very night.
  - This happened to a few students a few summers ago and everyone received their baggage and all belongings.
- Be aware that they may break the lock on your luggage for security purposes.

From the airport you can take a train into Geneva, and from there the train to Lausanne.

**1. Trains.** Trains run from the airport to the center of Geneva (look for signs to "Genève centrale" or "Cornavin" (the train station in central Geneva ) approximately every 10 minutes, from 5:30 a.m. to midnight. The trip takes approximately 6 minutes, and the fare is approximately CHF 4.50. The train is perhaps the most convenient and economical way to go into the city. The train goes directly to the Gare de Cornavin (usually referred to on signs as "Cornavin"). From there you can find transportation to Lausanne, approximately 40 km away. You may want to arrive several days or weeks early and travel through Europe. Be prepared for a few days of fatigue as your body becomes acclimated to the new schedule. There are a few travel books that suggest various kinds of diets and sleep adjustments to reduce the effects of jet lag. You may want to explore those. See **Appendix B**. Also, if you arrive in the early

afternoon, you may want to stay up until your normal bedtime. Doing this right off will help to minimize the jet lag effect.

- If you are arriving in Lausanne on Sunday, all stores and offices will be closed. You may wish to arrive as early as the Friday before the program begins to be able to settle in.

## **B. Exchanging Money**

You will want to exchange some of your money for Swiss francs at the Union Bank of Switzerland at the Cointrin airport so you will have Swiss francs to pay for your transportation. Remember to use the change machines as the tellers will charge a much higher fee.

## **C. Housing**

**1. Student Housing.** If you have not already done so, you will need to make your own housing arrangements. The University of Lausanne has a useful web page with housing resources at [http://www.unil.ch/sasc/page39822\\_en.html](http://www.unil.ch/sasc/page39822_en.html), and [http://www.unil.ch/cvac/page43016\\_en.html](http://www.unil.ch/cvac/page43016_en.html). Of particular interest is <http://www.unil.ch/cvac/page18250.html>. Please note, however, that many options are offered on a first-come, first-served basis.. You might also try this Lausanne tourist site: <http://www.lausanne-tourisme.ch/en/> (This site comes highly recommended by two former program directors.) See also **Appendix F** to this manual for additional resources and suggestions.

**2. Swiss Cuisine.** There are several Swiss dishes that you should try at some time during your visit. Perhaps the most famous is *fondue fromage*, which is Emmentaler and/or Gruyère cheese melted together with white wine and spices served at your table over a candle flame into which one dips cubes of bread. Fondue is usually shared by more than one person. You take the excellent French bread that is always served with meals, cut it into small pieces, use a fondue

fork, and dip the bread in the cheese. When it is fully covered with the cheese, you devour it. Tradition has it that if a woman loses her bread cube in the fondue pot (*caquelon*), she owes the man on her right a kiss. If a man loses his bread when in a restaurant, he has to buy the next round of drinks.<sup>6</sup>

*Rösti* or *röchti* is another well known dish, which consists of grated potatoes, sometimes mixed with vegetables, seasoned and cooked in a round pancake form. *Raclette* is a traditional cheese dish. A quarter or a half of a round of cheese is held over a fire. As it softens, it is scraped on your plate. The cheese, with its unique flavor, is eaten with dark bread, potatoes boiled in their skins, and sometimes pickled onions and *cornichons* (tiny pickled cucumbers). Swiss chocolate is, of course, quite famous and has been very popular among our students.

Coffee in Switzerland, and often in France, is a different experience. Rather than the cup of coffee to which we are accustomed in the United States, the Swiss usually serve coffee in a very small *demitasse* cup, *un petit café*. (If you want a larger cup, ask for *un grand café*.) It is a strong espresso coffee. Many persons add sugar cubes to the coffee, and occasionally milk or cream. Coffee in the morning is usually *café au lait*, or hot milk with the same strong Swiss coffee. Do note that you will pay for each cup of coffee. The free refills common in the United States are not the custom in Europe. Expect to be charged for water also, even tap water.

## **D. Getting Around in Lausanne and Geneva**

**1. General Information.** A map of the city can be obtained at an *Office du Tourisme* (Tourist Office). In addition, many banks offer free maps of the city. A map of the University of Lausanne is appended at **Appendix D**.

### **2. Visiting Geneva**

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<sup>6</sup> Darwin Porter, *Frommer's Switzerland and Liechtenstein* 31 (1990).

The best place for information regarding Geneva and its environs is the Tourist Office (tel. 738-52-00), which is open 7 days a week from 8:00 a.m. until 8:00 p.m. You can get some information while you are still in the United States by contacting the Swiss Tourist Office in New York City. The staff at the Geneva office speak excellent English, and they can provide a wealth of information.

You can also obtain information at the *Centre d'Accueil et de Renseignements* ("CAR") (Welcome and Information Center) at 30 rue du Mont-Blanc (tel. 731-46-47), open daily from 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m., and at the *Information de la Ville de Genève* (City Information Center), 4 place du Molard (tel. 3 29 99 70). There is also a student information office (*Info Jeunes*) at 13 rue Verdaine (tel. 3 21 22 30). It is open Monday through Friday from 10:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m.

**3. Bus Passes (Lausanne).** Lausanne has an excellent system of buses and trolleys that will take you virtually anywhere within the city. A bus pass is more economical than paying the bus fare every time you ride. To obtain a 1-month bus pass you will need to go to the TL (public transportation) office at the Lausanne-Flon metro station in the Place d'Europe. Have a passport picture (white background) with you. It should cost about CHF 66. If you are 25 years old or younger, you can get a youth pass for CHF 45 for the month.

- The bus system has several types of tickets: 1-way, 1-hour (with free circulation of the city on any bus and some trains and boats), all-day, 2-day, 5-day or monthly passes.
- The monthly pass is generally found to be the best bargain, costing about CHF 45 for those age 25 or younger and about CHF 66 for those over 25.
- Bring a passport photo.
- Many students found that doing more walking was a more pleasurable and adventurous option.

You can obtain maps of the Lausanne bus system in the information center at the TL office in the train station. You must buy your individual bus ticket at the orange machine located at each bus stop before boarding the bus. If you have an all-day or multi-day ticket, you must have it stamped at the orange machine before boarding. Each bus stop has a name which is

printed in white letters on an orange plate at the stop. Those names also appear on the map that you have. Beneath the name of the stop is the number and end destination of each bus that stops at that particular place. As in America, not every bus stops at every stop. In addition, at each stop there will be a schedule posted. Buses generally run about every 15 to 30 minutes. As in the States, it may be necessary to transfer from one numbered bus to another to reach a particular destination. Unlike in the United States, passes are not checked when you board the bus. Rather, the police occasionally will board the bus and conduct spot checks to make sure there are no free riders. **Do not free ride.** First, doing so is obviously unprofessional – a theft of services. Second, , in addition to being very embarrassed, **if caught without a pass, you will have to pay a hefty fine and be escorted off the bus.** During your stay, you will probably witness approximately two checks per week, if you ride the bus.

## MISCELLANEOUS

### A. Using the Telephone

There are communication tips on Rick Steve's website ([http://www.ricksteves.com/plan/tips/tips\\_menu.htm](http://www.ricksteves.com/plan/tips/tips_menu.htm)) that include phone and internet options, as well as general technical advice.

A January 6, 2010, article in the New York Times

(<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/01/07/technology/personaltech/07basics.html?pagewanted=all>) explains international mobile phone options, including how you can load Skype on a cell phone for cheap international calls and to stay in touch with each other members of our group. It is also possible to contact your cell phone service provider and to purchase a block of international calling minutes before leaving the U.S. Many cell phones now allow international dialing options, but this may not be the most economical choice.

In Switzerland, pay phones are located in most post offices and PTT centers (usually located in the same building). To make a local call, deposit at least 40 centimes and dial the number. A digital readout will indicate when you have to deposit more money.

- An alternative to continuously depositing money is the purchase of a Swisscom phone card. The cards are available in CHF 10 or 20 units and can be purchased at the post office, train station, or magazine stands.
- There are phones throughout the country that can be used with the Swisscom card.

International calling is also available on pay phones on a phone-first, pay-later, or collect basis. Prepaid phone cards are quite common in Europe and can be purchased in Lausanne and other European cities. They generally offer substantial savings over U. S. calling cards (including the card provided by your long distance carrier).

You can rent a cell phone that is formatted to be compatible for use in Europe for the time that you will be in Europe and have the phone shipped to you in Lausanne.

Another economical means of calling home is through a local calling card that can be obtained in one of several magazine/newsstand stores. Simply ask the cashier for a calling card to the U. S. and the amount you would like on it. Ten or 20 Swiss Francs are common amounts. The cashier will print off what looks like a receipt which has phone instructions and a pin number.

Long distance rates in general are lower between 5 p.m. and 7 p.m. (European time), after 9 p.m., and on weekends. Calls to the United States are substantially more than the cost to call from the U. S. If you are going to have much communication with family and friends at home, other than through email, we suggest either Skype (free!) or the international cell phone option mentioned above. You will not have your own phone in University housing, nor will you have control over the use of a phone – phones, to the extent available, will be shared by all residents.

## B. Tipping

Generally little or no tipping is required in Lausanne. The tip is always included in the prices on the menu. It is customary, however, to leave a waiter or waitress small change. For example, if the bill for lunch is CHF 15.50, you might give the server CHF 16 and allow him to keep the balance. If the bill were CHF 103, you might give the server CHF 105. If the service has been extraordinarily good, it is customary to leave a little extra something for the server.

In nearby France, look for the words “*service compris*” on the menu. That indicates that the tip has already been included. Sometimes the tip will merely be added to the bill. If you have any question at all as to whether the tip has been included, ask the waiter, “*est-ce que le service est compris?*” He will answer, “*oui*” or “*non*.” **Be careful, especially in Italy, to read the small print on the menu to ascertain whether the listed prices include tip (*servizio*) or a per person cover charge (*coperto*).** These charges, if not included in the prominently posted meal prices, can add as much as 20 – 30% to those posted meal prices. If you are not sure, ask before you order.

Tips for taxi drivers are included in the fare in Lausanne, but you generally should round off to the next highest Swiss franc. You will probably only use the taxi upon your arrival because the bus stops everywhere. In other cities in Europe the tip should be 10% to 15% of the bill. Check travel guides to determine if tipping is expected in other cities. If you travel and stay in hotels throughout Europe, it is customary to tip the people who carry your luggage. In many parts of Europe, it is customary to tip people differently than how it is done in the United States. For example, one generally gives the usher at a theater a few centimes. Consult the guidebooks for guidelines for each country.

### C. Electricity

The current used in Switzerland and most of Europe is 220 volts, alternating current, 50 cycles. This is in contrast to the 110 volt electricity we use in America. The electrical plugs are also different. The Swiss use 2 or 3 round prongs rather than the flat prongs used in America. The system in Britain is different yet.

- You will need a converter and adapter for European electric current if you bring any appliances. It may be easier to buy a hair dryer in Europe.

In order to use your electric appliances, *e.g.*, hair dryers, curling irons, and electric shavers, you will need both an electric converter (to convert the 220 volt current to 110 volts), **and** plug adapter to allow you to plug the American appliance into the European outlet. The kits are generally available at large hardware stores, department stores, and discount stores. **Do not attempt to use European current with only an adapter and not the converter.** Your machine will operate twice as fast and almost certainly burn out, and it may cause you serious injury. Please also note that most appliances will work differently when using the converter and some things may not work at all. You may want to bring two of these converters if you are planning on bringing a laptop, digital camera, MP3 player, alarm clock or the like. They are hard to find and expensive in Lausanne and it is not uncommon for them to break.

### D. Medical Matters

In case of an emergency, you can dial 144 to get an ambulance. The University Hospital of Lausanne is located at 21 rue de Bugnon, <http://www.chuv.ch/> or [info@chuv.ch](mailto:info@chuv.ch), tel.0041 21 314 11 11. There also are neighborhood medical centers (*Permanences médicales*) located throughout the city.

Most non-prescription medications can be obtained over the counter in Europe.

**Before you leave we recommend that you check the status of your medical insurance and what arrangements it makes for payment in Europe. Many insurance policies require that you purchase additional travel insurance.**

## **WEEKEND TRAVEL**

You may wish to travel throughout Switzerland, the surrounding French countryside, and to other points in Europe. We encourage you to travel with other students. Not only will it give you guaranteed roommates to keep hotel costs down, but you will probably appreciate the companionship on the journey as well. If traveling alone, let someone in Lausanne (a fellow student, professor, or the director) know your travel plans and leave phone numbers in case of emergency.

- **Information.** When traveling, you can often get information from information booths located in all major airports and train stations.
- Just look for signs indicating a small blue “i.” Be careful. There are 2 types of information booths: General information (what you want), and Ticket/Rail Information (for use if you have questions about traveling on the train or plane). Information staff usually speaks English.

Generally, air travel within Europe is somewhat expensive. Budget airfares do exist, but you should plan ahead to get the best price. **See Appendix D.** Some fares must be purchased 14 – 20 days in advance. A round trip to Holland, Spain, and other available destinations have cost approximately 180 – 240 CHF in past summers. However, the easiest and least expensive way to travel is by train. Check out [www.ratestogo.com](http://www.ratestogo.com) for the best last minute travel deals on hotels, from 2-star to 5-star, although it may be difficult to find cheap rates at the last minute.

### **A. Traveling by Train**

The trains are fast, clean, and comfortable and they go virtually everywhere, even to tiny, out-of-the-way towns. Generally, Eurail passes should be purchased in the U. S. before

departure. Other passes may be purchased in Europe. A rail pass is very economical, allowing you unlimited travel within a defined period of time for a single price. Often the cost of a single trip between 2 major cities will exceed the price of a rail pass that entitles you to an entire month of travel. Several kinds of rail passes are available at different prices. Eurail passes are the most popular rail passes. If you are traveling in groups of 2 or more, investing in a Eurail pass will be beneficial. You can also plan your travel ahead of time.

In order to make the most out of your trip, it is worthwhile to consider taking an overnight train. This allows you to sleep overnight and gives you an entire day to enjoy the country you are visiting.

- Check [www.eurail.com](http://www.eurail.com). See Eurail Pass section above.
- Reservations are often required for certain trains, so planning may be necessary before a weekend trip. Also, there are extra charges for reservations and overnight accommodations that are not included in your rail pass. Remember to reserve at least 1 week in advance to avoid disappointment. If you are traveling to Spain, reserve 3 to 4 weeks in advance.
- Inquire at the train station for more information on Eurail routes and train information.
- While the trains are well known for being on time, trains in other countries are not so reliable. Give yourself plenty of time for connecting trains.

## **B. Auto Travel**

Car rentals are expensive in Lausanne. They are significantly less expensive in some other countries. You may wish to check with a travel agent in the United States to determine whether you can get a better deal by taking the train to France, Germany, or Italy before using a car for the weekend. You also may want to check with classmates to see if several students might want to join in renting a car. This is a cost-effective way to go, especially for weekend trips inside Switzerland. Weekend rates are the best deal because they generally provide unlimited mileage (kilometers) and the use of a car from noon on Friday until 9 a.m. on Monday morning. If you are planning to drive in Europe, you should probably get an International Driver's License

available at your local AAA office (as of May 2013, fee was \$15 plus cost of photos). Some prefer motorcycles or mountain bikes, but you must be licensed. Remember also that most Europeans drive standard (5 speed) automobiles and you are likely to pay significantly more for an automatic vehicle. (Book ahead for an automatic car because there are fewer to rent.)

### **C. Cheap Air Travel**

In recent years cheap air travel around Europe has become increasingly popular. See **Appendix D** for a list of cheap air fare websites.

### **D. Youth Hostels & Cheap Hotels**

**1. Hostel Etiquette.** Youth hostels are an ideal way for students to travel throughout Europe. There are about 5,000 hostels located in 68 countries throughout the world. The cost is minimal: approximately \$20 – \$30 per night, often including breakfast. A hostel will provide you, at the minimum, with a bed and bath; you may have to bring your own sheets or rent them at the hostel. Hostels are located in nearly every major European city, conveniently near the best attractions. Guidebooks such as *Let's Go Europe!* will tell you where the hostels are located. You can also inquire at the information center or tourist office located in most airports and train stations. For some of the best pricing and information, including maps and reservations, check out [www.hostelworld.com](http://www.hostelworld.com).

Some disadvantages associated with hostels may include early curfews or the possibility that you will be locked out between morning and mid-afternoon. Be careful to protect your valuables while staying at a hostel. We recommend that you keep all your valuables on your person while you are sleeping. Many hostels offer lockers to store your bags. You may want to

bring a padlock to put your bags in a locker while you are away from the hostel during the day. *Let's Go!* offers descriptions of hostels as well as addresses, phone numbers, and cost.

**REMINDER: DO NOT GIVE YOUR PASSPORT TO ANYONE FOR ANY REASON!**

**2. Cheap Hotels.** If the idea of staying in a hostel does not appeal to you, many students have found similarly priced hotels in the area and that booking online provided them with the best prices. Recommendations are [www.hotel.com](http://www.hotel.com) and [www.travelocity.com](http://www.travelocity.com). You can also use travel guides such as *Rick Steves* and *Let's Go Europe!* for their recommended places to stay (see **Appendix B**).

## **E. Possible Day Trips From Lausanne**

Lausanne is ideally situated to explore the surrounding lake and mountainside areas. There are countless smaller towns and villages within easy reach of the city just waiting to be discovered by adventurous day trippers. These may be a good option for the Sunday after the first week of class.

**1. Montreux** – A great favorite among previous students is a day trip to Montreux, home of the world famous *Montreux Jazz Festival* (see list of music festivals below) and *Le Chateau di Chillon* (Chillon Castle – see #5 below). For 2 weeks in mid-July, Montreux transforms into the coolest place in Switzerland during the renowned Montreux jazz festival. But Montreux is worth visiting anytime of the year for its incredible up close views of the Swiss Alps looming overhead and its beautiful lakefront promenade. The city was originally intended as a resort area and retains its resort atmosphere with many large old-style hotels located throughout the city.

**2. Geneva** – Famous for its international institutions, this is Lausanne's big neighbor on the Lake, located just 55 km from Lausanne. There are many free cultural events in Geneva; for example, the International Red Cross gives a free concert every afternoon that is open to the

public. The music ranges from arias to string quartets - there is something new everyday. The concerts usually start at noon. You can also visit the Red Cross museum.

**3. Gruyeres** – If you’re looking for the consummate Swiss alpine village, look no further than Gruyeres, [www.la-gruyere.ch/](http://www.la-gruyere.ch/). You can visit the famous Gruyeres cheese factory or just take in the breathtaking mountain views from one of the city’s many terraced restaurants, or visit a real castle or the HR Giger Museum.<sup>7</sup> The sound of cowbells is never far off, and you’ll never go hungry in this beloved Swiss berg.

**4. Chillon** – Situated on a rocky outcropping on Lac Léman’s northern shore, Chillon ([www.chillon.ch](http://www.chillon.ch)) is Switzerland’s most famous castle. The castle is fully restored and furnished with a collection of excavated antique weapons, chests, and other items. Daily guided and self-guided tours are offered year round.

**5. Chamonix** – Located across the Arve Valley, approximately two hours from Lausanne by car, is Chamonix that is home to world class ski resorts and abounding with outdoor activities of every extreme. The 2-stage cable car to the top of the Aiguille du Midi is popular with day trippers and promises second-to-none views of the Alps on a clear day. Bring warm clothes – there’s snow up there!

**6. Annecy** – To many, Annecy is the most beautiful city in all of France. The city, just 35 km south of Geneva, is a must for day trippers, especially in summer. The ancient town is known for its incredible lakefront beaches along Lake Annecy and for the maze of ancient canals running through the old town, garnering Annecy the nickname, “Venice of the Savoie.” The Palais de l’Isle, Saint Peter’s Cathedral, and Annecy Castle are major historic monuments for when you get tired of the beach.

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<sup>7</sup> H. R. Giger was the visual inspiration for the movie, *Alien*. He is a Switzerland native born in the Basle. His museum is of a very futuristic world set in old traditional village. There’s also the H. R. Giger Bar with seats shaped like an alien – a very interesting sight.

## **F. Music Festivals**

- **La Fête de la Musique** Geneva, <http://www.ville-ge.ch/culture/fm/>
- **Montreux Jazz Festival**, <http://www.montreuxjazz.com/>
- **Moon & Stars Festival**, Locarno, <http://www.moonandstarslocarno.ch/>
- **Lake Parade**, Geneva, <http://www.lakeparade.ch/>
- **Montjoux Festival**, Thonons, <http://www.montjouxfestival.com>
- **Paleo Festival**, Nyon, <http://www.paleo.ch/>
- **Fête de Genève**, <http://www.fetes-de-geneve.ch/>

## **G. Other Attractions**

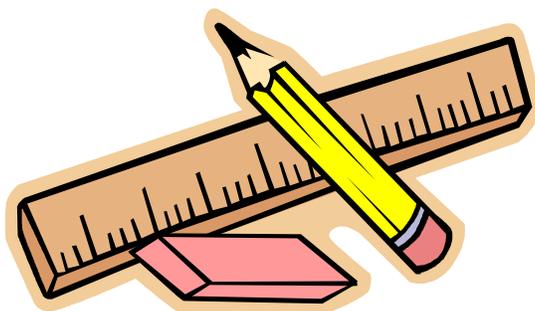
1. **Tour de France (Bicycling)**, <http://www.letour.fr/indexus.html>

**BON VOYAGE!**

# APPENDIX A

## METRIC CONVERSION CHART

[http://www.sciencemadesimple.com/metric\\_conversion\\_chart.html](http://www.sciencemadesimple.com/metric_conversion_chart.html)



### APPROXIMATE CONVERSIONS FROM STANDARD / US CUSTOMARY UNITS TO SI / METRIC UNITS

SYMBOL	WHEN YOU KNOW	MULTIPLY BY	TO FIND	SYMBOL
<b>LENGTH</b>				
<b>in</b>	inches	25.4	millimeters	mm
<b>ft</b>	feet	0.305	meters	m
<b>yd</b>	yards	0.914	meters	m
<b>mi</b>	miles	1.61	kilometers	km
<b>AREA</b>				
<b>in<sup>2</sup></b>	square inches	645.2	square millimeters	mm <sup>2</sup>
<b>ft<sup>2</sup></b>	square feet	0.093	square meters	m <sup>2</sup>
<b>yd<sup>2</sup></b>	square yard	0.836	square meters	m <sup>2</sup>
<b>ac</b>	acres	0.405	hectares	ha
<b>mi<sup>2</sup></b>	square miles	2.59	square kilometers	km <sup>2</sup>
<b>VOLUME</b>				
<b>fl oz</b>	fluid ounces	29.57	milliliters	mL
<b>gal</b>	gallons	3.785	liters	L
<b>ft<sup>3</sup></b>	cubic feet	0.028	cubic meters	m <sup>3</sup>
<b>yd<sup>3</sup></b>	cubic yards	0.765	cubic meters	m <sup>3</sup>
<b>MASS</b>				
<b>oz</b>	ounces	28.35	grams	g
<b>lb</b>	pounds	0.454	kilograms	kg
<b>T</b>	short tons (2000 lb)	0.907	megagrams (or "metric ton")	Mg (or "t")

<b>TEMPERATURE</b>				
<b>°F</b>	Fahrenheit	(F-32) x 5 / 9 or (F-32) / 1.8	Celsius	<b>°C</b>
<b>ILLUMINATION</b>				
<b>fc</b>	foot-candles	10.76	lux	lx
<b>fl</b>	foot-Lamberts	3.426	candela/m <sup>2</sup>	cd/m <sup>2</sup>
<b>FORCE and PRESSURE or STRESS</b>				
<b>lbf</b>	poundforce	4.45	newtons	N
<b>lbf/in<sup>2</sup></b>	poundforce per square inch	6.89	kilopascals	kPa

## APPENDIX B

# DIRECTORY OF TRAVEL GUIDES

1. *Let's Go: Europe*<sup>8</sup>
2. *Let's Go: Germany, Austria & Switzerland*
3. *Fodor's Switzerland*<sup>9</sup>
4. *Frommer's Switzerland and Liechtenstein*<sup>10</sup>
5. *Fodor's Europe*
6. *Fodor's Budget Europe*
7. *Frommer's Europe on \$50 a Day*
8. *Rick Steves, Europe Through the Backdoor (travel guides for all countries)*<sup>11</sup>
9. DK Top Ten Series Books for specific cities

You will find that *Let's Go* is more comprehensive and geared for the student (budget) traveler. Fodor's, the *Lonely Planet* series and the *Affordable* series (e.g., *Affordable France*) are also useful.

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<sup>8</sup> All of the *Let's Go* books are written by the staff of the Harvard Student Agencies and published by St. Martin's Press in New York.

<sup>9</sup> All *Fodor's* publications are published by Fodor's Travel Publications, Inc. in New York.

<sup>10</sup> All *Frommer's* publications are published by Prentice Hall Travel in New York.

<sup>11</sup> Rick Steves is the host of the PBS series *Rick Steves' Europe* and the author of 30 European travel guidebooks, all published by Avalon Travel Publishing.

## APPENDIX C

# STUDENT ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS AND RIGHTS

### A. Course Attendance

Student and course requirements for the Institute are the same as those for the Widener University School of Law. The student honor code applies. Courses must meet the requirements of the American Bar Association. Compliance with ABA requirements is necessary for the credits to be applied toward your law degree at your home institution.

Classes are held on the dates and at the times indicated on the final schedule (see APPENDIX H). Class requirements are fully equivalent to your classes at home. Class starts on time, and attendance will be taken in all courses. The ABA requirement that a student attend 80% of class hours is enforced. **Any student not attending 80% of classes will be given a “W” in the course.** In prior years, more than 1 student has been withdrawn for poor attendance. There is no refund for poor attendance, and no credit will be given for the course.

### B. Examinations

Exams may not be deferred except in the case of documented extreme medical or similar extreme personal emergency. In such case, notify the Program Director. Permission to defer an examination must be obtained prior to the scheduled examination day, unless the cause for deferral occurs on the examination day, and the cause is beyond the student’s control. Permission to defer can only be granted by the Program Director.

### C. Course Selection

Course selection will normally be done through the mail at the time of your application to the program. Students may change their course selection before the beginning of the program by

notifying Widener's International Programs Office. Students should make every effort to finalize their course plans prior to arriving in Switzerland. Students will, however, be allowed to add or drop courses through the first day of classes in each session. After this period, students may not add or drop courses. Students withdrawing from a course after this period will receive a "W" indicating withdrawal on the transcript to be sent to their home institution.

#### **D. Grading**

Course instructors will use the Widener University grading system. Courses will be graded on an A through F basis. Widener has no D- or F+ grades. Grades will be reported to your home law school. Each law school determines whether to accept the letter grade or to change it into a Pass or Fail. While home institutions may change grades into Pass or Fail, students may not elect to take courses at the Institute on a Pass/Fail basis.

#### **E. Substance Abuse**

Students are responsible for ascertaining and obeying all laws regarding drugs and alcohol in the countries in which they are residing or traveling. Any infraction of such laws will also be considered an infraction of Widener University Substance Abuse Policy. Any student who violates this policy may be disciplined, suspended, or dismissed.

### **SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY OF WIDENER UNIVERSITY**

#### ***Section 1.     Human Rights Policy***

It is the policy of Widener University not to discriminate on the basis of sex, physical handicap, race, age, color, religion, national or ethnic origin, marital status, or sexual or affectional preference in its educational programs, admissions programs, employment practices, financial aid, or other school administered programs. This policy includes, but is not limited to:

- a. recruitment and employment of applicants who possess the necessary qualifications and/or experience for appointment to the faculty;
- b. renewal of faculty appointment, promotion, tenure, and separation from the University;
- c. sabbatical leave or other leave with or without pay; faculty development programs, grants and awards;
- d. establishment of salary, benefits, workload, and other rights belonging to a Faculty member.

Moreover, it is the policy of the University that no employee shall discriminate against another employee on any of these grounds.

***Section 2.     Discrimination and Harassment***

Widener University seeks to create and maintain an academic environment in which all members of the community are free from unlawful discrimination and harassment.

- a. Definition of Sexual Harassment. Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitutes sexual harassment when
  - (1) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment or academic rating; or
  - (2) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment and/or academic decisions affecting such individual; or
  - (3) such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or academic performance, or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work or classroom environment.
- b. Sexual harassment in academe includes the use of authority to emphasize the sexuality or

sexual identity of a student in a manner which prevents or impairs that student's full enjoyment of educational benefits, environment, or opportunities. Academic administrators are required to acquaint their faculty with the seriousness of these issues and with the Widener institutional policy.

- c. Any faculty member, staff member, or student who believes himself or herself to have been injured because of a violation of these policies should make a prompt, written report to the Associate Dean's office.<sup>12</sup> Any reports of sexual harassment or discrimination will be promptly investigated and referred to the appropriate body for disposition.

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<sup>12</sup> The director of the Lausanne Summer International Institute is the Associate Dean for this purpose.

## APPENDIX D

### ADDITIONAL TRAVEL INFORMATION

**Lausanne Travel Guide:**

[http://www.virtualtourist.com/travel/Europe/Switzerland/Canton\\_de\\_Geneve/Lausanne-691866/TravelGuide-Lausanne-more.html](http://www.virtualtourist.com/travel/Europe/Switzerland/Canton_de_Geneve/Lausanne-691866/TravelGuide-Lausanne-more.html)

**Taxi Service:**

<http://www.infotaxi.org/city-2406.htm>

**Train/Rail System:**

For the Swiss Federal Railway (including train from the Geneva airport to Lausanne):

<http://www.sbb.ch/en/home.html>

[http://www.eurorailways.com/products/trains\\_passes/single\\_country/swiss.htm?source=g-sg-swiss&gclid=CJKWnfn2l4sCFRpUgQodtg8uUg](http://www.eurorailways.com/products/trains_passes/single_country/swiss.htm?source=g-sg-swiss&gclid=CJKWnfn2l4sCFRpUgQodtg8uUg)

Eurostar Chunnel Train: <http://eurostar.com>

**Airfares:**

Air Europa: <http://www.air-europa.com>

Aer Lingus: <http://www.aerlingus.com>

British Midland: <http://www.flybmi.com>

Cheap Flights: <http://www.cheapflights.co.uk>

easyJet: <http://www.easyjet.com>

Europe by Air Pass: <http://www.europebyair.com>

Mobissimo Travel: <http://www.mobissimo.com>

Spanair: <http://www.spanair.com>

Ryanair: <http://www.ryanair.com>

Skyscanner: <http://www.skyscanner.net>

Virgin Express: <http://www.brusselsairlines.com>

Wegolo: <http://www.wegolo.com>

**Other:**

<http://transitionsabroad.com>

<http://www.ricksteves.com/>

<http://www.travelmatters.com/>

**Map of University of Lausanne (UNIL) (follows on next page) :**

**[Classes will likely be held in Internet]**



# APPENDIX E

## CHECK LIST

### (Some often overlooked items)

You can buy almost anything you may need in Lausanne. However, most things will be more expensive than at home.

- travel alarm clock (battery operated) available at discount stores
- an adequate supply of toiletries (including band-aids, non-aerosol hair spray, tampons, hair conditioner, razors and shaving gel, laundry detergent. Although these things are all available, if traveling before settling in Lausanne, one may wish to weigh the benefits of having the items versus the extra space and actual weight.)
- medicine, *e.g.* aspirin, Dramamine (for motion sickness), anti-diarrhea medicine (for traveler's diarrhea), an adequate supply of any prescriptions you use regularly, contact lens supplies, and maybe perhaps a small First Aid Kit (sold in drug stores, etc.)
- film (It's usually expensive in Europe and you will probably find film development cheaper at home, too.) You should use digital or disposable cameras and have them developed upon return to the U. S. for the most reasonable prices.
- money belt or waist pouch for money, passport, tickets, credit cards, and your VISA/MAC card
- iPod, CD/MP3 player, Walkman, and tapes
- appropriate shoes – the more comfortable the better
- notebooks and pens for school
- flip flops (for the beach and shower)
- if your cell phone doesn't have one, a small calculator (for exchange rates)
- wash cloths (not commonly used in Europe but you may wish to pack one when traveling)
- \* We suggest that you prepare your own "check-list" of things that you may need.

## APPENDIX F

### Housing Options

#### Student Housing

Students make their own housing arrangements, but the University of Lausanne has some helpful resources (sites below):

<http://fme1.ch/en/> On this site are 7 residence halls that are considered university housing. When you click on the houses, you can read all about what each offers but continue to scroll down until you see the temporary rentals (these are the summer rentals that are for less than 3 months).

These sites also give the public transportation (bus numbers) and commuting times to the University. The walking time is also there.

[http://www.unil.ch/cvac/page43016\\_en.html](http://www.unil.ch/cvac/page43016_en.html)

<http://www.unil.ch/cvac/page18250.html>

Arlene Trapuzzano, [artrapuzzano@mail.widener.edu](mailto:artrapuzzano@mail.widener.edu), has some other contacts that may be useful.

#### Independent Housing

In addition to student housing resources, you might try these independent reservation services, or others like them:

<http://www.hrs.com/web3/>

<http://www.aua.com/us/eng/Hotels/hotelreservation/>

If you are only staying for two weeks, you might consider area hotels. You might find a (relative) bargain in the nearby town of Vevey (a favorite village of past program participants), at the Hotel Negociants:

<http://www.hotelnegociants.ch/>

## APPENDIX G

### TIPS FOR TRAVELING ABROAD

[http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/registration/registration\\_4789.html#](http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/registration/registration_4789.html#)

U.S. Department of State  
*Bureau of Consular Affairs*  
Washington, DC 20520

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*This information is current as of Monday, May 13, 2013.*

#### Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP)

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##### Stay Informed.

Sign up for our free Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (formerly known as “Travel Registration” or “Registration with Embassies”) to receive the latest travel updates and information!

When you sign up, you will automatically receive the most current information we compile about the country where you will be traveling or living. You will also receive updates, including Travel Warnings and Travel Alerts (where appropriate). You only need to sign up once, and then you can add and delete trips from your account based on your current travel plans!

##### Stay Connected.

By connecting with us on the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program, we will be able to assist you better in the case of an emergency, such as if you lose your passport or it is stolen while you are abroad.

We also assist U.S. citizens in other emergencies, such as in natural disasters. For example, after the earthquake in Haiti, we evacuated over 16,700 U.S. citizens and family members. During the civil unrest in Lebanon in 2006 we assisted nearly 15,000 U.S. citizens and family members, and in 2004 we helped thousands more during the tsunami.

The travel and contact information you enter into our Smart Traveler Enrollment Program will make it easier for consular officers in U.S. embassies and consulates around the world to contact you and your loved ones during an emergency—including situations where your family or friends in the U.S. are having problems trying to contact you with important news.

Stay Safe.

We believe that a well-informed traveler is a safer traveler. Our consular officers around the world compile country-specific information, travel alerts, travel warnings, fact sheets and emergency messages to provide you with timely and accurate travel information about every country where you may travel.

We include reports on possible risks and security threats so that you can make informed decisions about your travel plans and activities.

Stay informed by connecting with us via our Smart Traveler Enrollment Program so you can have safe and enjoyable travels!

Go to <http://step.state.gov/step/> to enroll!

## CONSULAR INFORMATION SHEET: SWITZERLAND

[http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis\\_pa\\_tw/cis/cis\\_1034.html](http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1034.html)

U.S. Department of State  
*Bureau of Consular Affairs*  
Washington, DC 20520

*This information is current as of May 13, 2013.*

### Switzerland

#### Country-Specific Information

The U.S. Embassy websites answer many questions of interest to U.S. citizens visiting and residing in Switzerland.

**Embassy address:**

U.S. Embassy  
Sulgeneckstrasse 19  
CH-3007 Bern  
Telephone: (41) (31) 357-7011 (2 p.m.-4 p.m.)  
Emergency phone: after-hours/weekends – (41) (31) 357-7777  
Facsimile: (41) (31) 357-7280  
<http://bern.usembassy.gov/service.html>

**COUNTRY DESCRIPTION:** Switzerland is a highly developed democracy. Read the Department of State [Background Notes on Switzerland](#) for additional information.

**SMARTTRAVELER ENROLLMENT PROGRAM (STEP) / EMBASSY LOCATION:** If you are going to live in or visit Switzerland, please take the time to tell our Embassy about your trip. If you sign up, we can keep you up to date with important safety and security announcements. It will also help your friends and family get in touch with you in an emergency. Here's the link: <http://step.state.gov/step/>

United States Consular Agency, Zurich  
Zurich America Center, Dufourstrasse 101, 8008 Zurich  
Telephone: (41) (43) 499-2960 (10 a.m. – 1 p.m.)  
Facsimile: (41) (43) 499-2961

Email: [zurich-ca@state.gov](mailto:zurich-ca@state.gov)

United States Consular Agency, Geneva  
rue Versonnex 7, 1207 Geneva  
Telephone: (41) (22) 840-5160 (10 a.m. – 1 p.m.)  
Facsimile: (41) (22) 840-5162.

Email: [Geneva-CA@state.gov](mailto:Geneva-CA@state.gov)

**ENTRY / EXIT REQUIREMENTS FOR U.S. CITIZENS:** Switzerland extends visa-free entry to U.S. citizens staying in Switzerland for up to 90 days (consecutive or combined, within a six-month period) for tourist or business purposes. The passport should be valid for at least three months beyond the period of stay. Switzerland is a party to the Schengen Agreement, which allows for free travel within a multi-country zone of Europe. For further details about travel into and within Schengen countries, please see our [Schengen fact sheet](#), at [http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis\\_pa\\_tw/cis/cis\\_4361.html](http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_4361.html)

For further information about customs regulations, please read our [Customs Information page](#): [http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis\\_pa\\_tw/cis/cis\\_1468.html](http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1468.html)

**THREATS TO SAFETY AND SECURITY:** Switzerland remains largely free of terrorist incidents; however, like other countries in the Schengen area, Switzerland's open borders with its Western European neighbors allow for the possibility of terrorist groups entering/exiting the country anonymously. You should remain vigilant with regard to your personal security.

Although there have been no recent terrorist attacks in Switzerland, violence by anti-globalization, anti-Semitic, and anti-establishment (anarchist) groups does occur from time to time. This violence is typically in the form of property damage and clashes between these groups and the police. The potential for specific threats of violence involving U.S. citizens in Switzerland is remote. Nevertheless, the Consular Agencies in Zurich and Geneva may close periodically to assess their security situation.

Public demonstrations occasionally take place, mostly in Zurich, Geneva, and Bern. These events are almost always known in advance to the police, who provide appropriate personnel to observe them and maintain order. Such demonstrations rarely turn violent; nonetheless, you should avoid them if at all possible.

Stay up to date by:

- Bookmarking our [Bureau of Consular Affairs website](#), which contains the current [Travel Warnings and Travel Alerts](#) as well as the [Worldwide Caution](#).
- Following us on [Twitter](#) and the Bureau of Consular Affairs page on [Facebook](#) as well.
- Downloading our free [Smart Traveler iPhone App](#) to have travel information at your fingertip; and,
- Calling 1-888-407-4747 toll-free within the U.S. and Canada, or a regular toll line, 1-202-501-4444, from other countries.

Taking some time before travel to consider your personal security – Here are some useful tips for traveling safely abroad.

**CRIME:** Switzerland has a low rate of violent crime; however, crimes of all types which may include violence do occur. Pick-pocketing and purse snatching are the most common and frequently occur in the vicinity of train and bus stations, airports, and some public parks, especially during peak tourist periods (such as summer and Christmas) and when conferences, shows, or exhibits are scheduled in major cities. Be especially vigilant in the airports and railway stations in both Zurich and Geneva, as these locations experience multiple incidents of petty theft almost every day.

In many countries around the world, counterfeit and pirated goods are widely available. Transactions involving such products may be illegal under local law. In addition, bringing them back to the United States may result in forfeitures and/or fines.

**VICTIMS OF CRIME:** If you or someone you know becomes the victim of a crime abroad, you should contact the local police and the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate. We can:

- Replace a stolen passport;
- Help you find appropriate medical care if you are the victim of a violent crime such as assault or rape;
- Put you in contact with the appropriate police authorities, and if you want us to, we can contact family members or friend; and,
- Help you understand the local criminal justice process and direct you to local attorneys, although it is important to remember that local authorities are responsible for investigating and prosecuting the crime.

The local equivalent to the “911” emergency line in Switzerland is 144 for medical/ambulance services; 117 for the police department; and 118 for the fire department.

Please see our information on victims of crime, including possible victim compensation programs in the United States.

**CRIMINAL PENALTIES:** While you are traveling in Switzerland, you are subject to its laws even if you are a U.S. citizen. Foreign laws and legal systems can be vastly different than our own. In Switzerland it is expected that citizens and visitors carry an I.D. and/or a passport. Should the police stop you, and you are without an I.D., it is possible that you may be taken in for questioning. This is the decision of the individual police officer. Travelers should also be aware that photography is not allowed in certain areas (for example, at military airports). Please observe posted signs regarding photography.

Driving under the influence of alcohol can lead to heavy fines and/or a ban from driving or in severe cases, a jail sentence, depending on the percentage of alcohol in the blood;. Swiss law only allows up to 0.05% blood alcohol content (whereas the legal limit in the United States is 0.08%). Driving speeds in Switzerland are also much slower than in the rest of Europe and vary from area to area. In residential areas the speed limit is 30 km/h (18.6 m/h), on urban roads 50

km/h (31 m/h), on rural roads 80 km/h (49.7 m/h), on minor highways 100 km/h (62 m/h) and on the Autobahn 120 km/h (74.5 m/h). **Travelers are advised to carefully observe the posted speed limits.**

Traffic fines are costly and vary according to where the infraction occurs and by how much one exceeds the speed limit. Fines assessed within the city limits are higher than those assessed on a highway or autobahn. The fine schedule follows:

Speed Over the Speed Limit	Within the City Limits	Outside the City/on a Highway	On the Autobahn
1-5 km/h	CHF 40	CHF 40	CHF 20
6-10 km/h	CHF120	CHF 100	CHF 60
11-15 km/h	CHF 250	CHF 160	CHF120
16-20 km/h	court appearance	CHF240	CHF180
21-25 km/h	court appearance	court appearance	CHF 260
Over 25 km/h	court appearance	court appearance	court appearance

The court appearance carries a fine ranging from CHF 500-CHF 1,000 (US \$683-1,270) and other penalties the court deems appropriate.

Running a red light carries a fine of CHF 250 (US \$341).

Drug possession carries heavy fines and prison terms in Switzerland; these can vary depending on the amount and type of narcotics carried. Any attempt to cross an international border carrying drugs (for instance transiting Switzerland via Zurich airport) automatically constitutes trafficking charges. These charges can also carry heavy penalties.

Engaging in sexual conduct with children or using or disseminating child pornography in a foreign country is a crime prosecutable in the United States. If you break local laws in Switzerland, your U.S. passport won't help you avoid arrest or prosecution. It's very important to know what's legal and what's not where you are going.

Switzerland, through its 26 cantons (states), has programs to assist victims of crime and their immediate relatives. Medical, psychological, social, financial, and legal assistance are available throughout the country. This type of assistance must be applied for, and the local police can assist if necessary. These programs also protect the rights of the victim during criminal proceedings. The victim may receive compensation for some damages, if requested during the criminal procedure. Information is available at the Swiss Department of Justice located on Bundesrain 20, 3003 Bern, telephone: 41-31-322-4750.

Please see our information on victims of crime, including possible victim compensation programs in the United States.

The United States and Switzerland do not have a bilateral agreement requiring mandatory notification of a U.S. citizen arrest to the U.S. embassy. Notification of arrests is only required if the arrested U.S. citizen so requests. If you are arrested and concerned that the Department of State may not be aware of your situation, you should request the police or prison officials to notify the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate of your arrest. Based on the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations, bilateral agreements with certain countries, and customary international law, if you are arrested in Switzerland, you have the option to request that the police, prison officials, or other authorities alert the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate of your arrest, and to have communications from you forwarded to the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate.

Switzerland is a signatory to the European Convention on Human Rights, which requires arrestees be immediately heard before an independent Magistrate to determine if they will be held for investigative detention. Individuals “highly suspected” of a crime are generally placed under police detention until such time that their case can be heard by the Magistrate.

**SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES: If you are going to participate in mountain activities (summer and winter) we strongly urge you to buy mountain search and rescue insurance.** Costs of search and rescue operations are your or your family’s responsibility. Search and rescue insurance is available inexpensively in Switzerland and you may purchase it at many Swiss post offices. You can get more information from the Swiss National Tourist Office, at most tourist information offices or with the Swiss Air Rescue Organization. Such insurance has proved useful; **an uninsured rescue can easily cost \$25,000.**

Switzerland’s customs authorities encourage the use of an ATA (Admission Temporaire/Admission) Carnet for the temporary admission of professional equipment, commercial samples, and/or goods for exhibitions and fair purposes. ATA Carnet Headquarters, located at the U.S. Council for International Business, 1212 Avenue of the Americas, New York, N.Y. 10036, issues and guarantees the ATA Carnet in the United States. For additional information call (212) 354-4480 or email.

**ACCESSIBILITY:** While in Switzerland, individuals with disabilities may find accessibility and accommodation different from what you find in the United States. Certain difficulties may be encountered for people with disabilities, and Switzerland is in the process of improving these facilities. Most cantons have already implemented some provisions for persons with disabilities, but there is no country-wide standard. Experts estimate that only approximately 30 percent of public buildings are wheelchair accessible.

Public transportation is good and punctual. The Swiss tourist office and train station is the best place to obtain information about special fares for tourists.

For an excellent source of information regarding tourism in Switzerland, please refer to: [www.myswitzerland.com](http://www.myswitzerland.com). This site includes information on special rail passes, transport, hotel ratings, events, and weekly top news.

**MEDICAL FACILITIES AND HEALTH INFORMATION:** Excellent medical care is widely available. Good information on vaccinations and other health precautions may be

obtained via the [CDC website](#). For information about outbreaks of infectious diseases abroad, consult the infectious diseases section of the [World Health Organization \(WHO\) website](#). The WHO website also contains additional health information for travelers, including [detailed country-specific health information](#).

**MEDICAL INSURANCE:** You can't assume your insurance will go with you when you travel. It is very important to find out BEFORE you leave. You need to ask your insurance company two questions:

- Does my policy apply when I'm outside of the U.S. and provide full coverage?
- Will it cover emergencies like a trip to a foreign hospital or an evacuation? Will my insurance policy cover treatment and/or an extended stay in a hospital or clinic, and cover a medical evacuation (medevac)?

In many places, doctors and hospitals still expect payment in cash at the time of service (this is where your insurance policy will be of assistance). Your regular U.S. health insurance may not cover doctor and hospital visits in other countries. If your policy is not valid when you travel outside of the U.S., it's a very good idea to take out another one for your trip. For more information, please see our [medical insurance overseas page](#).

**TRAFFIC SAFETY AND ROAD CONDITIONS:** While in Switzerland, you may encounter road conditions that differ significantly from those in the United States.

Although many roads are mountainous and winding, Swiss road safety standards are high. In some mountain areas, vehicle snow chains are required in winter. Road travel can be more dangerous during summer, winter holidays, the Easter break, and Whitsunday weekend (late spring) because of increased traffic. Travel on expressways (indicated by green signs with a white expressway symbol) requires purchase of a sticker ("vignette"), which must be affixed to the car's windshield. Vignettes can be purchased at most border crossings points, gas stations and at Swiss post offices. Drivers using the highway system without a vignette are subject to hefty fines levied on the spot. Public transportation in Switzerland and Liechtenstein is excellent.

Please refer to our [Road Safety page](#) for more information. Also, we suggest that you visit the website of the Switzerland's [national tourist office](#).

**AVIATION SAFETY OVERSIGHT:** The U.S. Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has assessed the government of Switzerland's Civil Aviation Authority as being in compliance with International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) aviation safety standards for oversight of Switzerland's air carrier operations. Further information may be found on the [FAA's safety assessment page](#)

**CHILDREN'S ISSUES:** Please see our Office of Children's Issues web pages on [intercountry adoption](#) and [international parental child abduction](#).