



# SEMESTER AT SEA®

## FALL 2017 STUDENT VOYAGE PREPARATIONS

Greetings from Semester at Sea! As a confirmed participant on the fall voyage, we ask you to review the contents of this document. The enclosed information will assist you as you prepare to sail with us aboard the *MV World Odyssey*. Please read carefully the important information provided on the following topics:

1. [MyPassport](#) –access point for information critical to voyage preparation.
2. [Required Travel Documents](#)
  - Passport
  - Visas
  - Yellow Fever Card
3. [Traveler's Health and Vaccination Information](#)
4. [Port Locations](#)
5. [Payment Options](#)
6. [Important Dates](#) (i.e. course registration, field programs, etc.)
7. [Academics aboard the \*MV World Odyssey\*](#)
8. [Field Program and in-country travel information](#)
9. [IT Resources aboard the \*MV World Odyssey\*](#)
10. [Suggested packing list](#)
11. [Shipboard Accounts](#)
12. [In-country Finances](#)
13. [Staying in Touch](#)

If you have any questions as you finalize your preparations for sailing, please contact our office at 1.800.854.0195 or [programadministration@semesteratsea.org](mailto:programadministration@semesteratsea.org).

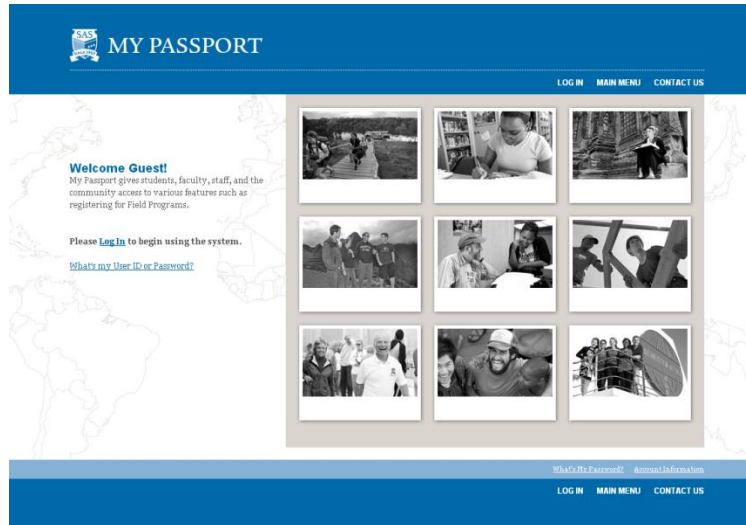


# MYPASSPORT

[\(back to top\)](#)

<http://mypassport.semesteratsea.org>

MyPassport is a way for you to receive information and to verify what we've already received as you prepare for your voyage. Check your MyPassport page often – most aspects of your planning and preparation will be available through this site.



Full instructions on how to log into and use MyPassport can be [downloaded here](#).

You will use your MyPassport page for the following:

- Review preparation steps
- Download documents and forms
- Upload documents and information needed to sail
- Sign up for field trips
- View your ISE financial aid awards
- Update your personal information

Perhaps the most important thing you can do to help prepare you for your voyage is to read the [Voyager's Handbook](#) and the [Ticket Contract](#). Both are available on your MyPassport page and contain extremely important information.

# REQUIRED TRAVEL DOCUMENTS

[\(back to top\)](#)

The documents outlined below are required to participate on this voyage.

## PASSPORT

If you do not have a passport or if you need to renew a current passport, please do so immediately. Please review this [FA17 Passport Info Sheet](#) for requirements. You may apply for a [passport online](#).

- Make sure your passport is signed.
- **Passports must be valid for at least 6 months beyond the date of your return (June 21, 2018).** If your passport expires before then, you must renew it . Please contact Trivisa-CIBT for assistance with first time or renewal of US passports.
- For lost or stolen US passports, please see the [State Department's travel site](#).

## PASSPORT PAGES REQUIREMENT

- Countries along this itinerary will require travelers to have a certain number of blank passport pages upon entry. **Each participant is responsible for the remaining blank visa pages in their passport, such that these entry requirements will be met in each sequential port of call.**
- If you already have many stamps in your current passport, you are advised to apply for a second valid passport or to renew your passport, as you may run out of visa pages more quickly than anticipated. **Trivisa-CIBT** is able to assist you with both of these options in advance of the voyage.
- Please review this [Fall 2017 Passport Info Sheet](#) for requirements.
- In addition to visa requirements, **Entry requirements** for each country will be available through **Trivisa-CIBT** custom webpage, set up exclusively for Semester at Sea participants. All voyagers are responsible for fulfilling all entry requirements in addition to visa and passport requirements.

Remember to consider the current processing time for receiving a passport as advised by the Department of State. If necessary, you may choose to expedite the process. **You will not be able to board the *MV World Odyssey* without a valid passport and all required visas.**

**IMPORTANT NOTE FOR MINORS:** Please note that those voyagers traveling as minors (under age 18) will have additional visa and entry requirements throughout the voyage, **such as the need to provide or carry their birth certificate.** Please refer to the Trivisa - CIBT page for this information or inquire with [programadministration@isevoyages.org](mailto:programadministration@isevoyages.org) with further questions. The participant is ultimately responsible for ensuring that all visa and entry requirements are met upon arrival to port.

## YELLOW FEVER CARD



The Yellow Fever Vaccination is required for entry into Ghana during your voyage. **You must bring your signed, original Yellow Fever Card with you to the ship.** You will not be able to board the ship in Ensenada without the official Yellow Fever Certificate (a yellow card) or a letter of exemption from your physician indicating the reasons for not having the vaccination. Note that a letter of exemption in lieu of the actual Yellow Fever Certificate could restrict your ability to leave the ship in some countries.

## VISAS

Visas are travel documents placed in the traveler's passport that shows you are allowed to enter a specific country for a specific period of time. **It is every participant's responsibility to obtain all pre-voyage required visas prior to embarkation.** Visa regulations are subject to change and ISE cannot be held responsible for incurred fees, fines, detainment or deportation due to missing visas. Additionally, should we have to reroute our itinerary for health & safety concerns, ISE cannot be held responsible for any required visa fees.

### VISA REQUIREMENTS FOR U.S. AND CANADIAN PASSPORT HOLDERS

Visas needed BEFORE voyage departure	Visas obtained EN ROUTE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● China</li><li>● India</li><li>● Ghana</li></ul> <p><b><u>You will not be able to board without these visas.</u></b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Viet Nam</li><li>● Burma/Myanmar</li></ul> <p>These will be obtained during the voyage and visa fees will be charge to your shipboard account. <b>Do NOT apply for these visas prior to embarkation.</b></p>

ISE has retained the services of [Travisa-CIBT](#) to assist participants with passports and entry visas.

**[Click here](#) for detailed FA17 Visa Information.**

### VISA REQUIREMENTS FOR INTERNATIONAL PASSPORT HOLDERS

If you are not a U.S. or Canadian passport holder, you may have different or additional visa requirements. As an international passport holder, you may still utilize Travisa-CIBT's research services to receive written instructions regarding your specific visa requirements.

Please email [programadministration@isevoyages.org](mailto:programadministration@isevoyages.org) or [ISE@travisa.com](mailto:ISE@travisa.com) to find out what countries you will need visas for, and whether Travisa can process these visas for you. Travisa will then send further instructions by email. Please be sure to provide detailed information including your citizenship, country of residence, status in the US and state of residence, and your voyage. For general questions and assistance, please contact Travisa or Program Administration.

***\*All non-U.S. and non-Canadian passport holders will be contacted by an ISE staff member to review visa requirements.***

# TRAVELER'S HEALTH AND VACCINATION INFORMATION

[\(back to top\)](#)

## **MALARIA PREVENTION**

CDC and international health requirements strongly suggest malaria prophylaxis. The spring voyage will be entering areas where malaria is likely to be present, which could present health risks for you. Malaria prevention should be discussed with your physician based on the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) requirements and recommendations. **Make sure you bring adequate medication with you as malarial drugs are not available onboard except for emergencies.**

Exposure will vary for each participant depending upon individual travel plans. Having an idea of what regions you plan to visit and how far you plan to travel outside the port city will greatly help your physician provide accurate medical advice concerning inoculations and disease risk.

In general, we also recommend that you contact the [CDC](#) and/or your physician to learn the current recommendations for immunizations in the countries you will visit. Be advised that inoculation requirements may be imposed at any time by the governments of countries on our itinerary. The Institute for Shipboard Education (ISE) cannot advise regarding the prescription of inoculations or be held responsible for unannounced health requirement changes.

**Please refer to the [Fall 2017 Travel Medical Concerns information sheet for more details.](#)**

## **YELLOW FEVER IMMUNIZATION**

Yellow Fever immunization is **REQUIRED** for all passengers on the Fall 2017 voyage. Please be sure to carry your signed immunization card with you to the ship.

## **FOREIGN TRAVEL HEALTH INFORMATION**

The CDC has health information and recommendations for foreign travel that is available 24 hours a day with the use of a touch tone phone by calling 1-877-FYI-TRIP (1-877-394-8747). Callers may select any one or all of the informational messages by following the instructions which are given. The information will be updated as needed.

Similar health advisory information is available on the [CDC Traveler's Health Information Page](#).

## **VOYAGE HEALTH INSURANCE**

All voyage participants are enrolled in a World Class Coverage Plan through [Cultural Insurance Services International \(CISI\)](#), a world leader in travel insurance. This plan is included as part of participant program fees, and is in effect upon arrival to the ship through disembarkation at the end of the voyage. Please [click here](#) for detailed policy information.

## **HEALTH CLINIC/COUNSELING OFFICE**

All visits to the shipboard medical clinic and counseling office during clinic hours are included in your program fees. Should a participant require medication (e.g. prescription or otherwise) and/or medical-related services (e.g. x-rays, casting, sutures, blood work, etc.), a nominal fee will be billed to the participant's shipboard account. Participants taking prescription medication should plan to bring a sufficient supply to last the duration of the semester and make sure their personal primary care physician notes the prescription on their medical history form.

***All medical information is current as of this writing – any changes in health requirements will be communicated to participants.***

## PORT LOCATIONS

[\(back to top\)](#)

### VOYAGE DEPARTURE – SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 2017

The *MV World Odyssey* will be located at the [Columbus Cruise Center Bremerhaven](#), Germany. On September 9, 2017, Fall 2017 students and Lifelong Learners will embark. Bremerhaven is located approximately 2.5 hours by car or train from the [Hamburg Airport \(Flughafen Hamburg; HAM\)](#) and 45 minutes by car from the [Bremen Airport \(Flughafen Bremen\)](#). The Port of Bremerhaven, where passengers will embark, is located on the midpoint of Columbus Quay, between Continental Europe to the south and Scandinavia to the north, with the North Sea to the west and the Baltic Sea to the northeast. It is situated on the River Wesser.



**DEPARTURE FLIGHT** - We [strongly](#) recommend that you arrive in Hamburg or Bremerhaven, Germany on **September 8, 2017, the day prior to embarkation**. The ship will not delay departure to wait for late-arriving students on September 9, 2017.

**Name of Port:** Port of Bremerhaven  
**Berth:** Columbus Cruise Center Bremerhaven

**Hotel Accommodations in Hamburg and Bremerhaven, Germany** - There are several events in Hamburg and the surrounding area during the days surrounding your voyage embarkation. **Due to this, lodging options are limited so we urge you to act quickly to secure your overnight accommodations for September 8, 2017, the evening before embarkation.**

### Embarkation Day Transportation

Students and Lifelong Learners will have the option of registering for an SAS-arranged convenience shuttle from Hamburg or making their own way to the ship, located at the Columbus Cruise Center Bremerhaven. **ALL STUDENTS AND LIFELONG LEARNERS** are required to either register for an SAS shuttle (\$45) OR register for an embarkation check-in time (at no cost) and travel independently to Bremerhaven. This is required to ensure smooth embarkation logistics and the ship's on-time departure.

- **SAS-arranged Convenience Shuttle:** Shuttles will depart from the [Radisson Blu Hotel Hamburg Airport](#) beginning at 0700 on embarkation day, September 9, 2017. Voyagers will be required to register in advance (through the same process as Field Program registration.) The shuttle fee is \$45/person paid at time of registration. Travel to the ship will take approximately three hours.
- **Independent Arrival in Bremerhaven:** Though voyagers are welcome to make their own way to the ship, be advised that travel to Bremerhaven from Hamburg (or surrounding cities) can be very complicated (especially with lots of luggage.) By train, the trip includes at least one train and station transfer in Bremen.

Registration will open Wednesday, July 12, 2017 and will close on Tuesday, August 1, 2017. You will register for an embarkation check-in time or shuttle using the same process as Field Program registration through MyPassport. Please [click here](#) for more information.

**Non-sailing guests are not permitted on the buses.**



## VOYAGE RETURN – SATURDAY, DECEMBER 23, 2017

The *MV World Odyssey* will dock at the [Port of San Diego](#), located approximately 3 miles from [San Diego International Airport \(SAN\)](#). Expected arrival time to the pier is 0800 on Thursday, December 23, 2017.



**Name of Port:** Port of San Diego  
**Address of Port:** N Harbor Drive & West Broadway, San Diego

**Berth:** TBD

**RETURN FLIGHT - Book your return flight from San Diego, CA AFTER 1700 on December 23, 2017.** Although the ship will arrive to San Diego at 0800 on December 23 each passenger must go through United States customs and immigration upon arrival before anyone can disembark from the ship. Timelines for this process are out of Semester at Sea's control and can take several hours. Disembarkation order for passengers will be determined and announced onboard the ship towards the end of the voyage and **no early disembarkation exceptions will be allowed for individuals who choose to book a flight prior to 1700 on December 23.**

**Debarkation Day Transportation & Accommodations:** Taxis will be plentiful and available immediately outside the ship terminal for those travelling to the airport or other destinations. For those travelling regionally, Union Station (also known as the Santa Fe Depot), San Diego's main downtown train station, will be located across the street from the cruise ship terminal. [Amtrak](#) service and routes are available from Union Station. Voyagers should NOT book train service prior to the mid-afternoon hours of December 23. For those requiring hotel stay in the San Diego area, please see [hotel recommendations](#) provided by the San Diego Board of Tourism.

If you have any questions as you finalize your preparations for sailing, please contact our office at 1.800.854.0195 or [operations@semesteratsea.org](mailto:operations@semesteratsea.org).

# PAYMENT OPTIONS

[\(back to top\)](#)

Full payment/last day to [cancel without penalty](#) for the fall voyage is due **June 12, 2017**. An invoice will be mailed to the address listed on your My Profile page - **consult the account summary on MyPassport for the most recent activity**. Program fees vary depending on your [cabin type](#). For questions about your balance please call [1.800.854.0195](tel:1.800.854.0195).

Please submit payment to our office via one of the below options:

1. Check or money order payable in US\$ to: Institute for Shipboard Education or I.S.E.  
– make sure to include your name on the memo line. Please mail to:  
  
Semester at Sea  
Colorado State University  
Campus Delivery 1587  
Fort Collins, CO 80523
2. Wire money to our account – contact our office for wiring instructions
3. [Online](#) through the Financial Information section of your MyPassport Page.  
Payments can be made via electronic check or debit/credit card (a 2.7% convenience fee is charged on credit card payments.)

## MONTHLY PAYMENT PLAN

The interest-free TuitionPay Plan from Higher One can be made for 5 - 10 payments depending on when a student enrolls in the plan. There is a \$55 fee to enroll in the TuitionPay Plan. The earlier a student reserves a cabin and enrolls in the TuitionPay Plan, the lower each payment will be. An example of a 10-pay Plan for a fall voyage would begin in January and end in October of the year of attendance. Even if you plan to apply for Semester at Sea and/or home school aid, you should enroll as early as possible. Higher One allows contract adjustments so you will be able to reduce the payments once your aid is packaged. To learn more about the TuitionPay Plan, call a TuitionPay consultant at 1.800.635.0120 or visit <https://tuitionpay.higherone.com/TuitionPay/Welcome.aspx>.

## ISE SCHOLARSHIPS AND FINANCIAL AID

Semester at Sea and the Institute for Shipboard Education (ISE) provides \$4 million in aid to students each year. Application deadlines vary:

- **Need and Merit** - Reviewed on a rolling basis and can be submitted at your earliest convenience. Allow two weeks for review.
- [All other awards](#) – April 19, 2017 (recipients notified May 5, 2017)

## FEDERAL FINANCIAL AID

Many home institutions will process federal financial aid on behalf of their students and forward the funds to our program based on an understanding called a consortium. Please inquire with your home school to determine if your current federal aid will transfer to our program. Students applying for federal financial aid are required to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). It is not necessary to add CSU's school code to the FAFSA.

It is important to notify us of any pending financial aid from your home school. Please have your school complete the Financial Aid Notification form and return it to our office by the payment deadline. The form can be found in My Documents.

## OUTSIDE FUNDING

Many outside agencies offer scholarships to students studying abroad. The study abroad office at your home school may be familiar with outside scholarships in your region - so make sure to visit their office or website for additional ideas.



# IMPORTANT DATES

[\(back to top\)](#)

**\*Deadlines are subject to change. View [online calendar](#) for most current information.**

## APRIL

- **April 19, 2017:** Financial Aid Deadline

## MAY

- **May 5, 2017 :** Financial Aid Awards Announced
- **May 17, 2017:** [Course registration](#) opens. A course registration packet will be posted online and e-mailed to students mid-April.

## JUNE

- **June 12, 2017:** Payment deadline. Last day to [cancel without penalty](#)
- **June 13, 2017:** [In-Country Field Program Registration](#) Opens (Participants will be able to browse programs on our website prior to this date. In the interim, [check out the Spring 2017 program catalog](#) to get an idea of what might be offered.)
- **June 20, 2017:** Priority Visa Deadline

## JULY

- **July 5, 2017:** Medical History Form due to [medical@semesteratsea.org](mailto:medical@semesteratsea.org) (More information about medical requirements will be emailed to all participants in early April)
- **July 7, 2017:** Learning Accommodations Due - SAS provides academic accommodations for students with documented learning disabilities. If you wish to request accommodations during the voyage, please have the appropriate office at your home institution email your letter of approved accommodations to [academic@isevoyages.org](mailto:academic@isevoyages.org). Submit these accommodations materials as soon as possible but no later than July 7, 2017. Accommodations submitted after this date will be reviewed but may be declined if found unreasonable due to late notice.
- **July 15, 2017:** Final Spring 2017 Grades Due to [admission@semesteratsea.org](mailto:admission@semesteratsea.org)
- **July 15, 2017:** Last day to enroll in [Tuition Pay Payment Plan](#).

## AUGUST

- **August 1, 2017:** All Self Service Portal requirements due via MyPassport.
  - Online Agreements
  - Emergency Contacts
  - Passport Details\*
  - Upload Passport Copy & Photo
  - Updated Transcript (with Spring 2017 grades)
  - Special Accommodations Acknowledgement
  - Visa Pre-Embarkation Form
- **August 1, 2017:** Final Visa Deadline
- **August 31, 2017:** Verify your Transcript Address via the self-service portal in [MyPassport](#).

*\*(Please note, the passport number entered into MyPassport is the number that will be used to book all Field Programs. If this number is incorrect or does not match the passport you will be traveling with, you may not be able to participate.)*

## SEPTEMBER

- **September 8, 2017: Bon Voyage Reception**—Parents and other family members are invited to a Bon Voyage Reception aboard the *MV World Odyssey* in the Port of Bremerhaven in the evening before the start of the voyage. **Due to limited capacity on the ship, Fall 2017 voyagers cannot attend this reception.** Advance registration is required and will begin on June 1.

**Other Parent Events:** There will be two **Fall 2017 Parent Trips**. The trips will take place in South Africa and in Vietnam. More details about these events will be available in late April. A **Welcome Home Reception** for family and friends will be held in San Diego, CA, on December 22, 2017, the evening before the ship's arrival. Due to customs regulations, family and friends are not able to board the *MV World Odyssey* on the day of arrival. Detailed information about all parent events will be posted on [Parent Resources](#) website and emailed to emergency contacts listed in students' MyPassport accounts. For more information about parent events, contact [parentprograms@isevoyages.org](mailto:parentprograms@isevoyages.org).

- **September 9, 2017:** Voyage sails from Bremerhaven, Germany!

# ACADEMICS ABOARD THE *MV WORLD ODYSSEY*

[\(back to top\)](#)

The academic program is the heart of a student's Semester at Sea experience. Below, please find information about the Semester at Sea courses, including requirements and tips for a successful academic experience.

## ABOUT THE ACADEMIC PROGRAM

- You must enroll in four courses, for a total of 12 credits. One of these courses is the required IE 300 Global Studies course; the remaining three will come from our standard course offerings. A list of classes offered on the voyage can be found on the [Fall 2017 Courses page](#).
- The distinctive feature of Semester at Sea is the opportunity it affords you to engage in global comparative education. The Global Studies course is an interdisciplinary course and the core of the academic program. It will help you deepen your understanding of contemporary life and culture in the countries visited. The course is designed to maximize your opportunity to think critically about your own society, as you visit and compare a range of countries from Spain to Japan.
- One of the most exciting aspects of studying on a Semester at Sea voyage is the experiential learning opportunity through each course's Field Class and Field Assignments. Professors design a unique Field Class for each course. These Field Classes become an integral part of your learning experience. Semester at Sea's rich and diverse Field Classes will allow you to apply insights from the classroom to the comparative work conducted in the field. Participation in a course's Field Class is mandatory. The Field Class and the assignments associated with the field experiences will make up approximately 20 percent of your grade.

## REGISTRATION

Online course registration will open on **Wednesday, May 17 at 0800 (MDT)**. More information about the registration process will be sent to you over the coming weeks. Until that time, please find here some tips to prepare for registration.

1. Review the courses that will be offered on the [Fall 2017 Courses page](#), along with the schedule of class meeting times and Field Class dates. Remember, you cannot register for two classes with conflicting Field Class dates, just as you cannot sign up for two courses that meet at the same time.
2. Read over the syllabi of the courses that you are of interest to you. Select four first-choice courses, along with 3-4 alternates. Remember, one course will be the required Global Studies course.
3. Take the syllabi, along with the bios of the faculty members teaching the courses (found [here](#)), to your academic advisor or study abroad advisor at your home institution to seek transfer advice and permission. Obtain a hard copy of the course approvals and how they will transfer to back your home institution. Keep these approvals for your records. Remember, each course **is** a Colorado State University course and is attributed three credits by CSU.
4. You are allowed to take a fifth course, for a total of 15 credits. This is however strongly discouraged. The rhythm of the voyage will leave you with little downtime, and the academic schedule is compressed. You will either be in class or in port. There are no weekends. Students taking a fifth course typically devote 1-2 days in each port to their additional coursework. You must receive approval to register for a fifth course. Email [academic@isevoyages.org](mailto:academic@isevoyages.org) with questions about what is required to gain approval.

## LEARNING ACCOMMODATIONS

Semester at Sea provides academic accommodations for students with documented learning disabilities. If you wish to request accommodations during the voyage, please have the appropriate office at your home institution email your letter of approved accommodations to [academic@isevoyages.org](mailto:academic@isevoyages.org) by **July 7, 2017**. Accommodations submitted after this date will be reviewed but may be declined if found unreasonable due to the late notice.

## ACADEMIC LIFE

Living and learning on a Semester at Sea voyage is an exhilarating, exhausting, and challenging endeavor. Chances are it is unlike any living-learning experience you have had, either on a traditional land campus or any other study abroad program. The experience has a number of distinctive elements you should bear in mind:

The rhythm of the voyage dictates your life more than a typical academic semester does. Classes meet every other day at sea, including Saturdays and Sundays. Port stays are the closest you will get to a weekend. However, some days in port will be dedicated to Field Classes. See a visual breakdown of the schedule of class days on the [Academic Calendar](#).

**Time management can be a challenge during Semester at Sea.** You will face a myriad of outside pressures—from cultural exploration in port to a vibrant student life program on the *MV World Odyssey*—that may tempt you to postpone your coursework. While a large part of your time with Semester at Sea will be spent outside of the classroom, it is the expectation that you will come to class prepared, with all assignments completed on the due date. You must make time to study.

You will be living and learning in a floating residential college with 565 students from over 200 different colleges and universities; a number of Lifelong Learners; 28-30 faculty members and their families; 25 staff members and their families; and 200 crew members from around the nation and all over the world. The ship's community includes a rich mix of generations from young children to senior adult lifelong learners. We encourage you to embrace this unique and diverse academic village and avail yourself of your shipmates' knowledge and experiences.

## IN-COUNTRY

Semester at Sea is a pioneer and leader in global, comparative education—a form of international study that focuses on comparing and contrasting the world's peoples, patterns, cultures, and traditions. Global, comparative education is the element that distinguishes Semester at Sea from other study abroad programs. One of the unique attributes of studying through Semester at Sea is the **experiential** component of learning. The time spent in each country plays an important role in achieving our overall learning outcomes. Semester at Sea provides a variety of programs and resources to help ensure participants maximize their time and learning while in each country:

- **Field Classes** – As mentioned above, Field Classes are the in-country, experiential component of each Semester at Sea course. Every course has an eight-hour, in-port class, organized by its professor. Field Classes will take theory from the classroom and put it into action and context in the field. Classes are included in the price of tuition and are open only to students registered in the course. The schedule of Field Class dates will be posted on the [Fall 2017 Courses and Field Classes page](#).
- **Meaningful Travel:** When students are not in Field Classes, they have the option of participating in SAS-designed Field Programs or to travel independently. Field Programs are experiences ranging in duration from half-day excursions to multi-day expeditions that are not included in voyage tuition.

## FIELD PROGRAM AND IN-COUNTRY TRAVEL INFORMATION

[\(back to top\)](#)

Rather than traditional cruise tours, ALL Semester at Sea Field Programs aim to actively further Semester at Sea's mission of increasing global understanding and inspiring and equipping the next generation of global leaders. This is what we're about:



### Why Field Programs?

Semester at Sea is NOT anti-independent travel. In fact, we believe independent travel experiences play an important part of achieving our mission and desired learning outcomes! We hope our voyagers learn to become smart, responsible and respectful TRAVELERS (not tourists.) We believe your time in-country is best spent with a thoughtful and intentional combination of independently-arranged travel and Semester at Sea Field Programs.

### The benefits of letting Semester at Sea do the planning for you include:

- ✓ **Make the most efficient use of your time in each port.** Getting from point A to point B can often be challenging, time consuming and expensive to figure out on your own. We work with experts on the ground to design the most efficient itineraries possible so you can trust every moment reflects the best use of your limited time.
- ✓ **Participate in responsible tourism.** Traveling in a responsible and sustainable way is challenging to do on your own. It takes dedication, time, energy, and resources to do so mindfully. Not all tourism is created equal; some tourism can actually cause harm to host communities and ecosystems. SAS employs a team of people to build relationships on the ground in each destination and to design programs that take this into consideration. Though not perfect, we aim to minimize the negative impacts of tourism on the environment and maximize the positive contributions our program can make to local communities.

- ✓ **Access to experiences you cannot create on your own.** Field Programs are built on a foundation of years and years of relationship-building with local partners and organizations. Our full-time jobs are to research and design programs that give you experiences your average tourist (or independent traveler) could not buy elsewhere.
- ✓ **“Be here now.”** Meaningful travel experiences require thoughtful planning; and thoughtful planning is time intensive! Researching and planning for each upcoming port can take you out of the present and away from your experience on the ship or in the current port. Participation in pre-designed Field Programs allows you to be more engaged in the present.
- ✓ **The safety equation.** All Field Programs are carefully planned in close collaboration with providers who have been vetted and are among the most reputable in the industry. These partners know the destination inside and out and design Field Programs that optimize meaningful experiences while prioritizing safety. Our providers are insured, use well-maintained transportation equipment, hire qualified drivers and guides, and prioritize accommodations and food establishments that provide an enriching experience while considering your health and safety.
- ✓ **Contingency Planning.** Traveling around the world on the ship comes with lots of variables and unknowns. It is not uncommon for there to be itinerary adjustments mid-voyage. When this happens, the Field Office staff spring into action and work around the clock to adjust Field Programs to meet the revised schedule (and make every effort to refund money whenever possible.) SAS cannot be responsible for independent travel plans that have to be canceled or modified due to an itinerary adjustment. In addition, SAS Field Program participants enjoy the peace of mind knowing that if the bus is stuck in traffic returning to the ship, or a flight is cancelled (or any other variable!), they will not be penalized for missing the required “on-ship” time. Independent travelers who arrive late (for any reason) receive dock time. (See Voyager’s Handbook.)
- ✓ **Your new best friends await.** Many voyagers report their favorite aspect of participating in Field Programs is meeting new people. Like any university campus, naturally groups form and people get stuck in the same patterns. Participation in Field Programs is a great way to stretch your comfort zone and get to know other people you might not naturally run into on “campus.”

**So, the million dollar question: Why do SAS Field Programs seem so expensive?** The answer is simple. We want our programs to feature unique opportunities and meaningful interconnection. We want to be able to accommodate hundreds of people in ten different destinations, with dozens of program choices in each port. We want each of those programs to align with SAS learning objectives, utilize only reputable and vetted providers, prioritize safety, respect responsible tourism best practices, and feature world-class facilitators... and simply put, this is not cheap! When you consider the benefits outlined above, however, we think you’re getting a pretty good “bang” for your buck. We do understand that for some of our participants, our programs may still be out of their budget. We believe in equal access for all voyagers and are actively working on pursuing sponsorship and additional scholarship sources to help offset Field Program costs. As a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, Semester at Sea is not in this for the good of our pocket books. Everything we do is to further our mission and enhance the educational value of our program. This includes Field Programs.

## The details:

- Field program costs are NOT included in voyage program fees.
- Field Programs are open to the entire shipboard community.
- Registration is scheduled to open **June 13, 2017 0900 Mountain Time**. (Programs will be available on our website to begin browsing before then around mid-May. In the interim, check out the [Spring 2017 line-up](#) to get an idea of program offerings.)
- Participants register and pay for programs using MyPassport.
- Participation in Field Programs or independent travel must be planned around required Field Classes.
- All programs partner with vetted local providers and have a Faculty or Staff member serving in a Trip Liaison role.
- [Field Program Terms and Conditions & Cancellation Policies](#)
- [Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- [What is a Field Class vs. a Field Program?](#)

## Independent Travel

While traveling independently, participants should be aware of health, safety, and security issues, and are advised to practice responsible tourism when working with non-SAS tour operators. Since SAS cannot monitor the independent travel of each participant, we emphasize risks to be avoided and provide tips to stay healthy and safe while in-country during each “logistical pre-port” presentation. And of course, all participants are welcome to return to the ship at any day or hour while in-country.

## *Considerations for Planning Independent Travel:*

- **Plan ahead.** With limited resources available on the ship, we advise participants to start planning early and have a rough plan for each port before arriving on the ship.
- **Do some homework.** At minimum, read reviews about where you’re planning to go, what you’re planning to do and where you’re planning to stay. Research some of the key cultural and historical sites in the region. Read travel blogs that highlight off-the-beaten path experiences that showcase unusual features of the destination. Consider what you love, what you’re passionate about and build your plans around that.
- **If choosing to book a pre-arranged program through a company, ask questions!** Do they have insurance? Have they worked with other groups before? Can you speak with a reference? Who are the guides and how are they trained? Will I/we be combined with other groups/people? What is included in the cost? What can I expect to pay extra for? Are tips included? What happens in the event of an emergency? How is the transportation provider chosen? Do you have a safety plan? If the trip is cancelled, can I get any money back?
- **Ask yourself** “what do I hope to gain or learn from this experience?” or “how do I hope to return to the ship different at the end of this port stay?” Do the math and make sure it adds up.
- When deciding whether to say “yes” or “no” to a proposed plan, **pause and consider impact.** Ask yourself: “How will my participation affect me? How could my participation negatively or positively impact others or the environment?” Especially arriving by cruise ship with ~750 people disembarking at the same time, SAS participants must be extra conscious of how their actions and behavior impact the host community. Travel in small groups, obey local laws, be respectful, be vigilant, carry the “green sheet” (or emergency contacts) with you at all times, don’t use or abuse alcohol, and be ambassadors of your home country and the Semester at Sea program.
- **Tell the ship where you’re going.** Overnight travel plans should be registered via a form provided on the intranet once on-board.



- **Abide by all policies in the [voyager's handbook](#).** (Please read: XV. TRAVEL POLICY (no travel outside the country of arrival) and XIII. Soliciting Field Trips (ISE strictly prohibits the organization, promotion, solicitation, and selling of trips provided by outside vendors.)
- **Plan overnight trips to depart the second day in port** (it is not uncommon for the ship to arrive late or for immigration and customs to take longer than expected.) Arrive back to the port-city well before the scheduled on-ship time.
- **Semester at Sea faculty and staff are not able to endorse specific *Independent Travel* activities or third-party providers.** However, do use their advice and expertise to help you make safe *Independent Travel* choices.

**Caution about “third-party” travel organizers:** Experiences organized by outside entities (businesses, individuals, alumni of the SAS program or other SAS participants), usually promoted via social media, are *not* endorsed by Semester at Sea and we strongly advise against them. Your life is valuable!! Do not blindly trust another person or company to plan an experience for you. Many of the people and/or organizations coordinating these experiences are not fully insured, do not have safety protocols in place and do not have your best interests in mind. You should not purchase or choose to participate in any program or experience where a person or organization is aggressively recruiting SAS participants or promising a “party experience” or offering activities that are in violation of the Voyager’s Handbook. There have been *many* occasions where students have been harmed due to unsafe conditions or have become victims of bribes, threats and exorbitant additional fees and fines on these types of programs. So what SHOULD you do? Consider the guidelines above. Do your research. Be a part of the planning process and know what you’re getting into. Ask questions. Travel in small groups with fellow students and Faculty/Staff. Take ownership over your experience.

Questions before embarkation? Email: [Field@isevoyages.org](mailto:Field@isevoyages.org) or call 970.491.8361. Once on-board, speak with the Field Office team located just behind and to the right of reception on deck 5.

# INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY ABOARD THE WORLD ODYSSEY

[\(back to top\)](#)

We try to provide Semester at Sea participants with relevant [technology services](#). Our traveling shipboard campus provides a unique and challenging environment. Please keep in mind the following points about shipboard computing:

- All participants are required to bring a laptop. There are only a couple of public computers in the library.
- Wireless connectivity is available in all public areas of the ship and in many cabins. Generally speaking, if you can get Internet in a coffee shop, you can get it on the ship.
- There is free email service for all participants. Instructions on setting up this account will be sent prior to the voyage and it is highly recommended that you follow these instructions and configure your email prior to boarding.
- Internet is free for CSU Library resources and select academic web sites (selected by faculty).
- Each participant will receive a limited amount of free Internet. The amount of free usage depends on the amount of data you transfer and the amount of Internet time you use. Accessing the Internet will require you to log on and to log off to record your session. Automatic updates of antivirus software and adware will require an Internet connection, and your allotted free time can be consumed by this, so get the latest updates for adware, spyware, and virus definitions before you leave, and then turn off all automatic updates after boarding. Additional Internet time can be purchased on board. **The use of Skype and similar sites are prohibited on the *MV World Odyssey*.**
- Printing and scanning resources are available on board. All participants are provided 70 pages of printing for free, after that additional printing credit can be purchased at 10c per page. There is no charge for the use of the scanners.
- The IT staff does not have the resources on board to repair computers.

## IT RECOMMENDATIONS FOR YOUR VOYAGE

- A USB flash-memory device (thumb drive)
- For Windows:
  - If you have one, bring a recovery disk for your operating system
  - Bring your Microsoft Office (or other productivity software) CDs, if you can
  - Have anti-virus and anti-spyware programs loaded on your laptop with the latest definitions
- For Macintosh:
  - If you have it, bring Mac OS recovery software
  - Install Firefox or Chrome as your default browser

# SUGGESTED PACKING LIST

[\(back to top\)](#)

Preparing to pack for your voyage may seem like a daunting task, but words to live by are: lay out everything that you think you need, put back half, and then pack what's left. The bottom line: come prepared, but travel lightly. Your belongings (including the luggage itself) are stored in your cabin. Keep this in mind when you are deciding between a huge suitcase or a soft-sided duffel on wheels (the latter is a great choice.)

**Baggage Limit: 2 checked bags, 1 carry-on luggage (such as a small duffel bag), 1 personal item (such as a backpack)**

[Download the voyage packing list from our website.](#)

## Additional Tips for Preparing to Sail on the *MV World Odyssey*

- **The *MV World Odyssey* only has European outlets with a voltage of 220v.** If you have a non-European device with an input range of 110v-240v you will only need an adaptor. If your device only has a single input range of below 220v, you will need a converter. To verify if you will need a converter, check the label on your device's power supply.
- **There are only two European outlets in each cabin and one shaver outlet in the bathroom.** The shaver outlet is dual voltage (110v and 220v) however, it is designed for low voltage appliances and can only accommodate shavers or similar devices. Power strips and extension cords are not allowed. However, in order to increase plug capacity, consider purchasing an [adapter that also offers two USB connections](#).
- **Straightening/curling irons are only allowed on board if you have proof that they are auto-shutoff.** If you have no proof, it will be confiscated during check-in and will not be returned to you. Please verify the voltage on your device as many of these devices are single voltage and may need a converter to be used on board. You may also consider purchasing a dual voltage [hair straightener](#) or [curling iron](#).
- **You will not be allowed to affix any items to your cabin walls.** The cabin walls on the *MV World Odyssey* are not magnetic. All adhesives including, but not limited to, regular tape, duct tape, wall mounting tape/adhesive strips, poster tape, and thumb tacks/push pins are not allowed on the ship. Cabin stewards check cabins daily so please do not plan to affix any items to the interior or exterior cabin walls. If any adhesives are brought to the ship they will be confiscated at check-in.

## SHIPBOARD ACCOUNTS

[\(back to top\)](#)

### **How do I purchase items on the ship?**

The *MV World Odyssey* uses a cashless system and a shipboard account is required for each participant. Any transaction or purchase onboard the ship such as field programs, snacks, bottled water, phone cards, Internet minutes, campus store, laundry, etc., will be billed through the participant's shipboard account.

### **How do I set-up my shipboard account?**

Participants will establish their shipboard accounts at the beginning of the voyage by registering a credit card with the ship's Purser's Office or by providing the third-party credit card authorization form, **which will be emailed to you two weeks prior to embarkation.** The shipboard account balance will be charged to the registered credit card approximately once a month throughout the voyage.

We strongly encourage you to register a card that is different from the card you plan to use while in port. In the event that if the card is lost or stolen, you will still have access to your shipboard account. An itemized statement will be provided to the student at the end of each voyage segment. This statement will not be provided to parents. It is the student's responsibility to provide the documentation to the parent if they request it and to make them aware that they will not be receiving statements.

### **Can I use a debit card for my shipboard account?**

While we *strongly* discourage the use of debit cards and cash, they are acceptable options to fund shipboard accounts. If a participant prefers to settle their shipboard account in cash, then the participant must maintain a \$500 credit balance on their shipboard account for the entire voyage. Registering a debit card for use on a shipboard account is not recommended because of the daily transaction limits required by banks. With additional field trip sales and other shipboard purchases, the participant's monthly charges will likely exceed the debit cards daily limits and result in a declined transaction. If this is your only option, please contact your bank for an increase to your daily limit prior to departure.

### **What happens if the form of payment on my shipboard account is declined?**

Non-payment of Shipboard Accounts, or declined credit card transactions will result in the participant's shipboard account being frozen until payment is rendered. If a participant's account is frozen then purchases aboard the ship are not possible (this includes registering for Field Programs) If the balance-owed reflects unpaid Field Programs, participants are given a 14 day grace period to pay the balance before they will be cancelled from the program(s). On day 15, participants WILL be cancelled from all registered (but unpaid) Field Programs and not allowed to participate. Standard cancellation fees still apply (this means a participant could still be responsible for paying for some or all of a program he/or she is not allowed to participate in.). If there is an unpaid shipboard balance at the end of the voyage, students' transcripts will be held until payment in-full is received and the bad debt will eventually be reported to the credit bureau. **ISE does not accept payments for shipboard accounts in their home office. All shipboard account payments must be made on the *MV World Odyssey*.**

The Institute for Shipboard Education (ISE) reserves the right to close a student's shipboard account for reasons including, but not limited to: unpaid shipboard account balances, delinquent tuition account payments, or disciplinary issues. Should you have any questions regarding policies and procedures regarding shipboard accounts please feel free to contact the ISE business office at 1.800.854.0195.

## **IN-COUNTRY FINANCES**

[\(back to top\)](#)

## **Where may I purchase foreign currency?**

You may wish to obtain local currency of the places you are visiting prior to departure, especially when port arrival coincides with a weekend. To obtain foreign currency please consult with a financial institution, such as Bank of America, Wells Fargo or your personal bank, who can better serve you. Be sure to know which countries you are traveling to as obtaining foreign currency may not be possible for all the countries on your itinerary.

## **How much money should I budget for each port?**

The amount of money you spend in each port will depend on your overall budget. The average voyager budget is \$2,500-\$3,000 in spending money for the entire voyage. Keep in mind that currency exchange rates vary from port-to-port so you may spend more money in some countries than others.

## **Are ATM's available in port?**

ATMs are widely available in most worldwide locations. ATMs distribute local currency and exchange rates are typically better. Please be sure to consult with your bank before using your ATM card abroad and alert them of your itinerary. Many banks place daily limits on ATM/debit cards. Be sure to check with your bank to see if you are subject to a daily limit.

## **Can I use my debit/credit card in port?**

Visa and MasterCard are accepted in many worldwide locations and offer advantageous exchange rates. Be sure to alert your credit card provider of your itinerary as charges in several different countries could trigger a hold on your account.

**Many European countries have transitioned to accept only cards with a microchip** (including businesses and ATMs). It is recommended that you bring at least one card with a microchip. If your bank does not offer cards with microchip please plan to bring foreign currency as a backup.

For Debit and Credit card use, it is highly recommended that you research institutions that waive the international transaction fee, such as Capital One, military banks, and some credit unions.

## **How many credit cards should I bring?**

**You should plan to bring two credit cards for your voyage in case one is lost or stolen.** When traveling with ATM/debit cards and credit cards, be sure to safeguard them and use them in legitimate establishments. You may want to periodically check your account online to verify usage. In the event your card is lost, stolen, there are fraudulent charges or you need to contact your issuing institution, write down phone numbers to use when calling from abroad.

## **SAS Field Program Finances**

Please make sure you have read the Field Program Terms and Conditions and Cancellation Policies [here](#).

## **STAYING IN TOUCH**

[\(back to top\)](#)

While on Semester at Sea, you have several options for staying in touch with family and friends. Additional information about these services will be provided to you on the ship.

### **EMAIL**

The most convenient way to stay in touch is via your voyage email account. All students, lifelong learners, faculty, staff and dependents are provided a free shipboard email address with which they can send and receive email messages on and off the ship. The email accounts will be in the format of [firstname.lastname.FA17@semesteratsea.org](mailto:firstname.lastname.FA17@semesteratsea.org) (i.e. [jane.doe.FA17@semesteratsea.org](mailto:jane.doe.FA17@semesteratsea.org)). **Approximately, one month before the voyage,** you will receive instructions on how to access your new email account.

### **MAIL – PORT ADDRESSES**

Please note that mail service is unreliable in many of the countries we visit. ISE does not assume liability for lost, damaged, or undeliverable items or the costs associated with the return or forwarding of items.

If you decide to send letters, postcards, or packages, we recommend using a courier that will provide a guaranteed delivery date and tracking number. Please do not send any mail to the ISE headquarters in Fort Collins, CO. or to Colorado State University for forwarding.

### **MOBILE PHONE SERVICE**

The *MV World Odyssey* does not currently have cell phone service.

**Important Note:** It is highly recommended that you contact your cell phone carrier and switch to an international plan prior to boarding if you intend to use your phone while overseas. It is also recommended that you turn off cellular data on your smartphones (iPhones in particular) to avoid a large data bill while on your voyage.

### **CALLING THE SHIP**

Every cabin aboard the *MV World Odyssey* is equipped with phones that enable around the clock ship-to-shore calling (both receiving incoming calls and placing outgoing calls). Students can make outgoing calls by purchasing pre-paid calling cards at the Purser's desk on the ship. Family members and friends can call the ship 24 hours a day by dialing the toll free number: (800) 305-9203. The caller will be asked to provide a credit card that will be charged approximately \$3.95 per minute. Your call will then be connected directly to your voyager's cabin.

### **PACKAGES**

Due to the cost of handling and receiving packages in each port of call, the recipient's shipboard account will be charged a fee of \$10, \$25, or \$50 depending on the size of the package. For each package received, the recipient's shipboard account will be charged accordingly. The fee is inclusive of imposed duties, local taxes, and any other cost associated with receiving the package. Should the sum of fees and taxes exceed \$50.00, then the actual amount incurred will be charged. Fees will be assessed according to the following scale:

- \$10 fee – Small flat parcels like heavy duty envelopes
- \$25 fee – Medium parcels up to 7 1/2" x 5 1/2" x 14 1/2"
- \$50 fee – Parcels larger than 7 1/2" x 5 1/2" x 14 1/2"

Recipients also will be responsible for the payment of imposed duties, local taxes, and any other costs associated with receiving packages. Duty charges are calculated by in-country (non-ISE) officials based on the perceived value of the items enclosed or in some cases the local price. As a result, duties may exceed the value of the items sent. We do not recommend that you send any of the following items: food (snacks, chocolates, candies, etc.), electronics, medication, credit cards, currency, or valuable items. Any mail sent to the vessel is subject to search by ship security if deemed necessary and will be discarded if containing [prohibited items](#) without reimbursement. ISE is not responsible for the retrieval or return of any items that do not reach the vessel prior to departure from each port.