



Office for International Study

SMITH COLLEGE JUNIOR YEAR IN PARIS

2009-2010 STUDENT HANDBOOK

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TENTATIVE 2009-10 CALENDAR

Friday, August 28, 2009	Arrival in Paris
Saturday, August 29, 2009	First Meeting, Reid Hall, 10AM
Monday, August 31, 2009	Orientation begins
Friday, September 25, 2009	Orientation ends
Fall Semester	
Monday, September 28, 2009	Fall courses begin at Reid Hall
Late September or October:	Courses start at universities
Tentative winter vacation:	December 19 through January 3
Spring Semester	Dates depend on university calendars
Easter/Spring Vacation:	April 17 – May 3rd
May 31, 2010	End of the program

Each university sets its own calendar, which is usually published just before the beginning of each semester. Until the calendars of the various universities are published, students should not make travel plans. A fall semester calendar should be available August 15, with updates with first semester exam dates expected in November.

The Director's supervision begins on arrival in Paris on August 28, 2009 and extends to the end of the academic year, May 31, 2010. Neither the Director nor Smith College is responsible for students prior to the official opening of the orientation session, during regular vacation periods, or after the official end of the second semester.

INTRODUCTION

This Student Handbook is intended to guide you through some of the early decisions that will shape your experience abroad. The Director of the program will always be available for guidance and assistance throughout the academic year, but it is primarily up to you to make the most of your experience.

Committing yourself to a year of study away from the United States means taking more responsibility for your own education and life than you may have in the past. The Director will help you to make informed choices about your academic program and personal welfare and serve as liaison between Smith College and local French academic and governmental institutions. But the success of your academic endeavors is largely in your hands.

As I have mentioned before, it is important that we think of this as a collective undertaking. You are responsible for yourself, but we also have real responsibilities to one another. The JYA experience will be a time of great personal and intellectual growth, but I start out with the assumption that each of you is a responsible adult. That means you are capable of making reasoned and informed decisions, and that you will hold yourself accountable for the consequences of your actions. In turn, I will do everything I can to make this year a success by challenging you to be your best—as a scholar, as a guest in a foreign country, and as a citizen of the world. I will also keep reminding you that you can (and should) take the work of your mind seriously without having to take yourself too seriously.

SUMMER PREPARATIONS

Student Visa

Students must apply for a long-stay visa from the French Consulate nearest their home during the summer before their departure. Letters from Smith College and a French university will be provided to students. Students are responsible for all fees and costs, understanding the application requirements, and assembling and submitting application materials. Students will be staying in Paris at the pleasure of the French government, and all visa rules and regulations must be followed to the letter. Apply for your visa early in the summer; don't put it off!

Once you have received your visa, scan the photo and signature page of your passport and the page containing your visa and send them via email to Mme Charlier, charlier@email.smith.edu

Public Transportation Card: *Carte Imagine-R*

Before the end of June 2009, Mme Charlier will send you an application form for the *carte Imagine-R* that you will have to complete and return to her immediately. As soon as she gets your form, Mme Charlier will continue that application process for the *carte Imagine-R*. The cost of the card is 286 €, which will be deducted in nine monthly installments from your BNP account.

ARRIVAL IN PARIS

You are responsible for making your own travel arrangements in order to arrive in Paris on or before **Friday, August 28, 2009**. Upon arrival, proceed directly to the hotel (see instructions below). If you arrive before noon, your room may not be ready, in which case you may leave your luggage at the hotel and come to Reid Hall. The Director will be there to welcome you.

For your first night in Paris, the program provides rooms at the Hôtel Méridien Montparnasse, a comfortable hotel that is just a ten-minute walk from the Smith Center at Reid Hall. The hotel is opposite the Gare Montparnasse, at 19, rue du Commandant Mouchotte. Students will be in rooms with two twin beds, and roommates will be assigned in order of arrival at the hotel. Breakfast is included. Most French hotels are smaller than American hotels and are far from sound-proof, so please be mindful of other guests and of their comfort.

If you arrive before August 28, you are responsible for making your own lodging arrangements. The Director will be available in Reid Hall on Thursday, August 27, and Friday, August 28, from 2 to 4 p.m. If you arrive in Paris early, feel free to come by the Smith Center.

Transportation from the airport

Bus: The least expensive way to get to Hôtel Méridien Montparnasse is on the AirFrance bus, *le car Air France* (see www.cars-airfrance.com), which leaves from both Charles de Gaulle and Orly airports. The bus goes to Gare Montparnasse, which is directly opposite Méridien Montparnasse. The fare from CDG is about 11.50 €. You will see the hotel as you step off the bus.

Taxi: Taxis are expensive, about 65 € from Charles de Gaulle, and 40 € from Orly Airport to the south of Paris. But, if you are on the same flight with other students, it may be feasible to share a taxi. A taxi will usually not take on more than 3 passengers.

Trains: There are other means of public transportation from the airports into the city – buses, rapid suburban rail lines (the RER), special rail lines (OrlyVal) – that are less expensive than a taxi.

Maps

A map of the neighborhood around Reid Hall will be emailed to you during the summer, but purchasing a *plan de Paris* is highly recommended. All Parisians have at least one well-worn *plan de Paris*, which presents the city *par arrondissements* in a compact format. You will find such a *plan* in bookstores and stationers everywhere; the department store Monoprix, near the Méridien, on your way to Reid Hall (on the boulevard Edgar Quinet), has a good choice of *plans de Paris*. The classic *plan* is *L'Indispensable*; another good one is the *Atlas de Paris par arrondissements* (published by Michelin). Consult a map to find your way from the Méridien Montparnasse to Reid Hall, a ten-minute walk.

FIRST MEETING IN PARIS

The first meeting of the program will take place at Reid Hall, at 10AM on Saturday, August 29. Topics will include cell phones, transportation, integration into French family life, and health and safety issues. We will complete paperwork for your *carte de séjour* (residence permit) and *carte bancaire* (ATM card), and you will receive your *carte Imagine-R*.

Bring the following documents with you to this meeting:

- Your passport
- An original copy of your birth certificate—not the original, but an original, obtained from the offices of the city of your birth and embossed with an official seal.

During this meeting, your luggage will be placed in a secure room at the Méridien Montparnasse. After the meeting, you will return to the hotel where you will be met by a member of your host family, and retrieve your luggage. Occasionally, students are met by a friend or neighbor of the family, or a member of another family, if the student's family is not able to be in Paris in late August. While this occurs only rarely, students must be prepared for this possibility.

PRE-DEPARTURE PREPARATIONS

Packing

Do not over-pack for your year abroad. Paris is a large modern city with everything you could possibly want or need. Clothing is expensive, but there are bargain stores and sales offering prices that will seem reasonable, even to an American converting dollars to euros. Personal care items are also available everywhere.

Bring no more than two moderate-size suitcases, a carry-on size bag you can also use for weekend trips, and a separate bag with your laptop. This will prepare you for most of the travel you will do during your year abroad. Remember, you must be able to carry everything you bring by yourself on and off the bus or train. Consult with your airline regarding baggage regulations.

Be sure your luggage is clearly labeled with your name and the Smith Center address in Paris. If your luggage is lost in transit, give the airline the Smith Center address. Keep your baggage claim tickets.

Items to pack in your carry-on:

- About 100 €, for incidental expenses during the first days of your stay in Paris, including transportation from the airport. You could also use an ATM at the airport to withdraw euros.
- Your passport and copy of your birth certificate (see above)
- A change of clothes, medications, and basic toiletries, in case your luggage doesn't arrive with you.
- Your laptop (if you are bringing one)

Other items to bring to Paris:

- If you are bringing your laptop, also bring your start-up discs and power cord with plug adapter

- Copies of your passport - put one in your checked luggage, one in your carry on, one in your wallet, keep one in your room in Paris, and leave one in the US with your parents.
- Extra passport-size ID photos, if you have them. It is also easy to have ID photos taken at a photo booth in Paris. You will need ID photos almost every time you engage with the French administration.
- For travel, you might want to bring an alarm clock, a small bath towel and wash cloth.
- A small gift for your host family
- A small supply of over-the-counter medications you prefer, and any prescription medications you take with documentation from your doctor. Keep all medication in original packaging.

Things NOT to bring to Paris:

- Small appliances such as hairdryers: You can buy a hair dryer in Paris for about \$20. The voltage is different in France.
- A large English/French dictionary: It is better to buy a good one in France, or use those in the library at Reid Hall.

Shipping

If you find you must ship items to yourself in Paris, the U.S. Postal Service provides the safest, least expensive, and easiest way to do so. Be sure to write “*Effets personnels usagés*” clearly on the box to avoid paying incredibly high taxes. In addition, experience suggests that it is best to declare only \$1.00 as the value of the contents of the box, no matter what it contains. If you insure the contents for more than this amount, French customs authorities will slap on a hefty tax – an amount equal to approximately one-third of the declared value, if not more.

You could also use a private air freight company that picks up items at home and sends them to Europe rapidly, but once your packages arrive in Paris you may have to pick them up yourself at the freight customs service desk at the airport – something that is a major *casse-tête* and will likely cause major delays.

Mail

You can receive mail at Reid Hall while studying in Paris. Give friends and family the address of the Smith Center before you leave home.

MONEY

The comprehensive fee paid to Smith College includes:

- all tuition fees, not including special fees for music or art classes
- housing in a French home, including breakfast daily, 6 dinners and one lunch per week
- a meal stipend for 6 lunches (6 € each) and 1 dinner (15 €) each week during orientation and when classes are in session
- 40 € to cover the cost of a simple *téléphone portable*
- all group expenses (train, hotel, cultural events) during orientation and other scheduled program excursions
- medical evacuation and repatriation insurance

Students must budget for the following additional costs: international airfare, books and course materials, the cost of phone calls (see phones section for estimates), a local transportation pass

(32€ per month), required medical insurance, and all personal costs such as toiletries, dining out and personal travel.

Personal Costs

It is difficult to recommend an how much to budget for spending money, because personal habits vary so greatly. Some students can get by on as little as \$50 per week, while other spend more than \$100 per week. Past students report spending less than 100€ each semester on books and supplies. The right amount for you will depend on your lifestyle and on the current rate of exchange. At this writing (April 2009), one euro (€) is worth approximately \$1.35; conversely, one dollar is worth only about *74 centimes d'euro* or “cents.” Generally speaking, life in Europe is going to appear to be more expensive than it is in the U.S. Follow exchange rates online.

You will also need to budget for any travel you wish to undertake. Most students travel during the main university vacation periods (at Christmas and Easter). Again, expenses depend greatly on where you travel, your lifestyle, and exchange rates, but at the very least, expect to spend \$500 per week for food and lodging. You'll also need to think about transportation costs. If you wish to stay in the Paris area during any holiday break, you must speak with the director early in the summer.

Personal banking

The Associate Director will initiate the process of opening a bank account for you at the Banque Nationale de Paris (BNP-Paribas) near Reid Hall. At the opening meeting, you will complete the paperwork with representatives from the BNP. You will receive your *carte bancaire* (ATM card) and checkbook shortly thereafter. The program will have deposited approximately 400 € in your account to cover your lunches for the first eight weeks of the program, which you will be able to access once you receive your *carte bancaire*. BNP has branches everywhere in France, including one around the corner from Reid Hall. Smith will deposit your meal stipends electronically to your account at the BNP approximately every eight weeks. In addition, your account will be debited approximately 32 € each month for your *Carte Imagine-R*.

Obtaining funds from home

ATM: The easiest way to obtain funds from home is to use your ATM card to make withdrawals from your US checking account in Euros. This also usually provides the best exchange rate. Inquire with your bank about fees for making withdrawals from abroad; most charge a flat fee per transaction, which means it is more economical to make fewer larger withdrawals instead of many small withdrawals. You can deposit cash withdrawn from your US bank account into your PNB bank account. You should notify your US bank that you will be abroad next year and making withdrawals from Europe. PNB, unlike most banks, does not charge an extra fee to Bank of America account holders using PNB ATMS to withdraw funds from a B of A account. You may also want to be sure you and your parents have plan for transferring or depositing funds in to your US bank account in the event of an emergency.

Traveler's Checks: Traveler's checks are a good source of emergency funds. You can also deposit them in your PNB account. They can be cashed at banks and at *bureaux de change*, but their rates of exchange are less favorable than ATM transactions. You can cash traveler's checks without commission in the offices of issuing companies such as American Express and Thomas Cook, but you may not find these offices when you need them. Traveler's checks can also be useful for travel to countries where ATM machines are not widely available.

Credit Cards: Credit cards are also useful in an emergency, and for travel, and other purchases. Credit card companies also usually give competitive rates of exchange, but may also charge foreign currency transaction fees. Inquire with your credit card company before you go, and notify them that you will be abroad for the year. Credit cards are not recommended for obtaining cash, as interest rates are very high.

Personal Checks: Personal checks drawn on a US bank account are not very useful. You can deposit them at PNB, but they can take weeks to clear. Wire transfer is a better option. You would need to supply your PNB account information to the person wiring funds to you.

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

If you regularly take any kind of prescribed medicine, carry a prescription written in generic terms with you. If possible, take along a sufficient supply of such medications to cover your entire stay in Paris. Take along a second pair of glasses or contact lenses and a copy of your prescription.

Visit your doctors and dentist for routine appointments before you go. If you have any specific health needs, bring with you a copy of your medical history and sign a release with your doctor or with health services at Smith College in case you need to have your records sent to your doctor in Paris.

The Smith Center in Paris maintains a list of doctors, both general practitioners and specialists, psychotherapists, psychiatrists, and dentists from whom students have received good care in the past. In general, French health care is first-rate, and it is usually somewhat less expensive than in the United States. A visit with a general practitioner will cost about 25 €; a visit with a specialist, from 50 € to 80 €.

INSURANCE

Smith student health insurance plan: Smith College requires that all participants on a Smith JYA program enroll in the Smith College student health insurance program through Gallagher Koster. The fee for this health insurance is not included in the Smith College comprehensive fee. Health plan brochures and details will be sent to students when they are available, in early summer. Coverage is from August 15, 2009, to August 14, 2010. Specific questions regarding your health benefits may be sent by e-mail to Michele Bergonzi, Vice President, Account Management mbergonzi@kosterins.com. Other questions about health insurance may be directed to Student Financial Services, (413) 585-2539, or sfs@smith.edu.

Travel Assistance, Medical Evacuation and Repatriation Insurance: This is provided at no cost to all participants on the Smith JYA program. Coverage is not valid when students are studying in his or her country of origin. Students will receive this information and wallet card in their pre-departure packets.

Personal Insurance: Neither Smith College, the Junior Year Abroad Program in Paris, nor the Director accepts responsibility for personal injury or for damage to or loss of personal property.

If you wish to have luggage or other personal insurance, you should arrange coverage with your agent before leaving the U.S

Liability insurance: As a student in the Paris JYA program, you will receive liability coverage (*responsabilité civile*) at no charge.

LIVING IN PARIS

Housing

All students in the Smith program in Paris live in French homes, in their own rooms. Students are not permitted to make independent housing arrangements while a participant in the Smith program in Paris. Room and board agreements are negotiated by the College on a year-long basis; commitments to host families are made well before arrival in France. It is very difficult to change housing assignments once you have settled into your French residence and thus important that you understand from the beginning that your housing arrangement, whatever it may be, represents a year-long commitment. In some cases, more than one student will be housed with one family.

Housing assignments are made by Mme Charlier, who is familiar with our Parisian families and their apartments, and the incoming Director. Mme Charlier makes every effort to accommodate each student's needs and preferences, and place her with a suitable family. You will be notified during the summer via email about your host family, and are encouraged to write them a brief email of introduction. Remember to pack a small gift for your family. One suggestion is a gift from your region or area; a student from New England could, for example, bring a small container of maple syrup. A gift reflecting your interests and background is another option. A past student brought CDs of her ensembles and her mother's jazz band, which her family enjoyed.

It is your responsibility to make a reasonable and good-faith effort to adapt to the differences and idiosyncrasies of your host family. This process of adaptation is an important educational component of the JYA experience. We are deliberately not recreating your Northampton experience (and, we hope, neither are you). Flexibility, grace and a sense of humor go a long way in living with a host family. No matter what your living situation is, be considerate of others. Your hosts will have their own (reasonable) rules and expectations—make sure you know and understand them from the outset.

Many students plan travel during the university holidays (Christmas and Easter). In our experience, both students and families enjoy taking a break from one another, and appreciate each other all the more upon return. If you wish to stay in the Paris area during any holiday break, you must speak with the director early in the summer. At the end of the year, students may stay with their families no later than May 31, 2010.

Dining

Families provide breakfast everyday, six dinners per week and one lunch per weekend (normally Sunday lunch), during orientation and when classes are in session. You will receive a stipend from Smith to cover the remaining meals. There are many options around Reid Hall to get a sandwich, a bowl of pasta or a crêpe for a quick lunch, in addition to the CROUS, a student restaurant located throughout the city.

Vegetarians are readily accommodated, but vegans are all but unknown in France. If you are a vegan, you may have to make certain important compromises or sacrifices. Regrettably, our families cannot fully accommodate special dietary needs of that particular sort.

Telephones

You will be given information about purchasing a cell phone (*un téléphone portable*) at the first meeting in Paris. You will receive 40 € to cover the cost of purchasing a simple *téléphone portable*. We recommend that you purchase your phone at an agency of Bouyges Telecom, Orange (France Télécom), or SFR. As soon as you have obtained your phone, notify the Director and Associate Director of your number.

The cost of your calls is your responsibility. This year's students report paying approximately 15 € to 25 € per month for cell phone use. In France, you pay only for calls you make, not those you receive. The cost of a local call, 0.50 € per minute, is high, while text messaging is more economical. Calling the US from your cell phone is extremely expensive. Less expensive options for communicating with friends and family outside of France include Skype (free internet video chat) and international phone cards. One such *carte internationale*, Delta Multimedia, Megacall USA-Europe, allows you to make international calls at very reasonable rates. A card that costs 7.50 € sometimes offers more than 10,000 minutes of conversation with someone in the U.S.

Land-line telephone costs are higher in France than they are in the U.S. Local phone calls in France are not free and therefore neither is Internet access, even to a local server. Overseas calls are also expensive on land-lines.

The Smith Center

The Smith Center in Reid Hall is open during the week from 8:00 a.m. to 10:30 p.m. The building opens at 10 a.m. on Saturdays and at 2 p.m. on Sundays, and closes at 10:30 p.m. both days.

Libraries

The Smith Center at Reid Hall has a small lending library of about 2,500 volumes, including an array of dictionaries and grammar books. Columbia University at Reid Hall also has a modest-size library with many of the most important reference books one would need for courses on literature, Paris urbanism, the history of art, and linguistics. Both are calm and pleasant spaces in which to work.

Computers

It is recommended that you bring a laptop with wireless internet access to Paris. Also pack the start-up disks for your computer, in case you have problems in Paris. Your power cord usually includes a built-in voltage converter, but you will need a plug adaptor to accommodate your plug to the shape of French outlets.

The Smith Center at Reid Hall has four desktop PC's and one laptop PC (each equipped with recent versions of Microsoft Office), and three ports for student laptops, all networked to a laser printer in our Reid Hall library.

Internet

All computers at the Smith Center are connected to the Internet. Academic work always takes priority over web surfing and e-mail on the Smith Center computers. There is also wireless internet available in all the public spaces at Reid Hall, including the library, the large conference rooms, the classrooms, the corridors, the courtyard. Some cafés and libraries also provide wireless internet access. There are also many *cybercafés* in Paris where you can use computer facilities for relatively nominal charges. Your host family will also provide internet access (not necessarily wireless).

You must check your Smith email address while you are abroad. The Director will use that address, and all official communications from Smith College will be sent to it.

Internships

It is possible to pursue an internship (unpaid, not for credit) while in Paris. There is a workshop held in the beginning of the program for students interested in experience a work placement while in Paris. It is also possible to participate in an academic internships; see Internships for Credit section below.

ACADEMIC PROGRAM

Language Pledge

All students participating in the Smith College program in Paris are asked to sign a language pledge in which they agree to speak French at all times: in Reid Hall, during excursions, and amongst themselves. This will have huge and immediate effects on your language skills- and by extension, on the quality of your experience in Paris. Take it seriously, and honor those who wish to abide by it by doing so yourself.

Orientation Session

Friday, August 28 – Friday, September 18, 2009

The *Session d'orientation* is highly intensive with classes five days a week. Students will be divided into two sections for these courses at Reid Hall which will be an intensive and rewarding initiation to academic, political, and cultural life in France. (Students studying at Science Po may have different orientation activities.) Orientation also includes visits major cultural and architectural monuments in and around Paris and systematic explorations of various Parisian *quartiers*.

The orientation courses are likely to be *Communication orale*, French History and Culture, and Phonetics. There will be brief quizzes and/or final examinations in each course. For successfully completing the orientation courses, students will earn one letter grade and two credits.

During the orientation session, the Associate Director will meet each Monday afternoon with the group for a *Paris pratique* mini-course. On Friday mornings, the Director will meet with the group to provide information on the academic program and course offerings, and also meet individually with students in the afternoons, to discuss orientation classes, academic-year courses, issues regarding university life in Paris, and any other concerns .

There will be no official vacation between the end of the orientation and the beginning of the regular academic year.

Academic Year
Monday, September 21, 2009 – Monday, May 31, 2010

Normal Courseload

Students normally earn 16 Smith credits and take four courses each semester in Paris. Students are required to take a French language course (usually the equivalent of FRN 300 and FRN 385) each semester. The remainder of the course load is made up of Smith courses, consortium courses, university courses, or an internship course, in consultation with the Director, who acts as academic advisor for all students in Paris.

Vacations and holidays

The tentative dates of winter vacation are Saturday, December 19, 2009, to Sunday, January 3, 2009. Do not make plans for winter break until the university academic calendar is published, around August 15.

Each university sets its own calendar, which is usually published just before the beginning of each semester. Until the calendars of the various universities are published, we cannot tell you with certainty when vacations will take place. Most university courses will begin between mid-September and early October, and some take a one-week vacation in January or February. A two-week Easter or spring vacation in April is common.

Obviously, any travel must be planned around your course schedule. That may mean that many of your colleagues will be on break, while you continue to slave away at your courses. Students pursuing full-time internships also take no vacation during the spring semester. Students should leave travel itineraries with the Director and Associate Director.

Please note that the end of the academic year for Smith College in Paris does not precisely coincide with the end of the academic year of the institutions with which we are associated in Paris. More information on end-of-the-year examinations will be available during the second semester.

Smith and Consortium Courses

Regular courses at Reid Hall will begin on Monday, September 28. Courses offered by Smith College and by the Three-College Consortium (Smith, Hamilton, Middlebury) resemble courses with which you are familiar.

French University Expectations

Courses at the French University will, in many cases, follow a unfamiliar format. At the Université Paris-Sorbonne (Paris IV), you will sit in large lecture courses (*cours magistraux*) and in smaller sectional meetings (*travaux dirigés* or *TD*) without knowing precisely what the assignment is for the next class. You may be given a four-page bibliography and nothing more to guide your work. At the Université Paris-Diderot (Paris VII), most classes, large and small, are autonomous: they meet once per week for three hours and are not divided into *cours magistraux* and *TD*.

You may feel lost for the first few weeks. The Director is there to help you succeed in your academic undertakings by talking you down, counseling patience, and hiring tutors as needed.

But success ultimately rests with you. Keep the distinction between “unfamiliar” and “this sucks” clear in your mind, and remember, again, that you are not in Paris in order to recreate the Northampton experience in a different location. Just as talent comes in many forms, so does instruction. We will certainly spend time comparing and contrasting the American and French systems of higher education, but learning to adapt is the key to *le grand succès*. You will learn a good deal from your classes at the French university, though it is likely that you will not realize this right away.

And certainly, expect the unexpected: universities may go on strike, in which case we will adapt—by replacing missing courses via tutors or establishing in-house alternatives. We will have a chance to discuss what it means to be in a country where universities play a far more prominent and visible political role.

Exams

At the end of the first semester, students sit for exams for their university courses as scheduled by the professor. Students must take exams without exception.

At the end of the second semester, special arrangements are made for students to complete their final exams or papers early, before the end of the Smith program.

Internships for credit

Credit-bearing internships may be pursued by qualified students with the approval of the Smith director with the organization known as Internships in Francophone Europe. Both full-time and part-time tutorial internships are available. Part-time internships usually carry four credits and are the equivalent of one course. Both options are available spring semester only. These internships require course work and the writing of a significant final report.

Internships in biology with a CNRS or INSERM research team associated with a Parisian university are also available for qualified students with the Smith director’s approval. Students earn 4 or 8 credits and become an integral part of a research team working on projects at the forefront of biological research, and learn many of the specific techniques used in developmental, genetic, and molecular biology. In addition to conducting experiments, interns are required to read scientific literature in the area of their particular research project, to write summaries of their readings, and to write a year-end report on their work. Most research teams welcome students who are willing to prolong their part-time internships during the year into full-time summer internships (for which Smith students can apply for Praxis funding). The Director makes every effort to find these internships, but should there be more students seeking these internships than research teams available, students who need the credits to fulfill their biology major have priority.

ACADEMIC POLICIES

Credit

Students in Paris must satisfactorily complete their Smith, consortium and university courses or internships to earn 16 Smith credits each semester and two credits for orientation. In exceptional cases, and only with the permission of the Director and the Associate Dean for International Study, students may earn more than 34 credits for the year in Paris. Credit is not granted for a beginning modern language course taken abroad.

Grades

All grades earned in Paris are Smith College grades, and will be counted in your GPA and for qualification for Latin honors and membership in Phi Beta Kappa.

Attendance

Students are expected to attend all classes as scheduled. Classes are held Monday through Friday. Many classes at French universities are offered on Fridays and attendance at Friday classes in Paris is required. Attendance is critical to your academic success in Paris. Unless a group event is planned, students are free to travel on weekends. Students may not begin official vacations earlier than the assigned date or extend them without special permission from the Director.

Smith Policies

All Smith College policies published in the Smith Bulletin apply unless otherwise stated in this handbook.

ACADEMIC HONOR CODE

The Smith Honor Code is in effect in Paris. The Smith College community at home and abroad maintains that any evasion of the spirit of the Academic Honor System is a violation of the Academic Honor Code. The following regulations and requirements apply to all students on the Smith College Junior Year Program.

In essence, the Honor Code requires that in all oral and written work, which will normally be accomplished in French, you must practice intellectual honesty. You may always seek the advice of professors regarding written work and ask for assistance from native speakers concerning specific grammatical problems. The work you submit, however, must be your own: it must not be written, translated, revised, or rewritten by anyone else. You are strongly advised to follow closely the format suggested by individual professors when quoting from or paraphrasing any and all secondary sources.

The Honor Code is available online, and it is a good idea to refresh your mind about its content. Reading assigned works in translation without the permission of the relevant faculty member is both self-defeating and violates the spirit of Honor Code. If you have doubts about any specific practice that relates to intellectual honesty, please consult the Director.

Procedures in Paris for reporting suspected infractions of the Honor Code are the same as those which prevail on the campus in Northampton, except that the suspected infraction should be reported to the Director, who will report violations to the Dean of the College.

ALCOHOL AND DRUG POLICY

Alcohol may be consumed, but not abused, by students who are of legal age in the host country. Students who choose to consume alcohol do so with the knowledge that they remain responsible for their actions at all times. Smith College prohibits the illegal distribution of alcohol to students who are not of legal drinking age in the host country and prohibits the unlawful use of alcohol in any of its facilities and at any of its activities.

Possession, use or distribution of any substances that are considered by host country law to be illicit or illegal drugs is prohibited. Students are cautioned that the possession of drugs is often dealt with harshly by local and host country law enforcement.

Any alcohol or other drug infraction will be considered a grave violation of program policy and may result in serious sanctions, up to and including dismissal from the program.

MISCELLANEOUS PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Registering with the U.S. Embassy

Registration with the US Embassy in France is recommended for all U.S. students. In the event of an international, political, or family emergency, or in the event that a passport is lost or stolen, the U.S. Embassy will be much better able to assist registered students. Register online with the US Department of State at <https://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs/>. Students of other nationalities should register with their home country's embassy in France as well.

International Student Identity Card

The International Student Identity Card (ISIC) provides special discounts on travel and admission to museums and other sites. You can apply for this card in person at any STA Travel office. There is a STA Travel office at 44 Main Street, in Amherst (across from the Town Hall). To obtain the card, bring a passport photo, \$22, and your student ID. Cards are also available from the Center for International Studies (CIS), located at 25 New South St., #25, in Northampton. The ISIC application form may be downloaded from www.isic.us.com.

Travel in Europe

The Eurail Youth Pass (for persons under 25 years of age) could be a good deal for extended train travel but must be purchased in the U.S. Many different kinds of Eurailpasses are available, as you will find if you google "eurailpass" and see what's what. Once you know your academic schedule, you can then arrange for a friend or a family member to buy your pass in the United States and mail it to you in France.

There are now a number of bargain airlines in Europe, which has made travel around Europe more economical and faster than ever!

Preparing Yourself

Do you want to have a fabulous year in France? Do you want to make this one of the most meaningful years of your life? If so, expose yourself to as much French as possible, both now and throughout the summer before your departure for Paris. Speak French with your friends; read French or Francophone novels, newspapers, and magazines; see French movies; study the map of France; listen to French music; go to French movies or rent French videos, visit websites in French. The two groups of the orientation session will be called the *Groupe Pasteur* and the *Groupe Curie*. Do you know who they are?

Do not be afraid to make mistakes when you speak French. If you have at even a small amount of confidence in French when you arrive, you will soon begin to feel at home and to profit from your new surroundings. Make a commitment to yourself to speak French to your classmates while you are in France. Those who do so make far more progress than those who do not. Those

who make maximum progress are those who study and who have French friends with whom to study and get together.

Your ability to enjoy the full scope of life in Paris will depend in large part on your ability to express your ideas and your personality in French.

Check out the following websites:

- The website of the *Mairie de Paris*: www.paris.fr
- The three most important French daily papers:
www.lemonde.fr www.liberation.fr www.lefigaro.fr
- A choice of several radio stations equivalent to NPR:
www.radiofrance.com (you can choose *France Inter*, *France culture*...)
- Some radio stations that French young people like to listen to:
www.novaplanet.com/radio-nova www.radiofrance.fr/chaines/fip/accueil/
- A website about current movies:
www.allocine.fr

Let your summer readings and discoveries contribute to your knowledge of Europe and also of your own country, about which you will be asked many questions in the “ambassadorial” role you will be playing as an American student abroad.

Final Suggestions

The opportunity to spend a year abroad is the opportunity to explore another culture. Look around, listen, think, ward off the spell of received opinion. Because you will be living with a French family you will have to adjust to that family’s routine and, out of courtesy, to respect their rules about mealtimes and about the use of the kitchen, the bathroom, and the phone, and about smoking, listening to music, and making noise. Only by attempting to make such adjustments will you learn to appreciate certain aspects of French culture (and certain aspects of your own).

Go to France with an open mind; go prepared to explore another environment – and to experience a certain number of strikes, which may occasionally interrupt your daily routine. Try to put your own habits and preferences (for food and for everything else) into perspective. This is, at heart, an adventure. You will discover new ways of living and learning. The primary objective of study abroad is academic, but intellectual and emotional experiences will come from unexpected places. This year will likely change your life

Please ask your parents to read this Handbook (in its final form), and leave a copy of it with them at home; bring another copy with you when you come to France. If your parents wish to visit you in France, please advise them not to come during the first two months of the program, when you will have orientation session examinations and courses to register for and adjust to. A good time for a visit might be late November, or (better) early April.

Have a wonderful year in Paris! And remember that the Director will always be there to help you out, to give you advice and suggestions, and to be sure that you are taking advantage of all the assets of Paris.