



Calvin College
Semester in Britain
Student Handbook
Spring 2018

(Revised Fall 2017)

Table of Contents

Introduction	3
A Short History of York	4
Personal and College Expectations for Study Abroad	6
General Student Conduct and Living Abroad as a Pilgrim	10
Culture Shock	11
Pre-Departure Information	13
What to Bring	17
Finances and Logistics	20
When you arrive in England	22
Climate and daylight in York	22
York St John University	23
Housing & meals	23
Academic Program	24
Communication	25
Church life in York	26
Health & safety	26
Shopping in York	27
Visitors to York	27
Independent Travel	28
Behavioural expectations	28
Conclusion	29
 <u>Appendices:</u>	
United Kingdom: fact sheet	30
Conversion tables (metric)	31
UK Vocabulary: so you thought you knew English?	32
Contact Information	33
Map of Central York	34
Map of York St. John University campus	35
Map of The Grange	36
Student Independent Travel form	37
General Information from the OCP Office	38
Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assaults	43
Communication with Family and Friends	45
Sustainable Study Abroad	46
Absentee Voting	46
Keeping Safe Off Campus	47
Re-Entry	49
Exploring Grand Rapids	53

Introduction

Welcome to the Calvin College Semester in Britain program. We are delighted that you are interested in living and learning in Europe. Your investment of energy and patience during this semester will be richly rewarded with experiences that cannot be duplicated. We look forward to being your partners in this adventure. Although we cannot anticipate all of your questions, this handbook should inform you about the basics of the Semester in Britain program and provide details that will make your life in Britain more pleasant. Some information will be useful to you now, as you make plans for the trip. Other parts of this handbook will be helpful after you arrive in York. ***But, please do read the entire handbook now and share this information with your parents.*** Further questions or concerns may be directed to:

Professor Chad Engbers, Director of the Semester in Britain program in 2018

Office: Covenant Fine Arts Center

Office Phone: 616-526-8516

Email: engbers@calvin.edu

Professor Don De Graaf, Director of Off-Campus Programs

Office: Spoelhof Center 301

Office Phone: 616-526-6225

E-mail: ddegraaf@calvin.edu

The Concept

Studying overseas has long been a part of American higher education. Most liberal arts colleges have programs of study in various overseas locations. Rudyard Kipling once said, “They little know of England who only England know.” Similarly we would assert of Calvin students, “They little know of America who only America know.” A thorough and intimate knowledge of a foreign culture is an important counterweight, a corrective and comparative tool for understanding, whether you have lived and studied solely in the United States or have lived in other cultures. There are many ways of experiencing another culture. A vacation for relaxation and recreation is one way. A short visit to another country is likely to be less superficial than a vacation, yet is not a way to delve deeply into that culture. But a four-month residence in a foreign nation affords you enough time to transcend the limited possibilities that vacations and visits allow and to engage yourself deeply with different people, places, and ways of living.

The Site

Calvin’s Semester in Britain is set in the ancient city of York in the middle of England, about halfway between London and Edinburgh. A two-hour train ride will take you to either place. Narrow, winding streets; ancient timbered houses so old they’re protected by a conservation order; and no cars—this is the center of York, the host city for Calvin’s semester in Britain. The city’s layers of history—almost 2,000 years worth—will be a constant source of fascination as you study at York St John University, located just across the street from the medieval city walls. No matter what major you’re pursuing—business, communication, education, English, psychology, history, computer science, kinesiology, economics, sociology, engineering, nursing, social work, or the like—you’ll find classes to take at York St John University.

A Short History of York

(<http://www.visitthetopofengland.com/york> and Wikipedia)

There is archaeological evidence that Mesolithic people settled in the region where York is now by 8,000 - 7,000 BC, although it is not known if these were permanent or temporary settlements. The city itself was founded by the Romans as “Eboracum” in AD 71, when the Ninth Legion conquered the Brigantes and constructed a military fortress (*castrum*) on flat ground above the River Ouse near its junction with the River Foss. The fortress was later rebuilt in stone, covered an area of 50 acres, and was inhabited by 6,000 soldiers, who played a major role in the construction of Hadrian’s Wall further north. Much of the Roman fortress now lies under York Minster, and excavations in the Minster’s undercroft (which you can visit) have revealed some of the foundations and artifacts. The emperors Hadrian, Septimius Severus, and Constantius I all held court in York during their various campaigns. During his stay, Severus proclaimed York capital of the province of Britannia Inferior, and it is likely that it was he who granted York the privileges of a *colonia*. Constantius I died during his reign in York, and his son Constantine the Great was proclaimed emperor by the troops based in the fortress.



http://www.world-guides.com/images/united_kingdom/united_kingdom_map.jpg

In the 7th century, York was the chief city of the Anglo-Saxon King Edwin of Northumbria. The first church was built at this time for Edwin's baptism in 627. York became a major centre of Christian learning with a school established by Alcuin in 778. In 866 Northumbria was in the midst of civil war when the Vikings raided and captured Eboracum, renaming it "Jorvik" (now York). Under Viking rule the city became a major river port, part of the extensive Viking trading network throughout northern Europe.

In 1069, York was ravaged by William the Conqueror as part of his conquest of the North; Clifford's Tower is a surviving monument of his conquest. The old Anglo-Saxon Minster was badly damaged by fire at this time, and the Normans decided to build a new Minster on a fresh site. Around the year 1080 Archbishop Thomas started building a cathedral in the Norman style. York began to prosper again, becoming a profitable port and centre of trade, particularly in wool. King Henry I granted the city's first charter c. 1125, confirming trading rights in England and Europe. From 1220 to 1472, the old Norman cathedral was rebuilt into the current Gothic-style cathedral, which is still called the Minister, since the church began as a Anglo-Saxon "mission."

The city underwent a period of decline during Tudor times. Under Henry VIII, the Reformation brought the end of the monasteries of York (c. 1535), although the city continued as an ecclesiastical and social centre. Henry VIII created the Council of the North in York, and this Council increased in importance under Elizabeth I, leading to a revival in the city's influence.

Following the Civil Wars and restoration of the monarchy in 1660, the city gradually came to be dominated by the local aristocracy and gentry. Competition from the nearby cities of Leeds and Hull resulted in York losing its preeminent position as a trading centre, but the city's role as the social and cultural centre for wealthy northerners was on the rise. York's many elegant townhouses date from this period, as do the Assembly Rooms, the Theatre Royal, and the Racecourse.

George Hudson was responsible for bringing the railway to York in 1839, and soon York was a major railway centre. By 1900 the city accommodated the headquarters and works of the North Eastern Railway, which employed over 5,500 people in York. The railway was also instrumental in the expansion of Rowntree's Cocoa Works and Terry's Confectionery Works, the major employers in the city.

With the emergence of tourism as a major industry in the 20th century the historic core of York became one of the city's major assets, and in 1968 it was designated a conservation area. York's medieval walls, largely built on Roman foundations, are well preserved; the Minster is Europe's largest Gothic cathedral north of the Alps; and many museums and old buildings allow visitors to explore every period of British history. The opening of the University of York in 1963 added to the prosperity of the city. Fast and frequent railway service, which brings York within two hours journey time of London, has resulted in a number of companies opening offices in the city.

Suggested Guidebooks & Background Reading

For popular guidebooks, check out the *Lonely Planet* series and Rick Steve's books. The *Michelin* guidebooks and *Blue Guides* provide the most detailed information for those visiting museums and sites on their own. *Let's Go West Europe* sets the standard for student-oriented budget guides to Europe, and AAA guides have also been recommended. The program director has a shelf of travel books in York, but it's good to have a trusty guide of your own to carry around. Of course, you can get them in York, too. Past directors have recommended these books for general background:

Christopher Daniell, *A Traveller's History of England* (this one is a textbook for STBR 312)

David Dimbleby and David Reynolds: *An Ocean Apart*

Richard Critchfield: *An American Looks at Europe*

Jane Walmsley: *Brit-Think, Ameri-Think*

Paul Theroux: *The Kingdom by the Sea*

Margaret Drabble: *A Writer's Britain*

David Frost and Antony Jay: *To England with Love*

Frederic Youngs: *The English Heritage*

Bill Bryson: *Notes from a Small Island*

Personal and College Expectations for Study Abroad

In all of Calvin's programs we pursue high quality academic study shaped by the Reformed vision of the historic Christian faith. In the Semester in Britain we aim to live and study together as a Christian academic community, to develop our gifts by experiencing a situation different from the familiar, by learning under a variety of teaching styles, by encountering new sets of behaviours and beliefs, and by drawing from course offerings and academic expertise unavailable elsewhere. Our goals are to prepare ourselves to live and think as Christians in God's world, and to recognize the international and universal character of God's rule. Britain is a markedly "post-Christian" nation, more so than the United States, and studying there allows Calvin students to engage with a culture rather different from that on our own campus, in spite of many similarities. We seek to be intentional about forming a vital Christian community among ourselves and being a positive witness to those we meet in York.

Setting your Sights

A semester in Britain is hard to imagine. Will it be a "dream come true?" Will it match your expectations? Are you prepared academically, socially, and emotionally for this new experience? Such questioning prior to departure is normal. You should, however, be aware that virtually all of the students who have participated in this program have said afterwards that it was the most important experience of their lives to this point. Never before have they had such variety of sensations, survived so many challenges, met such different people, and learned so much about themselves. They cannot wait to return to Europe.

But it's important to have realistic expectations. Former participants never describe the semester as pure excitement and fun: this experience was also very challenging. They report that one of their achievements was learning to adjust to a new environment, to function as a resident in a foreign culture and not just as a tourist, and to endure occasional discomfort for the sake of the enriching experience of cross-cultural study for a

whole semester. Alumni of the program confirm that those who succeed, who get the most from the semester, are not necessarily the students who have always earned the highest grades. Rather, they are those who come with strong self-understanding and openness to the culture in which they live.

To succeed on this program, you should:

- **Know yourself.** You are, in part, a product of your home culture and you will better understand that culture by gaining some healthy distance from it.
- **Respect and honor your host culture.** Britain has its own culture, a complete system of dress, customs, behaviour, gestures, morality, codes, and values. You will try to understand, **appreciate**, and respect the manners and morals, the outward behaviour and the inner values of your host culture. Rather than flaunt your own lifestyle or your personal independence, you will study and try to adapt to local patterns.
- **Expect to be stretched.** You will see the semester as a living laboratory. The way people act and react will reveal to you the inner structure of their lifestyle more clearly than any textbook could. Any feelings of frustration, discomfort, isolation, or anger, which you may experience, will also be valuable data for understanding the psychology of cross-cultural encounters. You may share such feelings with your diary or program director or close friends, but you will refrain from making them a topic of public discussion, especially when casual acquaintances from the host culture are present.
- **Hold realistic expectations.** You will deliberately keep your expectations modest, your mind open to new experiences, your emotions in check. You will seek to engage the culture and experience it from within.
- **Maintain a positive attitude most of the time.** You will realize that your attitude has a direct effect on your fellow students, and you will do your best to maintain a positive outlook on your situation—particularly in regard to your studies. You will do your best to maintain a healthy, honest level of curiosity and commitment to your studies while you are abroad.

A student will not benefit from this program if she or he:

- **Takes pride in being an introvert or a loner** or finds group activities an indignity and a bore. You will be forced into the company of your peers.
- **Is prone to complain** about bureaucratic hassles and inefficiency, or thinks that someone else is at fault when things do not go as expected. Things will go wrong, and you won't always be able to figure out who is to blame; even if you do, it won't matter.
- **Thinks it is all right to skip some classes** every week as long as assignments are completed. We regard skipping class without a legitimate reason as a discourtesy, and it obviously reduces your opportunity to learn from the experience.

- **Takes pride in being a strong personality**, one who is eager to challenge everything whether it is thought it through or not. Such exterior defence mechanisms often mask personal insecurities that may become painfully obvious under the pressures of a semester abroad.
- **Sees this semester as a chance to break free from moral restrictions such as those on sex and alcohol.** As Christians we expect morally upright behaviour.
- **Thinks North American creature-comforts are the minimum necessary for civilized life.** You might be better advised to check into the Holiday Inn for the semester!

To cultivate a realistic and thoughtful approach to the semester, you may want to try these tactics:

- **If you have taken British Literature (English 212-214, 310-317) or the History of England (History 225), review some of what you learned** before you leave for York. Alternatively, do some reading about the United Kingdom. Acquaint yourself with the basic facts about British geography (you'll be traveling all over this country) as well as its current politics and history. We will all be learning about Britain in the British Culture class in York, but the more you know before you go, the richer your trip will be, and the more you can enrich the rest of the class.
- **Make a list of concrete goals and objectives.** What do you want to achieve with academic courses, with housing, with travel, with friendships, with your personal development? Ask yourself what help from others will you need to achieve your goals? Are you expecting your classmates to be just like you with similar goals, habits, and attitudes? How tolerant are you of differences? How ready are you to adapt? What kind of support are you expecting from the faculty director — do you expect him/her to be a cruise-line entertainment coordinator, or a colleague introducing you to new experiences and helping you grow from them?
- **Talk with one or more Calvin students who have studied abroad**, especially those who have studied in York. Ask about the uncomfortable as well as the positive sides of their experience. What surprised, what delighted, what frustrated them?
- **Talk with one or two international students** on Calvin's campus. Ask them about their expectations when they came to Calvin and their actual experiences. What's it like to live in another culture?
- **Resolve to get to know some British and international students** when you get to York. Students have repeatedly commented that one of the most rewarding aspects of the semester was the chance to develop new relationships with fellow students – flat mates, classmates, and others. Don't be afraid to invest some serious energy in relationships, particularly seeking out people of Christian faith in the church you attend or the YSJ Christian Union.
- **During a semester abroad you may have to rely more intensely on the resources of your faith** and this can deepen your spiritual life significantly. For this reason we encourage you to cultivate

spiritual disciplines such as Bible reading, prayer, and meditation as you prepare for the semester and as you live in Britain. We will be making worship and prayer part of our communal life in Britain, and chapel services and activities are available at York St John University; but spiritual health and growth is still your individual responsibility. Philippians 2:1-13 and Colossians 3:1-17 would be good places to start in preparing for the spiritual challenges ahead.

- **Cultivate the habits this fall semester** that will help you better appreciate and learn from your experiences in York in the spring. Begin to practice BeMAC:
 - a. Be Mindful
 - b. Be Attentive
 - c. Be Curious.

General Student Conduct and Living Abroad

Student Conduct Code

While studying off-campus you will be held to the same conduct code as if you were studying on-campus.

The official and most current version of the Student Conduct Code is found online at

<https://calvin.edu/directory/policies/student-conduct-code>. As you prepare for your semester off-campus, be mindful of the following:

- **Romance:** Off-campus romances can be enticing, but they also hold additional challenges. A romance between two Calvin students will be played out in front of everybody else in the program and can easily compromise the dynamics of the whole group. A romance between a Calvin student and a host country national student can be even more problematic and potentially traumatic. Be very cautious. Keep in mind that sexual misconduct can result in expulsion from the program: the student will be sent home with no refund.
- **Alcohol and Drug Use:** The legal drinking age in Britain is 18; adolescents who are 16 and older may drink wine, beer, or cider if it is purchased by an adult and drunk with a meal. You will be able to buy and consume alcohol while you are in Britain and traveling on the Continent. However, you are expected to use this freedom responsibly with the realization that demonstrations of public or private drunkenness can result in expulsion from the program. You should be especially aware of the impact of alcohol has on your decision making process. Alcohol can also contribute greatly to the possibility of you being a victim of crime. As a result, think twice before you drink and if you do decide to drink, do so in moderation.

Learning to be a Pilgrim, Learning from the Stranger

Something hidden. Go and find it. Go and look behind the ranges – something lost...and waiting for you. These words written by Rudyard Kipling describe nicely the wonder of travel: the excitement leading up to a new adventure in an unknown place, the sense of adventure that invites exploration and the seeking out of new experiences. Yet Kipling's quote should also lead you to ask these questions: What is waiting for you as you pack your bags and leave for the semester? What does God want you to seek in your time off-campus?

Some may see a semester abroad as the opportunity to be tourists, goggling at the wonders of the world. But this leads to a number of self-critical questions about the purpose of our travel:

- Do you see other cultures as commodities to be purchased and consumed?
- By participating in this program, are you just buying an item for your resume?
- Are you willing to leave your safe "bubble" of your friends and genuinely encounter another culture on its terms? Are you willing to experience the joy and challenges of another life?
- To what extent do you want a program where everything is planned, structured, and predictable, or are you open to what is unknown and not foreseen?
- Do you want simply to gaze at exotic people from a safe balcony or bus, or do you want an engagement with another culture that teaches you how others perceive you?

These questions push you beyond the boundaries of an ordinary tourist and reveal something significant about Calvin's hopes for your travel. The Off-Campus Programs Office hopes that you learn and grow through your experience. Much like the pilgrim on a quest, we wish for you to be transformed through your journey. We want you to come back a different person. We want your travel to influence the rest of your life.

Many of you have thought deeply about your motivations for studying off-campus. You have a hunger for more meaning than can be provided by the tourist industry. Tourists often ask only, "Am I getting my money's worth? Is it worth it?" The pilgrim asks instead: "Am I worthy of this encounter? How can I be a blessing to others I meet and let others be a blessing to me?"

Many tourists judge the worth of the culture they visit and never examine what their travel reveals about their own culture's values. Pilgrims, in contrast, should judge themselves. The pilgrim does not ask, "What do I want?" but rather "What does God want to teach me through my travel?" So as you prepare for your off-campus experience and as you experience the joys and challenges of studying off-campus, continue to challenge yourself with these questions: "What is God trying to teach me through these experiences and my interactions with others along the way?"

Culture Shock

The term *culture shock* is used to describe the anxiety produced when a person moves to a completely new environment. This term expresses the lack of direction, the feeling of not knowing what to do or how to do things in a new environment, and not knowing what is appropriate or inappropriate. For students, the feeling of culture shock generally sets in after the first few weeks of coming to a new place as they go through the process of cultural adjustment.

For some students a bout with cultural adjustment is brief and hardly noticeable. For other students the process of cultural adjustment can cause intense discomfort, often accompanied by hyperirritability, bitterness, resentment, homesickness, and depression. In some cases distinct physical symptoms of psychosomatic illness occur.

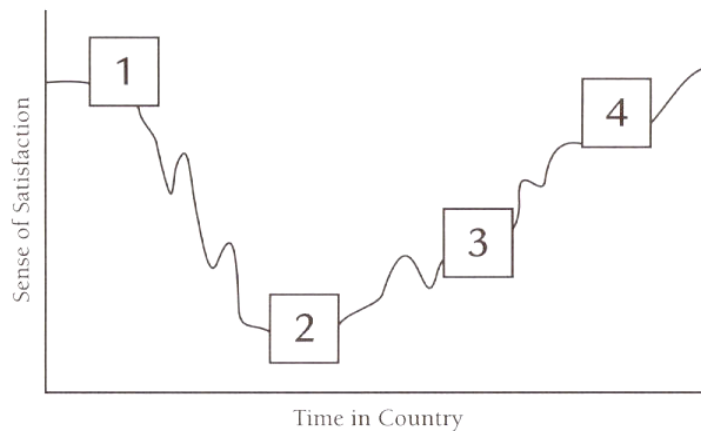
It is important to remember that cultural shock does not result from a specific event. Instead it comes from the experiences of encountering ways of doing, organizing, perceiving, or valuing things which are different from your own and which threaten your basic unconscious beliefs, values, and customs. Further, culture shock does not strike suddenly or have a single principal cause. It builds up slowly, from a series of small events, which are difficult to identify.

One way to deal with culture shock is to be aware of the progressive stages of cultural adjustment. These stages include:

- **Stage One:** Cultural euphoria. During this stage your first reaction to a new place is often to enjoy and be pleased by all of the new things encountered. This time is called the "honeymoon" stage, as everything encountered is new and exciting.

- **Stage Two:** Cultural confrontation. During this stage a person begins to encounter some confusion about their new home. Crises start to develop, feelings of discontent, impatience, anger, sadness, and feelings of incompetence can begin to emerge. Students can be irritable and hostile as there are often feelings of dissatisfaction.
- **Stage Three:** Cultural adjustment. During this stage, the student begins to gain some understanding of his/her new culture. The student does not feel as lost and starts to have a feeling of direction as he or she becomes more familiar with the environment and wants to belong.
- **Stage Four:** Adaptation or biculturalism. During this stage the student realizes that the new culture has good and bad things to offer. This realization is accompanied by a more solid feeling of belonging.

The “U” Curve of Culture Shock and Cross-Cultural Adjustment



Adapted by Kohls, L. R. (2001).
Survival Kit for Overseas Living

Responding to culture shock and adjusting to a new culture

- Realize everyone experiences it.
- Be ready to learn from it: there are different ways of doing things, not worse, not better.
- Reread this information when you're feeling down.
- Pursue information gathering about the country where you will be studying. Do research, ask people, read books. Choose one or two areas and investigate them deeply (e.g., soccer, food, film, music, theatre).
- Begin looking for logical reasons behind everything that seems strange, confusing, difficult, or threatening.
- Make a list of all the positive things you can identify about your present situation.
- Avoid other students who are in a permanent state of complaining and culture shock.
- Work at maintaining a healthy sense of humor.
- Find someone who has gone through culture shock and has a positive attitude now. Get perspective.

- Make friends with host nationals and try to develop one or two deeper relationships while studying abroad.
- Keep busy. Keep active. Keep your mind occupied. Don't sit around and feel sorry for yourself.
- Have faith that you will work through culture shock to brighter days ahead.
- Look outside yourself, help someone else, and be concerned about others in the program.

Pre-Departure Information

Pre-Departure Paperwork

Once accepted into the Britain off-campus program, there are a number of tasks you will need to complete including:

- Paying a deposit for the semester
- Attending orientation meetings (required)
- Completing all the forms on the Horizon Application, which include
 - Waiver form
 - Health insurance verification form
 - Emergency contact form
 - Health Forms (both for physical and mental health)
 - Visa application (YSJ will provide the visa letters for entry with student status into the UK; some passport holders may need to apply for a special visa)
 - York St John University application forms

As you leave Calvin for Christmas break, **please continue to check your email.. There may be important tasks that you need to complete while you are on break prior to departure.** Please inform the program director if there is any change in contact information for you prior to departure.

Pre-Departure Orientations

Once accepted into the Britain semester abroad program, there will be additional orientation meetings to help you prepare for the experience. Students are required to attend these orientations, so talk to the program director early to reserve dates for orientations and training. When you arrive at York St John University, additional orientation and training will take place to ensure that you are prepared for your off-campus experience.

Obtain a Passport

If you already have a passport, **make sure it is valid for at least 6 months beyond your intended stay in Europe.** If you do not have one, you should apply for a passport at least three months before departure. If you are a U.S. citizen, this can be done at the nearest post office (Grand Rapids or Wyoming). Proof of U.S. citizenship is required (original birth certificate, naturalization papers, or a previous passport) and identification must be established by an acceptable document (driver's license or previously issued passport). Also required are two duplicate photos recently taken, full face with a light background, 2x2 inches in size

(these can be taken for a nominal fee at Calvin's Audio-Visual Department). Passport applications are available online at <http://travel.state.gov/passport/> Canadian students can find information and forms at <http://www.ppt.gc.ca/index.aspx?lang=eng> Students of other nationalities should check with Jo Cooper (Immigration coordinator, Admissions office) about possible visa requirements for travel to Britain, and requirements for return to the U.S.

Be sure to sign your passport when you receive it. Please provide your professor with a photocopy of the first pages of your passport before you leave for Britain, and keep a spare copy in a secure place separate from your passport. In the event that your passport is lost or stolen, this will make replacement easier. It's not a bad idea to scan your passport and email it to yourself as an additional back-up in case of loss or theft. Each student is responsible for all passport and visa arrangements for the entire program. You will be admitted to the UK on a student visa, and arrangements for this are made by our host university for most passport holders. Our group travel will be limited to the United Kingdom, but those wishing to travel elsewhere during Easter break are fully responsible for any necessary visa arrangements. When you enter the UK you must be ready to present your passport, your York St John University admission letter, a visa (if required), and a Calvin College letter confirming that you have adequate financial resources for your time in the UK.

Registering at the U.S. Embassy

If you are an American citizen studying outside of the United States, Calvin's OCP Office will register you with the United States Embassy in that specific country through the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program. For more information about the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program please review the following website: <https://step.state.gov/step/>.

The OCP office encourages international students to register with their own embassy. The OCP office will be glad to assist you in this process.

Additional Pictures

Please bring several 2x2 pictures of yourself, similar to passport pictures. These will be needed for various identification cards in Britain: your YSJ identification card and Young Person's Rail Pass may be two of them. You may purchase them at the Calvin Audio-Visual Department. Some students have used photocopies of their Calvin web pictures, but these don't always laminate well and may not be accepted by some agencies.

International Student Identity Card/Hostel Card/Rail Passes

The International Student ID card can get you international student recognition, student admission discounts to various museums and attractions, limited sickness and accident insurance, and a 24-hour traveller's assistance hotline. You need to provide a passport photograph to purchase the card. More information about discounts, country by country, is available at <http://www.myisic.com> (Note: Calvin students have generally found that their York St John ID cards were sufficient to gain European Union student discounts everywhere they travelled, but with the Brexit vote, it is unclear whether these discounts will still apply.)

Calvin will issue an additional student ID that identifies you as a Calvin student studying abroad. This card also includes emergency contact numbers of the program director (in country) and Calvin's OCP office. However, this card does not always work for obtaining student discounts.

If you plan to stay in hostels for more than 7-8 nights during your time in Europe, it may be worthwhile to buy a Hostelling International card; information is available at www.hiusa.org (Note: Calvin students have found that it was easy to book inexpensive hostels online without having this card.)

You will be getting a Young Person's Rail Card for Britain shortly after arrival—it's included in the course fee. But if you want rail cards for spring break travel on the continent, be advised that some European rail passes may not be available in Europe and have to be purchased before you depart from North America. Check out www.raileurope.com for options and costs. Witte Travel may be able to give you a good deal without the online fee—contact Cindy Gless at cindyG@wittetravel.com. Even after you have a rail pass, remember that you need to book tickets with the train companies; you can't just get on & off trains without reservations.

Insurance (Medical and Travel)

All students must have hospitalization and medical insurance that is valid outside of the United States while studying off-campus. You must complete and turn in the Health Insurance Verification Form prior to departure. For students not covered under their parents' health insurance, Knightcare is available through the Health Services Office at Calvin. Another option is HTH Worldwide Insurance Services (www.hthstudents.com).

Prior to leaving for your off-campus experience, please check with your health insurance company to find out what they cover when you travel. Ask about the process for submitting claims during international travel. While doctors and hospitals in the U.S. require only that you present a policy number at the time of service, this is not the case abroad. Regardless of what insurance you have, **you will be expected to pay all medical bills yourself at the time of service.** However, this is generally much less expensive than in the U.S. Remember to get itemized statements and present them to the insurance company to be reimbursed for medical expenses. If your insurance company says you are covered for urgent/emergency care while abroad, you should have sufficient coverage.

In addition to your own primary care insurance, Calvin purchases travel insurance for all students studying on one of Calvin's programs (semester or interim) outside the United States. This insurance includes supplemental health insurance (for major medical expenses) and pays for emergency re-location in case of illness or political unrest. You will receive a card and information about this policy before departure. Additional information about health insurance while abroad as well as Calvin's travel insurance policy can be found at www.calvin.edu/admin/travel/international/insurance.html

The travel insurance bought by Calvin does NOT pay for the cost of the semester if you are not able to participate in the semester program. You may want to consider purchasing additional insurance to cover your trip if you don't go on the trip for medical or other reasons. In addition you can purchase insurance to cover items that are stolen and lost luggage, if you so desire. You are expected to cover these additional expenses.

Vaccinations/Medications/Health Supplies

In addition to vaccinations and shots that are required for enrollment at Calvin, **you are required to have a flu shot for your protection and the group's, and a tetanus shot** (if you haven't had one in the past five years). If you require prescription medications, take a sufficient amount for four months in their original containers. While there are pharmacies much like those in the USA, American prescriptions cannot always be honoured in Britain. So think ahead, and bring the prescription drugs you need. If you wear contact lenses or glasses, bring an extra pair along or a copy of your lens prescription. If you have any special medical concerns that should be known, please tell the director for your own safety. You must complete the Insurance Verification Form and Emergency Contact Information form before we leave.

Travel Arrangements (Airline Baggage Restrictions)

Calvin semester abroad programs include the cost of round trip airfare from Grand Rapids to your off-campus program location. During your pre-departure preparations, you will be asked to indicate your travel plans. If you are going to travel on the same dates as the group (either from Grand Rapids or your home town) Calvin will make your travel arrangement. The Calvin travel agent can also help with most deviations—flights to or from Britain that are different from the group travel. If you make your own travel plans (not encouraged), the OCP office will credit your miscellaneous account for the price of the group fare from Grand Rapids. If you are leaving from a city other than Grand Rapids and the price of the ticket is more than the group fare you will be charged the additional cost.

All luggage costs are the responsibility of the student. Each airline carrier has different rules and restrictions that students are responsible to know and follow. Delta Airlines allows 1 checked bag up to 50 lbs that will be transported free of charge along with 1 personal item (purse, laptop, etc.) and 1 carry-on bag. See http://www.delta.com/content/www/en_US/traveling-with-us/baggage/during-your-trip/carry-on.html for baggage size restrictions. Cost for additional checked baggage is the responsibility of the student.

What to Bring

Travel light. Limit yourself to essentials. Remember you need less than you think you do and that you can get additional clothes and supplies while abroad.

Things to include

- **ONE suitcase** for international flights. Please be sure your baggage is labelled. There is a fee for excess size, weight or a second checked bag. For details see <https://www.aa.com/i18n/travel-info/baggage/carry-on-baggage.jsp>
- **ONE soft-sided carry-on bag** (max. length + width + depth of 45”) and one personal item. (Camera, purse, bag)
- **Neck purse / zip-top / Velcro purse:** In general, being in Europe is safer than being in North America. But in any large city one must take precautions against petty theft, and this advice must be amplified for visitors who will be easily distracted by the new sights and sounds of travel. So *please*, do purchase a neck purse or other secure wallet for your valuables—passport, money, credit/debit cards, and tickets—and then *please*, do keep your valuables in it. You can buy one at Target for under \$10, and it will last a lifetime. It’s advisable to divide your valuables between at least two places (in case one is stolen or lost) and keep your working cash or wallet in your front pocket while travelling.
- **Passport, Calvin ID & another photo ID, insurance card / info.**
- **YSJ admission letter and the Calvin letter confirming funds for subsistence expenses.**
- **A couple of credit / debit / ATM cards** (carry cash, cards & passport under your clothing).
- **Photocopies of your passport, ID cards and credit cards.** These copies will serve as your back-up and it is strongly recommended that they be carried in your carry-on luggage.
- **International Student ID card/Hostel Card/Rail passes – OPTIONAL**
- **Two or three passport-sized pictures** for ID cards in Britain (Audio visual Dept. can provide).
- **Laptop**
- **Important miscellaneous items**, such as flash drives, earplugs, Bible, camera, extra batteries, sunglasses, etc.
- **Plug adapter & transformer/converter for any electrical appliance** (voltage in Britain is 220v). The voltage and electrical plugs in England are different than in North America. If you bring your own appliances, such as hair dryers, electric shavers, laptops and iPod chargers, you will also need a

plug adapter (a plug with 3 flat prongs for Britain, 2 round prongs for the continent) and a voltage converter/transformer so you don't burn out your appliance. Most laptops have a voltage converter/ adapter built-in.

Alternatively, you can buy items like hair dryers or curling irons in York and leave them for future students (there are already some that were donated in previous years—the program director has an inventory of items available at the Calvin house in York).



- **Medications:** if you need prescribed medications, take along a sufficient quantity for the entire trip *in their original, labelled containers*. When travelling carry all medications with you (in your carry-on luggage). If addition, bring copies of your prescriptions and the generic names for the drugs. If possible, carry a letter from your doctor attesting to your need to take the drug. Take along a physician's letter if you require routine injections, a narcotic, or more than two prescribed medications. We recommend that each of you take along your preferred medications for colds, upset stomach, diarrhoea, and motion sickness.
- **Collapsible umbrella & rain gear, including waterproof hiking shoes or boots.**
- **Clothing.** In general, students in Britain dress a little better than they do at Calvin. Men may wear slacks and button-down shirts, even vests; and women may wear stylish clothes, including skirts and nice shoes or boots. Jeans are worn to class, but not sweats or baseball caps. On the continent, long skirts or slacks are expected for women in some churches. It's a good idea to bring along a variety of clothes, from dressy to informal. Although the weather is usually mild by mid-western standards, students are often surprised at how chilly the wet and windy weather seems, especially in February. Plan to dress in layers: sweaters, windbreaker, coat, gloves & hat.

The best clothing to pack will be:

- **Inconspicuous.** Avoid dressing in a way that could mark you as an affluent tourist. Dress conservatively throughout your stay.
- **Highly flexible.** Favor items that can be worn either more formally or less formally, items that can be worn in layers, and skirts/pants that match most of your shirts/tops. (If you can't wear it with at least two or three other things in your suitcase, you probably want to leave it behind.)
- **Easy to wash and dry.** You might end up doing most of your laundry in the sink.
- **Comfortable for walking/hiking.** Pockets make it easy to pack documents and snacks for daytrips; front/inside pockets help to secure money, credit cards, etc. Even in York, you will get most places on foot. Comfortable shoes are the essential foundation of your wardrobe.

Again, *pack light!* Most students agree in retrospect that they brought too many clothes. Save some space for things you buy in Britain.

NOTE: One set of bedding is provided in all university lodging (pillowcase & bottom sheet with duvet). If you want a top sheet or additional bedding, bring it or plan to buy it in York. Bring a towel or plan to buy one in York (there are some from previous students at the Calvin house). For independent travel, you may also wish to bring (or buy in Britain): a pair of flip-flops (for hostel showers), a lock (for hostel lockers), a flashlight, first-aid kit, laundry line, compass. Note: it is illegal to carry knives in Britain, so leave your Swiss Army knife at home.

Things *not* to include:

- Valuable or expensive jewelry (even inexpensive jewelry can attract unwanted attention).
- Unnecessary or too many electronics and gadgets. Bring only the electronics necessary as these items may make you more of a target for robbery. If you do bring electronics, you may need a converter. If you bring a laptop, bring a flash drive that you can use to transport assignments to print and turn in.
- All unnecessary things in your wallet: library card, extra credit cards, social security card, etc.

NOTE: Leave a copy of emergency phone numbers, your itinerary, copy of your passport and driver's license, etc. with your family.

As you pack for your trip consider the words of Steve Hanna after he completed a semester abroad:

Most people say that you should pack light, but that doesn't go far enough. Bring only one bag, and bring it half-full. Not only should your pack be half-full, but you should be half-full as you come to another country to fill up. Half-full means that by going to another country, you will inevitably fill up as you learn about yourself, your new friends, their culture, & your own home. A half-full student is a wise student, who comes to learn, not expecting what they already have at home. A half-full student is someone who comes to another country to experience that culture for what it is, not for what it lacks. You're not going to Asia or Africa or Europe to experience the same life you have at home, with washing and drying machines, fast food, cell phones, and picket fences, right? You're going abroad to learn as much as you can—to fill up your pack, if you will—and to return with much more than you had before.



Finances and Logistics for the Britain Program

Program Fees

Britain will cost more than a semester in Grand Rapids—how much more depends mostly on you. The cost for tuition, room & board has typically been about the same for Britain as on-campus costs, but with the addition of airfare and excursions, the total cost of the program will naturally be higher. For Spring 2018 the total cost of the semester will be \$23,750 (\$16,650 tuition and \$7,100 program fee). Costs for the spring 2018 semester at Calvin are \$21,545 (\$16,650 tuition and \$4,995 room and board). The stated price includes all tuition, lodging in York, a food allowance, group transportation for excursions, a young person's discount rail card, all admissions for group trips, and an administrative fee. You are responsible for the cost of books, medical insurance, passport, personal spending money, and optional travel (especially during the Easter recess). Your program fee (minus your \$500 deposit and any financial aid) is billed to your Calvin account for the spring semester. Payments are due on the usual Financial Service billing schedule. You may discuss the payment schedule with Financial Services.

Refunds (Withdrawing Prior to Departure)

Once the college begins to commit funds on your behalf (e.g. airfare, lodging, etc.), you are responsible for these costs. If for any reason, you need to drop out of a semester program, please let us know as soon as possible. Calvin will do its best to recoup as many costs as possible but you are responsible for any costs we are unable to recoup.

Budgeting and Personal Spending

Alumni of the program agree with the joke about going overseas: “bring half the clothes and twice the money.” Be forewarned that Europe can seem expensive. All of your program costs, including the many group excursions, are included in the Calvin fee. You will receive electronic weekly food allowances of approximately £60-65 during the weeks of class. But beyond that, it is difficult to recommend an exact figure for extra spending money because students' plans and habits vary so widely. You can expect some unique expenses in the first two weeks as you stock up on food and necessities for your room (for example, toilet articles are more expensive in Britain than the U.S.), but most of your “extras” will involve optional entertainment and travel. In the past students have generally spent \$2,000 - \$2,500 in additional personal funds over the semester, mostly to take advantage of opportunities to travel. Those who went to the continent during Spring break estimate that they spent at least \$1,000 - \$2,000 for that travel alone. However, it is possible to spend less by staying in England or in York during Spring break, or by inviting your family to visit you during that time – maybe they can help with your expenses. Students who have spent less “extra money” were able to do so by careful planning and close attention to their expenses. (Note: under our student visa restrictions you may not work during the four months in Britain.)

Before departure, you and your parents / guardians should discuss your budget and decide how much money you will need in England and how you will obtain it. Some students recommend adding your parents' names to your bank account to facilitate transactions and transfers while you are out of the country. An easy way to obtain cash when you arrive in the UK is to use an ATM in the airport, train station, or local bank. Some

students buy British pounds in the U.S. so that they have some start-up cash, or bring U.S. dollars and exchange them for pounds on arrival (the best exchange rates were found at the Post Office on Lendal St. in central York). Once in Britain, it's wise for reasons of security and economy not to keep large sums of cash on hand. Learning to put yourself on a strict allowance and keep track of where your money is being spent will help keep "extra costs" under control.

Other than bringing cash, the best options for meeting your financial needs are

- **ATM cards/debit cards:** Safe and usable throughout Europe, these are probably the easiest and best option for most. You receive a better exchange rate than you'd get with the other options. With debit/ATM cards you receive the local currency of the country in which you withdraw the money, so no additional exchange of funds is required. The ATM/debit card should bear your own name, and obviously you must ensure that there are sufficient funds in your account for what you want to withdraw—here's where having your parents' names on your account can help, because they can add funds if needed, assuming they are willing. ☺ With either credit or ATM cards, be sure before departure to notify your bank that you will be using the cards in Europe so that they will not invalidate them because of "unusual transactions." ATM cash withdrawals usually entail foreign transaction fees; ask your bank how much. You might also ask for a list of affiliated banks in any countries you plan to visit.
- **Credit Cards:** With Visa and MasterCard you can obtain cash advance from banks that post their signs. However, the interest/advance fees can be quite high. Check with your credit card company before you go.
- **International Money Order:** A quick and relatively easy way to receive money from a friendly donor. Some students have used PayPal to receive funds online.

Having more than one means of support (some cash, two or three cards) is a good idea, especially when travelling away from York.

Planning for the two-week Spring Break

During Easter break, there will be a planned weeklong group excursion in London led by the director of the program. The costs of group travel and activities are included in the cost of the semester. However, if you are planning extra travel in the United Kingdom or parts of Europe on weekends or during the remaining two weeks of spring break, you should do some careful planning as early as possible. Bookings of planes and hostels (even trains on the continent) should be done in February, if possible, since most British universities and many European students will be travelling during the same weeks. Destinations in Spain, France, and Italy are very popular, so hostels can be crowded and trains hard to get if you wait until the last minute. Some students have found buying the Eurail pass convenient, but it's important to remember that even with the pass you still need to book your train, and the number of seats allotted to pass holders may be limited on any given train—so you aren't guaranteed a seat. Here are some websites Calvin students have found useful for booking:

For cheap flights:

easyjet.com

ryanair.com

jet2.com

For hostels:

hostelbookers.com

hostelworld.com

You can also save money on personal train travel in Britain by making reservations online at www.nationalrail.co.uk/ or www.virgintrainseastcoast.com or www.southeasternrailway.co.uk/ or www.thetrainline.com.

Travel on the continent can be surprisingly expensive. Beware of hidden costs, such as the price of shuttles from remote airfields or train stations to city centres, or the unexpected charge for bread and bottled water at dinner in a restaurant. Useful tips for saving money: search the internet to find coupons for attractions and restaurants in the cities you'll be visiting; use your York student ID to ask for EU student discounts on admissions to various attractions; book overnight trains to save on lodging; book hostels that include breakfast; buy food at grocery stores or take-out places & eat it in the parks.

When You Arrive in England

The flight across the Atlantic goes through the night. On arrival, remember that England is five hours ahead of Eastern Standard Time. You will pass through Passport Control, where you must be ready to show your letter of admission to York St John University and your Calvin College letter confirming that you have financial resources for your stay in Britain. A student visa will be stamped into your passport. You will then collect your luggage and pass through customs. Professor Engbers or a representative from YSJ will meet you beyond customs and escort you to a coach that will take you to York for check-in to your rooms.

For the first few days in England you may experience jet lag—feelings of disorientation, interrupted sleeping patterns, and possibly dizziness and difficulty concentrating. Drink lots of water, walk around, and go to sleep at the normal English time. These symptoms will pass. For many people the best solution is to get into the daylight as soon as possible after arrival and try to stay awake until late evening local time. Stay hydrated and eat on the local schedule, as much as possible.

Climate and daylight in York

Throughout the year, York's weather is usually more temperate than Grand Rapids. This may come as a surprise, particularly if one realizes that, based upon its latitude, if York were located in North America, it would be on the shore of Hudson Bay, 800 miles north of Grand Rapids. You'll notice this difference first in terms of daylight hours: the sun rises around 8 a.m. and sets around 4 p.m. in early January; but by early May it rises around 5 a.m. (daylight saving time) and sets around 9 p.m. Britain is surrounded by water, which moderates temperature fluctuations. Despite the common image of a "Dickensonian" Christmas with large snowflakes falling, it doesn't often snow in England and when it does, it usually melts quickly. But the surrounding seas make the weather very fickle. A day that begins with perfectly clear blue skies may be cloudy with rain squalls a short time later and vice versa. It is wise to carry a small umbrella and wear several layers of clothes that allow you to change according to the weather.



York St John University (see campus map on page 32)

Our host is York St. John University (www.yorks.ac.uk/about/), an institution of about 6500 students with programs in the arts, business, communication, education, English, film, history, information technology, religion & theology, and health & life sciences. The university is located immediately outside the medieval walls of York, within easy walking distance of the RR station and the historic centre. It hosts many international students every semester and has an efficient International Studies office to serve our needs (<http://w3.yorks.ac.uk/international.aspx>). Alizée Cordes is the International Exchange Officer and our primary contact in that office. We use YSJ classrooms, library, dining hall / “canteen” and other facilities. The Calvin director lives in a rented terraced house near the campus and frequently offers hospitality to the class.

Housing and Meals

Calvin students are housed at the Grange, an apartment Complex about 10 minutes north of campus:

- Five flats per building, sharing a kitchen, toilets & showers (see map at the end).
- Private rooms, each with a sink.
- Basic bedding is provided but not towels.
- “Self catering” – which means that residents have to buy and prepare their own food, or purchase it on campus. You may need to buy some household items at the outset, though a basic set of dishes and cooking items with pot or pan is usually available. Past students who lived in the Grange have had a wide variety of experiences with their flat-mates, from total isolation to warm friendships – so much depends on who those other people are. Flats can be noisy.
- Some students have enjoyed preparing their own food in the shared kitchens; others have been disappointed by dirty or broken appliances. But students have generally been able to economize with

their shopping, perhaps by sharing meals, and some have even saved money from their weekly allowance for other purposes.

NOTE: Several large grocery stores are within walking distance; students often patronize Sainsbury's, Aldi's and Morrison's; there are small neighbourhood stores even closer for basics (like Spar).

Academic program

The academic program begins on Monday, January 22; exams conclude on Friday, May 11. Students will return to Grand Rapids on Tuesday, May 15.

Normally students take two courses with the Calvin director and two with British professors, for a total load of 13 to 17 credit hours. All students are expected to maintain a full-time load of course work. No refunds can be given to students who drop a course, who do not participate in the organized field trips and cultural events, or who are sent home for disciplinary reasons. For courses taught by Calvin faculty, letter grades are recorded and included in the calculation of the student's GPA.

Grades for York St John's courses will not be included in the calculation of your GPA, but no academic credit will be granted for grades below C. All students will be enrolled in Professor Engbers's two courses, listed below. In addition, participants in the program will register for two courses offered by professors ("tutors") at York St John University in order to achieve the minimum course load of 12 credit hours.

Courses taught by Professor Chad Engbers

STBR 212: Early British Literature: Revival and Reformation. (4 semester hours; Literature core) This course primarily uses the earliest British literature, from the Medieval and Renaissance periods, to explore the ways in which English culture was shaped by changes such as the conversion to Christianity and the Protestant Reformation. Attention is also paid to the ways in which this old literature has found ongoing renewal through phenomena such as the Gothic revival, the staging of Shakespeare plays, and Harry Potter.

STBR 312 Life and Culture in Great Britain (4 semester hours, Global and Historical Studies core course plus CCE credit) This course has two objects of inquiry: first, British culture in the twenty-first century; and second, the problems and promises that confront us when we inquire into British culture as outsiders. What new things can we learn? What biases do we bring? In other words, our job is to ask good questions, and then also to ask questions about the questions we have asked.

Difference in Teaching Styles: United States versus Britain

When studying in York, Calvin students must learn to adjust to the methods and requirements of the English educational system. Typically, British professors (tutors) meet their classes less often than Calvin professors do, lecture almost exclusively, and give no quizzes or tests during the entire term. Even textbooks and final exams are not always required. Attendance is usually not taken and there is sometimes no accountability for reading assignments. As a result, absenteeism is a major problem in some courses and Calvin students can get the impression that little is expected of the students. Tutors do not usually schedule office hours, so it may feel as though there is little personal connection with the students. The student's work in a course (module)

may consist of writing one to three essays based on readings from recommended book lists. Most essays are due at the end of the term, but not all of them. Without the periodic deadlines and feedback to which American students are accustomed, some find it difficult to pace their work throughout the term or know how they are doing.

Students in the British system also do not take core or general education courses; hence it takes only three years rather than four to complete a university degree. This means that if you are taking a music course, all the non-Calvin students will be music majors; if you are taking a religion course, all the other students will be religion majors, and so forth. The grading system is also very different from Calvin's. Although YSJ tutors use a grading scale of 100 points, they hardly ever award a grade above 80. Grades of 70-80 are considered A's, 60-70 B's, and 50-60 C's (so to count at Calvin, your YSJ grades need to exceed 50). Self-disciplined students will find that they can finish their work early and then relax. In general, Calvin students have done exceedingly well at YSJ, so be confident.

Communication

You will need a laptop, since most of our communication will be electronic: by email and Moodle. **Check both regularly.** You will have email privileges at York St John as well as at Calvin. All course materials will be put on the Calvin Moodle site (www.moodle.calvin.edu), and you will upload most of your essays to that site in response to weekly assignments. This will save a lot of printing and paper. If you need to print out assignments for your other classes, printers are available on the YSJ campus.

You should purchase a SIM card from a UK carrier for your own smart phone or plan to use a simple "flip" phone that is owned by Calvin. You will receive enough money for a SIM card and about 2 months of a very basic plan. If you want something with data and more bells and whistles, you will be responsible for the cost. You may also earn additional telephone money by (1) keeping your phones topped up, (2) keeping them charged and on, and (3) responding promptly to calls and texts. It is imperative that students can be contacted immediately in case of a crisis. Using a USA smart phone and relying on Facebook messenger or Skype is not sufficient, as students need to be reachable even if they do not have wifi access.

In 2017, most students bought a SIM card and plan with the company Three, which offered an unlimited data package for around £20-30/month. Other students used older "flip" phones owned by Calvin and purchased much more basic plans through the company EE for around £10/month (with the convenient option of adding a 21 day European "international" plan for only £10).

You must check early with your USA carrier to see whether your USA phone is compatible with a UK SIM card. Also make sure your phone is officially "unlocked" by your US carrier. "Out of contract" does not necessarily mean "unlocked." Students who had their phone unlocked before leaving the USA had no difficulty getting their phone to work with Three or EE; students who made assumptions about "unlocked" did have difficulties.

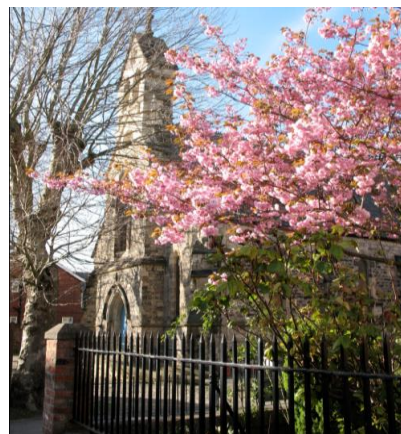
Please remind your callers that Britain is 5 hours ahead of EST and advise them not to make late calls during the week. The least expensive way to communicate live with family and friends is by Skype. If necessary, help them install the software & a camera before you go: <http://www.skype.com/intl/en-us/get-skype/>.

Church life in York

Although British culture is correctly described as “post-Christian,” in the sense that church attendance and enthusiasm for Christianity are far weaker than they were 100 years ago, there are many faithful Christian churches in York that will welcome your participation. In addition to the religious services available on YSJ’s campus, there is the magnificent York Minster, where evensong occurs every day (5:15 weekdays, 4:00 Sunday) along with other weekday and Sunday services. The Anglican parish for YSJ is St. Thomas with St. Maurice (on Lowther St.), and the small congregation there has been very kind to Calvin students and faculty in the past (www.stthomaswithstmaurice.org.uk). In addition, there are Baptist, Methodist, Reformed, and house churches around the city, and many students in the past have enjoyed the 7 pm contemporary service at St. Michael le Belfry (“St. Mike’s”), adjacent to the Minster (<http://www.belfrey.org/>). Trinity Church York is a Presbyterian congregation with many students as well as young families (<http://www.trinitychurchofryork.org.uk/>). For a list of all the churches in the York area, see <http://www.churchestogetherinyork.org.uk/org.php?org=Chu>.



York Minster (St. Mike’s adjacent)



St. Thomas with St. Maurice

Health & Safety

In the event of an emergency, try first to contact Professor Engbers by phone (numbers are on the emergency contact card you will receive before departure). If you are unable to contact him in Britain as quickly as you’d like, feel free to call the Calvin College Off-Campus Programs office (001-616-526-6382 or 001-616-526-6551). Though emergencies are rare, people in that office are experienced at responding.

There is a Health Centre on the York St John campus (ground level of Hall G), but past students have not always found it very helpful. Some have been told only full-year students can receive care, while others have received minimal treatment and been charged for it (we are working on this issue). If you feel you need some medication, we recommend Boots Pharmacy (the nearest one is on Gillygate a block away from campus), where the “chemists” (pharmacists) are very well trained and helpful in prescribing medications to fit your need. For more advanced medical care, it’s best to go directly to the National Health Service Walk-in Centre at 35 Monkgate (one block outside Monk Bar, just a few blocks east of campus). Here you will be seen and treated by a doctor at no charge, but bring your YSJ student ID card with you.

Shopping in York

You will receive a city map when you arrive, but these are all within walking distance.

- Barnitts (on Colliergate in King's Square) has almost any household item you could want.
- Boyes (on Goodramgate, inside Monk Bar) is a good source of inexpensive household items.
- Gumtree is the UK equivalent of Craigslist: www.gumtree.co.uk
- Marks & Spencers (M&S, on Pavement at Shambles) has everything from food to clothes.
- Mobile phone companies (mostly on Coney St. along the river).
- Morrison's (on Foss Islands Rd. across the Foss River at tall smokestack) large grocery store near Limes.
- Outdoor Market (between Parliament St. & Shambles) great for cheap, fresh produce Monday-Saturday.
- Post Office (on Lendal St. at St. Helen's Square).
- Poundland (on Low Petergate near the Minster; another on Coney St.) sells everything for 1 pound!
 - (There are also smaller Poundlands in various places throughout the city and country)
- Sainsbury's (on Fossbank Rd. W of the Foss River) large grocery store closest to campus & Grange.
- There are also many "resale stores" and thrift shops where students in the past have found good used items (e.g., Oxfam store on Goodramgate inside Monk Bar and Salvation Army store on Gillygate near campus); these are also good places to recycle clothes & items you don't want to bring home at the end of the trip.

Visitors to York

As you make your plans for the semester, you may be thinking of sharing the experience with friends and family by inviting them to visit you in Britain. While we understand the desire of family and friends to visit students who are away from home for a significant length of time, such visits can be disruptive and harmful to group cohesion if not done with sensitivity to the other students and the program director.

Here are the Off-Campus Program policies for visitors:

- Any visitor to a Calvin off-campus program must notify the program director of their visit via the student at least 3 weeks in advance (email: engbers@calvin.edu).
- Family and friends should plan their visit to coincide with the second two weeks of Easter vacation (April 1-15) or after the end of classes (May 11). If this is not possible, family and friends are urged **not** to visit at times when overnight group trips are planned or when the group will be having planned excursions.
- Students whose family or friends are visiting while classes are in session are not excused from classes or group trips in order to be with their visitors. Visitors are normally not allowed to join group excursions.
- Visitors may not stay in the student's room. They should stay in a hotel, B&B, or youth hostel.

Independent Travel

You will have some opportunities for independent travel on weekends. When you do travel independently (anytime you are planning to spend a night away from your study location), you must complete an Independent Travel Release (page 37 of this Handbook), which includes your itinerary and how you can be reached in case of an emergency, and turn it in to your program director **at least three days before you travel**. Do not presume that you can travel unless the program director has given her permission. With the exception of the two week independent travel during the Easter Vacation, **you may not be away from York for more than three consecutive nights**.

Behavioural Expectations

In the group's best interest, you are expected to conduct yourself with Christian maturity and mutual respect.

Diligence

We are engaged in an accredited academic enterprise, not a tourist trip. There will be ample opportunity for relaxation and fun, but we expect you to complete all assignments on schedule, participate fully in all classes and activities, be prompt for all group meetings and departures, and seek to maximize the intellectual benefits of the trip. Please do not indulge in any selfish behaviour that would detract from our main purpose.

Courtesy

We are guests in a foreign land and should do nothing to offend the hospitality of our hosts or leave the impression that we are "ugly tourists." Specifically, we must

- treat all people with respect: loud speech and rude or impatient conduct are offensive;
- avoid any public criticism of British culture (politics, religion, food, or whatever);
- be attentive to our British tutors & acquaintances and patient if their ways aren't the same as ours: asking questions and showing genuine interest are good ways of indicating your respect.
- remember to BeMAC:
 - Be mindful
 - Be attentive
 - Be curious

Safety

We will be on unfamiliar ground, and though there is very little violent crime in Britain, prudence demands that we take common-sense precautions. Specifically, this means we must

- never discuss the group's schedule or itinerary with strangers and never invite a stranger to our lodging or other meeting spots;
- avoid drawing attention to ourselves: dress conservatively & speak quietly;
- be alert at all times to those around us, especially in crowds & on public transport;
- not go out alone, especially at night or to deserted places; stay in groups and make sure others know where you are and when you will return;

- never accept invitations from complete strangers or accompany them to private locations;
- carry the minimum amount of valuables necessary, and never put them in backpacks, fanny packs, or outside pockets; use a money belt, neck pouch, or a safe place in your room.

Responsibility

In matters of personal conduct, we expect participants to act in consideration of our Christian witness and the group's best interests. Specifically, this means "responsible freedom":

- faithful and prompt participation in all group activities
- no smoking during group activities
- no use of alcohol during working hours (typically until 5 or 6 pm)
- no abuse of alcohol at any time
- no use of illegal drugs—penalties for possession are severe in Britain
- no late-night activity that would prevent readiness for work at 8 a.m.

Flexibility

In spite of our plans, there may be times when the weather is bad, something may be closed, our rooms may not be perfect, and so forth. In these situations, patience and a sense of humour are vital. If you have complaints, bring them to the professor first, not to our hosts.

Conclusion

The Semester in Britain will not always be easy, but it will be challenging, stimulating, and fascinating beyond your expectations, especially if you are willing to be open and adaptable to new and different experiences. Your own willingness to take the plunge, to attempt the semester abroad is a praiseworthy and constructive step. So are your careful preparations and your effort to anticipate problems. Patience, endurance, common courtesy, and good will can make the coming semester a most exciting and memorable time of your life!



APPENDICES

UNITED KINGDOM: FACT SHEET

Geography:

- A country of about 243,600 square miles (slightly smaller than Oregon)
- Surrounded by water: Atlantic to the west, North Sea to the east, English Channel to the south
- Borders the Republic of Ireland (UK includes only N 1/6 of that island); 35 km from France
- Mostly rugged hills and low mountains; 24% arable land; coastline of about 12,400 kilometres
- On Greenwich Mean Time = five hours ahead of Eastern Standard Time

Population:

- About 62.35 million (2010 est.); growth rate .56%; life expectancy 77.2 yrs. (men), 81.6 (women)
- 92% white, 2% black, 1.8% Indian, 1.3% Pakistani; 90% live in urban areas
- Religion: 71.6% Christian (mostly Anglican), 2.7% Muslim, 23% unspecified or none
- Besides English, some still speak Gaelic, Welsh, and Cornish; literacy rate: 99%

Politics:

- England united 927; Wales & England 1284; Scotland added 1707; Ireland 1801; N. Ireland 1921
- Great Britain = England, Scotland, Wales; United Kingdom = Great Britain & N. Ireland
- “Union Jack” flag has red cross of St. George (patron saint of England), diagonal red cross of St. Patrick (Ireland) and diagonal white cross of St. Andrew (Scotland)
- Constitutional monarchy and Commonwealth realm with London as capital
- At its acme in 19th century, the British Empire ruled ¼ of the surface of the earth
- Historically played a key role in the development of parliamentary democracy
- Has a bicameral Parliament: Commons (650 members) & House of Lords (741)
- Separate Scottish Parliament, Nat’l Assembly of Wales, N. Ireland Assembly - est. 1999
- Legal system: no written constitution; based on common law w/ Roman & continental influences
- Chief of state is *Queen Elizabeth* (since Feb. 1952)
- Head of government is the Prime Minister, Theresa Mary May, Conservative party (since July 2016); official opposition party is Labour, led by Jeremy Corbyn
- Charter member of NATO, one of five permanent members of UN Security Council, former member of the European Union (but outside its economic & monetary union)

Economy:

- GDP of \$2.29 trillion (2011), growth rate 0.8% (2011); public debt at 85% of GDP, □ inflation of 4.5% (2012) unemployment of 8.1% (2011); 14% below poverty line
- Labour force mainly in services (80.4%, 2006 est.), then industry (18%), only 1.4% in agriculture
- Produces 60% of food needs; imports 19% of energy needs; a leader in trade & financial services
- Currency: the British pound (GBP), divided into 100 p. (pence)

Banks, Post Office, Taxes, Tipping, Telephones:

- Banks are generally open from 9.30-15.30 Monday-Friday

- Post offices are generally open from 9-17.30 Monday-Friday; Saturday 9-12.30.
- The VAT (value added tax) is 15% ; tips (“service” charges) are usually included in restaurant bills, but add 10-15% if they are not; taxi drivers and hairdressers expect a tip of 10-15%
- The country code for calling Britain is 44; to call the USA directly, first dial 001

Emergency number: 999

Some useful websites about Britain & York:

<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/uk.html> (CIA factbook on UK)

<http://www.visitYork.org/> (tourist site for York)

<http://w3.yorks.ac.uk/> (main page for York St. John University)

CONVERSION TABLES:

Weight

1 kilo = 2.2 pounds

5 kilos = 11 lbs.

10 kilos = 22

Liquids

1 litre = .264 US gallon

2 litres = .53 gallon

10 litres = 2.64 gallons

Length

1 meter = 39 inches

5 meters = 16.4 feet

10 meters = 32.8 feet

Distance

1 kilometre = .62 miles

5 kilometres = 3.11 miles

100 kilometres = 62 miles

Temperatures

0 Celsius = 32 Fahrenheit

5 Celsius = 41 Fahrenheit

10 Celsius = 50 Fahrenheit

15 Celsius = 59 Fahrenheit

20 Celsius = 68 Fahrenheit

25 Celsius = 77 Fahrenheit

UK Vocabulary: so you thought you knew English??

Some British words & phrases, with their US counterparts (thanks to Josh de Lacy et al.)

All right?	= How are you?
Amber (light)	= yellow (traffic light)
Bird	= girl
Biscuit	= cookie
Brilliant	= cool, great
Bonnet	= hood of a car
Boot	= trunk of a car
Bum	= fanny
Bum bag	= fanny pack
Bun	= sweet roll
Chavs	= social drop-outs
Cheeky	= bold, mischievous
Chips	= steak fries
Coach	= bus
College	= high-school level for pre-university students
Come round	= come over
Cracking	= really terrific (as in “a cracking good show”)
Crisps	= potato chips
Dodgy	= sketchy
Done & dusted	= old news, over and done with
Fairy cakes	= cupcakes
Fit	= attractive
Football	= soccer (of course!)
Half three, etc.	= 3:30
Have a go	= try
Hyena / hila	= hello
Hob	= stovetop
How are you keeping?	= How are you?
Mate	= friend
Maths	= math
Mum	= mom
Pants	= underwear
Path	= sidewalk
Pissed	= drunk
Pissing it down	= raining hard
Pop in	= visit
Posh	= upper-class, preppy
Pod	= pudding (often a baked pastry shell filled with stew)
Queue	= line up
Rail station	= train station
Toilet (or loo)	= bathroom
Trolley	= shopping cart

Trousers	= pants/jeans
Tutor	= professor
Unit	= university
Walking	= hiking
What do you fancy?	= What do you want to eat?

Important Contact Information

Off-Campus Programs Office		616-526-6382
Off-Campus Programs Staff		
Don DeGraaf (Director)	ddegraaf@calvin.edu	616-526-6225
Dave Ellens (Admin)	dellen52@calvin.edu	616-526-6550
Broene Counseling Centre		616-526-6123
Financial Aid (Scholarships, Grants, Loans)		616-526-6134
		800-688-0122
Financial Services Office (Bills, Payments)		616-526-6127
Rana Huisman (Bursar)	rsh4@calvin.edu	800-688-0122
Health Service Office		616-526-6187
Barb Mustert (Travel Health Nurse)	bmustert@calvin.edu	800-688-0122
Academic Services (Transcripts, Credits)	acadservices@calvin.edu	616-526-6155
Switchboard		616-526-6000
Campus Safety (operator available 24/7)		616-526-6452

Additional Resources

The Internet guide of Hostelling	www.hostels.com
Hostelling International	http://www.hiusa.org/
Student Travel Website (STA Travel)	http://www.statravel.com
Student Universe	http://www.studentuniverse.com
Calling Internationally	http://www.howtocallabroad.com/
U.S. State Department	http://travel.state.gov/
U.S. State Department Travel Warnings	https://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/alertswarnings.html
U.S. Embassies	http://www.embpage.org/
World Health Organization	http://www.who.int
Currency Converter	http://www.xe.com/ucc/

CENTRAL YORK

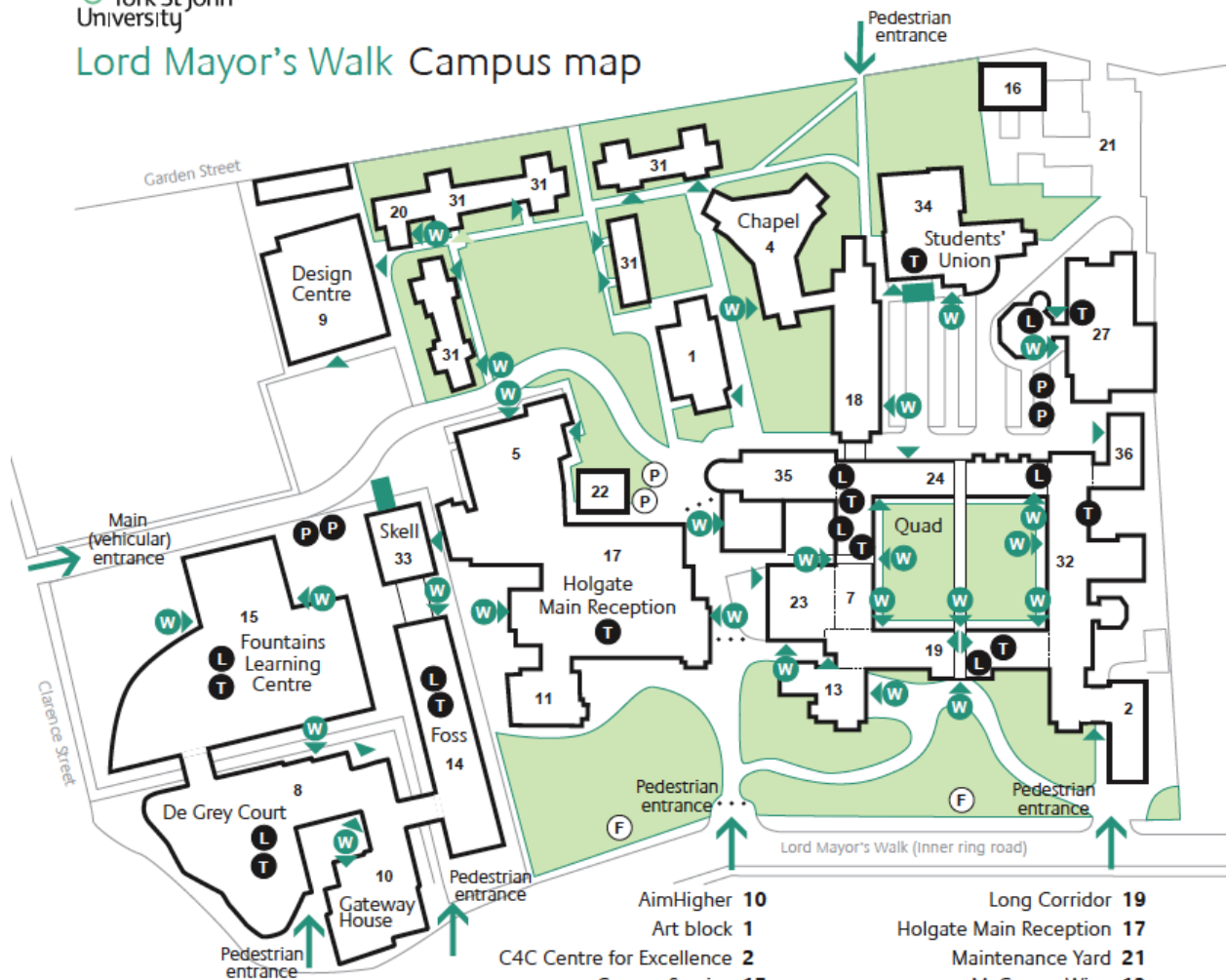
(Buildings of York St. John University in orange)



York St John University, Lord Mayor's Walk, York YO31 7EX T: 01904 624624
www.yorksja.ac.uk

Published by Target Maps, a division of Location Maps Ltd 01746 768388 © Design Copyright Location Maps

Lord Mayor's Walk Campus map



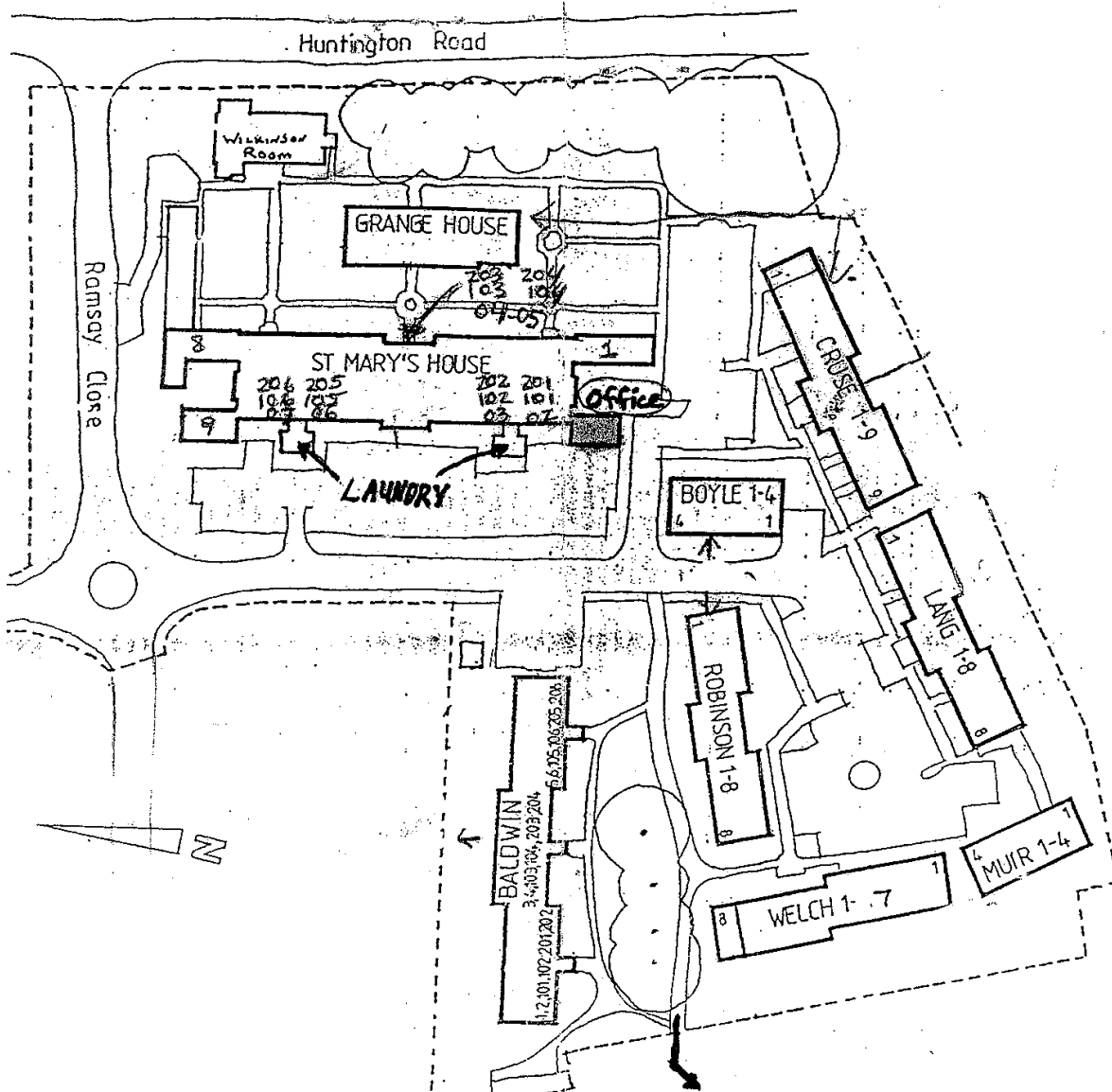
Key

- ▶ Entrance
- W Wheelchair accessible entrance
- L Wheelchair accessible lift
- T Wheelchair accessible toilet
- F Fire assembly point
- P Reserved car park space (booked in advance)
- P Disabled car parking space
- Smoking shelter

Should you hear the fire alarm, please make your way to a fire assembly point on the front lawns.

AimHigher 10	Long Corridor 19
Art block 1	Holgate Main Reception 17
C4C Centre for Excellence 2	Maintenance Yard 21
Careers Service 15	McGregor Wing 13
Chapel 4	Music Block 23
Conference Office 5	New Wing 18
Crush Bar 5	Nottingham Corridor 24
Dance Studio 7	Nursery 16
De Grey Court 8	De Grey Court Reception 8
De Grey House 10	Phoenix Centre 27
Design Centre 9	Porters Lodge 17
Dining Room 5	Postgraduate Centre 8
Executive Wing 11	Print Services 22
Facilities Offices 5	Research & Enterprise 8
Finance 13	School Corridor 32
Foss Building 14	Security 23
Fountains Learning Centre 15	Skell Building 33
Garden Street 16	Sports Performance Area 14
Health Centre 20	SPACE 10
Higher York 10	Student Residences 31
Holgate 17	Student Services 17
Human Resources 18	Students' Union 34
Institutional Advancement 8	Temple Hall 35
International Centre 17	Wilmott Wing 36
IT Services 15	Yorkshire Film Archive 15

The GRANGE



To YSJ campus: follow bicycle path through blue gate, go straight to end of Eldon Terrace, angle left toward Minster on Eldon St., go to end of street and enter campus behind chapel.

I, _____, am exercising my option to travel independently and I hereby acknowledge that I am responsible for my own health and safety during this time. I further acknowledge that the appropriate sections of the waiver and release agreement I signed prior to departure on this program/course remain in effect.

Date

Indicate your itinerary and its timeframe, including contact information for an emergency:

[illegible]

GENERAL INFORMATION FROM THE OCP OFFICE

REPLACING A LOST PASSPORT

If you lose a passport, report it to your program director immediately. Also report immediately that the passport is lost or stolen to the closest U.S. Embassy or Consulate and file a police report:

<https://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/passports/lost-stolen.html>. Go to the closest U.S. Embassy or Consulate to receive a new passport. A copy of your passport page and being registered with Embassy or Consulate will help in the replacement process.

- State Department's website for registering groups (this has been done for the group prior to departure): <https://step.state.gov/step/>.
- State Department's website for a listing of all US Embassy and Consulate websites and location: <http://www.usembassy.gov/>
- For students who are not American citizens, students and the program director will need to contact the nearest embassy or consulate of the country that issued your passport

MEDICAL ISSUES/HEALTH & SAFETY

DEALING WITH EMERGENCIES

As part of your orientation (after departure), program directors will review emergency procedures and how to respond to a crisis. At any time during the semester, if you (or your parents or families) have an emergency or crisis please contact Calvin's Off-Campus Programs office. Once the immediate emergency passes make sure to complete an incident report for the Off-Campus Programs office. The incident report form may be found on the Off-Campus Programs website (<https://calvin.edu/offices-services/off-campus-programs/safety-incident-report/>). This report will assure proper follow-up to whatever situation has occurred.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

True emergencies are actually quite rare. While losing luggage, tickets, or even a passport is inconvenient, they are not emergencies. Emergencies are situations in which there is an immediate threat to your health and/or safety. An emergency is an occurrence or situation that poses a genuine and sometimes immediate risk to your health and well-being or the well-being of your fellow students. Calvin has a number of emergency protocols in place should a true emergency develop (these protocols can be reviewed at: www.calvin.edu/academic/off-campus/instructors/risk-management/). If you have an emergency while studying in one of our programs you should contact your program director immediately. During your in-country orientation, you will be given a safety orientation. Be sure you understand the basic policies and procedures specific to your location.

Emergencies at home: people need to know how to get in touch with you--especially if you are away from your program city or after the program has ended. You should have a conversation with your family before you leave about what you will do in the event there is a death or serious medical situation in your family. Please inform the Program Director if there has been a family emergency. You must have a leave of absence approved by the Program Director or the Off-Campus Programs Director in order to be excused from

classes to return to the U.S. in a family emergency. Note: you must return to your study abroad location and complete the academic program there to receive credit.

If your family cannot reach anyone in the Off-Campus Programs Office, they should phone the Campus Safety office's 24/7 line (616-526-6452). If you wish to contact the off-campus programs office via email, contact either Don DeGraaf (ddegtraaf@calvin.edu) or Dave Ellens (dellens@calvin.edu).

TRAVEL HEALTH RESOURCES (including immunizations)

All students participating in the China, Ghana, Hungary, Peru and Thailand semester must be seen by Health Services prior to travel to make sure they are up-to-date with all necessary vaccinations (e.g. measles, mumps, rubella, tetanus, diphtheria, hepatitis A and B, meningitis, influenza, and polio). This visit should take place ideally 4-6 weeks before travel, to get any additional vaccinations, medications, or information you may need to stay healthy while studying off-campus. Certain immunizations are required prior to travel (depending on program location).

In addition to immunizations, Health Services provides a number of other resources as you prepare for your time off-campus (especially if you are studying abroad). Research additional information about staying healthy while traveling, make an appointment as well as complete the Travel Health Module by reviewing the Travel website of Calvin's Health Services. The website is available at: www.calvin.edu/admin/health/travel/

PHYSICAL HEALTH

Students should do the following to reduce their risk of illness and injury:

- In developing areas, if you travel outside of Britain, boil your water or drink only bottled water or carbonated drinks from cans or bottles with intact seals. Do not drink tap water or fountain drinks or add ice to beverages. Avoid eating salads, fresh vegetables and fruits you cannot peel yourself, and unpasteurized dairy products. Eat only food that has been fully cooked and served hot.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand gel to clean your hands.
- Avoid animal bites by not handling or petting animals, especially dogs and cats. If you are bitten or scratched, wash the wound immediately with soap and water and seek medical attention to determine if medication or anti-rabies vaccine is needed.
- If visiting an area where there is risk of malaria, use insect repellent and a mosquito net for sleeping, wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants outdoors between dusk and dawn, and make sure to take your malaria prevention medication before, during, and after your trip, as directed.
- If you are visiting a country that has experienced an avian flu (bird flu) outbreak, avoid poultry farms, bird markets, and other places where live poultry is raised or kept. For more information, see the webpage from the Center for Disease Control (www.cdc.gov/). —Guidelines and Recommendations: Interim Guidance about Avian Influenza A (H5N1) for U.S. Citizens Living Abroad.
- Travel to high altitudes may result in altitude sickness. To minimize this potential, acclimate over a few days' time. Avoid exertion and alcohol. Drink extra water. Symptoms usually resolve in 24-48 hours and can be helped with analgesics and anti-nausea medications.

- Automobile accidents are the leading cause of preventable deaths in travelers. Wear your seat belt and follow the local customs and laws regarding pedestrian safety and vehicle speed. Avoid night travel if possible.
- If visiting an area which has risk of water-borne infections (i.e. schistosomiasis), do not swim in lakes or streams or other bodies of fresh water.
- Keep feet clean and dry, and do not go barefoot, especially on beaches where there may be animal waste, to prevent fungal and parasitic infections.
- Use sunscreen with both UVA and UVB protection.

If you become sick while you are away, be sure to inform the program director, your host family, or some other responsible person on site. If things don't improve in a day or two, get to a doctor. Your program director can help you get the treatment you need. In the case of accidents or injury, make sure you inform the program director about the accident or injury.

For specific health risks in the country you will be studying see the Calvin Health Center or the Center for Disease Control (<http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/>).

MENTAL HEALTH

You are encouraged to be vigilant about your mental and emotional health while abroad. Suggestions for nurturing your mental health while traveling and studying off-campus include the following:

- Be aware of the signs of culture shock so that you can identify symptoms in yourself.
- Build supportive relationships with the people in your group.
- Talk openly with others about how you are feeling, and ask for help when you need it.
- When tensions arise with others, communicate openly and practice good listening skills.
- Be intentional about the use of healthy coping skills, such as exercise, laughter, reading, relaxation, talking with others, artistic expression, listening to music, or prayer—figure out what has worked well for you to reduce stress in the past, and return to those copings skills.
- Allow your mind to dwell on the good things in your experience abroad and in the people with whom you are spending your time.
- Get enough sleep and eat regularly—be consistent in the timing of these routines.
- Avoid the use of alcohol, tobacco, or other substances that can reduce healthy coping abilities.
- Maintain consistent spiritual practices.
- Consider writing in a journal, with a focus in your writing on identifying your feelings, making helpful adjustments in your thinking, and problem-solving.
- If applicable, stay consistent with prescribed mood medications.

For some, levels of emotional distress might go beyond the typical experiences of culture shock. If you find yourself in need of additional resources to manage your mental health, talk with your program director sooner rather than later. Some of our off-campus sites have resources for on-site psychological counseling. These services are provided on a pay as you go basis and are the responsibility of the student.

If you know ahead of time that you are susceptible to emotional strain while abroad, consider talking with a counselor at the Broene Counseling Center prior to your departure. You are also advised to keep your program director informed of any struggles, and to work with them ahead of time to identify mental health resources at your off-campus site if needed. Referrals for mental health services can be sought through the US Embassy (<http://www.usembassy.gov>) or through local organizations such as universities or churches.

SPIRITUAL HEALTH

Living abroad can be a time of great spiritual struggle and also great spiritual growth. Before you leave think about how you will meet the challenge of living in a new environment, with new thorns and stumbling blocks, which will likely cast the state of your soul in a new light. While you are off-campus, take the challenge of finding ways to nurture your spiritual health. Discuss with your fellow students and your program director how the group can hold one another spiritually accountable. In the past, students have organized Bible studies, attended church together, had weekly dinners with devotions, as well as had prayer partners while off-campus.

SAFETY TIPS

Calvin's Off-Campus Programs (OCP) Office takes its responsibility seriously to do its utmost to provide a secure environment in which you can live and learn. Although no one can guarantee or assure the safety of participants or eliminate all risks from an off-campus study experience, our goal is to minimize risks and keep you and your parents aware of special situations as you make decisions about studying off-campus. While the OCP office and the program director will do everything possible to assure your safety while studying abroad, you must also recognize your responsibility for your security while studying off-campus.

Experience tells us that students who make themselves a hard target rather than an easy mark are much more likely to be safe while studying abroad. This means that you need to be constantly aware of your surrounding and make good decisions related to your behaviours. What follows are a number of personal checklists or tips that you can use to minimize the risks of travel wherever you find yourself.

Pre-departure checklist

- **Emergency contacts:** Get emergency contact information from your Calvin director to share with family and friends. Make sure the Calvin director and the Off-Campus Programs office has all your emergency family contacts.
- **Key travel documents:** Photocopy key travel documents (passport, driver's license, itineraries, etc.). Take one copy with you and leave one copy with your family or friends.
- **Health insurance:** Learn how to access your health insurance coverage while abroad (know what your plan covers & how payments are made). Remember Calvin provides SUPPLEMENTAL travel insurance. This insurance includes medical and political evacuation insurance and supplemental health insurance that will offer additional coverage when you have exhausted your primary insurance, but you must use your primary insurance first.
- **Practice language:** Learning the language of any country where you plan to travel is important; start before you go. At the very least learn a number of useful survival phrases.

- **Local knowledge:** Learn a bit about the culture in your host country. In addition, inform yourself about local laws and customs in any country you plan to visit before you leave.

In-Country Checklist:

- **Air travel:** In airports be attentive to your luggage and possessions. Keep possessions in your sight. Take care and look out for each other. While traveling on airplanes, keep yourself hydrated.
- **Situational awareness:** Be constantly aware of your surroundings. Be alert for people or events that distract you from being attentive to your surroundings. Learn to trust your gut—if something makes you uncomfortable, get out of the situation into a more safe and secure location as quickly as possible. Whenever something unusual is happening, pay attention.
- **Keep a low profile:** Remember that your accent, clothing, and mannerisms will indicate to others that you are not a local. There will be times that, for reasons of personal safety, you do not want to be marked as a tourist or otherwise be identified as an easy target for theft or assault. Learn how to do this at your site. Learn how the locals keep themselves safe and discuss with your program director and fellow students how to keep each other safe during your off-campus experience.
- **Presence:** Develop a sense of confidence as you navigate new surroundings. When you walk as if you have no idea of where you are or what you are going to do next you are sending an immediate signal that you are a soft target to scam artists. Make use of maps to orient yourself prior to a trip.
- **Local knowledge:** Understand where the resources within your host country are and how to get to these resources if needed. Where is the hospital? Police station? U.S. consulate or embassy? Program director's home and office? What are the telephone contact numbers you need to carry? This should be addressed with your group upon arrival.
- **In case of a robbery:** Carry a throw away wallet that you can give immediately if someone attempts to rob you. Carry a second wallet in a money belt or around your neck (under clothes, not in your back pocket), which has an ID, some cash, credit card(s), a copy of your passport & a list of emergency phone numbers.
- **Key travel documents:** Don't carry your passport UNLESS you absolutely need it - a photocopy will do just fine for every day use.
- **Emergency action plan:** Understand the emergency action plan and discuss it with the director and fellow students in case of a natural disaster or traumatic world events.
- **Communication:** Carry a cell phone with minutes for local calls.
- **Money management:** Think about how you will manage your money flow – banks, ATM machines, credit cards, etc. are all options depending where you are. Avoid carrying large amounts of cash; do not flash your cash. Have at least two sources of money (ATM card, credit card, debit card) in addition to cash, and keep them separately. If you lose or are robbed of one source, you will still have a way to get money.
- **Safety on the streets:** Avoid known high crime areas. Don't use short cuts, narrow alleys or poorly lit streets. Try not to travel alone at night, and walk on well-lit and heavily travelled areas. Avoid public demonstrations. Beware of pickpockets and groups of vagrant children who could create a distraction to pick your pocket. Wear the shoulder strap of any bags across your chest and walk with the bag away from the curb. Don't dangle purses or cameras from your wrist. Avoid typically American establishments like McDonalds and Starbucks. Use only reputable transportation companies (taxis, etc.). Get the numbers of a company you trust that you can call to pick you up or cultivate 5 or 6 specific drivers you can call when you need a ride. Make sure to have these numbers

available when you are out and about in the city. If an incident happens, no matter how small, during an off-campus experience make sure to report it to the Calvin director. You are also encouraged to report it directly to the OCP office using the incident form found on the OCP website. You can fill this form in on-line and it will be sent directly to the OCP office.

- **Independent travel:** When traveling independently, don't stay in dives or couch surf or hitchhike. While this may be inexpensive, you are risking your personal well being by traveling or staying in housing with persons you do not know.
- **Stay informed:** Stay informed about developments in your host city and country and in the world. U.S. foreign policy does affect how people overseas will treat you.

AVOIDING AND RESPONDING TO SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND SEXUAL ASSAULTS

Students on study abroad programs may find that other cultures and societies have a much different understanding of what might be considered sexual harassment than is typically the case in the United States. Likewise there can be great variation in the roles of men and women and also in their forms of social interaction. Part of the study abroad experience is to learn how another culture and society organizes everyday life. What might be perceived as sexual harassment at Calvin may be regarded by some as being socially acceptable in another country, albeit obnoxious and unsettling behavior.

While American laws do not extend beyond the borders of the United States, Calvin students studying abroad are bound by College policy regarding social behavior and sexual harassment presented in the student handbook. With regard to the actions of others, if you feel that you have been the subject of sexual harassment during an off-campus experience, you should first report this to the program director as well as the Off-Campus office. Calvin will do all that it can to provide resources to you and deal with the situation in accordance to the procedures outlined in the student handbook. Resources for all involved are included below.

As you live and study off-campus, remember the following to try to avoid sexual harassment and assault:

- Dress conservatively.
- Avoid walking alone at night or in questionable neighborhoods.
- Do not agree to meet a person whom you do not know.
- Be aware that some men from other cultures tend to mistake the friendliness of Calvin women for romantic interest. Be serious and firm. Again, be straightforward and firm if propositioned; you may have to deny propositions multiple times.
- Don't be afraid to be rude. Protect your own comfort and safety.
- Avoid eye contact with unknown men.
- Recognize that the stereotype that American women are morally loose and uninhibited about sex is quite prevalent in other countries.
-

Always remember that no one has the right to take sexual advantage of you. If you are victimized in this way, be sure to get help from your program director and/or another person in authority. This is important for your physical and mental well-being and to protect others from becoming victims in the future.

If you are assaulted:

- Go to a safe place
- Get help from a trusted person immediately.
- Get to the medical and psychological support services you need immediately.
- Inform your program director and/or the Off-Campus Programs Office as soon as possible.

Resources

- Calvin Student Conduct Code can be found at:
<https://calvin.edu/directory/policies/student-conduct-code>.
- Resources for understanding and responding to sexual harassment and sexual assault:
<https://calvin.edu/offices-services/student-life/forms-policies/sexual-harassment/>

COMMUNICATION WITH FAMILY AND FRIENDS

TECHNOLOGY

What role should technology and communication play in your off-campus experience? It wasn't that long ago that students participating in an off-campus semester had very few options for getting news from home or sending back updates. Yet in today's world you can be connected 24/7; this greatly changes the off-campus experience. You can Skype, email, Facebook and call daily. This connectivity can be a blessing but it also brings many challenges as you can forget to live in the moment and as a result miss important opportunities to grow and experience the places you are studying.

These challenges highlight a philosophical dilemma of studying off-campus. Can you truly have a study abroad experience – whether immersive or comparative – when you are connected the same way you are at home? Are you really embracing the experience when you need to pause to update Facebook and e-mail photos to your friends at home?

Communicating with family and friends back home will be important during your time away. Before you leave, you should think about how and how often you will communicate through Skype or other means. This is also an issue to discuss with your fellow students and program directors in terms of how you can use technology responsibly, finding a balance that maximizes the safety benefits of technology while minimizing the intrusion on the cross-cultural experience. While technology plays a vital and growing role in other cultures, it is critical that you detach somewhat from the technological comfort that you have while at home.

Every moment you spend using technology to connect to family and friends back home is time that takes away from living in the moment and experiencing the new places where you are living. So plan ahead and be intentional about the various forms of technology available to you.

COMMUNICATING WITH PARENTS

One of the goals of the Off-Campus Program Office is to facilitate the growth and development of all students who participate in an off-campus semester or interim. The College believes one way to encourage this development in students is to treat them as adults (see the parent resources guide—www.calvin.edu/parents/communication). The Off Campus Programs Office seeks to

- communicate directly with students and encourages parents to do the same;
- encourage students to communicate directly with their parent(s).

FERPA (the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974) provides guidelines that inform how the college interacts with students and parents (www.calvin.edu/academic/services/ferpa/). A student's permission is requested to share general information with his or her parent(s) (i.e., financial information, academic progress and grades, academic services and accommodations, general group updates, group dynamics, and personal counseling matters). However, in the case of an emergency (as deemed by the college, see examples below), parents will be contacted immediately.

Even though communication to parents via students is the operative principle, it is not an absolute one. Exceptions could include:

- Hospitalization such that students are unable to contact parents personally;
- Serious disciplinary actions for a violation of the student conduct code (e.g., most cases resulting in disciplinary probation and in cases of suspension). In these cases, parents must be notified. Our preferred method is to allow students a short but reasonable time frame to make contact with their parent(s). Parent(s) are then asked to contact the Director of Off-Campus Programs for further discussion;
- Suicide attempt; and
- Permission by the student to deal directly with parent(s).

SUSTAINABLE STUDY ABROAD

The benefits of studying off-campus are well documented; however, traveling and studying abroad can have social and environmental impacts on the world around us. As you prepare for your semester off-campus, think about how you can minimize your impact. How will you be culturally sensitive to your new surroundings? How will you minimize the environmental impact of your trip?

One way is to try to reduce your carbon footprint for your travel. This can be done in several different ways. You could volunteer with a local environmental organization and plant trees or a garden or work in other ways to enhance the environment. Another option is to make a donation to the Calvin Energy Recovery Fund (CERF). CERF is a revolving fund used to improve energy efficiency and reduce carbon dioxide emission on campus. The energy savings from CERF projects are routed back into the fund for five years after the project payoff; thereby growing the fund to support future projects. More information can be found at www.calvin.edu/admin/travel/carbon.html.

ABSENTEE VOTING

If you are going to miss an opportunity to exercise your right to vote while you are studying off-campus. Please make arrangements to vote by absentee ballot. An absentee ballot can be obtained from the Secretary of State or from your home state. For Michigan residents, additional information can be found at http://www.michigan.gov/sos/0,4670,7-127-1633_8716_8728-21037--,00.html.

KEEPING SAFE OFF CAMPUS (advice from the Off-Campus Programs office)

Calvin College will do its best to provide a safe and healthy environment for you during your off-campus program, but we cannot eliminate all dangers and risks. Listen to and heed the advice of persons connected with the program. These people are experts—take advantage of their knowledge! By following their advice, you can lessen the chances of an incident, accident, or illness. Here are some of the most important general guidelines:

FOOD AND DRINK

These precautions may not be necessary in Western European countries, but are definitely advisable in all others.

- ☐ Eat only peeled fruits and vegetables; do not eat food cooked at the roadside or at a market stall.
- ☐ Drink only water bottled or boiled.
- ☐ Don't accept bottled drinks that have been opened out of your sight. Ask the server to bring the bottle to your table unopened. ("Bottled" water has been known to come from the kitchen faucet.)
- ☐ If you are of legal age and choose to drink alcoholic beverages (assuming this has not been proscribed by your instructor), be aware of your limits and of your heightened vulnerability. Your reflexes will be slower and you are more likely to appear to be a good target for crime.
- Keep an eye on your beverage. (Drugs can be slipped into it while you're gone.)
- ☐ Wash your hands frequently.

MONEY AND OTHER VALUABLES

- ☐ Keep your passport, credit cards, insurance card(s) and money in a money belt or neck pouch that is tucked away under your clothes except when you need it.
- ☐ Be aware of your surroundings; don't get so involved in looking at the sights that you become an easy mark for a pickpocket or mugger. Be especially vigilant when getting on and off public transport, when you're in a crowded place and could be easily distracted.
- ☐ Travel light. The more luggage you have, the more vulnerable you are to theft. Mark your luggage both inside and out with your name and a contact phone number, and mark it distinctively, so that you can spot it quickly as yours if someone tries to walk off with it.
- ☐ Have at least two sources of money (ATM cards, debit cards) in addition to cash, and keep them separately. If you are robbed of one source, you will still have a way to get money.
- ☐ For more suggestions about how to avoid theft, see <http://www.calvin.edu/academic/off-campus/resources/theft-thwarters.html>
- ☐ Make a photocopy of your passport ID page, credit cards, tickets and other travel documents, and keep the copies in a separate place. Give a copy to someone at home, too, as a back-up.
- ☐ Leave expensive jewellery and other valuables at home.

TRAVEL AND SIGHTSEEING

- Keep a phone card and contact information for your instructor(s) with you at all times.
- Complete the Independent Travel Release form and give it to your professor before any overnight independent travel, and phone or email promptly if your plans change so that he knows as much as possible about your location and plans.
- Do not travel alone away from the group. Unfortunately, this is especially important for women.
- ☐ Read up on the area that you're planning to visit; the more knowledgeable you appear, the less you look like a potential target.
- ☐ Do not travel late at night unless you have someone meeting you at the train station, airport, etc.
- Be cautious about going out in town late in the evening.
- ☐ Ask "deskies" at your hotel or hostel about areas to avoid; they are usually reliable sources of local information.
- ☐ Follow your instincts—if you hail a taxi and you feel uncomfortable about the driver, send the taxi on its way.
- Stay on major streets as much as possible after dark. If you see people loitering in your path, turn back and head to a place where there are people around.
- Female students will sometimes encounter harassment, but uncomfortable situations can usually be avoided by taking the following precautions:
- Dress conservatively. While short skirts and tank tops may be comfortable, they may also encourage unwanted attention.
- Avoid walking alone at night or in questionable neighbourhoods.
- Do not agree to meet a person whom you do not know in a non-public place.
- Be aware that some men from other cultures tend to mistake the friendliness of North American women for romantic interest.
- Avoid eye contact with unknown men.
- Remember that no one has the right to take sexual advantage of you, no matter what you do or don't do. If you are victimized in this way, be sure to get help from your instructor and/or another person in authority. This is important for your physical and mental well-being and to protect others from becoming victims in the future.
- Avoid large crowds, especially if they are politically motivated. In the event of civil unrest, keep a low profile. If you are away from the group, try to contact the nearest embassy or consulate of your home country for advice.

RE-ENTRY (from Off Campus Programs)

As you return from your off-campus experiences, it is important for you to think intentionally about your re-entry to your life at Calvin or post Calvin. Re-entry is the process of returning home after spending time off-campus. Re-entry is often most difficult for students who have studied abroad but it can also be present for those who have had an intense experience in the United States. By traveling off-campus, you have kindled a flame that can be used in many ways. Keep the flame alive by sharing your experience with others, becoming active in your local community, advocating for our brothers and sisters around the world, and finding ways to continue to embody the global understanding that you experienced while away. You may be surprised to find that the lessons of your recent journey are applicable right here at home.

The re-entry process can be more difficult for some than others but almost all students experience some form of reverse culture shock as they return home after an intense semester off-campus. Similar to culture shock, you can find yourself moving through various stages as you work to integrate your time away into your life at home. There are a number of strategies that you can employ to help in this transition process. Please take a moment to review these strategies and find the ones that will work best for you.

Remember, that Calvin has a number of resources that you can take advantage of as you make this transition. These resources include:

- **The Broene Counselling Centre:** Free, confidential counselling is offered at Broene for all Calvin students. You might consider this resource if you would benefit from support in sorting through feeling of reverse culture shock (such as anxiety, depression, and confusion) or if you would like to talk with a counsellor about how to integrate your international experiences with your life back on campus.
- **Off-Campus Programs Office:** Stop by the OCP programs office and share a few stories from your time away.
- **Service-Learning Centre:** Many service-learning opportunities in Grand Rapids have an international connection. Stop by the SLC to explore the possibilities of getting involved once you return to campus.

Strategies for personal/emotional re-entry:

- **Share:** Make time to show your pictures to others who are interested. Create a photo album with a manageable number of photos to share with others.
- **Plan:** Create a re-entry action plan based on the following statement: I plan to do the following in order to prepare for and deal with the personal/emotional stress I may face upon my return home...
- **Be aware** of the possible challenges of re-entry. Discuss these challenges with your group prior to departure.
- **Reflect** on your time off-campus (e.g., keep a journal of your thoughts, ideas, questions, etc.). Here are some possible questions to help you reflect on your overall experience:
 - What did a typical day look like for you?
 - What was the experience like for you? What was easy? What was hard? What helped you to learn or grow the most?
 - Where did you travel and what did you do outside of work/school?
 - How did you connect with individuals and groups from the host country?

- I definitely do not want to forget: What made me laugh out loud? What brought tears to my eyes? My biggest cultural gaffe? My biggest cultural success?
- What are three to five things that you enjoyed most about studying abroad?
- What were three to five things that were most difficult while you were abroad?
- What are the lessons you have learned that you never want to forget?
- What are two or three things that you learned about yourself through this experience?
- What new insights did you have about your place in today's global community?
- What are two or three questions (if any) about the experience that you are still struggling with related to yourself as an individual?
- What are two or three important things about this experience that you want to share with family and friends?
- How could you bring some closure to this experience (photo journal, letter to myself, a presentation to others, etc.)?
- What are some skills that you learned?
- What are three recommendations you would make to a fellow student who was going to have a similar experience next year?
- **Identify** others you can talk to upon your return.
- **Join** a support group or talk to someone in the Broene Counselling Centre to help you sort out your feelings as you return.
- **Serve** as a contact or resource for future students who are interested in studying off-campus or embarking on similar experiences.
- **Acknowledge** how the experience has changed you. Be open to continuing this journey as you return.
- **Take the time for closure** both with your host country friends and family and with the students who shared the experience with you.

At the end of the book *Life of Pi* by Yann Martel, the narrator arrives on a beach in a small boat with a tiger (named Robert Parker) after a journey of over 200 days. The tiger jumps from the boat and runs off into jungle. In reflecting on this moment the narrators notes:

I wept like a child. It was not because I was overcome at having survived my ordeal, though I was. Nor was it the presence of seeing humans again, though that too was very moving. I was weeping because Robert Parker had left me so unceremoniously. What a terrible thing to botch a farewell. I am a person who believes in form, in the harmony of order. Where we can, we must give things a meaningful shape. For example – I wonder – could you tell my jumbled story in exactly one hundred chapters, not one more, not one less? I'll tell you, that's one thing I hate about my nickname (Pi), the way that number runs on forever. It's important in life to conclude things properly. Only then can you let go. Otherwise you are left with words you should have said but never did, and your heart is heavy with remorse.

That bungled good bye hurts me to this day. I wish so much that I'd had one last look at him in the lifeboat, that I'd provoked him a little, so that I was on his mind. I wish I had said to him then – yes, I know, to a tiger, but still – I wish I had said, "Richard Parker, it's over. We have survived. Can you believe it? I owe you more gratitude than I can express. I couldn't have done it without you. I would like to say formally: Richard Parker, thank you. Thank you for saving my life. And now go where you must. You have known the confined freedom of a zoo most of your life; now you will know the free confinement of a jungle. I wish you all the best with it. Watch out for Man. He is not your friend. But I hope you remember

me as a friend. I will never forget you, that is certain. You will always be with me, in my heart. What is that bliss? Ah, our boat has touched sand. So farewell, Richard Parker, farewell. God be with you."

Strategies for civic engagement and social action:

- Create a re-entry action plan by answering the following question: I plan to do the following in order to contribute to positive social change on my campus or home community through engagement in my community and my continued involvement with my host country or region by . . .
- Stop in the Service-Learning Center (SLC) and explore the opportunities to get involved that connect to issues you explored while studying off-campus.
- Identify immigrants from your host country and try to connect with the immigrant community from this region of the world.
- Write an article for your local newspaper or college paper about how your experience abroad helped you gain global understanding about a particular global issue. What is your perspective about a social issue having lived abroad?
- Determine whether community service activities you've carried out during the program can be applied to your home community and look into continuing these types of activities at home.
- Stay current on world events.
- "Be the change you want to see in the world." (Ghandi)

Strategies for academic reintegration:

- Create a re-entry action plan by answering the following statement: I plan to do the following in order to actively integrate my new knowledge, interests and skills into my college experience. . . .
- As you look to complete assignments in the upcoming semester, think about how you can incorporate your study abroad experience. Talk to your professors about the possibilities.
- Identify professor you can communicate with regarding how your experiences fit with their areas of interest.
- Determine if an independent study about some aspect of your recent off-campus experience could be incorporated into your program of study.
- Become a member and/or participate in one of the clubs at Calvin with an international theme.
- Publish stories or articles about your off-campus experience in campus media sources.

Strategies for professional development:

- Create a re-entry action plan by answering the following statement: I plan to do the following in order to incorporate my new skills and interests into my professional path. . . .
- Request a letter of recommendation from your program director detailing the experiences you had while studying off-campus.

- Visit the Career Development Office and explore ways you can highlight your off-campus experiences in the job search process. If interested, explore opportunities to work abroad.
- Discuss skill development with a career counsellor and how to highlight skills and international experiences on your resume.

EXPLORING GRAND RAPIDS

Global Connections, Local Responsibilities summarizes some of the connections the Off-Campus programs want to make between your global experiences off-campus and your living locally in your community. Within this context we often see our global experiences as a chance for exploration; yet our local communities offer a unique context for exploration as well. What follows is a list of cultural challenges for Grand Rapids. The Off-Campus Programs office wants to encourage you to complete as many of these challenges over the next semester as you prepare to travel to Britain. Students who demonstrate that they have completed 24 challenges by the time they graduate will receive a free gift from the off-campus programs office. This is an honor system: You should search for answers yourself.

1. What is a *Paczki*? Try one and tell us what day do people eat this traditional ethnic food.
2. What is *banke*? What is the significance of *banke* in West Michigan?
3. Ride the White Pine Trail on a bike, from Riverside Park to Rockford and back with a friend; have the friend verify your ride.
4. Ride the Kent trail on a bike, from John Ball Zoo to Cutlerville and back with a friend; have the friend verify your ride.
5. Have a burger at the oldest bar and restaurant in downtown Grand Rapids. Name the restaurant.
6. Attend a service at a Jewish synagogue.
7. Attend mass at a Catholic church.
8. Attend a service at a church comprised primarily of people who are culturally or ethnically different than yourself.
9. Visit three different ethnic grocery stores. Buy food at one of these stores and cook an ethnic meal for your friends.
10. Attend an ethnic celebration somewhere in the city. Describe the celebration.
11. Visit an event at the Ladies Literary Club.
12. Visit the Fulton Street Farmers Market. Buy enough locally grown food to fix a meal for your friends.
13. Have a wet burrito at the Beltline Bar.
14. Eat at an ethnic restaurant where you have not eaten before.
15. Get a photo of yourself on the merry-go-round in the Grand Rapids Public Museum.
16. Get a photo of yourself on the giant tire swing in Grand Rapids.
17. Get a photo of yourself at the Flouride Memorial Sculpture in downtown Grand Rapids.
18. Attend a concert or go ice skating at Rosa Parks circle.
19. Bike or walk around the lake in Millennium Park.
20. Rent a canoe and paddle a portion of the Grand River
21. Volunteer as a tutor through the Service Learning Centre at a school in Grand Rapids.
22. Find where the Robert Morris "Earthwork" outdoor sculpture (also known as Grand Rapids Project "X" is located.
23. Visit the Frederick Meyer Gardens and Sculpture Park; take a photo of yourself at the DeVinci Horse.
24. Wander the Heritage Hill Historic District, adjacent to downtown Grand Rapids, which includes 1,300 homes dating from 1848. Take a self-guided walking tour to see more than 60 architectural styles. Find the address of the Meyer May house.
25. Attend an event at Wealthy Street Theatre.
26. Ride the Rapid to an event downtown and back.
27. Meet an immigrant to Grand Rapids. What is their story and how did they end up in Grand Rapids?

28. Have a meal or snack at God's kitchen or the DeGage.
29. In 2006, *Field & Stream* Magazine named Grand Rapids the nation's sixth best fishing city. You can hook salmon and steelhead in the middle of downtown; take a photo of yourself at the Fish Ladder.
30. Take a tour of the GRAM.