What to Know Before You Go

1.) How can I use a cell phone without spending my life savings?
   We recommend that you purchase a pay-as-you-go cell phone abroad. They are inexpensive and you can find good plans for international phone calls. With Spanish phones, you will not be charged for incoming calls, however, be careful with the roaming fees when using them outside of Spain in your weekend travels!

2.) What are the apartments like?
   Each apartment at the Valencia Study Center has internet access, 1-5 bedrooms (double or triple occupancy), 1-4 bathrooms, air conditioning/heat, fully-equipped kitchen, washing machine and personal study space. Access to dryers are provided in the common areas.

3.) When is the onsite orientation session?
   The first orientation meeting take place on August 29th at 6:30pm. More orientation activities will take place during the next days. Note: All orientation activities are mandatory!!

4.) Where do I get my books for classes?
   We have emailed your registration materials, including a list of required textbooks. If stated in the registration information for the course, you will need to purchase your books prior to departure, and bring them with you to Valencia.

5.) Will they accept my American dollars in Spain?
   Only at exchange currency places (mainly banks). We recommend that you go to your local bank several weeks prior to departure and exchange at least $100 for euros. You can exchange currency at the international airports and at banks (in Spain from 9.00am to 2.00pm, Monday through Friday). We do not recommend traveler’s checks as they can be a hassle to cash.

6.) How do I access the rest of my hard-earned money?
   The easiest way to access money in Valencia is with an ATM card. Your FSU Card will work as an ATM card at banks in Valencia. Make sure your ATM card is associated with an international ATM circuit, like Cirrus, Plus or Star. Please inform your bank before departure that you will be traveling abroad.

7.) Now that I can access my money, how much should I expect to spend?
   As indicated by former students, approximately $4,500-$5,500 is needed for a full semester of meals, incidental expenses, and personal travel. Believe it or not the largest amount will be spent on meals. Take advantage of the meal vouchers and the kitchens.
8.) How do I make sure I don’t fry my laptop abroad?
   Make sure to bring plug converters for all electronics. You can purchase these in Valencia if you prefer. Laptop computers will rarely require transformers, but check yours to make sure. As an aside, don’t forget to check your homeowner’s insurance to make sure your electronic devices are covered for theft abroad.

9.) Can I refill my prescriptions abroad?
   You must bring sufficient quantities of prescription medication with you. Make sure to keep these medications in their original containers, along with a copy of the prescriptions, in your carry-on luggage. If you have difficulty getting a vacation prescription to cover your entire stay, please contact IP immediately.

10.) How do I keep my peace of mind while abroad?
   Make copies of your plane ticket, passport, and credit cards (back and front). Bring copies with you to Valencia, and leave additional copies at home with your family.

11.) What are some packing suggestions from former students?
   Don’t pack too many shorts, Spaniards dress more formally. September and beginning of October is still hot. However, starting mid-October, the weather is colder. You will need some warm clothes and good walking shoes, pack accordingly. Do not over pack!

12.) Can I have packages sent to me while I am abroad?
   We strongly discourage students from having any packages sent to them while abroad. We have had numerous students who had problems either with packages arriving after they’ve already left the program or getting charged a significant amount in CUSTOMS. Either way, it’s not worth it. Please feel free to encourage your loved ones to send mail, but not packages.