

**Spring 2023**

**Essential Information for Accepted Students**

**Vassar-Wesleyan Program in Paris**

**Table of Contents**

I. BEFORE YOU GO AND TRAVEL TO PARIS

1. [Passports](#)
2. [Visas](#)
3. [Certification of Student Status, Student Cards](#)
4. [Shots](#)
5. [Travel to France](#)

II. ARRIVAL AND ORIENTATION

1. [Paris Orientation](#)
2. [Transportation in Paris](#)

III. PREPARING FOR STUDY ABROAD AND PERSONAL GOALS

1. [Adjusting to a New Culture](#)
2. [Diversity and Inclusion Abroad](#)

IV. LIVING IN PARIS

1. [Expenses](#)
2. [Banks and Money](#)
3. [Scholarships and Financial Aid](#)
4. [Registering with the local French authorities](#)
5. [Health](#)
6. [Safety](#)
7. [Alcohol, Other Drugs and Demonstrations](#)
8. [Clothing](#)
9. [Electrical Equipment, Personal Computers, and Cell Phones](#)
10. [Packages to France](#)
11. [Travel outside of Paris and France](#)

V. THE HOUSING PROCESS

VI. RESOURCES

VII. EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

VIII. EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

IX. CALENDAR

X. FRENCH CONSULATES IN THE UNITED STATES

XI. CHECK LIST

# **I. BEFORE YOU GO AND TRAVEL TO PARIS**

## **1. Passports**

Record the number of your passport before you leave the U.S., in case you lose it while abroad. Leave the number with your parents. Also keep a copy of it in your wallet, calendar, or address book. Keep a scan of it on your Drive. If you lose your passport in Paris, report the loss to the program director immediately, or in his absence, to the American Consulate, 4 avenue Gabriel, near the Place de la Concorde (Tel. +33 1 43 12 22 22). Details on the process for obtaining a new passport in France can be found on the [American Embassy in Paris U.S. Citizen Services webpage](#). It is a good idea to bring an extra U.S.-sized passport photo with you to France.

## **2. Visas**

You must obtain a French student visa before leaving the United States. Applying for a visa is a multi-step process and must be started well in advance of your program start date. You will need to submit a current passport, valid for at least three months past the end date of your program, as part of the application process. Therefore, if you need to renew your passport, make sure you do so as soon as possible.

### **STEP 1**

Campus France USA is the French government agency that works with students in the U.S. going to France for an academic program of 90 days or more. The Campus France Etudes en France application is the mandatory first step for all student visa applicants. Campus France USA ensures all academic criteria are met before the applicant submits a student visa application. OIP/OIS will provide you with guidance on how to complete this online application.

### **STEP 2**

VFS Global is an external agency responsible for managing all visa appointments and visa application submissions across the U.S. in 9 consular jurisdictions. After completing an online student visa application on the France-Visas platform, you will visit a VFS Global Center in person to submit the visa application. OIP/OIS will assist you with this additional online application and help you organize your materials for your in-person appointment.

### **STEP 3**

Once you have submitted your visa application at VFS Global, the application is sent to the Visa Service of the French Consulate in Washington, D.C. for processing. The Visa Service makes decisions on the issuance of student visas. They will mail your passport to you, with your student visa attached, after you have been approved. **You must scan and upload your visa to the VWPP database by December 12th (for a Spring semester mobility).**

This [Student Visa Guidelines document](#) provides more details about the process and what documents you will need to submit as part of your application. If you have questions or concerns about any part of the application process, you should contact OIP/OIS.

If you have not obtained your visa before you leave for France, you will not be able to participate in the program! Make sure you pay close attention to all emails and instructions you receive from OIP/OIS about the visa application process.

**Mandatory visa validation:** All students must validate their VLS-TS with the OFII within three months of their arrival in France and pay a tax of 50€. The validation is done [online](#).

### **3. Certification of Student Status**

The OIP/OIS will give you two originals of a letter in French on the program stationery certifying that you are an international student studying in Paris. You will need to include one of these originals in your application for a student visa. Take the other one with you to Paris.

### **4. Shots**

You should check with the health center at your college or university or your own doctor about what shots may be advisable for travelers in Europe. This is especially important if you plan to visit countries in Africa or the Middle East.

You will be informed in a timely manner by Vassar and Wesleyan about mandatory vaccinations.

### **5. Travel to France**

#### **a) Travel to Paris**

A group flight is organized for Spring program students from New York City to Paris. We highly encourage students to take the group flight. This ensures a smooth arrival for our students. Details of signing up for the group flight are provided by the Office of Study Abroad at Wesleyan and the Office of International Programs at Vassar.

Here is the Spring 2023 group flight itinerary from JFK to Paris:

#### **AIR Saturday, 7 January 2023**

Delta Air Lines Flight Number: 0264

From: New York Kennedy (JFK), USA Depart: 10:40PM

To: Paris Charles de Gaulle (CDG), France Arrive: 12:00PM (8 January)

Nonstop, duration: 7 hours 20 minutes

Status: Confirmed Miles: 3635 / 5816 KM

Equipment: Airbus A 330 Jet

Meal: Dinner

Departs JFK Terminal 4 - Arrives CDG Aéroport 2 Terminal E

Delta Air Lines Confirmation number is HLIZC4

Return CDG-JFK

**AIR Sunday 14 May 2023**

Delta Air Lines Flight Number: 0263 Class: Q-Coach/Economy

From: Paris Charles De Gaulle, France Depart: 10:20 AM

To: New York Kennedy NY, USA Arrive: 12:50 PM

Status: CONFIRMED

Equipment: Airbus A330 Jet

DEPARTS CDG TERMINAL AEROGARE 2 TERM E ARRIVÉES

JFK TERMINAL 4

Delta Air Lines Confirmation number is HLIZC4

For students who cannot be on the group flight, you will need to send your itinerary (date, time and airport of departure and arrival) to [info@vwpp.org](mailto:info@vwpp.org). For spring semester students, send this information **by December 7th**.

RECOMMENDATION and WARNING word about ground travel from the airports in Paris:

Spring semester group flight students are greeted at Charles de Gaulle airport by vans hired by the VWPP to take them to their hosts homes on arrival.

If you are arranging your own flight you will be responsible for your ground transportation into Paris.

We suggest you book a hired van at Groupe BlueVan Paris

<https://www.paris-blue-airport-shuttle.fr>

or

<https://www.bluvan.fr>.

Taxis at Paris-Charles de Gaulle Airport:

To guarantee you a safe trip at a fair price, we recommend that you only take an official taxi outside our terminals. Only taxis located in stations located at the gates of the arrivals levels are authorized to pick up customers. See where the official taxi ranks are located below. This is where you will find the official taxis. These official taxis are recognizable by the light sign on the roof of the vehicle. **If you are approached at the exit of the baggage claim by people claiming to be taxis, decline any transport proposal.**

Our tips for recognizing an official taxi:

- Follow the "Taxi" sign to find stations outside the terminals.
- Check the illuminated sign before getting on board.
- Check if a counter showing the price is present.

- On arrival, pay the price indicated on the meter. There is a flat rate between Charles de Gaulle Airport and Paris' "right bank" (53€) and "left bank" (58€), not including luggage fees and other surcharges.

### Location of taxi ranks:

To leave the airport, you will find taxis at the exit to the baggage claim area of your arrival terminal:

- Terminal 1: exit 24 on the arrivals level
- Terminal 2A: exit 6
- Terminal 2C: exit 14
- Terminal 2D: exit 7
- Terminal 2E: gate 10 on the arrivals level
- Terminal 2F: gate 11 on the arrivals level
- Terminal 3: exit of the arrivals hall
- Terminal 2G: blue gate

## **II. PARIS ORIENTATION**

### **1. Paris Orientation Spring 2023**

The semester will begin with an orientation session in Paris from January 9 to January 22. It will include methodology sessions to prepare you for coursework in your French university classes, meetings on contemporary French society, intercultural awareness, security, practical aspects of living in Paris, housing and academics, as well as various outings and cultural activities, and free time to explore Parisian museums, monuments, and neighborhoods on your own until courses begin at your French university. The VWPP will provide you with a list of sites and museums, many of which are now free for people under 26, and provides reimbursement for cultural activities up to a designated sum. **Participation in all orientation sessions and meetings is mandatory.**

### **2. Transportation in Paris**

The public transportation system in Paris and the surrounding area is well-designed and highly efficient. Many metro and bus stops service every arrondissement in Paris and the bordering towns. Students find public transportation practical and easy for commuting to their classes and activities in Paris. All students should expect to commute an average of 30-45 minutes on public transport to classes. You should become more familiar with the Parisian public transportation system, ("le métro," tramway, and buses), as well as the prices of various tickets on <http://ratp.fr>.

**By December 9th, before you arrive in Paris, you should request a completely free « Passe Navigo » (a personalized electronic pass) on the Internet so it will be ready for you when you arrive in Paris.**

Once you get this pass in Paris, you can easily put money on it in metro stations (at the ticket window or at machines) to purchase either a weekly or monthly pass with unlimited access to

the Parisian Transportation System. Once your pass is charged, you just need to have it scanned by the machine when entering the station or the bus.

To order a pass, visit [www.navigo.fr](http://www.navigo.fr) and click on the square « Commander une carte » which will take you to this link:

[https://www.jegeremacartenavigo.fr/souscription/commande\\_de\\_carte/profil](https://www.jegeremacartenavigo.fr/souscription/commande_de_carte/profil)

**Click on “Je crée mon compte”**

**Nom : your Last name**

**Prénom : your First name**

**Date de naissance : Your birthdate (dd/mm/yyyy)**

**Adresse email : your email**

➤ Choose a password that contains at least **8 characters, including 2 numbers, one uppercase and one lowercase.**

➤ **Tick the « Je reconnais avoir pris connaissance et accepté les Conditions Générales de Vente et les conditions générales d'utilisations » box.**

**You will receive an email to activate your account. Once this is done, log in to your Navigo Connect account. The first page that will open is “Commander votre pass”. Click on “Continuer”.**

➤ Fill in the various forms.

➤ If you have a picture of yourself (face on a clear background, no head covering), **smaller than 100kb**, on your computer you can upload it to the website for your card; if not, the website also allows you to take a photo from your computer to upload.

**Nom : your family name**

**Prénom : your first name**

**Téléphone : here you must put in a French cell phone number.** If you don't have one yet, just don't fill in the box as it is not mandatory. You can always connect back and fill in the information later.

**For your address, enter the Vassar-Wesleyan Program in Paris address :**

**Adresse : 4 rue de Chevreuse**

**Complément : Vassar-Wesleyan Program in Paris**

**Code Postal (CP) : 75006**

**Localité de destination : Paris 06**

**Date de naissance** : your birthdate

➤ **Tick the** « Je reconnais avoir pris connaissance et accepté les Conditions Générales de Vente et les conditions générales d'utilisations » **box and press** « Valider ma demande de passe ».

➤ Once you send the form, you will receive a confirmation that your order has been taken into account. Your “Passe Navigo” will be mailed to you at the VWPP office within 3 to 4 weeks.

➤ **You can also have a passe Navigo made on the spot if you go to the station gare Montparnasse or any other major station in Paris.**

👉 The “Passe Navigo” is not itself good for transportation: you **have to put money on it** to have unlimited weekly (*hebdomadaire*) or monthly (*mensuel*) access to the Parisian Transportation System. This pass is valid on all metros, buses, trams and RER trains from the first to the last day of the calendar week or month in the 5 zones covered by the Île-de-France area public transportation. You can put money on your “Passe Navigo” starting the last week of the preceding month. A week costs 22,80€, a month costs 75,20€.

👉 A photo is required on your passe Navigo for it to be valid, along with your name. If you purchase your passe Navigo in a Métro station, you may need to attach a printed photo yourself using the self-adhesive square on the card. If you travel with a passe Navigo that does not have your name and a photo on it, you may be fined.

Upon your arrival in Paris, we suggest you purchase the **Pass Navigo mensuel for the month of January at 75,20€ (included in your food and transportation stipend.)**

### **III. PREPARING FOR STUDY ABROAD AND PERSONAL GOALS**

You will need to prepare yourself for a geographic move from one country to another and a psychological adjustment to another culture. A good way to prepare mentally for study abroad is to learn as much as possible about the country and culture in which you'll be immersed. You will be assisted with the practical preparation (what to study, how to obtain necessary travel documentation, what to take, what to wear, where to live) by Vassar and Wesleyan professors and staff, but the mental preparedness component is up to you. The more facts you learn, the more research you do about France (and Europe), its history, customs, food, language, geography, politics, music and popular culture, the more you will appreciate what you see, hear, taste, smell, and experience once you arrive in France.

Inform yourself as much as possible about France and current events in Europe before you arrive. This will improve your comprehension and help you understand conversations with your host family and other people with whom you speak. The French people you meet will expect you to have an opinion about, or at least be aware of, current events. The best way to do this is to listen to the radio, read French newspapers online, follow Youtubers and find Instagram posts in French, or watch television news in preparation for your time in France. Check out sites like:

TF 1: <http://www.tf1.fr/jt-20h/>

France 2: <http://www.francetvinfo.fr/replay-jt/france-2/20-heures/>

France 3: <http://www.francetvinfo.fr/replay-jt/france-3/19-20/>

France 24: <http://www.france24.com/fr/>

Arte: notamment l'émission « Karambolage » : <http://www.arte.tv/magazine/karambolage/fr/>

TV5: <http://www.tv5.org/>

RFI: <http://www.rfi.fr>

RFI produit une émission spécialement dédiée à l'apprentissage du français:

[http://www1.rfi.fr/lfr/statiques/accueil\\_apprendre.asp](http://www1.rfi.fr/lfr/statiques/accueil_apprendre.asp)

Radio France: <http://sites.radiofrance.fr/franceinter/accueil>

Le Monde: <http://www.lemonde.fr/>

Libération: <http://www.liberation.fr/>

Le Figaro: <http://www.lefigaro.fr/>

This website can also be a useful source for listening practice: <http://cortland.edu/flteach/civ/>

Watching movies and television shows is also a good way to improve your language abilities and learn about French culture, issues in contemporary France, and views of Parisian life. Here are a few movies we suggest:

## Films

<i>Il a déjà tes yeux</i> (2016)	Directed by Lucien Jean-Baptiste
<i>Les goûts et les couleurs</i> (2016)	Directed by Myriam Aziza
<i>Mignonnes</i> (2020)	Directed by Maïmouna Doucouré
<i>Bande de filles</i> (2014)	Directed by Céline Sciamma
<i>Les Misérables</i> (2019)	Directed by Ladj Ly
<i>La Cour de Babel</i> (2013)	Directed by Julie Bertucelli (documentary film about education in France)
<i>Intouchables</i> (2011)	Directed by Olivier Nakache and Éric Toledano (views of French society)
<i>The Artist</i> (2011)	Directed by Michel Hazanavicius (won 5 <i>Oscars</i> ) Directed by Philippe Lioret
<i>Welcome</i> (2009)	(issues in contemporary France – struggles of illegal immigrants)

<i>Paris</i> (2008)	Directed by Cédric Klapisch (views of Parisian life)
<i>Entre Les Murs</i> (The Class) (2008)	Directed by Laurent Cautet (issues in contemporary France – difficulties of teaching in deprived areas)
<i>Two days in Paris</i> (2007)	Directed by Julie Delpy (views of Parisian life)
<i>Mon Oncle</i> (1958)	Directed by Jacques Tati (exposure to French culture and film history)

## Television Series

<i>Dix pour cent</i>	comédie dramatique
<i>Plan coeur</i>	comédie romantique
<i>Family Business</i>	comédie
<i>La Forêt</i>	policier
<i>Engrenage</i>	policier
<i>Marianne</i>	horreur

## 1. Adjusting to a New Culture

### Phases of “Culture Shock”

While no two study abroad experiences are the same, there are patterns of adjustment to any new culture that are surprisingly similar and that have been charted in the field of intercultural studies. An awareness of these patterns can help us to understand the processes people undergo when they live in another country or culture. Perhaps some of you have already experienced these processes by coming to study in the United States, in which case you might know that preparing for the experience will make it all the more rewarding.

The following information is drawn from the introduction to the book *On Being Foreign*, edited by Tom J. Lewis and Robert E. Jungrams (Intercultural Press, 1986) as well as the

article “Moving with emotional resilience between and within cultures,” by Janice Abarbanel, (*Intercultural Education*, 20:4, S 133-S 141).

The first, or **Preliminary Phase** of learning to live in a new culture, begins with the decision to leave the home culture. It includes the preparations for leaving, the farewells, and the trip from home to another place. This phase is characterized by both the excitement of a new experience and the regret at leaving behind so much that is familiar.

The second, or **Spectator Phase**, begins with the arrival in the new culture and ends when the excitement of that new experience begins to fade. In this stage, the person moving between cultures is largely a passive, but very alert, spectator.

During the third, or **Increasing Participation Phase**, the person plays a more active role in her/his/their setting. The person may be frustrated at this stage because of difficulty in dealing with the most elementary aspects of daily life. The person’s reactions to the encounters in the new culture at this point are crucial. Some people want to withdraw from encounters in the new society; others approach these encounters as challenges that will produce growth. As one is able to deal successfully with more and more encounters in the culture, one begins to gain a sense of accomplishment, self-esteem, and satisfaction from the engagement with the new culture. This phase is often the most difficult phase of adjustment because it is at this time that the values and beliefs of one’s own culture come into conflict with those of the new culture. At this stage, the student will probably find herself/himself/themselves experiencing “culture shock,” and it is typical for Americans in this stage in France to feel that French people are unfriendly, contradictory, disorganized, rude or insensitive when asked for help, critical of American politics or the U.S. role in world politics, and/or have a stereotypical view of Americans (fat, loud, blond, rich, etc.).

As the individual adapts to new ways of coping in the new culture, some new behaviors become internalized. At some point in this stage the participant begins to feel split between two cultures. The student now realizes that she/he/they is/are a product of more than one culture. This is the **Shock Phase** in which the old and new cultures confront one another.

The **Adaptation Phase** is the end point of the experience of living in another culture. The person is now able to operate well in either the old culture or the new one. At this stage, one’s sense of foreignness begins to disappear and one begins to identify with the new culture. One feels not only comfortable in the new culture but a part of it. A person who has adjusted well to two different cultures can be said to be bicultural, and even after returning to the home culture, has a broader worldview and is enriched by the adaptations she/he/they has/have made.

Some of the symptoms of culture stress include: a feeling of loneliness; difficulty sleeping, eating, and concentrating; an upset stomach, fatigue, and headaches. Living abroad is also tiring, as it requires you to be “plugged in” a lot (unplugging often only occurs when you close the bedroom door for the night). A certain feeling of exhaustion is also normal, particularly during the Spectator Phase.

It is normal to experience difficulties in adjusting to a new culture. Most people who live in another culture are going to experience, or have experienced, the same feelings as you.

### **Coping with Culture Stress**

**Remember to take care of yourself physically.** You are under some pressure and you need to find ways to relax in a healthy way and keep yourself in good physical condition. Be sure you do plenty of walking, biking, jogging, swimming, or any other physical activity to keep yourself fit. Do not let colds or upset stomachs last too long; it is a good idea to see a doctor after a couple of days if you are not feeling better. Consulting a general practitioner costs 25€ and can be partly/fully covered by your insurance.

**Retain your own value system.** You don't have to change your values or what you think is right or wrong. Be prepared to question your own beliefs and analyze your reactions, emotions, and cultural beliefs to be able to explain to other people why you don't do certain things or do them in a certain way. You can also try new things without abandoning your core values. You may learn that you like the new way or finally prefer your own.

**Develop a new support system and become active in the new culture.** You have left your old support system – your family and friends – behind, and will need to develop a new one, although you cannot expect it to be as broad or deep as your old one since you will be in France for only a few months. Some of the new people who can help you include program staff, your hosts, and your professors. When you do need help, ask people for it, expressing your needs as precisely as you can. Becoming active in the new culture by speaking French at every opportunity, joining clubs, studying at the university, volunteering where you know you will have an opportunity to meet other people who do not speak your own language, and doing an internship will also help you broaden your support system and move beyond the Shock Phase. It also helps to recognize and think about the many positive aspects of French culture: people take the time to greet each other formally, for example, and enjoy lively and wide-ranging conversations over meals or in café ; they do not rush all the time; they make an effort to dress neatly and stylishly; there is broad appreciation for the arts and cuisine.

**Stay off your phone and close your computer.** Modern means of travel and communication make instantaneous contact with your family and friends in your home country possible. This can be reassuring, for you as well as your family, especially when you first arrive in France. We encourage you to contact your family when you arrive and to update your family and friends several times a month on your progress in France. However, constant contact with your family and friends can hinder your efforts to immerse yourself in French culture, meet new people, and make significant progress in speaking French by providing a constant and instant “umbilical cord” to your home country and familiar people in your native language. When program students were asked recently in an intercultural workshop to describe their most rewarding experience, one successful student replied that it was his ability to be on his own, to rely on himself and be more independent in France than he was in the US. Another said that she really became immersed in Paris and started to feel like part of the city and culture when the internet connection in her apartment was down for a few weeks and she had started going out more.

**Discourage long visits from family and friends.** It is often at the point when they are becoming immersed in French life (October/November first semester, March/April second semester) that students start to welcome visitors from home in Paris. Think carefully before you agree to host visitors with whom you will be speaking English, who will be arriving as tourists, and who have different expectations and time frames. As a university student, you will have exposés and papers to research and present, most of which are assigned mid-semester. At this point, you will just have begun to feel comfortable in the language, your classes and the French people you have been seeing on a regular basis. If you are planning on hosting family or friends, ask if they can schedule their visits at the end of the semester since visits at this time are less disruptive to the immersion and growth process you will be experiencing.

Please remember that your hosts have not signed on to host your friends or passing relatives and might not feel comfortable being asked to do so. Asking them might create some unfortunate tensions. Parisian hostels and some hotels can be reasonably priced for individuals or couples, and for larger groups there are many sites that offer reasonably priced short-term apartment rentals.

As wonderful as it is to see a loved ones' faces again and to be able to show them the city you have come to appreciate, it is still an interruption in your progress abroad, and a semester goes by very fast. We encourage you to choose very wisely when and how many visitors you will host over the semester, and to limit the number and the length of these visits.

Finally, friends or family members' visits *in no way* constitute a valid excuse to miss class.

## **2. Pluralism, Equity, and Inclusion Abroad**

The VWPP supports all students regardless of ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, religion, or gender identity, in order to promote a healthy, thriving program based on respect for others. However, issues surrounding pluralism, equity, and inclusion are treated differently in France, due to its unique social, political, economic history. It is important to learn about these differences before you leave and to have an open mind toward them when you arrive. Indeed, the more information you have on these issues before you leave and while you're in France, the better equipped you will be when faced with a difficult situation. Check out the Diversity Abroad's page, "[Welcome to France.](#)" which provides a very general overview of the current status of diversity and inclusion in France.

We also recommend that you read one of the following books before leaving for France:

- ❑ *Les Français*, by Julie FETTE, Jean-François BRIÈRE & Laurence WYLIE, Hackett Publishing (Focus), 4th edition, 2021.
- ❑ *France* by Emile CHABAL, Polity Histories, 2020.
- ❑ *Sixty million French can't be wrong* by Jean-Benoît NADEAU & Julie BARLOW,

Robson books, 2004

- ❑ *French or Foe?* by Polly PLATT, Culture Crossings, 3rd edition, 2003
- ❑ *Savoir Flair!* by Polly PLATT, Culture Crossings, second printing, 2003
- ❑ *Français et Américains, l'autre rive* by Pascal BAUDRY, 3rd edition (October 2007) in French, © Ed. Village Mondial/Pearson. Can be consulted online at <http://www.pbaudry.com/>
- ❑ *Français/Américains* by Gille ASSELIN & Ruth MASTRON, Alban, 2005
- ❑ *Culture Shock. France: A guide to customs and Etiquette* by Sally ADAMSON TAYLOR, Kuperard, 2001
- ❑ *Cultural misunderstandings. The French-American Experience* by Raymonde CARROLL, University of Chicago Press, 1990
- ❑ *Évidences invisibles. Américains et Français au quotidien* by Raymonde CARROLL, Seuil, 1990 (same as above, French language edition)
- ❑ *Study Abroad Paris*, John Chrisman and Audrey Queyreyre, Angevin 2006.
- ❑ *Nouvelles mythologies* ed. Jérôme GARCIN, Seuil, 2007
- ❑ *A Year in the Merde* by Stephen CLARKE, Black Swan Corgi, 2005
- ❑ *Almost French: A new life in Paris* by Sara TURNBULL, Paperback, April 2002
- ❑ *French Toast* by Harriet Welty ROCHEFORT, Saint Martin's Press, 1997
- ❑ *Les idiomatics. English-French* by Genevieve BLUM & Nestor SALAS, Éditions du Seuil, 1991

## IV. LIVING IN PARIS

### 1. Expenses

The comprehensive fee includes tuition, room and board, and round trip airfare. Vassar and Wesleyan students will be billed through their student accounts. Tuition, round-trip group flight, orientation, excursions, room, partial board (breakfast and three evening meals are provided by the homestay) and a monthly food and transportation stipend are included in this fee. Students from other institutions should check with their home institution to see how billing for study abroad works on their campus. The Vassar-Wesleyan Program in Paris also reimburses cultural activities undertaken in French (see below for more information).

The following estimate of your personal expenses beyond the tuition, room and board fee is calculated at an exchange rate of 1€ = \$0.98. The figures shown are the **average expenses for a semester of 4 months**. Only **very careful** spending will allow you to stay within the average range, so you should budget slightly more money than is noted here. You also need to take the fluctuating dollar-euro exchange rate into account.

### **a) Housing and food expenses**

The room and partial board fees you will be charged cover your room, 7 breakfasts, and 3 dinners per week with your family. In addition, you will be given a monthly stipend to cover the cost of lunches and four dinners. This monthly stipend begins on the day of your arrival in Paris. It is based on the cost of buying groceries and preparing your own lunches and four dinners a week and/or purchasing these meals in a university cafeteria, not eating out.

Currently, the cost of a full hot meal at a student “restau U” or “R.U.” is 3,30€. You can find a list of them here: <https://www.crous-paris.fr/restauration/les-lieux-de-restauration>.

The “R.U.” closest to Reid Hall (open evenings, weekends, and university vacations) is **RU Bullier, 39 avenue Georges Bernanos, 75005 Paris (RER B – Port Royal)**.

If you plan on eating regularly in local bakeries (10€ per meal) or restaurants from time to time like many students, from 8€ - 13€ fixed price menu at a Chinese restaurant – to an average of 20€ - 22€ for a fixed price lunch menu and upwards *à la carte* and in the evening, you should budget more.

### **b) Necessary expenses**

For the sixteen weeks of the semester, you will need from \$400 to \$500 for books, laundry, a local SIM card, sundries, etc.

### **c) Personal spending**

Depending on your habits, you will need from \$120-\$180 per month for movies, plays, museums, restaurants, shopping, etc.

The program organizes and subsidizes a full cultural calendar of excursions in France, visits and cultural activities in Paris, receptions and lunches. Many courses also include on-site visits to monuments, plays, and operas. The program also provides students with information on free activities available to Parisian students. Many museums are free for young people aged 26 years and under. Type “activités gratuites à Paris” into a search engine and you will find a multitude of suggestions and tips. You will also be reimbursed up to approximately 350-450€ per semester for French cultural visits, individual excursions, and fees associated with activities like cooking classes or athletic, artistic, or musical programs. Reimbursements are made once a month after you submit receipts for these activities. You will receive in addition a rail youth discount card called « Carte Avantage Jeune » (49€) from the program. This card allows students to purchase train tickets within France through the SNCF (national rail company, Société nationale des chemins de fer) at a discount.

If you plan trips in France, you should buy your tickets as well ahead of time as possible to take advantage of discounts provided with the “Carte Avantage Jeune” the program provides you, or low cost “Ouigo” or “Billet Prem’s” on rail travel in France.

#### **d) Personal travel**

A Passe Navigo costs 75,20€ (approximately \$73) per month. The passe Navigo can be used not only for travel in Paris proper but also for travel to the whole Île-de-France area which covers travel to sites such as Versailles, Fontainebleau, Provins, and other interesting outlying areas of the Greater Paris area [www.navigo.fr](http://www.navigo.fr). **The cost of the monthly Passe Navigo is included in your food and transportation stipend provided by the VWPP.**

#### **e) All students must have a cell phone with a French SIM card during their stay in France.**

For security reasons, the director must be able to call you and speak with you immediately in case of an emergency. Keeping your American phone number means you will be charged for local incoming and outgoing calls and that your local hosts will not be able to reach you without incurring extra charges.

If you are planning to use your American cell phone in France with a French SIM card, so that you will have a French cell phone number, **you need to make sure that your phone is unlocked** (be sure to check the procedure with your current phone company ahead of time). We encourage you to order your French SIM card 3 weeks before your planned arrival in France.

[Free Mobile](#) offers a French SIM card for 10€ and calling and data plan for 19€99 per month, with no long term contract commitment. You can buy this SIM card and plan at the [Free Center](#) boutique (there is one near Reid Hall) using a US credit card that will be debited automatically monthly, and the mailing address of the VWPP, **4 rue de Chevreuse, 75006 Paris**. You will need to send a registered letter a few weeks before you leave France to cancel the plan and automatic payments. The VWPP will provide a model of this letter and instructions for you a few weeks before the end of the semester.

[Lebara](#) is another inexpensive option for a French SIM card. You can order a free SIM card directly online and sign up for a calling and data plan for 19€99 per month with no long term contract commitment. If you order your SIM card online, please remember to have it sent directly to VWPP, **4 rue de Chevreuse, 75006 Paris**. Be careful not to order delivery too far in advance (up to a month ahead of time) as you will need to activate your SIM card in the month following its arrival. To cancel, go to your MyLebara online account and disable the renewal option with one click.

Both options include unlimited calling to the United States.

You may also purchase a cheap cell phone from one of the numerous stores (FNAC, Darty, La Poste...) in Paris for approximately 20€. SIM cards can be bought for 10€. Additional minutes (*recharges*) can then be bought in *tabacs* and post offices for between 5€ and 100€ as and when needed. This alternative is more expensive if you use a lot of data and send many texts.

## 2. Banks and Money

**Please make sure that your parents have this banking information.**

Limited amounts of cash can be obtained with Visa and Mastercard debit cards from certain ATM machines with a PIN number. There may be a small bank fee each time you withdraw money depending on your bank's agreements with French banks (ask your bank in the U.S.). **You should not rely solely on the use of ATMs for money transfers with your American debit cards during your first weeks in France. Be sure to bring enough cash with you to cover your first two weeks' expenses, and to leave time to confirm that your ATM card works in France.**

**Before leaving, you should call your bank to notify them that you will be using your bank card abroad, and ensure that you are able to use your card to withdraw cash from automatic teller machines in France.** In the past, some students who did not notify their bank ahead of time had their cards blocked for security reasons, and were unable to withdraw cash for a certain number of days.

**Do not have anyone send you cash through the mail. You can never be sure when, or even if, it will arrive.**

Many big American banks have branches in Paris (HSBC, Citibank) or have agreements with specific French banks (Bank of America and the BNP Paribas, for instance). Check with your U.S. bank to see if it has a branch or an affiliation with a bank in Paris. If you have dollars wired directly to a French bank account, **make sure your family has the branch number, the IBAN and SWIFT numbers, and the branch address, as well as your account number.**

In case of emergency, you can have money wired to your [Wise](#) account. Information about this account follows:

### **ON WISE:**

Students receive reimbursements from the Vassar-Wesleyan Program in Paris for the above cultural activities stipend (and reimbursement for certain course activities, such as museum visits, that will be specified in advance). These expenses will be reimbursed in euros by bank transfer into a WISE account.

We ask you to open a [WISE](#) account in EUROS and send the EUR IBAN corresponding to this account to the VWPP. With this information we can transfer euros into your WISE account.

It's very simple to open a WISE account online [here](#).

- For your account, you need to use this address in France :

Your name, c/o Vassar-Wesleyan Program in Paris, 4 rue de Chevreuse, 75006,  
Paris

- Be sure to open an account in EUROS.
- You open the Wise account with 20 euros that you transfer from a bank account (this can be an account from another country, such as the United States) or from a credit or debit card. This is not a payment, just an initial transfer that you transfer back later.
- You need your cell phone and your passport. Wise will verify your identity. You may use your non French cell phone; once you have a French cell phone number you should go back into your Wise account and update the phone information there.
- Once you have registered your account, it will take from a few hours to a few days to get confirmation that you are logged in.
- You will receive an email from Wise; you can then find your EUR IBAN that you will send to the VWPP.

If you wish, you may request a Wise ATM debit card to withdraw your euros. Your euro withdrawals are free if you withdraw less than 200 euros 2 times a month maximum.

If you have any technical questions, please start with the WISE chat. And, of course, the VWPP staff is at your disposal if you need any information or encounter any difficulty.

### **3. Scholarships and Financial Aid**

If you receive financial aid from Vassar or Wesleyan (scholarships, grants, loans), these funds will be credited to your student account in the usual manner. Please read all the financial information we have provided above carefully and be sure to meet all deadlines. Students from other institutions should check with their home financial aid office.

### **4. Registering with the local French authorities**

**Mandatory visa validation:** All students must validate their VLS-TS with the OFII within three months of their arrival in France and pay a tax of 50€. The validation is done [online](#).

### **5. Health**

We encourage you to disclose to the Paris program staff any health and safety concerns you might have as soon as possible **before your arrival in Paris**. This will allow the program to arrange any accommodations that might be necessary. If you will need accommodations for your stay or studies, please contact the VWPP director as soon as you are accepted to the program to leave enough time to make arrangements with the proper local contacts.

You should apprise the Vassar Office of International Programs or Wesleyan Office of International Studies of medical or special needs or issues well before you leave for Paris.

Be sure you make plans with your healthcare provider to continue physical or psychological treatments.

It is very important that you bring medical records with you if you have special needs,

medication, a chronic illness, or particular health issues. If you will need any ongoing medical treatment in Paris, especially prescription medicine, make arrangements through your health practitioner and check with the courier services before you leave the U.S. If you wear glasses or contact lenses, you should bring your prescription, as you will need it to obtain new glasses or lenses if lost or broken. It is a good idea to have extra contact lenses with you.

Healthy habits (including proper rest and eating and pursuing a regular, relaxing activity such as art, dance, music, yoga, meditation, or athletics) help to prevent illness and minimize stress and thereby facilitate a positive and rewarding experience abroad.

If you become ill, please notify the director or the assistant director promptly. The office has up-to-date lists of general practitioners and specialists used by former students, and these lists will be given to you in Paris. As noted above, a visit to an in-network general practitioner costs 25€ and can be reimbursed by your insurance.

 **For current Covid-19 Fact Sheet updates and information for France, please visit the [www.apuaf.org](http://www.apuaf.org) website and download the latest edition.**

### **For students of Vassar College:**

Vassar College's travel assistance and insurance provider is **On Call Global Assistance**. The video orientation that reviews the highlights of Vassar's On Call coverage is available here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bBCnbc5M0rM&feature=youtu.be>.

### **Key features of the program include:**

- Medical, travel, and security assistance including insured medical evacuation and repatriation service
- Coordination of medical care
- Coordination and payment of travel arrangements for you or a person you designate for certain emergency circumstances
- Please note that this program does not cover preventative services or continuation of preexisting conditions. In the event of an incident requiring medical or mental health care, if the cost of the service is \$500 USD equivalent or less, you may need to cover the costs and get reimbursement from the insurance company. Request to make a claim by contacting On Call (contact information below), and they will reimburse your claim as soon as possible. For covered medical care costs exceeding this, On Call would arrange for direct payment so that you will not need to wait for reimbursement.
- When arranging for medical care in advance while abroad via On Call, you may communicate with On Call that you are experiencing financial hardship in order to receive coverage upfront, rather than paying for care and receiving reimbursement later.

Please also remember that this is additional insurance for the purposes of your time on a study abroad program. It is not a replacement for your primary insurance coverage or additional coverage that may be required for your specific program.

### How to use this insurance:

Since you may need to **contact On Call**, please make sure you are familiar with how to reach them, and keep this contact information on hand for whenever you may unexpectedly need it. In any non-emergency situation, in order to use On Call services most efficiently, **you should contact On Call before seeking medical attention, instead of going directly to a medical provider and contacting On Call later.** This will ensure that you are using the most appropriate providers and will avoid delay of any reimbursements, etc.

**It is important that at this time, you add the contact information for this insurance to the mobile phone you are using abroad so you know how to contact On Call when needed. Simply send a text message to the number 444-999 that says OnCall Vassar and you'll receive a link to easily add a digital content card right into your phone contacts in just a few taps.** It is not an app to download, just an easy way to make sure you have contact information available in case you need help while away from home.

If you have any problem with this process, *please save the following contact information:*

- **The 24/7 phone numbers : +1 603 952 2665 and +1 844 884 1205**
- **Email: [mail@oncallinternational.edu](mailto:mail@oncallinternational.edu)**
- **Text only number: 603-945-0103**
- **Claims processing customer service: 866-224-4594**

**The policy number for this insurance is: US 1221932. (Individual members all have the same policy number).**

### For students of Wesleyan:

International SOS and UHP are Wesleyan University's travel assistance and insurance providers. Important points to remember :

Before your program begins, Wesleyan Office of Study Abroad will email you an info card to print and carry with you at all times, and a letter introducing the services to you and/or your parents.

- The info card contains local numbers for service centers in different countries, but you should use the Philadelphia number if possible. The Philadelphia service center is more familiar with communicating with students. International SOS serves a wide variety of clients in different industries.
- From France, dial 001 215 942 8478.
- You should call this number *before* you arrange a healthcare appointment to avoid any additional costs. An International SOS representative will help you identify in-network providers and may schedule an appointment for you.
- The insurance only covers you for the duration of your program. If you will be traveling after your program and would like to purchase insurance for those additional

dates, please let the Wesleyan Office of Study Abroad know.

- The insurance does not cover you in the United States.
- In an emergency situation, you can go to any of the Paris hospitals' emergency room and will be covered.
- For reimbursements, you should contact International SOS and UHP directly.

#### **a) Mental Health Services at Reid Hall (available to all VWPP students)**

The VWPP has joined with other programs based in Reid Hall to provide psychological services on-site. All VWPP students can consult with professional counselors available at Reid Hall. The first session is free of charge and the following can be free in some cases.

These consultations are confidential and appointments can be made directly with the service via their [website](#). Information will be available during orientation.

For any administrative help such as scanning health service-related documents, please do not hesitate to contact the VWPP office. If you prefer to scan or copy your documents on your own, we recommend the closest copy center to Reid Hall: **Digital Media Services** (46 rue Notre-Dame des Champs - 75006 Paris).

## **6. Safety**

Our staff is here to support you in staying safe while abroad and in connecting with appropriate resources should the unexpected occur.

As a person entering a new culture, it is important to remain aware of your surroundings, as certain social codes and cues may not be immediately familiar to you. Do not let your desire to make the most of your experience in Paris overwhelm your common sense. Crime occurs in Paris as it does in any major metropolitan center. Try to avoid placing yourself in vulnerable situations and drawing unnecessary attention to yourself in public. Immersion is a useful strategy to avoid becoming a target.

Protecting your objects:

- When in public (and especially in crowded places like the Métro), tuck personal items away, including your cell phone.
- Carry your wallet in a zipped, cross-body bag or in your front pocket. Move your backpack to your side or your front in crowded places.
- Never leave your bag on the ground in a café, restaurant, or movie theatre. Always keep it on your lap. Bring a bag with you that closes completely, not an open tote bag that is easy to reach into.
- Don't keep all your documents and money in one place. It's best to carry your travel documents on your person and make them inaccessible to others – even when you use the restroom on the plane. Keep a photocopy of your passport and visa separate from the original. If you have two credit or debit cards, consider leaving one at home as a backup.

## Protecting yourself:

- Be aware of your surroundings and reasonably wary of people you do not know who approach you in public.
- Be cautious with new acquaintances – don't give out your address and always meet in public places. Parisians get together in public spaces, like cafés, and invite their friends over to their homes only when they have known each other for a while.
- Be discreet in giving out information about other students or group events (i.e., do not reveal the meeting place for a group activity with someone you do not know well; do not disclose the address or phone number of another student). Do not hesitate to report unusual activity near your classes or home to the program director.
- Use the buddy system, especially during the first few weeks of your stay and when you are out late at night or are traveling in other countries. Walking with someone else helps to deflect approaches by would-be harassers.

## *Nightlife brings its own set of risks.*

- **If you think you will come home late, let your hosts know of your plans, and make plans for returning home before going out.** Places that you are familiar with and that feel “safe” to you during the day may be different at night. Stick together with friends as much as possible. Have cash or a credit card on hand for emergencies like an unexpected need to get home.
- Try to get home while public transportation is still running (the last train is at around 12:30 am during the week and around 1:30 am on the weekends). We do not recommend taking the Noctilien (night bus).
- Remain vigilant when taking a taxi or Uber. Uber drivers are not as closely supervised as taxi drivers. Share your location with someone and let them know when you have gotten to your destination safely.
- Drugs and alcohol consumption can lower inhibitions and cause people to make choices they would not normally make. Moderate your intake and always remain aware of your surroundings.
- A dedicated meeting covering security will be held during orientation. We encourage you to watch « A Guide to Staying Safe in Paris », a helpful video created by the Préfecture de Police de Paris for visitors: <http://www.dailymotion.com/video/x3mlgvf>.

We enroll all students in the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) before or shortly after they arrive in Paris. The STEP is a free government service that allows U.S. citizens and nationals traveling and living abroad to enroll their trip with the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate in order to receive local communications in the event of an emergency.

Keep in mind the impact that the global political and economic climate may have on your experience abroad. The Covid-19 pandemic, military conflict in Ukraine, and energy crisis (among other ongoing events) have a daily presence in French life. In times of instability and conflict, it is important to:

- Watch or listen to the news regularly. In the event of an emergency, announcements may be made through the media.
- In large cities or popular tourist destinations, spend as little time as possible in potential targets for terrorist activities. Do not visit areas known to have concentrations of residents aligned with interests unfriendly to the U.S. When in doubt, please consult with the director before making travel plans.
- Monitor the [Department of State's Bureau of Consular Affairs travel advisories](#).
- Keep away from social and political demonstrations, particularly those directed against the U.S. Resist the temptation to satisfy your curiosity or join the crowd. Walk away. Do not agree to newspaper or other media interviews regarding political conflicts.
- Make a personal communication plan with your family and decide on methods of contact should an emergency arise.

## 7. Alcohol, Other Drugs and Demonstrations

Drinking alcoholic beverages, as well as non-alcoholic ones, is normal and acceptable in social situations among young French people and is usually associated with food or meals. However, drinking to excess or binge drinking is regarded as socially inept, immature, and showing a lack of self-control. In addition, all kinds of substance abuse dull the senses and thereby impede your ability to cope with the challenges of an unfamiliar environment. Alcohol and other drugs make you more vulnerable to theft and put your personal safety in jeopardy.

French laws prohibiting the use and sale of drugs are tough and strictly enforced. These laws prohibit the production, possession, distribution, sale, use, import, and export of narcotics and marijuana. However small the quantity involved, a user is subject to arrest and severe penalties. **The American Embassy cannot help if an American citizen is arrested for the possession or selling of drugs. It is strictly a matter for the French police and courts.** The director can do nothing beyond offering information and moral support.

While demonstrations are interesting political events, you should be aware that a foreign student arrested during a demonstration can face serious problems with the authorities. In addition, the French National Assembly passed a law several years ago that holds people arrested during a demonstration responsible for the damage and injury caused by the collective group of demonstrators, whether the person arrested had anything to do with the damage/injury or not. It would be wise to ask the director for his or her advice before attending such a public event.

**If the director decides that your behavior is disruptive to the program or puts your own well-being at risk, you will be sent home.**

## 8. Clothing

It rarely snows in Paris, but it rains frequently and temperatures do go below freezing. You should have a winter coat with you and clothes that can be layered. Apartments in Paris are often not as warmly heated as in the U.S., since heating is more expensive. Expect to bundle up when you are inside. Bring good walking shoes and be prepared for rainy weather.

Students wear student attire, but something less casual than jeans is expected for receptions, concerts, operas, some restaurants, and theater evenings. Bring a bathing suit if you want to take advantage of the numerous public swimming pools in Paris, and running shoes if you are a runner (they are much more expensive to purchase in France than in the US).

### **9. Electrical Equipment, Personal Computers, and cell phones**

The electrical voltage in the U.S. is 110V. In France it is 220V, and the plugs are different. Some electrical items purchased in the U.S. come equipped with a switch that permits them to operate on both currents. Electrical items that are not equipped with such a switch must be fitted with a transformer. All electrical items purchased in the U.S. must also be fitted with an adapter in order to plug them in. You should look into buying an adapter and a small transformer for simple appliances before you leave.

You should take a laptop computer with you if you have one that works well. Most computers now have double voltage, but it is very important that you double-check and inquire before you leave if you will need a specific type of transformer. Each item should be treated as a special case. If your computer is still under warranty, bring a copy of the warranty. The VWPP classroom has two Macs that students can use when class is not in session. In Reid Hall, students may connect to the WiFi network for web access from their own laptops and print. A password will be sent to your email address by the Reid Hall technical service before you arrive in Paris. **Save this information in a Word document on your computer so you will be able to access the Reid Hall WiFi when you first arrive.** Computer shops in Paris will also print documents for a small fee per page. You will NOT have printing privileges on your host family's printer. Internet access is provided in all host homes, and free WiFi access can be found in many *cafés*, restaurants, and even public parks in Paris.

### **10. Sending packages to France**

All items coming into France are charged a 20% value added tax, unless they are used items. If you will be receiving packages from your family via the U.S. Postal Service, UPS, FedEx or any other carrier, **please tell people to mark clearly on the customs slip that the contents of the package are “used personal items” if this is the case.** FedEx and DHL offer tracking insurance; the USPS does not. It is best to have packages delivered to yourself at Reid Hall (“c/o Vassar-Wesleyan Program in Paris” should be written clearly on the package) since there is always someone at the Reid Hall reception desk to take the delivery during the day and evening. If you live with a French family, your name is unlikely to be on the mailbox, which will make it difficult to deliver a package. Many buildings in France do not have a *conciierge* anymore to take delivery, and some *concierges* may not feel it is their duty to take delivery of packages for non-permanent residents of the building.

### **11. Travel outside of Paris and France**

**If you are planning to travel, you must fill out a *formulaire de voyage* on the French VWPP website before you travel and inform your hosts about your plans.**

When you travel, be sure that several people know where you are and how to reach you. Don't hitchhike.

Don't travel alone if you can avoid it and use caution if you do. Do not leave your bags or belongings unattended at any time. Security personnel in airports and train stations are instructed to remove or destroy any unattended luggage. Do not agree to carry or look after any packages or suitcases for anyone. Make sure no one puts anything in your luggage. Avoid traveling in buses if you are carrying a large instrument that must be placed underneath the bus, in the baggage hold.

## **V. THE HOUSING PROCESS**

Please read carefully all the details about the housing process, types of housing and the VWPP residence commitment on the **Essential Housing Information Page**.

## **VI. RESOURCES**

Students have found the following resources useful when looking for odd jobs such as babysitting or English lessons. Let the program staff know if you are looking for this type of work, since people sometimes contact us directly asking for student help. The Reid Hall bulletin board is on the ground floor, past the reception desk to the left. It has ads for housing, babysitting, lessons, and items for sale.

### **American Church (Protestant)**

65, Quai d'Orsay

75007 Paris

Métro: Invalides

Very good bulletin board for work, housing, and au pair positions. Open weekends.

### **EIAP (Echanges internationaux à Paris) ([Facebook page](#)):**

Organizes language exchanges, excursions and visits in Paris and France, evenings centered on the different countries (food, culture) of its members. A good place to meet young people.

### **Cultural opportunities in Paris**

Try to become familiar with what Paris has to offer now. If you know you would like to go to concerts, museums, etc., you can look at what is going on in Paris before you leave the U.S. We invite you to read our French website "[Cultural activities](#)".

Have a look at the website of the "**Mairie de Paris**":

<https://www.paris.fr/quefaire>

The following website offers many suggestions:

<http://billetreduc.com/N/1/liste.htm?type=1&region=J>

Other online resources include:

Movies: <http://allocine.fr/>

If you are between 18 and 26, entrance (with an ID) is free at the Musée National d'Art Moderne at the Pompidou Center, and from 6 pm to 9 pm on Fridays, to the Louvre. Certain national museums' permanent collections are open free of charge to the public the first Sunday of the month, such as the Musée du Quai Branly, the Louvre, the Rodin Museum, etc. As a student, you can have a discounted entrance fee to most museums and art students can

gain free access to some museums (by showing supporting proof).

The permanent collections of twelve museums run by the city of Paris are free of charge to all. They are :

- la maison de Balzac
- la maison de Victor Hugo (place des Vosges)
- le mémorial du Maréchal Leclerc de Hauteclocque et de la libération de Paris
- le Musée Bourdelle
- le Musée Carnavalet – Histoire de Paris
- le Musée Cernuschi (le Musée des Arts asiatiques de la Ville de Paris)
- le Musée Cognacq-Jay (le Musée du XVIIIe siècle de la Ville de Paris)
- le Musée d'Art moderne de la Ville de Paris
- le Musée de la Vie romantique
- le Musée des Beaux-arts de la Ville de Paris (le Petit Palais)
- le Musée Jean Moulin
- le Musée Zadkine

All the national museums offer free entrance to EU citizens and long-term residents under 26 upon presentation of a European ID. Show your university ID or your visa or “carte de séjour” for free entrance to museums.

Check out the individual museum websites for information on the Carte Louvre Jeunes and the Laissez-passer at the Musée d'Orsay and the Centre Pompidou, which provide free entrance as well as other benefits to card holders who are under 26. Further information for cultural visits will be provided at orientation.

Finally, you can also check this article for more free visits in Paris.

## **VII. EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING**

While in Paris, you may wish to undertake an internship or experiential learning placement (“stage” or service learning). The VWPP has a number of interesting opportunities to offer. Involvement in the local culture provides opportunities to exchange with and learn more about Parisians in places where they live, work, and learn.

Here is a non-exhaustive list of *stages* that VWPP students have done in the past. Please keep in mind that not all *stages* are available every semester and that new opportunities may be available when you arrive in Paris. If you are interested in this type of opportunity and have personal contacts in Paris, we encourage you to follow up on them.

### ***Books and bookstores:***

- Book store
- Rare book restoration
- (e)Book promotion and research for upcoming book with the author

### ***Publishing:***

- Children's book and game publisher

***Art, Galleries, Museums, art foundations:***

- Galerie S
- Terra Foundation
- Musées de Paris

***Research assistants:***

- Les Amis de la Maison de Balzac : social media, website update, events

***Language Assistants, teaching :***

- Primary and secondary schools, business school

***Community Service:***

- Volunteering through the Espace Bénévolat and Benenova, food kitchen, tutoring

**VIII. EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

We encourage you to engage in an extracurricular activity while you are in Paris and will help you get started. Activities in which former students have been involved include:

[CLIP](#) language exchange groups (English-French, French-German, French-Spanish) and different « country nights » cultural evenings.

[UCPA](#) ski or hiking trips to various regions of France.

**Sports**

- Badminton
- Basketball (team in Alfortville)
- Capoeira lessons (PUC)
- Frisbee (Ah Ouh Puc)
- Gym class at the Sorbonne
- Gym club (Neoness, Les cercles de la forme)
- Hiking in Île-de-France
- Horseback riding (Le Galop, Sannois ; Manège Dauphine, bois de Vincennes)
- Snowboard and ski excursions with UCPA or associations sportives des universités de Paris
- Soccer (PUC ; Urban Football, Puteaux ; Sciences Po)
- Swim team (Club des nageurs de Paris)
- Tennis (Association sportive de Sciences Po ; Paris 7 sports program)

- Ultimate Frisbee (PUC)
- Volleyball
- Women's Rugby (ESPCI)
- Yoga (PUC)
- Climbing

### **Dance, music**

- Ballet (Centre de danse du marais, Studio Harmonic, Elephant Panam)
- Indian dance & Bollywood dance (Centre de danse du marais)
- Salsa (Centre de danse du marais)
- Ballroom dancing
- Choir (Chœur interuniversitaire de Paris)
- Camerata
- Dance class (Académie Américaine de Danse de Paris)

### **Art & crafts**

- Art class (Académie de Port Royal)
- Circus classes (Académie Fratellini)
- Drawing class
- Drawing workshop at the Louvre
- Fashion photography
- Knitting group (Tricothé, l'Oisiveté à la Butte aux Cailles)
- Painting class
- Photography classes (Centre d'animation Montgallet, Studio Vermès and Spéos, Centre d'animation Jean Verdier)
- Photography workshop at the Louvre
- Pottery class (Atelier du Chat)
- Sewing class

### **Social, religious outings**

- Church (Unitarian Universalists in Paris, Saint Michaels, American Cathedral, American Church, Eglise Réformée de Paris Luxembourg, others)
- Synagogue (Union libérale israélite de France, 24 rue Copernic, Paris 16)
- Various [CIJP activities](#) (language exchanges, outings, game nights etc.) and Paris tours

- [EIAP](#) activities and trips
- Exchange with students of the Lycée Hôtelier
- General assemblies with French students
- Language exchange
- Outings with tutors
- Parismus (student organization that connects exchange students to French students)
- Spectator of international soccer games
- Theater nights followed by discussions with the actors

### **LGBTQI+**

- International festival of Parisian lesbian and feminist movies
- Centre LGBT Paris (<http://www.centrelgbtparis.org/>)

### **Travel in France**

- Hiking trip “randonnées” and ski/snowboard “stages” with UCPA
- Stay in “gîtes- chambres à la ferme ou chez l’habitant” when travelling in the French provinces
- Trips outside of Paris with Erasmus students
- Woofing (<http://woofing.fr>)
- CIJP and EIAP tours and excursions

### **Other**

- Activist groups such as « Paris Vegan Day », « Fur = torture » etc.
- Babysitting
- Cooking class (Hôtel Ritz École Escoffier, Atelier des Chefs, Atelier des Sens)
- Italian class
- Tutoring
- Volunteering (<http://espacebenevolat.org>)
- Writing workshop

## IX. VWPP academic calendar

VASSAR  
COLLEGE



WESLEYAN  
UNIVERSITY



### ACADEMIC CALENDAR – SPRING 2023

#### - January -

<b>Sunday, January 8</b>	Group flight arrival in Paris
<b>Monday, January 9 to Sunday, January 22</b>	Orientation
<b>Monday, January 16</b>	Beginning of Université Paris Cité <b>science</b> courses
<b>Monday, January 23</b>	Beginning of VWPP seminars and university classes

#### - February / March -

<b>February 27-March 3</b>	Winter break
----------------------------	--------------

#### - April / May-

<b>April 10</b>	Lundi de Pâques (national holiday)
<b>April 24-May 8</b>	Spring break
<b>Tuesday, May 9 to Friday, May 12</b>	VWPP finals and lecture week Last week of VWPP language tutoring.
<b>Sunday, May 14</b>	Group flight leaves

## X. FRENCH CONSULATES IN THE UNITED STATES

For student visa information, go to the website of the French consulate that has jurisdiction over your permanent home address.

**Addresses States/Regions served**

## **BOSTON**

31 St. James Avenue MA, ME, NH, RI, VT

Park Square Bldg., Suite 750

Boston, MA 02116

**Tel:** 617-832 4400

## **NEW YORK**

Visa Service: 10 East 74<sup>th</sup> St.

(between 5<sup>th</sup> Ave. & Madison Ave.) NY, NJ, CT, Bermuda

New York, NY 10021

**Tel:** 212-606-3601

## **DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**

4101 Reservoir Rd., NW DC, DE, MD, VA, WV, PA, OH Washington, DC 20007-2185

**Tel:** 202-944-6195

## **ATLANTA**

3475 Piedmont Road, NE, Suite 1840 AL, GA, MS, NC, SC, TN

Atlanta, GA 30305

**Tel:** 404-495-1660

## **MIAMI**

Espirito Santo Plaza, FL, Puerto Rico, Cayman, Turks & Caicos 1395 Brickell Ave., Suite  
1050

Miami, FL 33131

**Tel:** 305-403-4150

## **CHICAGO**

205 N. Michigan Ave., Suite 3700 IL, IN, IA, KY, MN, MO, WI, ND, SD, KS, NE, MI

Chicago, IL 60601

**Tel:** 312-327-5200

## **NEW ORLEANS**

1340 Poydras Street, Suite 1710 LA

New Orleans, LA 70112

**Tel:** 504-569-2870

## **HOUSTON**

777 Post Oak Blvd., Suite 600 AR, OK, TX

Houston, TX 77056

**Tel:** 713-572-2799

### **SAN FRANCISCO**

540 Bush Street AK, CA (all other counties)

San Francisco, CA 94108 NV (all other counties),

**Tel:** 415-397-4330 WA, WY, MT, ID, OR, UT, HI and Pacific islands under U.S. jurisdiction

### **LOS ANGELES**

10390 Santa Monica Blvd. AZ, CO, NM,

Suite 115 & 410 CA – counties: Imperial, Inyo, Kern, Kings, Los Angeles, CA 90025 Los

Angeles, Mono, Obispo Orange, **Tel:** 310-235-3200 Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego,

San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Ventura

NV – counties: Clark, Esmerelda, Lincoln, Mineral, Nye

## XI. CHECKLIST

You should have the following before you leave. You should have at least one **extra copy of all the documents**; it's probably a good idea to have several copies of them. Put the copies in a different place from the originals.

- Passport (multiple copies of first page)
  - Student visa
  - OFII form (top half completed and stamped by the consulate at your visa appointment)
  - "Attestation de domicile" letter
  - Certification of student status letter
  - Financial guarantee
  - Proof of health insurance
  - Extra copy of your birth certificate (in case you lose your passport)
  - Extra copy of your medical certificate (if you want to play on a sports team)
  - Extra copy of med prescriptions if applicable
  - Please make sure you have uploaded your ID photo (color, approx. 1.5 x 2 inches) on the database. We will need them for your student ID, library cards, membership cards, etc.
-  Please make sure you have read through this section carefully and that you have communicated the appropriate information about your stay to your parents.