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Greetings from Vesalius College!

We are very pleased and honored to have the privilege of welcoming your students to our campus in Brussels. We plan to provide them with an environment of personal challenge and academic development as well as with the security of the small, international community that defines Vesalius College. This document will help you to counsel your students who are interested in studying at Vesalius and who might have some questions about our programs, requirements or amenities. We will update this document yearly. Please do not hesitate to contact us should you have any additional questions. More detailed information can be found on our website at www.vesalius.edu

Study Abroad Program Contacts

Silvia Dell’Acqua, Director of International Programmes, Projects and Outreach (Primary)
Email: sdellacq@vub.ac.be

Caroline Van Ongevalle, Study Abroad Assistant (Secondary)
Email: cvongeva@vub.ac.be

Study Abroad Department Mailing Address

Vesalius College
Study Abroad Office
Pleinlaan 2
1050 Brussels
Belgium
Phone: +32-2-614-8170
Fax: +32-2-614-8050
Costs

Tuition

Visiting study abroad or exchange students do not pay tuition to Vesalius College. They pay tuition to their home institutions. In the case of study abroad students, Vesalius College will bill the home institution for the students’ tuition and fees.

Estimated Cost of Living (per semester)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Euro (€)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Educational Materials</td>
<td>750.00 – 900.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accommodation</td>
<td>2,300.00 – 3,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food (minimum)</td>
<td>1,300.00 – 1,700.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Transportation</td>
<td>160.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Insurance</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobile Phone</td>
<td>200.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Packing for your semester abroad

Shipping recommendations for excess baggage and personal effects.

It can be very challenging to pack your suitcase when trying to prepare for a semester or a year abroad. You’ll need to take into account varying weather conditions and also be sure not to exceed your maximum baggage allowance on the plane. This is why most students opt to have extra clothes and other personal items shipped to them from home. The problem that may be encountered, though, is that many students find themselves having to pay hefty customs taxes (“douane”) in order to claim their package at the post office. This is because gifts and commercial goods sent to Belgium from abroad are subject the Belgian customs tax.

How can you try and avoid having to pay this tax?

Shipment Via Regular Mail:

1. If your package had a declared value of goods shipped on the mailing label (i.e. if your parents estimated the value of the shipment to write it on the mailing ticket) then you can be sure that a tax will be imposed based on the declared value. As such, it is best to ask the sender to write “personal effects” on the sending label but NOT to declare a value for the goods shipped. One problem, though, is that if there is no value declared by the sender, customs officials will often open the package, give an estimate of the value of the goods and then declare a tax due based on their evaluation.

2. If the package is to be considered “excess baggage” then this can be shipped tax free. However, the goods must be shipped in a suitcase. The same instructions apply, however, when filling out the shipping label. The sender should indicate that the contents are “personal effects” and should NOT declare a value for the goods shipped.
3. Specific questions about customs taxes and standard shipping can be addressed directly with B-Post. The phone number is +32 (0)22 012345. You should choose the option to continue in Dutch ("en Néerlandais" - option 1) and then, when you get someone on the line, ask to speak to someone in English.

**Alternative Shipping Methods (from the US):**

1. **US Postal Priority Mail International:** With this type of shipment, the package is tracked – this is a very rapid mode of expedition and also one of the safest. However, you have a 50% chance of facing customs charges.

2. **US Postal Express Mail International:** This is the most secure, controlled and rapid mode of expedition. However, with this type of expedition, you are almost certain to encounter customs charges.

3. **Private Shipping Companies (UPS, DHL...):** Again – very rapid and secured expedition, but sure to result in your having to pay customs charges.

In light of this information, it would seem that your best bet for avoiding customs taxes would be to ship your goods via standard delivery methods, claiming “personal effects.” Your decision, however, might depend on the value of what you want to ship and the level of security you require.

**Housing**

Vesalius College’s housing coordinator is responsible for helping all study abroad and exchange students secure housing for their stay in Brussels.

**Home Stays**

The Study Abroad department works with a number of host families who, for years, have welcomed international students into their homes. These families are committed to enriching the study abroad experience for these students while always coming away with positive, fulfilling experiences of their own. Most of our host families are French-speaking, although some are Dutch-speaking. All have a good command of the English language and are able to communicate effectively with students who have no knowledge of French or Dutch.

If a student opts for this type of housing, their stay with the host family will begin as soon as they arrive in Brussels. The cost for this type of housing is currently at 160€ per week and is subject to cost-of-living increases.

**Services included are:**

- Bed and breakfast, 7 days a week
- Dinner, 5 days a week (weekdays)
- Use of bathroom/shower
- Use of kitchen when no meals are provided
- Use of telephone in case of emergencies
- Internet access*

Students wishing to stay with a host family should fill in the Host Family Request Form ([http://www.vesalius.edu/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/Homestay-request-form-fillin2.pdf](http://www.vesalius.edu/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/Homestay-request-form-fillin2.pdf)) and return it to Mrs. Bénédicte Debray ([benedictebray@hotmail.com](mailto:benedictebray@hotmail.com)).

**For students staying with host families:**

The mandatory arrival date in the host family is the SUNDAY THAT PRECEDES THE FIRST DAY OF ORIENTATION (this is true for the fall, spring or summer terms. Although students are welcome to arrive in Brussels before this day, they will need to find independent accommodations (youth hostel, hotel or other for the days that precede the Sunday move-in day). Please see the following web page for more information: [http://www.vesalius.edu/academics/study-abroad-programme/incoming-students/housing-and-expenses/#Independent](http://www.vesalius.edu/academics/study-abroad-programme/incoming-students/housing-and-expenses/#Independent). The home stay application form can be found on the following page: [http://www.vesalius.edu/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/Homestay-request-form-fillin2.pdf](http://www.vesalius.edu/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/Homestay-request-form-fillin2.pdf) and must be sent via email to Bénédicte Debray at [benedictebray@hotmail.com](mailto:benedictebray@hotmail.com).

**Home Stay Application deadlines**

- Fall semester: June 1
- Spring semester: November 15
- Summer term: March 30

Students who fail to submit their application on time cannot be guaranteed a host family. If placed, they also cannot be guaranteed fulfillment of their requests.

**Students will be notified of their placements** no later than three weeks prior to the first day of orientation.

Students in home stays will be asked to review and sign the contract. This contract will be distributed during the home stay talk, which will be given during orientation. It is important that students are aware of their responsibilities towards the host family and towards the university when in a home stay.

*It should be noted that Belgian internet providers limit the amount of traffic per subscriber. Typically, the limit is around 50 gigabytes per month, but students may want to check this with their host families. Factors that contribute to exceeding the data limits include downloading movies or using voice-over-IP programs such as Skype for phone calls and webcam sessions. As such, students may be asked to limit their internet use in the home or to pay additional internet charges so that the family may supplement their subscription.*
Independent Apartment Accommodation

If the student opts for independent housing, please note that housing cannot be arranged before their arrival in Belgium. As such, if possible, we recommend that the student arrives in Brussels one week before orientation; as the earlier they arrive in Brussels, the easier it will be to find accommodation. Prices for independent student accommodation can vary from €350 to €600 per month, depending on size and level of comfort. Charges, such as phone, utilities, internet, etc. are not always fully included and may result in additional monthly fees.

Students may opt for temporary accommodations upon arrival in Brussels. Some addresses can be found on our website: http://www.vesalius.edu/academics/study-abroad-programme/incoming-students/housing-and-expenses/#Independent

For students desiring independent accommodations:

The following options exist:

1) Youth Hostel – please see the following site for contact information: http://www.vesalius.edu/academics/study-abroad-programme/incoming-students/housing-and-expenses/#homestay.

2) Independent apartment – please refer to the site above for more information.

3) International Student House (Van Orley) – single and double rooms in downtown Brussels. Please refer to their website: http://www.brik.be/international-students/van-orley-international-student-house. Students wishing to reserve a room should contact the provider directly.

4) NEW! U-Residence – brand new facility containing single and double rooms on VUB campus, across the street from Vesalius: www.u-residence.be. This residence takes students on a first-come, first-served basis and also offers hotel rooms for very short visits. Students wishing to reserve a room should contact the provider directly.

5) NEW! Jump Away – Fully-furnished and equipped shared international student flats located near campus: http://www.jumpaway.eu. Students wishing to reserve a room should contact the provider directly.

• Students wishing to obtain additional assistance from the Vesalius Housing Coordinator in finding independent housing should fill out the Independent Housing Request Form: http://www.vesalius.edu/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/form_housing_needs.pdf and email to Bénédicte Debray at benedictedebray@hotmail.com.
Town Hall (Commune) Registration

When students arrive in Brussels, they are required to register with the town hall of the commune in which they reside. The student visa (3-month; single entry) requires that students register with their town hall within 3-8 days of arriving in Brussels. If this is not done, students may have trouble travelling across borders to and from non-Schengen countries once their student visa runs out.

Your student visa required that you need to register with your town hall within 3-8 days of arriving in Brussels (don’t worry about this). However do not wait too long to make an appointment to register (make an appointment within 2 weeks of your arrival). If you do not register, you may have trouble travelling across borders to and from non-Schengen countries once your student visa runs out.

Required documents for town hall registration include:

- Identity card and/or international passport (with student visa stamp)
- The certificate (“proof of registration”) proving that the student is officially registered as a student at Vesalius College (obtained at Vesalius Reception Desk).
- If applicable, an official document to prove student received a study grant or scholarship
- Student’s housing contract to prove Belgian address
- Student’s E128 form or equivalent health insurance document (student possesses one)
- 5 identity photos
- Cash (up to €50)

It is also very important that, before leaving Belgium, students return to the town hall to withdraw their name from the town hall registry. In the case of students in home stays, the home stay provider may be required to continue to pay fees for students who have left the country but who are still listed as living at their address.

Application Information

Academic Terms

- Fall Semester: Late August – mid December
- Spring Semester: Late January – mid May
- Summer Term: Late May – mid July

Please check the web link for exact dates, http://www.vesalius.edu/studyabroad, academic calendar.

*It is imperative that visiting students respect the start and end dates of our academic calendar and purchase their plane tickets accordingly. The orientation session at the beginning of each term is mandatory. In addition, students must plan to remain in Brussels until the last day of the final exam period as the final exam schedule is not defined until the week before finals week. Vesalius professors are not expected to give visiting students early examinations in order to suit the students’ individual travel needs.*
Admission Requirements

Applications (http://www.vesalius.edu/studyabroad/sawa) must be printed out, filled in and then returned electronically or by regular mail to:

Caroline Van Ongevalle  
Vesalius College  
Study Abroad Office  
Pleinlaan 2  
1050 Brussels  
Belgium  
cvongeva@vub.ac.be

All academic transcripts and bank statements must be sent as original copies and translated into English.

For more information, please see the following link:  
http://www.vesalius.edu/academics/study-abroad-programme/incoming-students/academic-information/

Application Deadlines

✓ Fall Semester: April 1  
✓ Spring Semester: November 1  
✓ Summer Semester: May 15

Pre-Registration Deadlines:

✓ Fall Semester: April 15  
✓ Spring Semester: November 15

Internship Course Application Deadlines (CV’s and Cover letters)

✓ Fall semester: July 1  
✓ Spring semester: November 15  
✓ Summer term: April 1

Once the Internship catalogue is published, in order to officially apply for the Internship course, students must follow the instructions on the Internship page of the Vesalius College Website (http://www.vesalius.edu/academics/vesalius-internship-programme/) and then send their CV and cover letters for their top 3 placement choices to the Internships team at internships@vesalius.be

In order to guarantee that we can adequately review the quality of your application materials, it is important that you submit your cv and cover letters as soon as possible before the application deadline!

Be sure to select internship positions from the offerings posted for the semester in which you intend to be in Brussels and not from the previous semester offerings.
Studies

Majors Available

All bachelor programs offered by Vesalius College are open to study abroad and exchange student enrollment. These include business, communications and international affairs.

Courses

✓ All courses offered by Vesalius College are open to study abroad and exchange students as long as they have met the pre-requisites at their home universities.
✓ Only the course BELG 3002 is closed to all students except for students from the study abroad group, CIEE.
✓ Every semester, Vesalius College proposes a certain number of external courses provided by university partners located in the Brussels area (i.e. the Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Boston University, the Royal Conservatory, etc.). A few of these courses may carry an additional charge. Many of these also follow the European academic calendar, meaning that they begin and end later in the semester than do Vesalius College courses. Students choosing to select external courses may need to take this into account when purchasing their plane tickets.
✓ Each spring, Vesalius College offers the course “POL 315E – Model United Nations”. This is a preparatory course for the Geneva International Model United Nations (GIMUN) Summit, which takes place every spring. Only students who also attended Vesalius College in the fall and began preparations to take POL 315E in the spring or students who have independently applied to and been accepted as delegates to the GIMUN for the spring can apply to take POL 315E.
✓ Any student who wishes to enroll in a French or Dutch language course above the elementary level (elementary French – LFR 101E or elementary Dutch – LDU 101E) will be required to take a language placement test during orientation week. Results of this test will determine the appropriate language level in which to place the student and for which course the student will be allowed to register.
✓ The course ‘ART361E-European Studies’ includes mandatory field trips to approximately 5 European cities. This course carries an additional charge of 795€, which will typically be billed directly to the students (unless other arrangements have been made with the home institution).

The following site: http://www.vesalius.edu/academics/study-abroad-programme/incoming-students/academic-information/ offers information on the current course schedule, course descriptions, and gives provides a complete downloadable version of the course catalogue.
Internship

Please see deadline information under the ‘Admission Requirements’ heading on page 7. Vesalius College offers students the opportunity to work while earning university credits in some of the most prestigious public and private organizations in the Brussels area. Students wishing to participate in the internship program must apply directly to the Internships Team. All applications must be sent before the deadline to the Internships team, at internships@vesalius.be. The listing of internship opportunities is updated every term (spring, summer and fall) and is posted online. For information on the Vesalius Internship Program, including current internship opportunities, application guidelines and application deadlines, please refer to the following website:

English Proficiency

Study abroad and exchange students from partner universities whose language of instruction is not English, whose mother tongue is not English, or who have not completed their high school education in English, are required to present the results of an English proficiency exam.

- IELTS score (to be used whenever possible as the preferable test): at least 6.5/9.0
- TOEFL score (only in the case where IELTS test not possible): at least 577/677 (paper based), 233/300 (computer based) or 90/120 (internet based)

Legal Requirements

Visa

Visiting students coming from outside the Schengen region are required to obtain a student visa to study in Belgium for the spring and fall semesters. For the summer term, a student visa is not required and students can simply study in Brussels on a tourist visa.

Vesalius College provides all students with two versions of their acceptance letters, one in English and one in Dutch. These will be required by the Belgian consulate or embassy to which they apply for their visa.

Students can expect to wait from 4 weeks to several months for the issuance of their visa depending on the backlog of the consulate or embassy to which they apply and on their age at the time of application. Students 21 and over will be required to undergo a full background check plus fingerprinting (this means an FBI background check for US students), which can be an extremely lengthy procedure. It is therefore imperative for students to submit their applications in a timely manner.
The student visa typically allows for a 3-month stay with multiple entries into Belgium. Some embassies/consulates may issue 6-month visas and other may only issue 3-month single entry visas. Please be sure and check which type you have been issued before planning on travel once in Europe.

More information on student visa applications can be found on the following site: http://diplomatie.belgium.be/en/services/travel_to_belgium/studying_in_belgium/.

**Health Insurance**

Visiting students are required to obtain international health insurance before arriving in Brussels. Vesalius College does not provide a health insurance plan, however, does recommend that students consider obtaining supplemental Belgian national health insurance.

Some Belgian hospitals and emergency treatment centers will refuse treatment of patients without up-front down-payments of considerable sums of money. Others will allow for initial treatment but will require rapid payment for services rendered and will not direct-bill US or other international health insurance companies. This means that, although the students’ international health insurance will cover reimbursement of the medical expenses, the student will still initially be required to provide considerable sums out-of-pocket, which may prove to be quite a hardship.

With Belgian national health insurance, the hospital or emergency care service will direct bill the student’s policy, thus requiring no up-front payment. Seventy-five percent of the student’s medical expenses will be covered, including routine medical visits and prescription drugs.

The costs of Belgian national health insurance differ depending on the student’s registration status. If not yet registered in a Belgian Town hall at time of application; the cost is of €55,00/quarter + €6,95/month. If registered in a Belgian town hall; the cost is €6.95/month.

For more information on obtaining Belgian health insurance, please see the following site for Euromut health insurance: http://www.euromut.be/ContentServer/expats/Situation-en/situation.studying-in-belgium/S_article. Our contact at Euromut is Charlotte de Raymond at Charlotte.deraymond@euromut.be (tel: 0032/(0)472/23.63.64.)
Vesalius College Services

English and Math Workspace

The English and Math Workspace is a service designed to help students with the following:
- Planning and construction of written assignments
- Tutoring in Math and Statistics
- Time management
- Research, bibliography and annotation skills
- Numeracy Skills
- Difficulties with English grammar, syntax and/or punctuation

This service is free of charge to both Vesalius students and study-abroad students. Tutors are available by appointment.

English and Writing: kate.connelly@vub.ac.be
Math and Statistics: koen.lefever@vub.ac.be

College Psychologist

Vesalius College offers students support for personal issues with the counseling services of Alex Anghelou, a clinical psychologist specialized in Cognitive Behavior Therapy (CBT). He provides a safe environment for students to discuss concerns which may impede their academic progress and/or personal growth. Among other things, the issues he helps with vary from culture-shock, exam anxieties, relationship difficulties, homesickness and sexual identity/orientation to drug/alcohol dependency, eating-disorders, stress, and depression.

Sessions for counseling occur once a week on Wednesday and last for up to an hour. Counseling is provided to students at no cost and sessions and their content remain strictly confidential. Students may contact the counselor directly for an appointment at anghelou@gmail.com.

Airport Pick-Up

- Arrange for car service pick-up in advance by contacting “Taxi Bien - Morvan,” which is the provider Vesalius College has used for many years. Vesalius College will no longer arrange for airport pickup and this will be the responsibility of the student. Credit card payments are accepted. Cancellations and changes in arrival times will need to be communicated directly to Morvan if this option is chosen and financial consequences may intervene for failure to show up at the confirmed time. Students should contact Taxi Bien-Morvan at LEAST 5 DAYS PRIOR TO ARRIVAL at: TAXI BIEN - DISPATCHING DE MORVAN - TAXI SERVICE - Nieuwe Steenweg, 10 - 1731 Zellik, Belgium
  Phone: +32-476-43-20-74 / Fax: +322-466-21-73 / Email: taxibien@gmail.com

- Take a Brussels Airport Taxi directly at the airport. This service is very easy to use; the cab drivers can almost always communicate in English and it is possible to pay with credit card. More information can be found on the following site: http://www.brusselsairport.be/nl/passngr/to_from_brussels_airport/taxi/

- Contact the host family to see if they would be willing to pick the student up from the airport.
**New Student Orientation**

Vesalius College provides a mandatory orientation for visiting students at the beginning of every term. In the spring and fall, sessions run from the Wednesday through the Saturday. In the summer the information sessions take place in one day and there is a tour of Brussels given on another day.

During these sessions, students are given information on the academic and social environment of Vesalius College. They are given information on course registration, dropping and adding classes and other administrative issues. They are given information on Belgian health insurance and banking systems as well as information on Vesalius College services such as the College counselor and the English and math tutorial services. They are also given cultural and safety tips regarding living in Brussels.

During orientation, students living in home stays are given a special orientation session. Students applying for internships also have a special session regarding their upcoming interviews and the placement system. All students have sessions for the activation of their College computer accounts and are given a tour of the campus. A tour of Brussels is also organized in addition to student parties promoted by the Vesalius Student Government.

New students are also assigned to Vesalius College “Buddies” who are Veco upper classmen, volunteering to help the new students adjust to life in Brussels and at Veco.

Students can find information on participating in student clubs in their welcome pack as well as on the Vesalius College Facebook page. Students can also consult the Facebook page for information on buying and selling used books.

**Sports on Campus**

**VUB Sports Complex**

Vesalius visiting students have access to all sports facilities of the Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB), our parent university located just across the street. This includes an Olympic-sized pool, soccer field, running track, badminton, volleyball, basketball and more.

For more information, please view the following site: [http://www.vub.ac.be/english/sport/international-etterbeek.html](http://www.vub.ac.be/english/sport/international-etterbeek.html).

**Health City**

Health City is a state-of-the-art private sports club located on VUB campus. Health City not only offers modern aerobic and weight training equipment, but also offers pilates, spinning classes, and a full range of group fitness classes (The Mills Series), which are all included in the membership fee.

A Free trial session of offered to all new students. It is mandatory to have opened a Belgian bank account in order to purchase a Health city membership.

For more information, please visit the following site: [http://www.healthcity.be/be/all-inclusive/detail/healthcity_elsene/](http://www.healthcity.be/be/all-inclusive/detail/healthcity_elsene/).
Libraries

All Vesalius College students have access to three major libraries in Brussels: The library of the Vrije Universiteit Brussel (the VUB), located across the street from our campus, that of the Université Libre de Brussels (the ULB), also across the street from our campus and the Royal Library, located downtown.

Campus Map

Vesalius College is located across the street from its parent university, the Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB). Since June of 2011, we have moved to new state-of-the-art facilities located just west of the VUB campus on Pleinlaan 5. Please see the VUB campus below, which includes our new facilities.

Y – Medical Center
R – Cafeteria
L – Sports Center (Health City)
E – VUB Computer Labs
C – VUB Library
6 – Main entrance to VUB campus
5 – Pleinlaan 5 – Vesalius College Building