Study Abroad

Greece
2020

Program Guide
# Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academics</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-departure Academic Planning</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Credits and Course Load</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registration in Greece</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dropping/Adding Courses</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reporting Your Registration</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grades &amp; Transcripts</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACT &amp; UWEC Transcripts</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service Learning</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greek &amp; ACT Academic System</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Money Matters</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost Estimate</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Currency Exchange</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost of Living</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash on Arrival</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banking in Greece</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scholarships</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hellenic-American Scholarships</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merit Scholarships</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health &amp; Safety</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centers for Disease Control</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greek Student Health Insurance</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Healthcare</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services for Students with Disabilities</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety in Greece</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pick-pocketing/Purse-Snatching</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural Disasters</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emergency Contacts</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>911 Equivalent in Greece</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marijuana and other Illegal Drugs</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Required Documents</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visa</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Determining Whether You Need a Visa for the Semester</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residence Permit</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visas for Travel to Other Countries</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Packing Tips</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weather</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clothing</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Converters and Adapters</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Getting to Greece</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel Arrangements</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Airport Greeting Service</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Arrival</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Late Arrival</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lost Luggage</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Settling In</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orientation</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On-Site Support</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Transportation</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Clubs &amp; Organizations</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meet Greek Students</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteer</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Living Situation</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quiet Hours &amp; Housing Policies</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing for Academic Year</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What's Provided?</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bathroom Notes</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meals</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greek Specialties</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time Difference</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Congratulations on being accepted to the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire study abroad program with the American College of Thessaloniki (ACT) in Greece. Living and studying in a new culture is both an exciting and a challenging experience. Past participants of study abroad report that the many advantages of international study include:

- Gaining new perspectives on a chosen academic field
- Increasing understanding of different cultures
- Enhancing personal development
- Developing different perspectives on U.S. culture
- Gaining self-confidence and independence
- Learning skills for the future international job market

It is up to you to determine how you can best benefit from these possible advantages. This is your adventure!

Use this program-specific guide with the more general resources in your BlugoldsAbroad account. While this guide contains the information available at the time of publication, it is impossible for any single resource to answer all of your questions. Your peer advisor will email information throughout the semester, and we encourage you to do your own research, also, using the web resources listed towards the end of this guide, as well as others that you find. Contact the Center for International Education (CIE) staff or your peer advisor with your specific questions.

Questions only you can answer include:
1) What are YOUR goals for this experience? Advancement in a future profession, desire to expand personal and academic horizons, need for a change, and wish to challenge yourself in a new environment?

2) How can you best prepare to meet your goals within the context of this program? For example, if one of your goals is truly being immersed in Greek culture, yet ACT has a very international student body, how can you insure that you do not spend too much time with other international students?

The information in this guide was current at the time of publication, though changes may occur at any time.
**ACADEMICS**

Additional information on topics such as maintaining program eligibility, registration at UW-Eau Claire, class attendance, course equivalencies, grades, transcripts and service learning is in the Academics section of your Study Abroad Handbook.

**Pre-departure Academic Planning**

Please see the UWEC Greece Academics page for details on how to plan your courses at ACT.

You submitted required forms for ACT through your ACT account. After ACT accepts you, the Admissions Office will send a tentative class schedule that they publish for each semester, along with instructions on how to register.

The final schedule is typically published in May for fall semester, in November for spring semester, and in February for summer. You will send your course preferences to the ACT Registrar’s Office, copying Cheryl Lochner-Wright (lochnecb@uwec.edu). Courses should be ranked in the order you wish to take them, with number one being your top choice.

Each class needs a minimum of eight students to run. The ACT Registrar’s Office will finalize enrollments in March for summer, May for fall and in December for spring.

**Credits and Course Load**

One credit at ACT equals one credit at UW-Eau Claire.

**Summer:** You must enroll in a minimum of three credits and may take a maximum of six. The only exception is if you take the four-credit nutrition course, in which case you could take up to seven.

To receive summer financial aid, you must take at least six credits.

**Semester:** The semester study abroad program fee at ACT includes 12-15 credits.

If you take a 4-credit course, you may be bumped above the 15-credit threshold and must pay additional tuition.

For all terms:
- The credits you earn abroad are considered UW-Eau Claire resident credits.
- The classes you take abroad will count towards the total credits needed for graduation.
- Dropping below full-time status may result in loss of financial aid and/or insurance coverage and must be approved in advance by the CIE and X.

**Registration in Greece**

You will be registered by ACT based on your course preferences and enrollment numbers in courses.

**Dropping/Adding Courses**

**Summer:** All course changes must be made by the 2nd day of class.

**Semester:** You will have a drop/add period during the first week of the semester to finalize your registration.

For all terms:

Be sure to bring a list of all courses, equivalencies, and your degree audit with you to ACT to assist with changing your registration, if necessary.

**Reporting Your Registration**

As soon as you confirm your final registration at ACT, log in to your UW-Eau Claire online study abroad account and complete the Course Descriptions questionnaire. You will find it at
If a course you are taking is not already in the UW-Eau Claire Transfer Wizard, you will need to provide the following information:

- course title
- course number
- course description
- number of credits
- name of the department you would like credit in

Once equivalencies have been established by all department chairs involved, the courses will be posted to the Transfer Credit Wizard, and you will be able to see them there.

**Equivalency timeline:** The process of determining an equivalency can take four to six weeks. In other words, you will most likely not be able to ask to have equivalencies established for 6-8 courses so that you can choose which one you wish to take.

**Grades & Transcripts**
ACT grades on the typical A-F scale. Your ACT grades are figured into your UW-Eau Claire GPA.

**Note:** UWEC students abroad are not allowed to take classes pass/fail. Grades from X are figured into your UWEC GPA and posted to your UWEC transcript. No exceptions will be made.

**ACT & UWEC Transcripts**
Please see the Academics section of the Study Abroad Handbook for important information if you are graduating, transferring or applying for a competitive major such as Nursing or Education at the end of your term abroad.

ACT will send a transcript to UWEC after the end of the regular ACT term.
- For summer, they will be issued in September
- For fall, they will be issued in February.
  For spring, they will be issued in July.

Because transcripts will arrive later than the UW-Eau Claire semester, you will initially receive a grade report with “NR” (not reported) for all courses. This will be changed once the transcript arrives.

**Service Learning**
ACT now offers a Service Learning Practicum course (Soc Sc 399). This course is not offered every term, so please check your term’s schedule.

In order to have the course count for a portion (or all – it will depend on how many hours you complete) of your service-learning requirement at UWEC, you will need to complete the service learning forms online once you have your volunteer assignment.

To do so, go to: [https://www.uwec.edu/service-learning/students/](https://www.uwec.edu/service-learning/students/)

Click on “Create a Project”.

The UWEC Greece study abroad coordinator, Cheryl Lochner-Wright, will be your UWEC Mentor. Enter her username on the form: lochnecb

For the question, “How would you like your mentor to be involved in your project?” state that your mentor will read and comment on your reflection paper and may ask you follow-up questions as necessary.

**Greek & ACT Academic System**
Traditional higher education in Greece is different from the U.S; however, because ACT
is accredited by a U.S. institution, classes are somewhat similar to classes in the U.S.

**Professors:** ACT faculty are typically Greek or Greek-American. Many adjunct faculty on staff at ACT are working in the field they’re teaching at the same time as teaching. ACT has found that this overlap really helps put theory into practice.

**International Classroom:** ACT classrooms are very international. You will have Greek students, Balkan students, and other international students (including those from the U.S.) in your classes. Most of the professors incorporate current events in Greece, the Balkans, the U.S., and Europe into their classes. Keeping up with current events will help your understanding of the classes!

Not everyone in your classes will be a native speaker of English, so try to speak at a slow rate so everyone can understand.

**Academic Expectations:** You will not have as many short quizzes or daily assignments, although you will have lots of reading to do. Students are expected to learn independently and often work together outside of class to understand or expand upon the materials presented.

**Syllabi:** Course syllabi in Greece are different from those in the United States. There will be general dates of tests/quizzes or major assignments, but the syllabi are not as detailed as what you may receive at UW-Eau Claire, and changes are not uncommon.

**Changes to Syllabi:** Professors have the right to change dates and to add assignments as they choose. Sometimes you will learn that a test is coming up, or an assignment is due, just a few days or a week in advance, and the change may be announced verbally. Former ACT students note that this means you must be in class regularly or you may miss critical information.

**Class participation:** Active class participation is expected by the faculty and included in your grade. You must be on time for class. If you are late, particularly in business classes, you must knock on the door and ask permission to enter. The faculty member then decides whether you can join the class or not.

**Socratic Method:** When a student asks a question or offers an opinion on a class topic, the professor may come back with an alternate view to spark debate: this is the Socratic method of teaching, which strives to help students come to a more complete understanding of the subject. U.S. students not used to this teaching methodology sometimes feel the professor is attacking or arguing with them, but that is not the intention: this is just a different teaching style than what is usually used in the US.

**Workload:** Past students have judged the overall work required to be similar to that expected at UWEC, but students have noted that work is left to student initiative. If you do not keep up with class reading and notes, exam periods will be very difficult.

**Academic Support:** All ACT professors hold office hours when you can go and ask questions. The academic skills center on campus can help you as well.
**MONEY MATTERS**

UWEC information about making payments, when they are due, withdrawal and refund deadlines, financial aid, general scholarships, budgeting and ways to bring money abroad is in the *Money Matters section of your Study Abroad Handbook.*

**Cost Estimate**

You can find the most current cost estimate for your program, in easily printable format, on the [CIE Greece webpage](#). Be sure you are looking at the correct term. Remember that the cost estimate includes what you pay to UW-Eau Claire, what you pay to ACT Greece, and what you pay directly to other vendors.

The total cost estimate is based on a double room. **Single rooms are available at additional cost, and you will pay that additional cost directly to ACT.**

**Semester:** If you choose to take more than 15 credits, the cost is $333/credit hour for the 2019-2020 academic year. You will pay it directly to ACT. Additional credit amount is subject to change.

**Currency Exchange**

The currency of Greece is the euro. One Euro has 100 cents. There are 8 Euro coins, ranging in amount from 1 cent to 2 Euros. Coins have different designs in the various countries that use the Euro. Bills range from €5 to €500 and have a standard design across countries.

You can find current exchange rates at [https://www1.oanda.com/currency/converter/](https://www1.oanda.com/currency/converter/)

**Cost of Living**

For an idea of what everyday costs you may encounter, check out this website:


**Cash on Arrival**

You will need to pay for a taxi to your accommodations upon arrival; estimated cost is €20-30. You may also need to buy food or make some other small purchases before you locate a bank or ATM. ACT suggests that you travel with Be sure to travel with around €75.

**Banking in Greece**

Semester students: You can open a Greek bank account upon arrival to Thessaloniki by going to any bank with your passport and local address. **All students applying for a residence permit must open a bank account.** More information is in the "Required Documents" section of this guide. Summer students usually do not open bank accounts.

Citibank is a U.S. bank with branches in Thessaloniki is Citibank. If you bank with Citibank already, or have a checking account with them, then you won't pay ATM fees each time you withdraw money. You can learn more at [www.citibank.com](http://www.citibank.com).

**SCHOLARSHIPS**

In addition to the financial aid and scholarship information in your Study Abroad Handbook, ACT offers two scholarship programs for **semester study abroad students:**

**Hellenic-American Scholarships**

(2/semester)

For Greek American students. Each scholarship covers half of the tuition fees It does not cover housing, orientation, field trips, international student fees, travel, or personal/living expenses. Students must be accepted to ACT,
be Greek-American (have proof of Greek descent) and have a 3.0 GPA or better.

Merit Scholarships
ACT grants a $1000 merit scholarship to students who have a 3.6 GPA or better and have at least sophomore standing. Eligible students will receive application information directly from ACT after acceptance.

Please note: if you receive either award from ACT, you may still need to pay the full amount of the program cost by the final due date, since ACT needs to see your semester grades for the term just prior to participation to confirm the award. If your scholarship is confirmed after UWEC bills have been posted, the CIE will adjust your bill, and the scholarship will either replace loans, or you will receive it as a refund.

HEALTH & SAFETY
General information on these issues, as well as information on CISI insurance, is included in the Health & Insurance and Safety Abroad sections of your Study Abroad Handbook.

Centers for Disease Control
The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has vaccination suggestions, how to stay healthy when abroad, and health information specific to Greece. Review the CDC site for Greece.

Due to an increasing measles and mumps cases in Europe, we strongly encourage all students to check their vaccine history to see if they have had the MMR vaccine.

Greek Student Health Insurance
In addition to the CISI insurance required by the UW-System, semester students applying for a Greek residence permit must have insurance through a Greek company. ACT has an insurance policy that you can purchase upon arrival to fulfill this requirement. The cost was 120 Euro in 2019.

Healthcare
Campus Medical Services: ACT has a doctor and nurse available on campus. The nurse is on duty weekdays from 9:00am to 3:00pm and the doctor is available Wednesdays and Thursdays from 1:30-2:30pm. Students who need further care will be directed to one of the many public hospitals in the city.

Counseling Resources: If you would like to see a therapist while abroad, we can work with CISI to identify English speaking therapists in Thessaloniki. Start this process before you go or after by contacting your UWEC study abroad coordinator. (lochnecb@uwec.edu).

Medical supplies/medications: You can find basic medical supplies or medications in local pharmacies. They are plentiful and are identified by a green cross (universal symbol in all of Europe). They even sell personal hygiene items that you might not expect, like toothbrushes.

Services for Students with Disabilities
ACT will do their best to accommodate any disabilities, but services cannot be guaranteed or may be different than what you are used to in the United States. Services such as extended test time or a quiet testing space are accommodations ACT has been able to honor for past students. Please contact you UWEC Study Abroad Coordinator to begin exploring what services might be available to you.

It is also important to be aware of the level of accessibility in Greece in general. To find more information on the topic, please see the “Laws and Special Circumstances” tab on the U.S.
State Department Greece Country Information page.

Safety in Greece
Important information on crime and road safety is included in the “Safety & Security” tab of the U.S. State Department Greece Country Information page. If you are the victim of a crime, or if you are arrested abroad, get in touch with the nearest U.S. consulate or embassy. U.S. consular offices will do what they can to help U.S. citizens in serious legal, medical, or financial difficulties. They can often direct you to a reliable doctor or clinic, help you contact family, or re-issue your passport.

Pick-pocketing/Purse-Snatching
Both are common in Thessaloniki, and on public transportation and at popular tourist sites throughout Greece. To reduce the risk, do not have your phone or other valuables out in public spaces. An iPhone is a target for pickpockets. If you carry a purse, make sure it is across the body and has zippers. Keep your wallet in a front pocket, not a back pocket. Only carry small amounts of Euros on you to minimize loss. Using a money belt under your clothing is another way to prevent valuables from being stolen.

Natural Disasters
- Earthquakes and tremors occur regularly. Please see Ready.gov’s earthquake-safety pamphlet for tourists and visitors.
- Forest fires are common, especially during the dry summer months, and occasionally cause road closures.

Emergency Contacts
General emergency procedures are described in the Study Abroad Handbook and ACT International Office staff are available if difficulties arise. You will receive an emergency contact card at orientation; be sure to keep it in your wallet always. The information is also on the Contact Names & Addresses page of this guide.

911 Equivalent in Greece
If you are in an emergency in Greece, you will need to know how to reach the local police, fire, or ambulance services. The local equivalent to the 911 emergency line in Greece is 112. We suggest you save this number in your cell phone in case you need to use it quickly.

Marijuana and other Illegal Drugs
Although marijuana is relatively easy to obtain in Greece, the possession and use of marijuana is illegal. Even carrying it on your person can be considered drug trafficking. Penalties for possession, use, or trafficking in illegal drugs in Greece are severe, and convicted offenders can expect long jail sentences and heavy fines. U.S. citizenship offers no protection if you break a Greek law. There is NOTHING the CIE, ACT, or the U.S. government can do if you are found in violation of Greek laws.

In addition to legal penalties, you are putting yourself at risk of robbery or assault, or you may get a much more dangerous combination of drugs than you thought you were buying.

REQUIRED DOCUMENTS
Passport information is included in the Travel Resources section of your Study Abroad Handbook.

If you are not a U.S. citizen, please contact the CIE for more information about the following topics.
Visa
A visa is official permission to temporarily reside in another country and is granted by the government of that country.

Greece is part of the Schengen agreement. As of this writing, U.S. citizens can travel to the Schengen countries without a visa and stay for 90 days or less. To see a list of current Schengen members, click here.

Summer: For U.S. students studying in the summer, the program is only five weeks long, so you do NOT need a visa. You cannot stay longer than 90 days in the Schengen area, so if you plan to travel before or after the program, make sure your total stay in the Schengen area is less than 90 days.

Semester: A U.S. citizen planning to be in the Schengen area for more than 90 days must obtain a visa from the Schengen country where they will spend the most time: in this case, Greece. The CIE will post basic information about the current visa options for U.S. citizens for study in Greece to the Learning Content section of your online study abroad account during the semester prior to departure. However, it is your responsibility to keep up-to-date about student visa requirements for Greece, and if required, to apply for and receive a visa from a Greek consulate or embassy in a timely manner.

Determining Whether You Need a Visa for the Semester
The ACT semesters are right around 90 days. If they are slightly under 90 days, then you can decide if you want to apply for a visa or not.

Should you choose to NOT obtain a visa, you must leave the entire Schengen area within 90 days, and you cannot reenter for another 90 days.

Should you overstay the 90 days, you run the risk of being fined upon departure, and/or denied entry into any Schengen country in the future.

Residence Permit
Once you arrive in Greece, you will register your visa in order to apply for the required residence permit.

ACT staff will help you obtain the necessary items to complete your residence permit application. You must open a bank account as a part of this process and deposit 400 Euro into it. You will be able to remove this money and close the account as soon as you obtain the residence permit.

ACT will send you more information about the residence permit process in the weeks leading up to your departure and will discuss it with you at orientation after arrival.

Visas for Travel to Other Countries
If you plan to travel outside of Greece country, you should verify visa requirements for each country you will visit by contacting the nearest consulate for that country, or your travel agency. Most Western European nations do not require U.S. citizens to have a visa for tourist travel of less than three months.

Packing Tips
There is general packing information in the Travel Resources section of your Study Abroad Handbook, and you will get a suggested packing list for Greece at Orientation 2. In addition, you should know the following:

Weather
The climate in Greece is somewhat milder than Wisconsin and very dry, especially in the summer.
• For summer, expect highs in the upper 80’s during the day and the 60’s at night.
• For fall, highs will be in the 60s and 70s, with lows in the 40s and 50s.
• For spring, you’ll have highs in the 40s-50s, with lows in the 30s and 40s.

**Clothing**
Dress at the university will be casual, with jeans and sweaters the primary clothing of choice. Bring some warm clothes: Greek apartments/dormitories are often not as warm as those in the U.S. since they are not insulated for cold weather.

**Converters and Adapters**
The standard electric current in Greece is 220 volts. If you plan to bring a hair dryer, razor or other appliance from the US, you will need to buy both a voltage converter and a plug adapter. Another option is to buy the appliances after you arrive.

If you plan to bring your laptop abroad, check the power cord to see acceptable voltage inputs and outputs. If it includes 220 volts, you will only need to use a plug adapter, not a voltage converter.

If you have several US appliances you plan to use abroad, consider bringing a power strip, also. You will still need to have a voltage converter in order to plug it into the wall.

**GETTING TO GREECE**
There is information on student-oriented travel agencies, instructions for booking a flight, and other travel information in the Travel Resources section of your Study Abroad Handbook

**Travel Arrangements**
It is your responsibility to make travel arrangements to Thessaloniki. You will get specific date and arrival information as soon as it is available.

ACT recommends that you arrive at the Thessaloniki airport, and this is the only place they provide a greeting service. You can get a connecting flight to Thessaloniki at the same time you buy your main ticket.

You can also fly to Athens and take a train to Thessaloniki; however, you will have to make your own way to your housing in Thessaloniki upon arrival.

**Airport Greeting Service**
As long as you arrive in Thessaloniki:
• on one of the designated arrival days
• between the designated arrival times AND
• you have sent your arrival information to ACT at least three weeks in advance of arrival,
you will be met at the airport by a member of the international office at ACT. **If you do not submit your arrival information to ACT on time, you will need to get to your housing on your own.**

The ACT staff will help you get a taxi to your housing. You will need to have €20-25 on hand to pay for the taxi fare.

Another ACT staff member will meet you at your housing, provide you with an arrival pack, and show you around your housing and neighborhood.

**Early Arrival**
• **Summer:** Housing will not be available before orientation begins.
• **Semester**: Housing will not be available more than three days before orientation begins. Should you arrive earlier, you will need to book a hotel or other short-term accommodations.

**Late Arrival**
Arrivals after the designated arrival time will need to make their own arrangements and pay for an overnight stay at a hotel.

**Hotel Suggestions**
Metropolitan hotel, 65 Vassilissis Olgas Street, tel. +30 2310 824221 (has student rates, contact ACT for more information)
PEFKA Hotel, 92, Analipseos str., Panorama, Thessaloniki (tel. 2310-341153).
ABC Hotel—41, Aggelaki str., Thessaloniki (tel. 2310-265421).

**Lost Luggage**
If your luggage is lost upon arrival to Thessaloniki airport (SKG), do not exit the baggage claim area to the arrivals halls before reporting the information below to the Lost and Found Office.

Do not give your student housing address or your personal phone. For security and ease of delivery give the following address instead:

YOUR NAME
C/O Miranda Margariti
American College of Thessaloniki-IPO
P.O. Box 21021, Sevenidi 17
Anatolia College
Pylea 55510, Greece

**SETTLING IN**

**Orientation**
ACT holds a required orientation at the beginning of each term; for semester programs, it includes a day-long field trip. You’ll get information about the campus, visa/residence permit processes, finding your way around Thessaloniki, food, shopping, and more. They will also arrange for a trip to stores for any household goods you need.

During orientation, lunches will be provided, but you will need to supply your other meals. The International Office also tries to coordinate various mixers throughout orientation so that you get to know the other international students and Greek students.

Semester students applying for residence permits: *you will need to have €160 in CASH, in addition to the €400 you deposit in the bank.* Although the process will be explained at orientation, you will have some time after arrival to apply for the permit, so you can access the cash from an ATM.

**On-Site Support**
Miranda Margariti in the International Programs Office will be your main advising contact at ACT. Her contact information is on the Contact Names & Addresses page of this guide.

**Local Transportation**
Your housing will be about 20 minutes away by car from the ACT campus. ACT has a free shuttle that runs from downtown to campus and from campus back to downtown twice a day (once in the morning and once at night).

The city bus takes about 40 minutes to get to campus. City buses run every 10-15 minutes. You can buy tickets on the bus, or you can buy tickets at kiosks (or peripteros) all over the city. The peripteros also sell candy, snacks, newspapers, and phone cards.

There is a monthly bus pass available; however, you are not eligible to buy a student bus ticket and past study abroad students do not recommend purchasing it, as you cannot ride the bus enough times to pay for the pass.
You can also take a taxi to campus for about 8-10 euros (one way). Up to four students can share this fare. The university has an agreement with a cab company that has English-speaking operators that offer discounts to students going to and from the apartments to campus.

**Student Clubs & Organizations**

At the beginning of each semester there is an Activities and Club's Fair. One club of interest to study abroad students is the field trip club that plans **three to five trips each semester** for a nominal fee. Other clubs include American Football, Cinema, Horse Riding, History and International Relations Society, Lifeguard, Marketing Society, Mountaineering, ACT Band, PC Games Design, ACT Radio (Radio ACTive), Sailing, Scuba Diving, etc.

ACT also has a Student Government Association, which plans additional trips, on campus events, nights out, etc. Each semester one study abroad student is selected to represent the study abroad students as part of the student government.

You can also join an intramural sports team. The sports offered are: tennis, table tennis, 5 vs. 5 soccer, volleyball, and basketball.

**Meet Greek Students**

A key to a good experience abroad is connecting with people in your host country. Because you will go through an orientation just for international students, it is easy to hang out just with them, or even just with the other Americans you meet. Try to meet and do things with Greek students.

The international office will hold various events throughout the semester to help you mix with local students. Keep in mind while doing this that the Greek students already have established groups of friends. You will have to take the first step, and often the second and third, to become part of the group. But it is well worth the effort.

Your resident assistant in your housing will also plan different events such as how to make Greek coffee. You do not have to participate in these events, but they are a great way to get involved. Don't be shy. Ask a Greek student to have a coffee or go to an event with you.

You can find out about community events at the International Office. Remember: signs in the community promoting events will be in the Greek alphabet, so having Greek friends who can translate will come in handy! You can take advantage of the experience by attending operas, sporting events, plays, and concerts.

**Volunteer**

Volunteering is a wonderful way to get involved in the local community and build meaningful relationships. If you do not want to take the service-learning course mentioned in the Academics section but would still like to volunteer in the community, ACT has many opportunities available in areas such as: special needs centers, soup kitchens, local schools, youth centers, tutoring high school students, etc. Certificates of recognition and awards of appreciation are provided to students for their volunteer work. You will learn how to get involved during orientation at ACT.

You will still need to complete the UWEC online service-learning forms if you wish to fulfill service-learning hours. To do so, go to: [https://www.uwec.edu/service-learning/students/](https://www.uwec.edu/service-learning/students/)

Hosting a volunteer requires time on the part of the organization to plan projects for and supervise that volunteer, so please take your commitment seriously. Otherwise, community
partners may not be willing to host volunteers in the future. Also, volunteering requires you to take initiative. The more you are willing to invest in the experience the more rewarding it will be!

**Housing**

**Living Situation**
ACT arranges housing downtown for all study abroad students. The apartments are very small by U.S. standards and very new by Greek ones, having been built in 2005. The apartments are located within residential areas and provide easy access to supermarkets, pharmacies, banks, post office, etc. A housing request form was included with your acceptance materials.

There are either double or single rooms. If you have a double room, you will receive your roommate assignment about two weeks before arrival. As mentioned previously, there is a surcharge for single rooms that you pay directly to ACT.

You may notice that you can hear your neighbors. The floors are usually tile carry sound well. Past students have recommended not wearing high heels or hard-soled shoes in your apartment.

**Quiet Hours & Housing Policies**
You will be living in a residential area, and out of respect for the permanent residents in the neighborhood, ACT has set quiet hours: 3:00 - 5:00pm and 11:30pm to 7:00am.

There is an RA in each building, and rooms will be inspected during the term to make sure you are keeping things in good condition.

Failure to observe ACT housing may lead to eviction without reimbursement or assistance by ACT in finding new housing. You will receive a full copy of housing policies directly from ACT.

**Housing for Academic Year**
Students staying for the full academic year can stay in their housing for both semesters, including term breaks, without paying extra for break time periods.

**What's Provided?**
You will have a small kitchen area, bathroom, desk, closet, beds, and a balcony.

- All apartments are furnished and offer free Wi-Fi access.
- You will also have an Internet hook-up in each room (you will need to either bring or purchase an Ethernet cable to connect your computer).
- You’ll get one blanket & one pillow for use during the semester.

All apartment buildings have laundry facilities with free washing machines, although you need to provide your own soap. You will receive a laundry key use the key to reserve a day/time so that you know a machine will be available. You will hang-dry your clothes, just as most Greeks do.

Sheets, towels, and kitchen utensils are **not provided**. You can choose to bring some bedding with you (twin sized bedding, older sheets/towels, etc.) and leave them behind when you come back, or you can buy them in Thessaloniki.

The International Office has towels, sheets and 2 packs of pillowcases available for 5 Euro each (so 15 Euro for one of each); they will deduct the cost from your housing deposit at the end of the term, if you buy through them. Otherwise, there are local stores where you can purchase such items.
**Bathroom Notes**
You **will not flush your toilet paper in the toilet** in Thessaloniki (and most of Greece). You will throw it away in a wastebasket in the bathroom. The pipes are narrow, and the water pressure is not strong enough to get the toilet paper through quickly enough. It therefore backs up the pipes, which you do not want to experience first-hand!

Past students recommend bringing toilet paper with you, as there will be none in your apartment upon arrival.

**Meals**
Meals are on your own as there is no meal plan. Most students do a combination of the following:
- Shop for groceries and prepare meals in your apartment.
- Meals in the campus cafeterias are quite inexpensive.
- There are several cafés in the neighborhood where you will be living.
- On certain nights of the week, restaurants offer a €10 special, which includes an appetizer, main course and dessert. This is very popular with students, as it allows you to try more expensive restaurants.

**Greek Specialties**
There are many Greek specialties to try, and since Thessaloniki is a port city, you’ll see lots of seafood. Here’s a small list of things to try:
- **Tzatziki** (tat-zee-kee): yogurt, cucumber, garlic, and salt. Great on fresh Greek bread.
- **Saganaki** (saga- nah -ki): fried cheese. Sometimes comes with tomato sauce. Plain with lemon is also good.
- **Spanakopita** (span-ah- koh -pee-tah): spinach pie
- **Dolmades** (doh- mah -des): grape-leaves stuffed with rice, onions and sometimes ground beef.
- **Mousaka** (moo-sah- kah): baked and like eggplant parmesan but not as tomato saucy. Contains eggplant, potatoes, onions, ground beef, oil, cinnamon, and a flour, milk and butter topping.
- **Pastitsio** (pan- sti -tsyo): like lasagna but not as saucy. Layered noodles, meat, tomato sauce and topping similar to mousaka but denser.
- **Feta**: a cheese
- **Gyro**: thin slices of barbecued meat specially seasoned with herbs and spices, served with tomatoes and onions on pita bread, and topped with tzatziki.
- **Greek Salad**: tomato and cucumber salad seasoned with onion, olive oil, vinegar, feta cheese and oregano. Traditionally, no lettuce in a Greek salad!
- **Baklava**: thirty or more nut filled, paper thin layers of glazed phyllo sheets of pastry soaked in pure honey make this the king of pastry desserts. Every country in the Near East claims baklava as its own.

**COMMUNICATION**
Information on accessing/forwarding your UW-Eau Claire email address and on computer app-based phone services (SKYPE, What’s App, Facetime, etc) is in the [Contacts & Communication section of your Study Abroad Handbook](..).

**Time Difference**
Thessaloniki is in the Eastern European Time Zone and can be either seven or eight hours ahead of Eau Claire, depending upon when Daylight Saving Time begins and ends in each country. To see the current time in Greece, visit: [https://www.timeanddate.com/worldclock/greece/thessaloniki](https://www.timeanddate.com/worldclock/greece/thessaloniki).
Email/Internet Access
There are small computer labs on campus, and the Bissell Library has wireless set up throughout the building. As mentioned earlier, you will also have Internet access in your apartment, but you will need to purchase an Ethernet cable.

Cell Phones
You will not have a land line in your room. Past participants suggest getting a cell phone after you arrive in Greece. At orientation in Thessaloniki, they will go over how to rent a cell phone that you can return at the end of the semester. In past semesters, it has cost ~40 Euros to start the plan, and then you pay-as-you-go for additional minutes.

Once you have your cell phone, it is more economical for family and friends to call you. Incoming calls to cell phones in Greece are free.

Telephone Information
From the U.S. to Greece: First dial 011, which is the international dialing code. Next, you dial 30, the country code for Greece, and the rest of the number.

From Greece to the U.S.: To call home while you are abroad using a calling card or calling collect, you must dial an access code to get an American operator. ACT has informed us that often MCI and Sprint cards bought in the U.S. do not work from Greece. You can purchase phone cards once you arrive. They typically cost 5-10 Euro.

Snail-mail
International airmail takes 7-10 days to cross the Atlantic in either direction. ACT notes that all packages should be mailed through the U.S. Postal Service (USPS), as packages mailed through FedEx or UPS have been taxed TWICE by the time they reach Thessaloniki. They also suggest not sending any electronics, as those are highly taxed, and it ends up being cheaper just to buy electronics in Greece instead. All snail mail should be addressed:

YOUR NAME
C/o Ms. Miranda Margariti
American College of Thessaloniki, IPO
P.O. Box 21021, Sevendi 17
Pylea 55510
GREECE

Cultural Notes
Greetings and Addresses
Observe proper greeting and leave-taking etiquette. Always shake hands when you meet an acquaintance. It is also acceptable for women to kiss friends (men and women) on both cheeks; men shake hands.

Time
In U.S. culture, we tend to be ruled by our appointment books. Time is measured differently in Greece. There is a sense that what you are doing at the present is important, particularly if you are spending time with a person, and that things planned for later will be taken care of later. It is not uncommon for a friend to show up later than an agreed-upon meeting time.

This is also why your syllabi do not have day-to-day assignments. The professors don't want to be ruled by a set schedule: if you're having a great conversation/debate on a topic, then you may spend more days covering it than originally planned. All the material will be covered, but at its own pace.

But be careful: it is not all right to be late for formal events. For things such as class or a meeting with a professor, church or a business lunch, punctuality is expected. In fact, in
Greece, if you are late for class, you must knock on the door and ask permission to be allowed to enter.

**Store Hours**
Store hours in Greece can vary depending on season and type of shop but a typical schedule is: Monday, Wednesday, and Saturday from 8am-2:30pm; Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 8am-2pm and from 5:30pm-8:30pm. Most stores are closed on Sundays.

**Smoking**
Most Greeks smoke, and smoking is allowed in most places. Your taxi driver may smoke while driving, and most bars/restaurants allow smoking. Students may invite you out for smoke breaks. They won’t be offended if you don’t smoke, but you can still go outside with them to socialize.

**Other Notes**
Pedestrians **NEVER** have the right of way, be careful when crossing the street!

There are no pollution controls for vehicles, buses, industry, etc. ACT is becoming more environmentally conscious, however. The campus has a recycling program.

Although most people in Greece are still ethnic Greeks and 98% of the population is still Greek Orthodox, there have been many immigrants and refugees in recent years. The new groups include immigrants from Albania, Bulgaria, Poland, Romania, Russia, Syria, Libya, and Ukraine, among other places. This has caused tension in Greece. Inform yourself before you go, as you will most likely hear debates on immigration in the country.

**Travel While Abroad**

**Travel through ACT**
A multi-day trip to Athens and a day-trip to Vergina are included in the program costs.

In addition, ACT may organize other low-cost trips and inform you of those during orientation. Past destination have included Ioannina – Meteora, Mount Olympus (hiking), 3-day sailing trip, Philippi & Kavala, thermal springs of Pozar and Edessa. If you want to participate on these, you will pay any additional fees directly to ACT.

If you are doing independent travel, ACT asks that you fill out an itinerary form before you go, so that they know how to reach you if necessary.

**Travel Agencies**
If you would like to travel while in Greece, the Study Abroad Office at ACT has a recommended list of travel agencies.

**Bus Travel**
If you want to travel around Greece, regional bus is a good option. To go to Chalkidiki (the nearby beach area), you go to a separate bus station that serves only that region (getting there is challenging, so you may need to take a cab to the bus station!).

All other bus travel through Greece is routed through the KTEL station at Athinon (Monastirioi 67). You can reach the bus terminal by catching a bus on Tsiminski near Aristotelus Square that has KTEL as its destination (check signposts at bus stops).

**Train Travel**
Thessaloniki also has a major train station for trains from many countries in the Balkans, with connections to other European countries including Turkey. You can check train times,
routes, and whether the train you need requires reservations at https://www.raileurope.com/ If it does, be sure to reserve a seat ahead of time!

**Air Travel**

Both Ryan Air and Easy Jet, budget European airlines, fly in and out of Thessaloniki.

**NOTE:** Students studying for the full year or semester may have restrictions on countries they can visit due to their residence permit. Be sure to ask the Study Abroad Office at ACT about these restrictions.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
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<tr>
<td>Travel Guide to Thessaloniki:</td>
<td>The Greek Language:</td>
<td>Greece National Tourism Organization:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weather in Thessaloniki:</td>
<td>Festivals, Celebrations &amp; Holidays in Greece:</td>
<td>Greece Lonely Planet:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thessaloniki Information:</td>
<td>Greek Food:</td>
<td>Newspapers:</td>
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# CONTACT INFORMATION

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<tr>
<th><strong>ACT</strong></th>
<th><strong>Greek Consulate in the U.S.</strong></th>
<th><strong>UW-EAU CLAIRE</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>Ms. Heather Funk</td>
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Director, International Programs  
Anatolia College/ACT  
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Pylea 555 10  
Thessaloniki, GREECE  
PH: 011-30-2310-398-205  
24 Hour Emergency Number: (+30) 6936.000-358  
EMAIL: heather@act.edu  
http://www.act.edu/ |  
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Cheryl Lochner-Wright  
Senior Study Abroad Coordinator  
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Fax: (715) 836-4948 |
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Phone: 312.335.3915  
Fax: 312.335.3958  
E-mail: chicago@greekembassy.org |  
U.S. Consulate in Greece  
Consulate General 43 Tsimiski  
7th Floor GR-54623  
Thessaloniki  
Phone: (30) (2310) 242-905  
https://gr.usembassy.gov/embassy-consulate/thessa |
| Ms. Miranda Margariti  
Study Abroad Coordinator  
American College of  
Thessaloniki  
Email: mmargarit@act.edu  
Tel: 011 30 2310 398205 | |  
**After Hours Emergency**  
(715)577-9045 |

24 Hour Emergency Number: (+30) 6936.000-358

If calling from the US, first dial 011

Remember that in most cases, local contacts are best in local emergency situations.

If you have an after-hours emergency that can be helped on the U.S. side, please call University Police at the number above. Calls can be made to this number 24 hours a day. You may get an answering machine; however, an officer is alerted as soon as you have left your message. Be sure to give the officer the phone number you can be reached at, as well as what type of assistance you require.

We suggest that you copy this page and leave it with your emergency contact and/or parents.
PAST PARTICIPANT TIPS
WHAT THEY WISH THEY HAD KNOWN/ADVICE:
Most people are very kind towards people trying to learn the language. I took time to learn basic words to communicate with people as best as I could, and it helped a lot. People told me all the time that they appreciated me trying, even if my accent gave me away. They were always willing to help me too.

I spent way more money than the cost estimate says.

The restroom situation is unique- throwing toilet paper in the basket was weird at first.

THEIR SAFETY TIPS:
Travel in groups – it makes it easier booking hostels but also provides comfort knowing you’re with others you trust.

Pick pocketing is a huge problem. I had two friends who had items stolen from them.

Women should not walk alone anywhere.

HOW THEY SUMMED IT UP:
Be ready for your eyes to be opened. Have an open mind, there are many view points in the world and you may have to adjust your word choice carefully.

This was an experience of a lifetime. I loved every minute of my time here. I enjoyed learning the “norms” of other cultures.

I would sum this experience up in one word: eye-opening.