

This guide is intended to help students prepare for the visa process. Please note that visa requirements and procedures can change with little or no notice. The Center for Global Study & Engagement (CGSE) strongly recommends reviewing this guide before applying to study abroad to ensure that visa timelines and requirements do not conflict with other academic, travel, or personal commitments.

Visa requirements may differ based on your citizenship status. If you are an international student or hold dual citizenship, please consult CGSE early to understand how this may affect your visa process.

How to use this guide

This is a planning tool to help you understand the general visa process. Once accepted into a program, you will receive a detailed visa guide including key dates, deadlines, required documents, and action items specific to your program via email and through the program's D2L Brightspace pre-departure course.

Visa Requirements

- All students (except EU citizens) must obtain a student visa to participate in the program.
- Students who arrive in Spain without a valid visa will be denied entry and may be sent home at their own expense.
- You are responsible for providing the documents to obtain your visa.
- Students are expected to submit their visa applications as a group through Dickinson.
- The visa process is critical. Please take it seriously and begin early.

Visa process at a glance

- **CONSULT** and **READ** information on the visa guide and D2L Brightspace course
- **GATHER** all of the supporting documentation for your visa application.
- **APPLY** through the group application process

Materials you should be prepared to provide:

- Original passport**
 - You will need to surrender your original passport at your visa appointment. Do not plan any international travel while your visa is processing.
 - Your passport must be valid at least 12 months AFTER the end of your study abroad program.
- Medical certificate**
 - This must be signed by an MD (not a DO, NP, PA, etc).
 - This requires advanced planning and is not typically available at the Wellness Center. You may need to visit your PCP or a local urgent care center.
- Required application materials (Accepted students will receive specific information)**
- Visa fees**
 - You are responsible for all associated fees related to obtaining your visa (including travel, if required). Refer to the program cost sheet for estimated visa fees.

Additional requirement for academic-year students ONLY

- FBI background check (and copy)**
 - ***This can be a lengthy process (6-8 weeks); students should start this process as soon as possible.***
 - Original and a copy.
 - The background check must be sent to the [US Department of State](#) to obtain an apostille.

TIMING CONSIDERATIONS

For fall and academic year students

- Applications must be submitted at least two months before the start of the program.
- For the fall and academic year, the visa applications are typically submitted to the consulate in early to mid-April (subject to change)
- Visa processing can take several weeks to months, especially during summer.
- You will not be able to travel internationally while your passport is being processed.
- Plan ahead and contact CGSE with any concerns.
- International students returning home for summer may need to apply from their home country. Visa procedures and timelines may vary significantly. CGSE can assist, but it is your responsibility to confirm the process.

For Spring semester students

- Visa processing occurs during winter break and may take several weeks to months
- Visa applications are typically submitted to the consulate in mid to late October.
- You will not be able to travel internationally during this time.
- Applications must be submitted at least two months before the start of the program, which means that if you are studying abroad in the fall semester at a different location, it may not be possible for you to obtain your visa between programs. You should consult the CGSE before making your plans.
- You may be able to apply from your fall location, but this is not guaranteed.
- You may need to return to the U.S. between semesters to apply. Confirm your fall program's end date to ensure the timeline works.
- International students should confirm where they will be during visa processing. If returning to your home country, check how this affects your visa application. You may need to apply from your home country, where procedures may differ.