

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN EAU CLAIRE  
CENTER FOR INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION

# Study Abroad



**GREECE**  
**SPRING 2019**

*Program Guide*

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**CONGRATULATIONS** on being accepted to the UW-Eau Claire study abroad program with the American College of Thessaloniki, Greece. Living and studying in a foreign culture is both an exciting and a challenging experience. Past participants of study abroad report that the many advantages of international study include:

*building upon existing foreign language skills*  
*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 experience!

This program guide is to be used together with the general Study Abroad Handbook. The handbook has information that is valid for all study abroad programs. This guide will provide you with specific information for the Greece program. It is designed to complement the handbook, study abroad orientation, and your individual pre-departure preparations.

Please realize that although this guide contains all of the information available at the time of printing, it is impossible for any single resource to answer all of your questions. Your peer advisor will e-mail additional information throughout the semester. Please contact the Center for International Education (CIE) staff, your peer advisor, and past program participants with your specific questions. You should also make use of the additional written and web resources listed towards the end of this guide.

Basic questions only you can answer include:

- 1) What are YOUR goals for this experience? Common goals of student travelers include advancement in a future profession; desire to expand personal and academic horizons; need for a change; and wish to challenge oneself with immersion in a new culture.
- 2) Given the way the program is set up, how can you best prepare to meet your goals? For example, if one of your goals is truly getting to know Greek students, yet you will be living with some U.S. Americans, how can you ensure that you get out and interact with the local population?

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

## GENERAL INFORMATION

### *The Program*

In this study abroad program, you become a regular international student at the American College of Thessaloniki (ACT). The first UW-Eau Claire students went to ACT in fall 2008. You will take courses with students from Greece, the Balkan countries, the U.S., and other countries. All coursework will be in English. You will live in apartments in the city center. A few excursions are included in the program costs.

### *The Location*

The Thessaloniki metropolitan area is the second largest city in Greece, with a population of more than 1.5 million people. It is located in the northern prefecture (state) of Macedonia, which is the largest prefecture in Greece. The city was first established in 316 BC by Kassandros. He named the city after his wife, Thessaloniki, who was Alexander the Great's half-sister. Theaters, jazz clubs, an opera house, and many cafés provide students with rich cultural opportunities. With three universities, the city is very student-oriented.

Thessaloniki was also named the European Youth Capital in 2014. This title is given to a European city for one year, during which they showcase their youth-related culture and social, political and economic life and development.

### *The University*

ACT was founded in 1993, and in 1995 was given the name the American College of Thessaloniki. It has a student population of 800. There is a great mix of students studying at ACT. The division is roughly 50% Greek,

30% Balkan countries, 10% U.S. students, and 10% other international students.

ACT is split into two schools: The Anatolia School of Business and the Anatolia School of Arts, Sciences, & Technology. Eighty percent of the students at ACT are studying business. The campus is located about 20 minutes from the center of Thessaloniki and consists of two buildings, the Bissell Library and the New Building.

### *Academic Calendar*

#### **Spring 2019 \***

|                             |                   |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Housing Opens</b>        | January 5         |
| <b>Orientation</b>          | January 7-8       |
| <b>First Day of Classes</b> | January 9         |
| <b>Last day of classes</b>  | March 27          |
| <b>Final exams**</b>        | March 29- April 5 |
| <b>Move out date**</b>      | April 7           |

\*These dates are tentative and subject to change. ACT dates can be found here: <http://www.act.edu/student-services/academic-calendar> (be sure to click on the right academic year and scroll to Spring I, 2019).

\*\* Arrival and move out date will be communicated to you from ACT.

## ACADEMICS

*Your Study Abroad Handbook has additional information on academic topics such as eligibility, registration, class attendance, credits and course load, petitioning course equivalencies, grades, transcripts, and accessing the UW-Eau Claire library while abroad.*

### ***Pre-departure Academic Planning***

You submitted required forms for ACT through your ACT account. After ACT accepts you, the Admissions Office will send a tentative class timetable schedule that they publish for each semester, along with instructions on how to register. The final schedule is typically published in May or June for fall semester and in **November for spring semester**. You will send your course preferences to the ACT Registrar's Office, copying Jenna Krosch ([kroschjm@uwec.edu](mailto:kroschjm@uwec.edu)). Courses should be ranked in the order you wish to take them, with number one being your top choice.

You will have paid to take 12 credits while participating in the semester. **Please note that if you take a 4-credit course, you will be bumped above the 12-credit threshold and have to pay additional tuition.** Each class needs a minimum of eight students to enroll, or it will not run. ACT will add your registration requests to the registrations of all currently-enrolled ACT students to make sure there are enough students for each class. The ACT Registrar's Office will do final enrollments in May for fall and in **December for spring**.

### ***Course Equivalencies***

Many courses you can take in Thessaloniki have already been evaluated for UW-Eau Claire credit. To find courses that have been evaluated for ACT, you will go to the Transfer Wizard site [here](#)

- Choose Greece, then click "Search"
- Click on the link "American Coll of Thessaloniki" when it appears
- Click "Search" again. All ACT courses that have been evaluated for UW-Eau Claire credit will appear in alphabetical order by the ACT School Course Number. If the ACT

course does not appear on the list, it has not yet been evaluated for UW-Eau Claire credit.

**Please keep in mind that this is a historical record of past course equivalencies.** There is no guarantee that the same courses will be offered in the future, or that they will be offered during the term in which you are abroad.

Course equivalencies for any ACT units not yet evaluated by UW-Eau Claire will be done AFTER your actual registration in Thessaloniki. This saves the Admissions Office and department chairs hours of evaluating courses that no one actually takes. Please note that you cannot assume that a course you are taking will transfer back in the way you want it to just because the course description sounds similar to a course taught at UW-Eau Claire. All course equivalency decisions are made by UW-Eau Claire department chairs and are not official until the Admissions Office receives the equivalency, with the chair's signature on it.

### ***Registration in Greece***

You will be registered by ACT based on your course preferences and enrollment numbers in courses. You will have a drop/add period during the first week of the semester to finalize your registration. 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.

As soon as your registration at ACT is finalized, **log in to your online BugoldsAbroad account and complete the Course Descriptions questionnaire.**

**Please note:** The process of determining an equivalency can take four to six weeks or more. In other words, you will not be able to ask to have equivalencies established for three or four courses so that you can choose which one you wish to take.

### ***Credits and Course Load***

One credit at ACT equals one credit at UW-Eau Claire. Study abroad students at ACT will take 12 credits (if you take more than 12 credits you will need to pay additional tuition directly to ACT).

### ***Grades & Transcripts***

ACT grades on the typical A-F scale. Your ACT grades are figured into your UW-Eau Claire GPA. **UW-Eau Claire students abroad are not allowed to take courses pass/fail.**

### ***Transcripts and Graduation***

A transcript for your program will be sent from ACT to UW-Eau Claire. Transcripts will be issued after the ACT regular semester. For fall, they will not be issued until February. For **spring, they will be issued in May.** Because transcripts may arrive later than the UW-Eau Claire semester, you will initially receive a grade report with "NR" (not reported) for all courses. A revised transcript will be issued after the grades have arrived.

**If you are a senior and are studying abroad for your last UW-Eau Claire semester, please note that the different time lines in grade reporting may require you to delay your graduation until May for fall students and until August for spring students.**

### ***Service Learning***

ACT now offers Service Learning Practicum (Soc Sc 399) for students to enroll in as a

course. This course is not offered every term, so please reference your options. 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. (If you do not want to take the course, but would still like to volunteer in the community, ACT has many opportunities available for you. You will still need to complete the online forms in order to obtain service learning.) To do so, go to:

<http://www.uwec.edu/SL/students/index.htm>

Click on "Create a Project" to receive more information on how to do this.

You study abroad coordinator is willing to be your UWEC Mentor. You would just enter the following information in: Her username: kroschjm

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

### ***Academic System in Greece***

Traditional higher education in Greece is different from that in the U.S. Since ACT is accredited by a U.S. institution, classes are somewhat similar to classes in the U.S. 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 fairly independently and often work together outside of class to understand or expand upon the materials presented.

**Course syllabi in Greece are different from those in the United States.** Professors do hand out a course syllabus with general dates of tests/quizzes or major assignments, but they are not as detailed as what you may receive at UW-Eau Claire, and changes are not uncommon. Professors have the right to change dates and to add assignments. Sometimes professors will tell you that a test is coming up, or an assignment is due, a few days or a week in advance. **Former ACT students note that this means you must be in class regularly or you may miss critical information.**

Class participation is expected of you in all classes. Often in class, the professor lectures but expects that you will participate or ask questions during the lecture. If you participate, the professor may come back with an alternate view as a way to spark debate, this is using the Socratic method of teaching to try to get to the truth. Some past students have said they felt attacked by the professor, but that is not the intention, this is just a different teaching style.

The overall work required has been judged to be similar to that expected at UW-Eau Claire, 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 Notes from ACT***

ACT faculty are typically Greek or Greek-American. There are a lot of adjunct faculty on staff at ACT who 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.

Active class participation is definitely expected by the faculty. Most of the professors incorporate current events in Greece, the Balkans, the U.S., and Europe into their classes. Being aware of current events will definitely help your understanding of the classes! Also be aware that not everyone in your class is a native speaker of English, so try to speak at a slow rate so everyone can understand.

All ACT professors will have office hours when you can go and ask questions. There is also an academic skills center on campus that you can go to if you need help.

You must be on time for class. If you are late, particularly in business classes, you have to knock on the door and ask permission to enter. The faculty member then decides whether you are allowed to join the class or not. Since participation is important for most grades, it is important to be on time!

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. Make an effort to sit by/talk to the Greek students! The only class that you might take with all other international students is the Greek language course.

## **MONEY MATTERS**

*Your Study Abroad Handbook has information about how payments are made, when they are due, withdrawal/refund deadlines, financial aid, scholarships, budgeting and ways to bring money abroad.*

### **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.

**Additional Courses:** If you choose to take more than 12 credits, the cost was \$333/credit hour (current at time of posting, subject to change) and you will pay it directly to ACT.

**Optional Personal travel:** This varies greatly from student to student. It depends on your budget and your priorities. Students who want to be involved in their host community generally spend less time (and money) traveling. Others travel every weekend with correspondingly high costs and fewer close connections in their new home.

### **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, and they have different designs in the various countries that use the euro. Bills range from €5 to €500 and have a standard design across countries.

The exchange rate as of June 2018 was 1 euro = 1.16042 US Dollars. You can find current exchange rates at <http://www.oanda.com/convert/classic>. All costs are estimated and may change due to exchange rate fluctuations.

### **Banking in Greece**

Greek bank accounts can be opened upon arrival to Thessaloniki by going to any bank with your passport and local address. **All**

**students must open up a bank account in order to receive a residence permit.** More information can be found in the "[Required Documents](#)" section of this guide. ACT will also send you more information closer to your departure.

An American 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, there is a scholarship that specifically supports students on the ACT program:*

### **Hellenic- American Scholarships**

ACT offers scholarships to eligible Hellenic-American students. Each scholarship covers half of the tuition fees. However, 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. More information can be found at: <http://www.act.edu/studyabroad/cost-scholarships>

### **Merit Scholarships**

ACT grants a \$1000 merit scholarship to students who have a 3.6 GPA or better and have at least sophomore standing. Students will receive more information on this from ACT, after acceptance.

Please note: if you receive either award from ACT, you will still need to pay the full amount of the program cost by the final due date, since ACT needs to see the current semester's grades to grant the award. If you receive the award, CIE will adjust your bill and it will either eliminate loans or be given as a refund.

## HEALTH & SAFETY

*Additional information on these issues, as well as information on CISI insurance, is included in the Health Issues and Safety Abroad sections of your Study Abroad Handbook.*

### **Greek Student Health Insurance**

As explained in your Study Abroad Handbook, all students going abroad through the UW-System have to be enrolled in CISI insurance. **In addition to the CISI insurance required by the UW-System, one of the requirements for the residence permit application is that you have insurance through a Greek company.** CISI does not meet the residence permit requirement, so you must purchase the Greek Insurance too. ACT has an insurance policy that you can purchase upon arrival to fulfill this requirement. The cost was 120 Euro in 2017. More information on obtaining a residence permit will be emailed from ACT and discussed at your onsite orientation.

### **Medical Care in Greece**

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.

If you need basic medical supplies or medications, you can find a local pharmacy. 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.

### **Mental Health Care in Greece**

If you would like to see a therapist while abroad, we can work with CISI to identify English speaking therapist in Thessaloniki. This process can be started before you go or after, but contacting your study abroad coordinator, Jenna ([kroschjm@uwec.edu](mailto:kroschjm@uwec.edu)).

### **Safety in Greece**

For specific information on crime and road safety in Greece, see the [Greece Consular Information](#). 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.

### **911 Equivalent in Greece**

If you are in an emergency situation 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.

The U.S. State Department also provides a list of [911 numbers abroad](#). Please note that in some countries there are different numbers for fire, police, and ambulance. Plan ahead and research numbers before you go.

## **Illegal Drug Use**

Aside from increasing the risk of exposure to HIV (the virus causing AIDS), in many countries drug use is subject to stringent laws. **If you are discovered using drugs, you will be expelled from the program** and all costs incurred will be your responsibility.

## **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 at all times. The information is also on the Contact Names & Addresses page of this guide.

# **REQUIRED DOCUMENTS**

*Passport information is included in your Study Abroad Handbook.*

## **Determining if you need a visa**

U.S. citizens can travel to the Schengen countries of Europe without a visa and stay for 90 days or less, within a 180-day period. To see a list of current Schengen members, [click here](#).

The ACT program dates fall right around the 90-day limit. If they are slightly under 90 days, then you can decide if you want to obtain a visa or not. **Should you choose to NOT obtain a visa, you MUST leave the Schengen area within 90 days.** If you decide that you want to travel before/after the program, it is highly recommended that you obtain a visa to not run into the issue of overstaying your privileges.

Should you overstay, you run the risk of being fined and denied entry into any Schengen

country in the future. **The CIE and ACT are not liable should you not obtain a visa and/or fail to leave the Schengen area within 90 days. Any fines you receive are your own responsibility.**

## **Visa**

A visa is official permission to temporarily reside in another country and is granted by the government of that country. 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 BlugoldsAbroad 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. At the time of publishing, U.S. citizens are required to obtain a visa if they stay in the Schengen area longer than 90 days in a 180-day period.**

Please read the "Visa" section of your Study Abroad Handbook for more information about what you should do to keep up-to-date on visa requirements.

## **Residence Permit**

In order to stay in the Schengen area for longer than 90 days, you will have to obtain a residence permit on top of your visa application. **The residence permit is done AFTER you arrive in Greece.** U.S. citizens will first obtain a visa BEFORE they go abroad, and then obtain a residence permit AFTER they are abroad.

The staff at ACT will help you obtain the necessary items to complete your residence permit. Please note that you will have to open a bank account as a part of this process, and deposit 400 euro. You will be able to remove this money and close the account as soon as you obtain a residence permit.

More information will be sent to you from ACT in the weeks leading up to your departure. When this is sent to you, be sure to look at the required documents you will need when applying for the permit in Greece. If any are easy to obtain while still in the states, it is recommended that you do that then to save you troubles when you are abroad. Then be sure to pack those items in your carry on so you for sure have them when you get to Greece.

## PACKING TIPS

*In addition to the general packing information in your Study Abroad Handbook, you should know the following about Greece:*

### **Clothing & Weather**

The climate in Greece is somewhat milder than the climate in Wisconsin, but you will still want clothing for all weather. For students studying in the spring semester, you can expect cooler temps (40's-50's) from January – April, with the weather warming up in May and June. Students studying in the fall semester, you can expect warmer temps (60's-70's) from September –October, with the weather cooling down to the 40's in December. The most rain falls between November and February.

The climate in Greece is very dry (think Arizona or Denver), so bringing extra chap stick, eye

drops, and lotion might be something you consider, if your skin gets irritated easily.

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.

### **What to Pack**

Your peer advisor will give you a suggested packing list at your program group meeting the semester prior to your departure.

### **Appliances**

The standard electric current in Europe is 220 volts. U.S. appliances such as hair dryers and razors run on 110 volts. If you plan to bring these appliances, you will need to buy **both a converter and a plug adapter**. You may also choose to buy the appliances abroad.

## GETTING TO GREECE

### **Travel Arrangements**

It is your responsibility to make travel arrangements to Thessaloniki. As long as you arrive in Thessaloniki:

- on one of the designated arrival days
- between the designated arrival times
- 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. They will help you into a taxi (you will need to have €20-25 in hand to pay for the taxi fare). Another staff member will meet you at your housing, provide you with an arrival pack, and show you around your housing and neighborhood.

(\*\*Failure to submit your arrival information to ACT may result in you having to find transportation and your accommodations on your own.)

Arrivals should not occur prior to three days before orientation begins, since housing will not be available.

Arrivals after the designated times should plan on having to pay for an overnight stay at a hotel or wait it out at the airport. Be sure to travel with some cash (\$100 US ~ €70 is suggested) for exchange purposes upon your arrival.

### **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).

Astoria Hotel—9, Salaminos and Tsimiski str., Thessaloniki (tel. 2310-505500).

Travel information will be given to you as soon as it is available. There is also information on student-oriented travel agencies, instructions for booking a flight, and other travel information in the Study Abroad Handbook.

### **Getting to Thessaloniki**

There are several ways to get to Thessaloniki; however, ACT will only meet students who are arriving at the Thessaloniki airport (and then proceed to help you obtain a taxi). 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 ACT to get to your accommodation.

ACT recommends you have converted \$100 USD to Euros prior to arrival.

### **Lost Luggage**

In case your luggage gets lost upon arrival to Thessaloniki airport (SKG) please ensure that you do not exit the luggage reclaim area before reporting at the lost and found office in the reclaim area. Do not exit the sliding doors to the arrivals hall before providing that office with the information below. 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

### **Orientation**

ACT runs a mandatory orientation at the beginning of each semester that includes a day-long field trip. They will give you 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.

**\*Note that in order to apply for your residence permit, you will need to have €166 in CASH, in addition to the €400 you deposit in the bank** (current at the time of posting, subject to change). You will have some time after arrival to apply for the permit, so you can access the cash from an ATM.

## HOUSING

### *Housing Arrangements*

ACT arranges housing downtown for all study abroad students. The apartments are located within residential areas and provide easy access to supermarkets, pharmacies, banks, post office, etc. A housing request form was included in your acceptance materials.

The apartments are very small by U.S. standards, but they were constructed in 2005. 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). There are either double or single rooms. The total cost estimate is based off a double room. If you have a double room, you will receive your roommate assignment about two weeks before arrival. **Single rooms are available at an additional cost and you will pay that additional cost directly to ACT.**

You may also notice that you can hear your neighbors more in your apartments. The floors are usually tile and echo a lot of things. Past students have recommended not wearing high heels or noise making shoes around while in your apartment.

### *Departure from Housing*

Students who are staying for a semester must depart by the move out date. Students staying for the full academic year can stay in their housing for both semesters, including during breaks, without paying extra for break time periods. They must depart by the move out date in the spring.

### *Quiet Hours & Housing Policies*

Since you will be living in a residential area, ACT has set up some quiet hours so you are not disturbing the permanent residents in the area. They are between 3:00 and 5:00pm and again from 11:30pm to 7:00am.

There will be a visitation schedule set up to make sure you are keeping your room in good condition during the semester. There will also be an RA in each building.

Failure to observe housing policies set forth by ACT (including quiet hours, alcohol use, etc.) may lead to eviction without reimbursement or assistance by ACT in finding new housing.

### *Laundry*

All of the apartment buildings have laundry facilities in them. They also have a key chart by day of the week and time. You will go down to the laundry room and put a lock at the day/time you want to do laundry so you know the facilities will be available for you then. Washing machines are free in the apartment building, but you need to provide your own soap. You will hang dry all your clothes, just as most Greek students do.

### *Linens*

Bedding, towels, and kitchen utensils are not provided. (Blankets and pillows are provided to students living downtown). 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 once in Thessaloniki. The international office does have an IKEA bedding packet for sale, if students decide they don't want to bring their own bedding. In the past it has been around €15. There are also local stores and IKEA, in case you would like to shop for your own linens.

### ***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 main reason for this is that 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.

### ***Getting to Campus from Your Housing***

Your housing will be located 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. The city buses run every 10-15 minutes. The bus that serves ACT is the #58 and costs around 1 euro. You can buy tickets on the bus or you can buy tickets at the kiosks (or peripteros) all over the city. The peripteros are little stand-alone kiosks that sell candy,

cigarettes, newspapers, phone cards and bus tickets.

There is a monthly bus pass available; however, you are not eligible to buy a student bus ticket and when talking with U.S. students studying at ACT, they did not recommend purchasing it. They said it was about 30 euros for the month, and you could not 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.

## **FOOD**

### ***Meal Options***

Meals are on your own as there is no meal plan offered. You will be able to shop for your own groceries and prepare your own meals in your apartment. You can choose to eat some meals, quite inexpensively, in the campus cafeterias, and there are also a number of 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 amongst students as it allows you to try expensive restaurants you wouldn't normally try.

### ***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 similar to eggplant parmesan but not as tomato saucy. Contains eggplant, potatoes, onions, ground beef, oil, cinnamon, and a flour, milk and butter topping.
- **Pastitsio** (pah- 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.

## COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

### *Getting Involved*

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. Make an effort to meet and do things with Greek 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.

How to begin? Talk with the Greek and Balkan students in your classes. Don't be shy. Ask a fellow student to have a coffee or go to an event with you. Take the first step, so that they know you are interested in getting to know them.

### **Clubs**

At the beginning of each semester there is an Activities and Club's Fair where you can learn about the different opportunities. One club of particular interest to study abroad students is the field trip club that plans three to five trips each semester for a nominal fee. There are also other clubs and organizations on campus that you can join. Other clubs include: American Football Club, Cinema Club, Horse Riding Club, History and International Relations Society, Lifeguard Club, Marketing Society, Mountaineering Club, ACT Band, PC Games Design Club, ACT Radio (Radio ACTive), Sailing Club, Scuba Diving Club, etc. ACT 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.

There is also an option to join an intramural sports team. The sports offered are: tennis, table tennis, 5 vs. 5 soccer, volleyball, and basketball.

You might also choose to volunteer through the Service Learning Program that is organized by the Student Services Office. Past students have been able to volunteer at the writing center, special needs center, soup kitchens, local schools, youth centers, etc.

### **Community Events**

You can find out about community events by asking 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.

The international office will hold various events throughout the semester to help you mix with local students. 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.

### **Service Learning**

ACT now offers a course specific to service learning and you can learn more about that in the Academics Section earlier in this guide.

In addition to this course, ACT also provides a lot of community service opportunities. Students can volunteer 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. If you are interested in this, ACT will tell you during orientation how to get involved.

## **COMMUNICATION**

*Information on accessing/forwarding your UW-Eau Claire email address and using Skype is in your Study Abroad Handbook.*

### **Email/Internet Access**

ACT offers email 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.

### **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, Sevendí 17  
Pylea 55510  
GREECE

### **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.

### **Cell Phones**

Because you will not have a land line in your room, past participants suggest getting a cell phone after you arrive in Greece. At orientation, they will go over how to rent a cell phone that you can return at the end of the semester. It typically costs 40 Euros to start the plan and then you just 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. You can also contact your family using the Skype or Facetime. It's free to call other computers that have Skype installed.

There are also a variety of free texting apps such as WhatsApp or Facebook Messenger if you don't want to worry about purchasing a new phone. You will need to make sure your phone is not roaming but instead only on Wi-Fi.

## **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 than in the U.S. 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. In Greece, 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. If you're having a great conversation/debate on a topic, then you may spend more days covering it than originally planned. The professors don't want to be ruled by a set schedule, because they know all the material will be covered, but at its own pace. Relax and try a new style!

Note: The more relaxed time concept **does not apply** in academic situations, such as class or a meeting with a professor. In these situations, and other more formal settings such as 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 are very different from those in the U.S. Although it can vary depending on season and type of shop, here are typical store hours: 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 still smoke and smoking is allowed in most places. Your taxi driver may

smoke while driving you to a location and most bars/restaurants allow smoking. You may notice some students will invite you out for smoke breaks and while you don't have to smoke, you can still go with them to socialize. They won't be offended if you decline their invitation to smoke or join them outside.

### **Other Notes**

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

Visiting students usually notice that there are no pollution controls for vehicles, buses, industry, etc. ACT is becoming more environmentally conscious, however. The campus has a recycling program.

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

## **TRAVEL WHILE ABROAD**

### **Travel through ACT**

A three-day trip to Athens and a day-trip to Vergina are included in the program costs. In addition, ACT organizes trips through a "field-trip club." 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, you may want to go by regional bus. 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 (Monastiriou 67). You can reach the bus terminal by catching a bus on Tsiminski near Aristotelus Square that has KTEL as its destination (check sign posts at bus stops).

### **Train Travel**

Thessaloniki also has a train station. The station serves as a major point of departure and arrival for trains from many countries in the Balkans, with connections to other European countries including Turkey. You can check train times and routes on <https://www.raileurope.com/train-tickets/rail-passes/>. This website also lets you know if the train you need *requires* reservations. If it does, be sure to reserve a seat ahead of time so you can take the train you need.

### **Air Travel**

Both Ryan Air and Easy Jet, budget European airlines, fly in and out of Thessaloniki. Budget airlines can be nice to use but keep in mind you may have limitations on the amount of luggage you can bring.

**NOTE: Students studying for the full year or spring 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.**

## PAST PARTICIPANT TIPS

### WHAT THEY WISH THEY HAD KNOWN:

Bring some zip lock bags for things.

The lack of English will be a big adjustment.

I wish I had looked into international phone plans more.

Greek time is a thing.

### THEY'RE SAFETY TIPS:

Travel in groups – it makes it easier booking hostels but also provides comfort knowing you're with others you trust.

### HOW THEY SUMMED IT UP:

I loved Thessaloniki! The people are so kind and the food is amazing, through this program you really immerse yourself in the different culture. Studying abroad was a wonderful opportunity and I wouldn't want to spend it anywhere else.

## WEB RESOURCES FOR GREECE

| <i>City</i>                                                                                                                                                                      |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Travel Guide to Thessaloniki:</b> <a href="http://grecetravel.com/thessaloniki/introduction.html">http://grecetravel.com/thessaloniki/introduction.html</a>                   |
| <b>Weather in Thessaloniki:</b> <a href="http://www.wunderground.com/global/stations/16622.html">http://www.wunderground.com/global/stations/16622.html</a>                      |
| <b>Thessaloniki Information :</b> <a href="http://www.saloniki.org/">http://www.saloniki.org/</a>                                                                                |
| <b>Thessaloniki Lonely Planet:</b> <a href="http://www.lonelyplanet.com/greece/northern-greece/thessaloniki">http://www.lonelyplanet.com/greece/northern-greece/thessaloniki</a> |
| <i>Culture</i>                                                                                                                                                                   |
| <b>The Greek Language:</b> <a href="https://www.greek-language.com/index.html">https://www.greek-language.com/index.html</a>                                                     |
| <b>Festivals, Celebrations &amp; Holidays in Greece:</b> <a href="http://www.grecetravel.com/holidays/">http://www.grecetravel.com/holidays/</a>                                 |
| <b>Greek Food:</b> <a href="http://www.yasas.com/greek-life/popular-greek-foods.asp">http://www.yasas.com/greek-life/popular-greek-foods.asp</a>                                 |
| <i>Country</i>                                                                                                                                                                   |
| <b>Greece National Tourism Organization:</b> <a href="http://www.visitgreece.gr">http://www.visitgreece.gr</a>                                                                   |
| <b>Greece Lonely Planet:</b> <a href="https://www.lonelyplanet.com/greece">https://www.lonelyplanet.com/greece</a>                                                               |
| <b>Newspapers:</b> <a href="http://www.onlinenewspapers.com/greece.htm">http://www.onlinenewspapers.com/greece.htm</a>                                                           |

## CONTACT NAMES & ADDRESSES

GENERAL UW-EAU CLAIRE & CISI CONTACT INFORMATION IS IN YOUR STUDY ABROAD HANDBOOK.

### ACT

Ms. Heather Funk  
Director, International Programs  
Anatolia College/ACT  
PO Box 21021  
Avenue Kennedy  
Pylea 555 10  
Thessaloniki, GREECE  
PH: 011-30-2310-398-205  
24 Hour Emergency Number: (+30) 6936.000-358  
EMAIL: [heather@act.edu](mailto:heather@act.edu)  
<mailto:antonefi@act.edu>  
<http://www.act.edu/>

Ms. Miranda Margariti  
Study Abroad Coordinator  
American College of Thessaloniki  
Email: [mmargari@act.edu](mailto:mmargari@act.edu)  
Tel: 011 30 2310 398205

### UW-EAU CLAIRE

Center for International Education  
Jenna Krosch  
Study Abroad Coordinator  
[kroschjm@uwec.edu](mailto:kroschjm@uwec.edu)

3 Schofield Hall  
University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire  
Eau Claire, WI 54702  
Phone: (715) 836-4411  
Fax: (715) 836-4948

### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Consulate General, Greece  
650 North St. Clair Street  
Chicago, IL 60611  
Phone: 312.335.3915  
Fax: 312.335.3958  
E-mail: [chicago@greekembassy.org](mailto:chicago@greekembassy.org)

Consulate General, United States  
Consulate General 43 Tsimiski  
7th Floor GR-54623  
Thessaloniki  
Phone: (30) (2310) 242-905  
<http://thessaloniki.usconsulate.gov/>

The **U.S. Department of State** offers useful travel information on the "Travel and Living Abroad" section of their web site-  
<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel/International-Travel-Country-Information-Pages/Greece.html>

We suggest you leave a copy of this page with your emergency contact/parents.