



Welcome N.U.*in* Families!

We look forward to communicating with you as your student prepares for departure, experiences life abroad, and transitions to Northeastern in January. Please read this N.U.*in* Parent Guide carefully and be sure your student reads through the N.U.*in* website for all important information. As always, do not hesitate to contact N.U.*in* at NUin@neu.edu or 617-373-6447 with any questions or concerns.

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• Preparing for Departure

Stay Informed

N.U.*in* will be communicating directly with your student to provide all pre-departure information and news alerts. Information and forms are available on the N.U.*in* website. When necessary, we will send additional information and email reminders for deadlines to the students' email address, which they have provided to us.

The most important item for preparing for the upcoming semester is the **Pre-departure Timeline**. Each timeline can be found through our website and is **location specific**. We encourage parents to print off the timeline, read it carefully with their student, and hang it in a location where you will see it regularly.

During these pre-departure months, N.U.*in* will send a number of emails to parents alerting them of upcoming or passed student deadlines. N.U.*in* will use the parent email address(es) provided to Northeastern University in your student's application.

In the past, parents have not received information from their student, so we urge you to stay in constant contact with your student regarding N.U.*in* information in order to stay well-informed of requirements and deadlines.

Health While Abroad

We strongly encourage you to honestly discuss your student's health and health-related practices. Going abroad is not a cure for concerns and problems. In particular, if you are concerned with your student's use of alcohol and other substances, or if your student has an emotional health concern, this should be addressed openly before departure.

The student should visit his or her physician(s) and dentist to ensure good health before travel. Organize medications, prescription renewals, and any special medical supplies that may be necessary while abroad. Your student will need a physician's prescription for medications and medical supplies to pass through immigration and customs. If you expect your student to need regular medical care while abroad, have their physician write a letter of introduction that outlines details of the medical condition care and specific needs of the student.

Communications

Explore the many communication methods available to you and your student and devise a plan on how you will communicate during the semester. **Keep in mind that communication access and speed—particularly internet—varies significantly by country.** Be sure to include alternate communication plans in the event of communication malfunction.

Following is a list of communication options:

- ***Cell Phones***

For safety reasons, students are required to have a cell phone while abroad. You and the student have the option of buying a phone before the student leaves, or upon in-country arrival. Northeastern does not endorse any cell phone companies and strongly urges parents and students to investigate cell phone opportunities for the student. Have your student gather all important phone numbers for staying in touch.

- ***Email***

All residences are equipped with internet and students will have access to computer labs on-campus as well.

- **Skype**

Skype is a free telephony service which allows you to make free phone calls through your computer. See Attachment 1 for detailed instructions.

- **Regular Post**

While not the current norm, this mode of communication is sure to bring a smile to your student's face! If you plan to send care packages, be sure that you investigate the custom regulations and shipping restrictions of the country where your student resides so packages aren't held for quarantine or students charged import fees.

Country Orientation

Familiarize yourself and your student with local laws and customs of the country. Be sure that you understand these local laws and customs as your student will be responsible for abiding by the laws.

Packing

Keep your student realistic about packing. All packing lists are available through the online checklist at our website, www.neu.edu/admissions/nuinfo.

Pre-departure Family Meeting

Schedule time to talk openly about how the N.U.*in* Program is an atypical first-semester-of-college experience, and your feelings about this.

- ◆ Students, how will you manage typical feelings like homesickness, adjusting to a new environment, and making more independent decisions?
- ◆ What do you hope to learn from this experience?
- ◆ In what ways are you prepared; in what ways are you unsure?
- ◆ Parents, what guidance do you have for your son or daughter about beginning college and living in a different country?
- ◆ How will you support your child's independence abroad?
- ◆ How much do you each know about your host location?
- ◆ What do you expect from each other?
- ◆ How does this apply to spending money, how often you will communicate, and rules that differ between the US and the N.U.*in* country (such as alcohol use)?

We strongly recommend that you and your family members together review the Northeastern University alcohol policy.

NU Alcohol Policy (<http://www.northeastern.edu/publicsafety/drugpol.html>) Please note that the policy for underage drinking does not apply to students in N.U.*in* while abroad since students will be of age, however all other policies do apply.

Discuss Expenses

You should begin to plan how much you can afford to spend now so you can budget accordingly when you arrive in country. Discuss as a family **before you leave** whether or not you should include such items as traveling or clothes in your expenses. As you will have access to a kitchen in your residence hall, take some time to practice meal planning, cooking, or food shopping to get a sense of how to make wise and economical food choices.

N.U.in 2010 students found that they spent the majority of their budget on the following items:

- food
- clothing
- entertainment
- international and domestic travel
- phone calls

As spending varies by students' budgets and interests, we urge you to consider your student's habits and research about spending abroad. Below you will find a chart that may be useful in helping you and your student plan for expenses.

Location	Average Monthly Budget USD
London, England Dublin, Ireland	\$700-1,200
Thessaloniki, Greece	\$400-800
Melbourne, Australia	\$600-1,000
San José, Costa Rica	\$400-600

• While Abroad

Understanding your Student's Culture Shock

Your student will go through several periods of adjustment when in-country, commonly known as culture shock. "Culture shock" is a term used to describe some of the more pronounced reactions to spending an extended period of time in a culture very different from one's own.

It is important that you are supportive of your student through these phases while making sure not to feed into any negativity that may result from this period of adjustment. Below is more information about culture shock (Adapted by Loyola Marymount University's Pre-departure Booklet):

Culture Shock: The Four Stages of Adjustment

1. The Honeymoon Stage

This stage is characterized by exhilaration, anticipation and excitement. The student is fascinated with everything new. The student is embarking on their 'dream come true'.

2. The Hostility Stage

This stage is characterized by frustration, anger, anxiety and sometimes depression.

Other symptoms of this stage may include:

- excessive concern over cleanliness and health
- feelings of helplessness and withdrawal
- irritability
- fear of being cheated or robbed
- an intense desire for home and friends
- loneliness, isolation and disorientation

- defensive communication
- physiological stress reactions such as upset stomach, or sleeplessness

3. The Adjustment Stage

This stage occurs when the student begins to relax in the new situation and begins to feel at ease with minor mistakes which previously would have caused major headaches. This relaxed and adjusted state of being is accomplished by making some friends, and getting to know the host culture.

4. The Bi-culturality Stage

This stage occurs when the student not only retains allegiance to the home culture but also feels at home in the new one. The student may feel some conflict on return to the home culture.

[Click here](#) to view an animated diagram and discussion, entitled “Understanding Culture Stress.”

Blogs

The Student Blog and the N.U.in News Blog are great ways to keep in touch and stay informed while your student is abroad. **Keep in mind that communication access and speed—particularly internet—varies significantly by country.**

- *The Student Blog*

N.U.in students are required to keep a blog during their semester abroad. Parents and friends are urged to check the Student Blogs regularly to see what’s new in the life of their student. The student blog can be accessed at: <http://nuweb4.neu.edu/nuin/>.

- *The N.U.in News Blog (Accessed from the N.U.in Student Blog)*

The N.U.in News Blog will allow you to read newsletters, written by each N.U.in Site Director and staff to inform parents, friends, and family members of the events and activities in which the students are involved.

● **Student Transitions**

Back Home

People who have lived abroad often find that the adjustment to returning home is more difficult than their adjustment to the foreign culture. Be prepared that your student may experience “reverse culture shock.”

My parents don't understand me now. They expect me to be the same person I was before I went abroad, but I'm not! Why can't they let me be myself?

Open communication is the best way to combat reverse culture shock. Recognize the changes that have occurred in your student and encourage them to share the new skills they have learned as a result of the study abroad experience. Discuss ways they can use these new skills to further their educational, professional, and personal goals.

To Northeastern

It is **mandatory** for all incoming students to attend the New Student Orientation at Northeastern University prior to the commencement of their first on campus semester.

Following is a general student communication timeline from the Office of New Student Orientation and refers to Part III: Northeastern Orientation:

Communication	Via	Date
Save the Dates for the Northeastern Orientation	Email	Mid August
Pre-Enrollment Packet, "A Guide to Getting Ready"	Hardcopy given to students on-site	Late September
Northeastern Orientation Registration	Admitted Student Portal	Late September
Parent Orientation Invitation	Letter	Early October
Orientation Reminder to home address	Postcard	Mid October
Orientation Reminder to students	Email	Mid October
Reminder to non-registered students	Email	Late October
Orientation Confirmation Packets	Post	One month prior to selected orientation date
Save the Date for New Student Orientation Registration	Email	April 2012

• The N.U.*in* Pre-departure Orientation

Parents and guardians are welcome to attend the Parent Program on the first day of the students' N.U.*in* Pre-departure Orientation. Student will register for the N.U.*in* Pre-departure Orientation via their myNEU student portal after May 2. Students will have until **May 20** to register.

Please see the day's *tentative* topics below:

- What to Expect While Your Student is Abroad
- Supporting Your Student: Culture Shock
- Staying in Touch: Communication While Students are Abroad

• Useful Websites

www.studentsabroad.state.gov

www.travel.state.gov

www.lonelyplanet.com

www.studyabroad.com

www.travellady.com

www.cnn.com

www.bbc.co.uk

<http://nuweb4.neu.edu/nuin/>

Department of State's website for students going abroad

Travel and health advisories for each country

Provides a large amount of general information

Country specific information

Numerous articles on the ins and outs of every country

News and current affairs from various countries

News and current affairs from various countries

N.U.*in* Student Blog