



ACU in
LATIN AMERICA

*Pre-Departure
Information*



Study Abroad

ABILENE CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

www.acu.edu/study-abroad

Preparing to Travel

Be sure to have photocopies of the personal data page of your passport packed separately from the passport itself.

Do not forget your passport. Without it, you cannot board the plane at Dallas-Fort Worth Airport.

Suggested Packing List

CLOTHING

- two or three nice outfits for evening excursions or events
- two or three pairs of dress pants or khakis
- seven long-sleeved shirts
- a couple of sweaters and/or sweatshirts (you may want to buy a sweater or two while there)
- three or four pairs of jeans
- house slippers
- sandals
- comfortable walking shoes
- sweats (two changes: one for working out in the cold and one for warm weather)
- a winter coat (not too heavy; keep in mind it does not freeze there so you want to dress in layers)
- rain jacket with hood
- hat or cap
- scarf and warm hat
- small purse for travel around town
- two or three towels and washcloths
- short-sleeved shirts
- two weeks of underwear, socks and anything else worn daily
- bathing suit
- two or three pairs of appropriate shorts for warmer weather

TOILETRIES

(all of these supplies can be purchased in Montevideo)

- shampoo
- soap
- deodorant
- toothbrush
- toothpaste
- contact lens solution
- razors
- sunscreen lotion
- supply of personal items you use on a daily or monthly basis (e.g., feminine products)

SCHOOL SUPPLIES

(all of these supplies can be purchased in Montevideo)

- Bible (bilingual if possible)
- paper/pens/pencils
- notebooks
- textbooks
- backpack
- notecards
- floppy disks or CDs for computer

MISCELLANEOUS

(all of these supplies can be purchased in Montevideo)

- prescriptions
- over-the-counter medications
- batteries
- flashlight
- Spanish-English dictionary
- cards/games/videos
- film/video camera (less expensive in the U.S.)

- alarm clock
- umbrella
- camera
- discman and headphones for travel
- books for leisure reading
- adapter/converter

TRAVEL GEAR

- backpack
- flashlight
- travel alarm (optional)
- earplugs
- small bag for overnight or day trips

DON'T BRING

- food
- electronic appliances
- bedding with the exception of one top sheet for travel

You may want to itemize the contents of your baggage for insurance purposes in the unlikely case that your bags are lost. Remember, if you buy anything there you will need room to take it home with you.

Here are some average temperatures:

Celsius	° Celsius	° Fahrenheit
September-December	12-22	54-72
January-March	19-30	72-90
April-June	13-23	56-74
July-September	7-15	39-59

The humidity is similar to the Dallas or Houston areas.

Flight Information

CARRY-ON LUGGAGE

- You will be limited to one or two carry-on items depending on the rules of the airline. Please contact the Study Abroad Office for details.
- Laptop computers, garment bags or briefcases are considered one of the allowed pieces.
- Carry-ons must fit in an overhead compartment or under the seat and should not exceed total dimensions of 45"/114 cm. and 10 lbs./6 kgs. maximum weight. For example, a typical carry-on bag could measure 9" x 23" x 13".
- Carry-on items that appear too large or irregularly shaped to fit under a seat, in an overhead compartment or in a closet or luggage rack will not be accepted for passenger cabin stowage.
- At times, additional limits may be placed on carry-on baggage based on the main cabin stowage capacity of specific aircraft.

CHECKED LUGGAGE

- You may check two pieces of luggage at a maximum of 70 lbs. each. Maximum total dimensions are 62" for the first piece and 55" for the second.

Financial Matters

AIRLINE TICKETS

Any student wishing to deviate on the return may do so for a deviation fee, provided the change is scheduled before tickets are purchased. Students should make plans as far in advance as possible to avoid disappointment. If you wait until you arrive in Montevideo, it may not be possible to change your return schedule.

BANK/DEBIT CARDS

Arrangements should be made for your personal expenses before departure. You should take at least one credit card and either a bank checking card or debit card with ATM capabilities. Pulse ATM cards will work at ATM machines in Montevideo. It is best to get cash from ATM machines and then exchange it for Uruguayan currency.

Fees may be charged for ATM usage, and Cirrus and Pulse exchange rates vary. There is an ATM three blocks from the facility at an Esso station as well as many banks nearby. Travelers checks may be used but the exchange rate will not be as good as an ATM. For emergencies only, checks may be cashed. **There is a \$50 fee for returned checks so make sure you have money in your account to cover the check.**

“Cambios” in Montevideo, Colonia and Atlantic beach resorts change U.S. dollars, cash and Travelers’ Cheques (the latter at slightly lower rates or modest commissions). Banks are the rule in the interior. Better hotels, restaurants and shops accept credit cards, but Uruguayan ATMs may reject North American or European debit cards (in the interior).

TIPPING

Most restaurants and large hotels will automatically add a 8 to 10 percent service charge to your bill so always check in advance before you give any extra money. You are, of course, welcome to tip in addition to that for exceptional service. If you are not satisfied with the service, however, refuse to pay the service charge, stating your reasons for doing so; you will be within your rights legally.

Here’s a guide for tipping:

- **Restaurants:** 8 to 10 percent of the check for full meals if tip is not already included; a small token if you’re just having coffee or tea.
- **Taxis:** Taxi drivers do not require tips, although you may round off the fare for convenience.

Living in Latin America

SURFACE MAIL POST

The mail takes about two weeks from the U.S. and four weeks to the U.S. The mailing address at the Montevideo facility is:

Casa ACU
[Student’s Name]
Colonia 2073
Montevideo, Uruguay 11000

Small packages (i.e., a small shoe box or video mailer) may be mailed to the address above. However, any package with a stated value of more than \$50 will go through a customs inspection. As a result, you will probably have to pay close to 100 percent duty on the contents of the package. Any customs inspection requires as much as one half day to a full day and a lot of “hassle.” It is best to avoid receiving packages. Rates may vary so you should see the U.S. Postal Service Web site at www.usps.com.

EMAIL

You may use your personal ACU Webmail account to check your email. Casa ACU has a computer lab for student use. Internet access is limited, though, so use your time online wisely.

Do not send or download large attached graphics files; please inform your friends and family of this. Excessive email use that impedes other students’ use of computers for academic purposes will result in suspended or revoked privileges for the duration of the program. Also see ACU guidelines and regulations governing the use of computers on campus.

TELEPHONE USE

There is one telephone on each floor of Casa ACU that requires a calling card or credit card. It is less expensive for you to receive calls than to call to the U.S. The number there including the country code is:

- Men’s floor: 011-598-2-402-4354
- Women’s floor: 011-598-2-402-3623

There is a three-hour time difference between Uruguay and U.S. Central Standard Time (from March to October, Uruguay is two hours ahead) so keep this in mind when calling.

To call the U.S., dial **001 + area code + number**.

LIVING IN FELLOWSHIP

Most students will share a room. Living arrangements will be based on the number of students attending the session. If you have a roommate preference, please notify the Study Abroad Office supervisor. Rooms will be furnished with a bed, bedding, pillow, desk, lamp, closet and clothes hangers.

Students will be responsible for their own washing and/or dry cleaning of clothes and bedding.

Casa ACU is to be treated in much the same way as a residence hall on the Abilene campus. No visitors are allowed into the facility. A large part of the facility consists of bedrooms; therefore, access must be limited. The front gate must be kept locked 24 hours per day. You will be issued two keys. **If you lose your room key you will be charged a replacement fee of \$50. If you lose the front gate key you will be charged \$100.**

DISCIPLINARY ACTION

All disciplinary actions will be handled by the appropriate personnel on-site. For questions, please see the form titled "Behavior Contract."

SPIRITUAL FELLOWSHIP

While in Uruguay, you will have the opportunity to be blessed and bless others with the Christian fellowship you will share with faculty, staff and the people of Uruguay. You will discover many opportunities for Christian service. You also will have the opportunity to educate yourself about the beliefs of others. This is part of your Study Aboard experience and will help you develop your own Christian worldview. All of this will be covered in the orientation after you arrive in Montevideo.

YOUR FIRST DAY IN MONTEVIDEO

When you arrive in Montevideo, you will be taken to the Casa ACU. After settling in, you will receive a room key, have an orientation and take a walking tour of downtown.

GETTING AROUND

Casa ACU is located on the south side of Montevideo just inside the downtown area. You can walk to the old city in 20 minutes. A walking tour brochure will be provided the first day you arrive. **Every block is measured by 50 numbered units, rather than 100, so as you are taking a look around at addresses keep this in mind and become familiar with the numbering system.** Casa ACU is on one of the major streets of the city (Colonia) and one block away from the main street.

Walking destinations include church, the beach, Tres Cruces (bus, mall and food), and any daily shopping needs.

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

Almost 80 percent of the buses stop within four blocks of Casa ACU. The major line number is 121, which will take you from the corner, to the old city, and back (within a block). It costs about 50 cents to ride almost any bus, and you have to pay each way. You go in the front door, pay the ticket taker "guarda" (sometimes the driver), and then push the button near the rear door when you want to exit.

Buses stop every two blocks. The nearby main bus station also provides interior and foreign travel.

Taxis are plentiful, inexpensive and user-friendly.

LONG WEEKENDS

During the fall and spring semesters, you will have two long weekends (with no class on Friday) and a one-week break. These opportunities will have an additional cost if you decide to travel. Specific information will be presented in the orientation meeting. Also, please see the handout "Things to Do in Montevideo and Surrounding Areas."

INDIVIDUAL TRAVEL

Travel regulations for all Latin America program students

You will have the opportunity to travel independently in the Montevideo area. After approximately 9 p.m., you should not travel alone, but in groups of two or more.

Regardless of the time of day, if you leave the Montevideo metropolitan area you must travel in groups of three or more. Wherever you go, you should use common sense in traveling so you will not become a victim of petty theft or other crimes. For example, always keep your purse or wallet in your possession at all times, and if you are out at night stay in well-lit places.

You should always keep the phone number of the on-site supervisor with you in case of emergencies. In addition, when you are within Latin America, it is recommended that you carry a photocopy of the identification page from your passport with you and leave the passport in the safe at Casa ACU. If you leave the country, it then becomes necessary to carry the original passport.

You should take great care not to lose your passport. If you lose your passport, you are to contact the on-site supervisor immediately and begin the process of ordering a replacement passport at the local U.S. Consulate.

Some travel tips before embarking on an independent trip:

1. Make sure you are caught up on your classes. It will be difficult to make up the work later if you get behind.
2. Be informed – know something about the place before you go. You will get more out of the trip and feel more comfortable as you travel.
3. Create an itinerary to leave with the on-site supervisor. While part of the fun in traveling is spontaneity, it is necessary to leave some notification of where you will be staying and when you are coming and going.
4. Pack lightly. For weekend or bus trips, you can pack a school backpack or a small duffle bag. A large backpack is not recommended.
5. Know your travel times and be there early to meet transportation.

ADMISSION OF NON-ACU GUESTS

The ACU facility is **not** designed to entertain guests, and non-ACU persons should **not** be invited to the facility. In the event that a student wishes to have a non-ACU person meet them at the ACU facility to go to some event, non-ACU persons must **not** pass beyond the waiting room behind the glass doors. Should a “guest” enter the interior of the facility, the student who admitted the “guest” to the waiting room will be responsible for the infraction, and the discipline committee will handle the infraction. This is a serious offense, and severe consequences may result.

ROOMS

You are responsible for your room. A check-in form for each room will be issued upon arrival. You should inspect the condition of your room and note any damage not reported on the check-in form, along with any missing items. The form should be returned to the on-site supervisor within 24 hours. Damage to the room during the course of the program must be reported to the on-site supervisor within 24 hours. You are not permitted to place items on the wall surfaces of any room without prior permission from the on-site supervisor. The supervisor will check for and record any damage at the conclusion of the program.

Your ACU account will be billed for any damage for which you are responsible. If responsibility cannot be determined, the cost will be divided equally among all occupants of the room. Failure to complete checkout procedures will result in a charge of \$100 to your ACU account.

You are expected to keep your room in an orderly and clean condition. Hot plates and other cooking devices are fire hazards and are not permitted in rooms. Kitchens are to be used for preparing and eating food. The on-site supervisor may inspect rooms on a regular basis to insure cleanliness. Bed linen is provided and will be laundered every two weeks. It is your responsibility to assist the on-site supervisor in the efficient exchange of bed linen.

We recommend that you keep your room locked when away from the house. Abilene Christian University bears no responsibility for personal items left anywhere in the house. ACU reserves the right to inspect rooms at any time to ensure the safety of the students in the program.

CURFEW

Safety issues for the entire group (students, faculty, any children present, staff, etc.) are always a matter of concern for everyone involved. While on an ACU Study Abroad program, life is truly lived in community, and everyone has to be sensitive to each other and “watch out” for each other. Therefore, ACU Study Abroad has set a curfew of midnight on nights before class days and 2 a.m. on nights before non-class days. After curfew, the main gate will be locked, and no one will be admitted. Anyone arriving after curfew will be responsible for

their own housing that night at a nearby hotel which is open 24 hours and at their own expense. Students are urged to be inside the main gate 5 to 10 minutes **before** curfew in order to insure compliance. Curfew violations will be handled by the discipline committee. Remember, if you are out at night, you should be with at least two other people to not invite any problems.

SAFETY

Safety is on the minds of most people these days, and the safety of students and personnel is a concern of the Study Abroad programs at Abilene Christian University. Montevideo is considered a safe city with many places to shop, beautiful parks to visit and opportunities to participate in recreational activities. Students should remember when they are traveling not to invite any street crime such as petty theft, pick-pocketing, etc. When you arrive in Montevideo, familiarize yourself with the city map, pay attention to the on-site orientation and use common sense when traveling about. When traveling around Montevideo, keep a low profile, and when out after 10 p.m. make sure you have one or two fellow ACU students with you.

FILM

Film may be purchased from a business across the street for \$5 a roll (24-exposure, 200 ASA film). Developing prints may be more expensive in Montevideo so you may wish to develop the film upon returning to the U.S. Twenty-four hour developing costs about \$10, but this includes a “free roll” of 100-speed film and a small album. **You pay this regardless of the quality of your finished prints.**

VIDEO RENTAL

While ACU students enjoy opportunities to view films in movie theaters, a video rental store is one block away from Casa ACU. You must be a member, which costs \$5, and each video costs about \$2. Almost all films are in English, with Spanish subtitles. ACU has a TV and VCR, which will play U.S. and South American videos.

Please note: ACU uses this unit for teaching purposes so opportunities for student personal use will be limited and determined upon arrival. If you plan to record or use your personal video camera, there are compatibility issues that exist between U.S. and South American TV/VCR units. For example, if you tape a program from television, it will not play back in the U.S. without an adapter.

MEDICAL INFORMATION

If you are taking prescription medications while abroad, please make proper arrangements with your physician prior to departure.

Pharmacies are close and easy to get to if you need medications. Two pharmacies closest to the facility are “Palmar” (two blocks away at 407-1970) and “Lyon” (one block away). By law, there is always a pharmacy

open in each neighborhood. Brand names are different in South America, so check with the on-site supervisor before purchasing over-the-counter medication.

A major hospital is approximately eight blocks away and is called the “Britanico” (British). The Britanico has some English-speaking physicians. In addition, there is a recommended physician who makes house calls and may be used depending on the circumstances. If a student is injured, the church building has ambulance insurance coverage.

You may wish to make a note of the hospital’s location upon arriving in Montevideo. You also should refer to the Medical Insurance Coverage brochure available in the Study Abroad Office.

CLASSES

While local adjunct professors will usually teach advanced Spanish language courses, most of your classes are taught by ACU faculty-in-residence. Qualified students also may take advanced Spanish courses at Universidad Católica (www.ucu.edu.uy) pending academic approval. If you are taking courses at Universidad Católica, please remember

you are representing Abilene Christian University. You must abide by the rules of Universidad Católica as well as ACU when taking courses there.

FACULTY AND PROGRAM SUPERVISORS

During your stay, you will be under the direction and care of the faculty and on-site supervisor. Let them know immediately if any problems arise so they can resolve them promptly.

The high quality of the ACU Study Abroad program is partly due to the outstanding faculty who teach and lead students through this experience. In addition, those individuals responsible for maintaining the housing facility are crucial to the success of the program, and their hard work should be appreciated.

REGISTRATION WHILE ABROAD

Students should be able to register while in Montevideo for the next semester on ACU’s Web site.

It is your responsibility as a student to make sure you do not have a hold on your account.

