



COVENANT
COLLEGE

May Term Student Handbook

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Brock 321

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May Term Checklist and Timeline

Initial Steps

- Begin either applying for or renewing your passport. If you have a passport, be sure to check that the expiration date extends six months or more beyond the end date of your May Term course. Check out <http://travel.state.gov/passport> for more information.
- Keep an eye out for the announcement of May Term courses. Each May Term will have one or two information sessions throughout September and October.
- Throughout the May Term Application period, you are welcome to contact the Global Education Office for advising at global.ed@covenant.edu

May Term Application

- For the initial application, make sure to gather all your necessary documents:
 - May Term Application and Interest Statement
 - \$300 deposit (Submit cash or check directly to the Accounting Department in Carter, or pay online through Banner or Pay my Bill link)
 - Passport photo OR passport application submission
- Make sure to inform a legal guardian of your plans to apply for a May Term and discuss the associated tuition costs, personal expenses, and risk management needs such as insurance and communications.
- **The deadline for MOST May Terms is November 1st.** However, take note of any alternate instructions or deadlines provided by your faculty lead.
- The deposit is refundable through the end of the Fall semester or until you are given notice of Acceptance.

Acceptance and Pre-Departure

- Once you are accepted to a May Term course, you will need to fill out the May Term Acceptance form on ScotsPortal. You will be required to provide information such as:
 - Off-Campus and Emergency Contact Information
 - Indication of your Travel Plans
 - Proof of International Healthcare and Travel Insurance
 - Indication that you have Read and Understood the Off-Campus Studies Standards of Conduct and Agreement
 - Submit a Copy of your Passport, either as a JPEG or a PDF
- **The May Term Acceptance Form MUST be completed by January 30th.**
- By completing the May Term Acceptance form, students are committing to attend at least two course-specific pre-departure meetings throughout the term.

There will also be one mandatory All Student Off-Campus May Term Pre-Departure meeting in late February.

- **Airfare charges will be incurred on your behalf starting January 31st.** Any cancellations past this date require a cancellation fee, for which the student is responsible.
- **Valid passports must be submitted by March 1st** at the latest. In order to be valid, your passport must have your signature. If you have not received your passport by January 30th and are unsure if you can make the March 1st deadline, please contact the Global Ed dept. for alternate plans.
- **Non-transferrable airfare costs will be incurred on your behalf by March 7th.** Instead of a cancellation fee, our travel agent is only able to issue a flight credit for the amount and airline of our group travel.
- Make sure that you have international health insurance coverage and research travel insurance options.
- Prepare your travel plans by purchasing any flights, trains, or buses, and accommodations you may need if you intend to travel independently.
- If you will need on-campus housing for the day between semester-end dorm checkout and the course departure day, please contact Student Development.

During Your Trip

- The faculty lead has full disciplinary power granted to her or him by Covenant College and the Office of Student Development. This includes the power to immediately dismiss without appeal a student from an Off-Campus Study Program. Any costs associated with voluntary or involuntary dismissal will be the responsibility of the student and will be reflected in your Banner account.
- While abroad, you can still contact the Global Education office with any questions concerning billing or changes to your travel arrangements.

May Term Planning Considerations

Identify Your Priorities and Conflicts

- Do you have conflicting commitments that could interfere with the dates of the May Term course? For anyone who participates in Spring athletics, what recommendations can your coach give concerning your time commitment? What about internship or job start dates, weddings or family events, summer camps, etc?
- What credits do you need to graduate? Does this course fulfill a general

elective, major, or minor degree requirement?

- What learning experience do you hope to receive from the course? What personal experiences or life skills do you hope to gain from this course?
- How will an international intensive course fit into your larger academic and career planning?
- Do you intend to do any independent traveling after the conclusion of the May Term course? How will this impact your flight plans and budget?

Records & Registration

The Global Education Office will register Off-Campus May Term students directly with the Office of Records on the students' behalf. All May Term courses that go abroad fulfill the Cultural Inquiry Requirement. If a course is available to fulfill multiple core requirements, students must determine which requirement they wish to fulfill and inform the Global Education Program Manager of which requirement they choose to fulfill.

Undergraduate Catalogue

A limited number of courses are offered during the summer months. A three-week May Term session is offered immediately following Commencement, where students may take a maximum of 4 credit hours with no more than two standard classroom courses meeting throughout the three weeks. Professors might also choose to teach a May Term course off campus, in collaboration with the Global Education department, in various global cities. These offerings are announced in September of the year prior. These offerings provide the opportunity for students to make up for deficiencies, enjoy international travel as a group, earn extra credit, or take required hours in order to lighten their loads during the regular semesters. Students may also earn credit by working as interns with a variety of organizations locally or in your hometown. Students from other colleges are also welcome to apply as special students for any summer courses.

It is the express responsibility of the student to make all necessary arrangements for Off-Campus Studies with other departments such as the Offices of Records, Financial Aid, Accounting, Student Development, and Global Education. It is your responsibility to be aware of deadlines on campus, such as financial aid deadlines and extended housing deadlines, and the check-out policy.

Core Requirements

Cultural Inquiry Requirement (CI)

Cultural Inquiry courses will explore one or more of the following: genders, ethnicities, races, religions, social classes, disabilities, or cultures other than those that comprise

the primary focus of Cultural Heritage of the West. Or, a CI course may be one taught by Covenant faculty in an international setting. A CI course offered by a student's major department may fulfill both the CI and a major requirement. A CI course may not fulfill the CI and another distribution requirement.

Global Awareness Requirement (GA)

Global Awareness (GA) courses seek to accentuate the multilevel interconnectedness of countries and cultures across the globe by carefully examining current events that illustrate the importance and clarify the dynamics relating to these connections. A GA course offered by a student's major department may fulfill both the GA and a major requirement. A GA course may not fulfill both the GA and any other distribution requirement (listed below). A Global Awareness course code (GA) will be associated with all courses that fulfill this requirement.

Travel Considerations

Transportation

As you are completing your May Term Acceptance forms, consider what flight options work best for your travel plans. For May Term courses that are 10 people or more, a group flight option will be provided. However, you may opt to book your own flights.

There are three primary reasons to independently book your flights:

1. You will be arriving at your May Term course location on a different date from the group. You must receive express permission from your faculty lead.
2. You would like flexibility in your travel plans following the course end, and cannot commit to alternate flight dates by March 1st.
3. You will depart from a different airport from the group flight. To make this change to our group reservation, it will often cost more than it would to find your own flight route. However, we can always source a quote for you.

For May Term courses smaller than 10 and for all independent travelers, the faculty lead's flight route information will be provided, in order for you to match your departure and arrival times with the group.

If you plan to travel independently following the end of your course, it is your responsibility to be familiar with your airline's policies on packing and documentation for international flights. It is also recommended that you spend time researching modes of transportation available in the countries you intend to visit. Many countries offer numerous options for cross-country trains, metro area train networks, and city or long-haul buses. Identify the most common means of navigating the city or countryside in your area.

Communications

It is important to establish a reliable means of communication while abroad. While

most urban environments will have options for public WIFI, and your living arrangements should also be equipped with WIFI, it is good to research options for data and service while abroad. Most mobile service providers offer options to add an international calling and data plan month-to-month, but rates may vary. It is also possible to buy international SIM or eSIM cards, which can be sourced by a mobile or third-party service provider. Access to cell phone service, data, and WIFI varies a lot from place to place, so make sure to look up what options are best for your specific travel plans.

Packing Recommendations

It can be helpful to research common clothing practices and safety measures that are recommended for the area to which you will be traveling. Consider what attire is common in that area. Things that are common in the U.S. that may be perceived differently elsewhere are outfit elements such as brand logos, baseball caps, athletic wear outside of athletic contexts, or the exposure of shoulders, knees, elbows, etc. For safety purposes, carefully consider where and how you store valuables. If you carry a bag, consider an option with a crossbody strap rather than a backpack. Store your items in front pockets or in clothing items with zippers. Keep an eye on your belongings and your surroundings. Also, make sure to check the weather! Even during the summer months, items like rain jackets, umbrellas, or layering for warmth may still be needed.

Another important consideration is packing adapters or converters. The main difference between an adapter and a converter is what they do with electricity. An adapter changes the plug configuration so your U.S. power plugs fit into the wall socket in the country you are visiting. The configuration required changes from place to place, as many different standards are used internationally. Please research which adapter is necessary for your trip. A converter changes the voltage of an outlet to match the voltage of a device. Converters are needed when a device is single-voltage and not compatible with the electricity in a foreign country. If you plan to pack appliances such as hair dryers, straighteners, curling irons, steamers etc. that are not dual-voltage, you will need a converter when visiting countries that have a higher standard output than the U.S. If possible, forego items that are not absolutely necessary or coordinate with your classmates to pack fewer of them overall.

International Banking and Currency

Please determine the best method for handling international banking and money transfers for your travel plans. While it is becoming more common for banks to offer no-fee international purchasing on debit or credit card transactions, it is not a universal practice. Check with your bank's policies regarding international transactions, and make sure to declare your travel plans to your bank so that any international purchases will clear.

It is also helpful to research what kind of transactions are customary in the region to which you will be traveling. For example, there are some cities where cash is no longer commonly used, and ATMs may be few and far between. There are also parts of the world where small or local shops may not accept debit or credit at all, and transactions will need to be conducted in cash. It is crucial to determine the most common methods of payment in your area.

It is also the student's responsibility to become familiar with the currency and currency exchange rate in their host country. This can significantly impact personal budgeting, so it is best to find and track information regarding currency exchange in advance.

International Student Identity Card (ISIC)

Consider purchasing an ISIC, which is sponsored by the Council on International Education Exchange and entitles students who are traveling abroad to discounts on airfare, travel, museums, and other activities. Applications are available at: <https://www.isic.org/>. You may also want to purchase their travel insurance, which includes health and accident insurance as well as medical evacuation and repatriation benefits.

Application Procedure

Passport Application

When studying outside of the USA, you must have a passport that is valid for more than six months beyond the end of your program. If you need a new or renewed passport, apply for one as soon as possible. It can take 9 - 12 weeks to receive your passport unless you pay additional fees for it to be expedited. For instructions and the application, visit: <http://travel.state.gov/passport>. To get a new passport, you'll need:

- Certified Birth Certificate
- Passport Photo, 2 copies - These can be taken at a pharmacy or post office, typically for a fee.
- Completed Application
- Check or Money Order for Applicable Fees
- In-person Appointment

When studying outside of the USA with a Covenant College-approved program, a clear, color photo of your passport must be on file with the Global Education Office. Make sure your passport signature line and emergency information are filled out. In order to be valid, your passport must have your signature.

If you are applying for a new passport, the closest offices for in-person appointments and photos are: the Rossville Post Office, the Trenton Post Office,

and the Chattanooga Public Library Main Branch. Check out USPS <https://www.usps.com/international/passports.htm> and the Library <https://chattlibrary.org/passport-services/> for more information.

If you already have your passport and need to renew, there are two avenues. If you were under 16 years of age when you first got your passport, you will need to apply in the typical manner, including booking an in-person appointment. If you were over 16 years of age, it is possible to renew your passport by filing a renewal application and mailing it in, complete with your old passport and a form of payment. Check out [this U.S. Travel page](#) for more information.

May Term Application

For your May Term Application, fill out any paperwork or essays required and make sure to submit the appropriate documents.

- May Term Application and Interest Statement
- \$300 deposit (Please see payment instructions under Financial Planning below.)
- Passport photo OR passport application submission

Your initial May Term Application will ask about your general student information and Banner ID, the name of your current healthcare provider, and your passport information or plans to apply. Your Banner ID is necessary as all students interested in an Off-Campus May Term course must be cleared by Student Development and the Records Office. If you have been subject to behavioral or disciplinary injunctions or are under academic probation, you may be prohibited from participating in an international course. The application also includes an early declaration of travel plans to ensure that you begin thinking about your preferred options. However, you will be able to change your intended travel plans during the May Term Acceptance period.

By applying for a May Term, you agree to accept the cost of tuition and program fees. Should you withdraw from the course, you may be responsible for costs incurred on your behalf. Make sure to inform a legal guardian of your plans to apply for a May Term and discuss the associated tuition costs, personal expenses, and risk management needs such as insurance and communications. Please see the Off-Campus Studies Standards and Agreement for more details.

The deadline for a May Term Application and Deposit is typically **November 1st**, but keep an eye out for additional or alternate instructions from your faculty lead. Please be in contact with the Global Education Office throughout your application process.

May Term Acceptance

Once you have been invited to an Off-Campus May Term course, you will receive instructions to fill out the May Term Acceptance Form on ScotsPortal. Submitting the online acceptance form indicates that you are committing to a May Term course and will be held responsible for its associated costs.

The form will ask for your non-Covenant contact information, emergency contact information, international health and travel insurance information, and a photo of your validated (i.e., signed) passport photo and information pages. You will also need to read the Off-Campus Studies Standards of Conduct and Agreement and indicate that you understand the policies and parameters associated with off-campus studies. You will also indicate your travel plans in the form. While it is not binding, additional charges or fees may apply should you change your travel plans after the May Term Acceptance deadline.

By completing the May Term Acceptance form, students are committing to attend the pre-departure meetings for their course throughout the Spring term. There are usually at least two course-specific pre-departure meetings. There will also be one mandatory All Student Off-Campus May Term Pre-Departure meeting in late February.

The deadline for a May Term Acceptance Form is January 30th. Please be in contact with the Global Education Office if you have additional needs regarding travel plans or passport submission.

Financial Planning

Expenses

The cost for an off-campus May Term course consists of three parts: tuition, program fee, and optional airfare. May Term tuition is offered at a 50% discount per credit. Program fees and airfare costs vary depending on the course location and itinerary. An estimate should be provided at the Fall term information session.

However, there may be additional fees that remain the student's individual responsibility, such as tourist visa fees, tourist tax, independent travel expenses, and personal expenses such as groceries or retail items. These amounts will vary according to your spending habits, travel plans, and program details.

Deposit and Payment

May Term Application Deposit

The May Term Application Deposit is a \$300 fee that reserves your place in a May Term course. It is due by the application deadline, which is typically November 1st.

There are two primary ways to pay your deposit:

1. For online payments, students can go to Banner and access their account balance under student records or use the [Pay Student Bill Online](#) link available at the Community Resources page. The process for paying the deposit is the same as for a regular term. However, in the drop-down menu titled “Payment For,” please select May Term Deposit. The online system only accepts MasterCard and Discover. There is a \$1 processing fee for all online transactions.
2. Cash, check, and all credit card payments are accepted in the Accounting Office in Carter 147, with a note indicating the student’s name, Banner ID, and purpose of funds. For a check, please write May Term Deposit in the memo line.

If mailing a check, please send it to:

Covenant College
Attn: Accounting Office
14049 Scenic Highway
Lookout Mountain, GA 30750

The May Term deposit is refundable until the May Term Acceptance deadline, which is January 30th. After that date, your deposit is forfeited, and you may be responsible for expenses that have been incurred on your behalf.

May Term Banner Account Balance

Payment methods for the overall May Term balance can be paid by the same methods indicated above. The finance charge for a regular term payment is waived for summer courses. However, a student’s Spring account balance must be paid before funds can be allotted to a May Term course.

The Banner account balance for your Covenant tuition, May Term program fee, and airfare (if applicable) will be updated at the beginning of the May Term course, typically the Monday following Covenant graduation. **The payment deadline for a May Term is June 30th.**

Financial Aid

Covenant College does not offer institutional aid for summer programming. Students on an Employee Education Benefit will receive their benefit funds towards the tuition portion of an Off-Campus May Term course at 100%. If the

course is not taught by Covenant faculty, they will receive a 50% benefit.

For May term or Summer term courses, if planned well in advance, the tuition cost may be added to FAFSA applications for the Spring semester before the experience takes place. By adding the cost to the student budget, a student may be eligible for additional loan funds, though they may be unsubsidized. The FAFSA application for a Spring term opens the Fall before, typically in October. The application must be fully processed and approved before the end of the Spring term, in order for funds to be applied to a May Term.

All other policies outlined in the Financial Aid Handbook and the Catalog remain the same for on-campus and off-campus study programs. Please refer to the [Financial Aid Handbook](#) on the Covenant website for financial aid program details or contact the Financial Aid Office with additional questions at 706.419.1126 or email: financialaid@covenant.edu. You may also contact the Global Education office at globaled@covenant.edu.

World Languages Stipend

The World Languages Department sees off-campus May Term courses as valuable for our students and wants to encourage student participation. We are offering a competitive, one-time grant of \$500 to applicants of the World Languages May Terms. These grants are based on both merit and need.

Eligibility or priority for awarding these grants will be based on the following three factors:

1. The scholarship must apply to language or culture May Term courses in the student applicant's target language.
2. Demonstrated financial need will be a determining factor.
3. Priority will be given to students who contribute to the World Languages Department and the study of languages. Students with a strong record of participation have a higher likelihood of being awarded the scholarship.

How to Apply

Each applicant will write a 300-500-word (one-page) essay titled *May Term Travel Stipend for World Languages* attached to their May Term application. It should include their name and the year/month of graduation. The application essay should address the following information:

1. Need: Please explain your financial need and how you plan to raise the remaining funds.
2. Contribution to WL Mission: In what concrete ways have you or will you contribute to the World Languages Department or to the study of languages and cultures at Covenant College? Please list any involvement in

activities, events, Student Assistant service, language club service, recruitment events attendance, or any other relevant area. Please be as specific as possible, including a detailed plan or past activities.

Potential Sources of Financial Aid for Off-Campus Study Programs

1. Databases for Study Abroad Scholarships and Grants:
 - a. [International Education and Financial Aid](#)
 - b. [International Scholarships](#)
 - c. [Study Abroad General List of Scholarships](#)
2. Pell Grant Recipients
Check out the [Gilman Scholarship and Grant](#).
3. General Financial Aid Sources Database
 - a. <https://finaid.org/otheraid/>
 - b. [International Study Abroad Loan Program](#)

This is by no means a comprehensive list, but it should provide some initial information for your funding search.

Risk Management

Health and Health Insurance

Verify that you have health insurance coverage while studying abroad during May Term - not all insurance plans provide coverage while you are out of the country. Covenant College enrolls all students in an emergency insurance plan with AIG, but all students are required to maintain personal healthcare coverage for the duration of the May Term course. When studying outside of the U.S. with Covenant College outside of regular terms, proof of insurance must be on file with the Global Education Office. Please see the Off-Campus Studies Standards of Conduct and Agreement for more details.

For all students, but especially those with allergies or pre-existing medical conditions, it is important to be informed about your own healthcare needs and communicate clearly with both your faculty leads and the Global Education Office. Make sure to travel with copies of relevant medical records or prescriptions that indicate your condition and care plan. It can be difficult to source prescribed drugs abroad or even get replacement glasses or contacts. Talk with your doctor about plans to travel for an extended period and work with them to ensure your needs are met. For contacts and glasses, you will need a hard copy of your prescription to get them filled abroad. Your appointment with Priesthill Health Services is the perfect time to inform our institution of any known critical conditions that could

impact travel. If you are comfortable disclosing that information to the Global Education Office, please do so. By giving the Global Education Office advanced notice, we will be able to source local medical resources that can address your unique needs.

It is common for any person to face fatigue or illness in response to new environments. Prioritize fueling your body to the best of your ability and pay attention to giving your body the rest it needs. Please check out the following resources for more information regarding remaining healthy abroad:

- [World Health Organization](#)
- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)

Safety While Traveling

The Global Education Office encourages students to sign up for the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) conducted by the U.S. Department of State. This free service allows the U.S. Department of State to contact a traveler in emergency situations, such as a family crisis or a crisis arising in the country of the traveler.

Other recommended measures:

- Leave a travel itinerary and contact information with family or friends. In case of emergency, they will have more than one method to get in touch with you.
- Make sure your passport signature line and emergency information are filled out. In order to be valid, your passport must have your signature.
- The student is solely responsible for becoming familiar with the local conditions, laws, and regulations of their host country. Check out the US Dept. of State website below regarding safety, local law enforcement services, and cultural norms of your host country and any other countries you intend to visit.

The web pages offer Consular Information Sheets for every country of the world. They include information such as unusual immigration practices, health conditions, minor political disturbances, drug penalties, current travel warnings, and public announcements. The sites are also a good resource to find country-specific safety information.

Check out these online resources to find out more about traveling conditions in your host country and other safety information:

- [U.S. Dept of State, International Travel Information](#)
- [Overseas Security Advisory Council Reports](#)
- [Safety Abroad First - Educational Travel Information](#)
- [Information for Women Travelers](#)
- [Mobility and Disability Rights](#)

- [CDC - Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)

Emergency Preparedness

If there is an emergency, please be familiar with emergency services and protocol in your area. It is important to know who to call or where to go so that you can quickly respond in an emergency situation.

- **Contact Local Authorities** - Know the equivalent of 911 in your host country or city to gain immediate emergency assistance. Find local emergency phone numbers and country-specific information at travel.state.gov/destination.
- **Notify your Faculty Lead and/or Program Administrator** - Know how to reach your faculty leads and any other chaperones traveling with you.
- **Contact the U.S. Embassy nearest you** - Consular personnel at US Embassies abroad are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, to provide emergency assistance to U.S. citizens. Check out the [Bureau of Consular Affairs](#) website for US Embassy and Consulate contact information. The Office of Overseas Citizen Services in the State Department's Bureau of Consular Affairs may also be reached for assistance with emergencies at +1.202.501.4444.
- **Get in touch with your family** - If you are involved in an emergency, remain in communication with your family when possible. It is best for those interested parties to communicate with you directly to eliminate miscommunication or delay.
- **Contact the Global Education Office** - If you need immediate assistance, please contact local authorities and your faculty lead. Once you are removed from immediate danger, have found medical assistance, or are otherwise able to do so, please contact the Global Education Office. The Program Manager will have provided you with multiple methods of contact before your departure.

The [US Embassy](#) or consulate in your area can offer limited assistance if you encounter legal, political, health, or emergency concerns. It can provide you with a list of attorneys or physicians, contact next of kin in the event of an emergency or serious illness, contact friends or family on your behalf to request funds or guidance, provide assistance during civil unrest or natural disaster, and replace a lost or stolen passport. An embassy or consulate is the primary source for information on where to obtain advice, but they will not be able to directly advise you.

In any situation where students are able to identify appropriate medical care, communicate with relevant family or hosts, make travel arrangements, and generally conduct their own affairs, students will determine whether or not to notify their emergency contacts. **The Global Education Office will contact a student's emergency contact persons in the event of:** perceived health and safety emergencies while the student is abroad, such as changing travel restrictions, the May Term course is disrupted or ended, emergency evacuation is considered necessary, or if the student has been dismissed for any reason from the course by their faculty lead. Any costs associated with leaving the course voluntarily or involuntarily for violating program policies or in the event of emergency response to a crisis are the responsibility of the student. If dismissed as a disciplinary measure, students also forfeit any credit they had intended to earn. Please see the Off-Campus Studies Standards of Conduct and Agreement for details.

Cultural Adjustment

Adjusting to a new place and a different culture can be a slow process. To prepare for your experience, it is helpful to become familiar with the stages of cultural adjustment.

Before departing for your host country:

- Do preliminary research about the social customs, geography, and history of the region
- Learn some common phrases for navigating in the local language
- Memorize the address of your accommodation
- Make sure to pack items that are sufficient for the weather and cultural norms
- Study the city on a map to get a sense of transit routes

Your initial arrival into a new culture can be both thrilling and exhausting.

EXPECT INCONVENIENCES. EXPECT TRANSIT DELAYS. EXPECT A LEARNING CURVE.

It is common to go through a “Honeymoon” stage in the first weeks, where each cultural encounter is met with curiosity and enthusiasm, and your course itinerary is going to be packed with events! It may even seem like your energy will never end, but the mind tires easily in new environments. Make sure to rest and recover properly each day so that you don't crash once the first wave of energy evens out.

Culture Shock is the experience of increasing irritation or disorientation that may come at some point after the initial adrenaline and excitement of settling in. The feelings and behaviors known as “Culture Shock” vary person to person. It could present as frustration and negative interpretations of unfamiliar cultural customs. It could also involve periods of sadness, loneliness, or homesickness. It is exceptionally important to maintain supportive group dynamics during this time.

Adapting to the culture around you takes a long time. It is unlikely that three weeks

will be sufficient to adjust, which can leave you disoriented. Rest assured that it is normal to have good and bad days.