
UNIVERSITY OF IOWA COLLEGE OF LAW
2010 Summer Program
IN COMPARATIVE AND INTERNATIONAL LAW



PREPARATION MANUAL

THIS MANUAL CONTAINS INFORMATION THAT WILL AID YOU IN YOUR
PREPARATION FOR THE ARCACHON PROGRAM IT IS NOT INTENDED TO BE THE
ONLY SOURCE YOU RELY ON

September 2009

Arcachon Participant Manual

Table of Contents

Table of Contents.....	1
INTRODUCTION.....	3
(1) PAYMENTS.....	3
(2) PASSPORTS AND OTHER IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS.....	4
(2.1) Passports.....	4
(2.2) International Student Identity Card	4
(2.3) International Youth Hostel Membership Card	5
(2.4) Student Visas	5
(3) FINANCE AND BUDGETING	5
(3.1) Banking and Charge Cards	5
(3.2) Online Banking.....	6
(3.3) Using Cash	6
(3.4) Traveler’s checks	6
(3.5) Budgeting.....	7
(3.6) Wiring Money.....	7
(3.7) Safety Tips: ATM Fraud	7
(4) MAKING YOUR TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS	8
(4.1) Booking your flight to Europe	8
(4.2) Airport Check-In	8
(4.3) The Flight.....	9
(4.4) What to Do When You Arrive	9
(4.5) Arrival in Arcachon	10
(5) CALLING/TELEPHONES	11
(5.1) Pay phones/phone cards	11
(5.2) Cell phones	11
(5.3) Skype.....	12
(6) FOOD.....	12
(7) GETTING AROUND IN ARCACHON AND IN EUROPE	13
(7.1) Getting Around in Arcachon.....	13

(7.2) Getting Around in Europe.....	13
(8) HOUSING	13
(9) PACKING	14
(9.1) REMEMBER THE “PACK LIGHT” ADMONITION!!	14
(9.2) Electrical Appliances.....	14
(9.3) Clothing	15
(9.4) Other Items.....	16
(9.5) Sample Packing List.....	16
(10) OTHER THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW	16
(10.1) Respect for Foreign Customs	16
(10.2) Tipping.....	17
(10.3) Medical Matters.....	17
(10.4) Iowa Law Review and Journal Applications	17
(11) CLASSES.....	18
(12) INTERNET ACCESS	18
(13) SPORTS.....	18
(14) WEEKEND TRAVEL.....	18
(15) TOURIST INFORMATION IN FRANCE	19
(16) OTHER LOCAL INFORMATION	19
(17) TOURIST IMPERATIVE	19

INTRODUCTION

Congratulations on your acceptance into the 2010 University of Iowa College of Law Arcachon, France International & Comparative Law Program! We hope this program will provide you with a variety of enriching academic and cultural experiences. This program includes international law courses, tours, and an introduction to French and European culture. It also provides a great opportunity to make lasting friendships.

If you have not traveled abroad before, you may not be familiar with the concept of “culture shock,” which is inherent in adjusting to a new culture. This adjustment takes some time. While you will probably begin your trip with a great deal of enthusiasm, you may eventually feel homesick for American culture. It is important to keep in mind that you are conditioned by American culture, and that it is important to remain open minded about the different values and customs of other countries. It is perhaps most important to remember that you are a guest in a foreign country, and it is always important to respect local customs and local laws.

Please take the time to read through this manual and to prepare as thoroughly as possible for this trip. Travel is much more enjoyable when you are well prepared. Please consider purchasing a recent travel book from Lonely Planet or another source for France or any other country you plan to visit!!

(1) PAYMENTS

April 23, 2010 is the due date for the remaining payment for the program. Please give Kelley Winebold a check for \$5550 (USD) dollars by that date, payable to the University of Iowa. While you can date the check for that day, it is permitted to postdate the check for June 1, 2010 to ensure plenty of time for financial aid to come through. We will verify with the financial aid office before depositing any checks.

No damage deposit is required for housing. If there is damage to the apartment, the amount will be charged later and split between all residents, unless we are told otherwise. If you will have a studio alone or are having a non-participant join you for some or all of the program, additional fees will apply. Fees for non-participants will permit them to attend all functions, including the opening and closing dinners, city tour, dune tour, Bordeaux tour, boat trip and any other events. We will pre-calculate studio and non-participant fees by May 1 and inform those to whom this information is relevant. An additional check, in U.S. dollars (USD) (and postdated to June 1, if you prefer) should be submitted at that time for the amount of those charges.

A separate amount will be charged for books based upon courses you plan to take. It will be determined when the books arrive at the bookstore.

For those University of Iowa students attending the post-program tutorial, your names will be passed along to financial aid so that you can borrow additional tuition and living expenses if you want. We will need a check (postdated to June 1, if you prefer) for the cost of tuition, housing, airfare, and transfers. These post-program costs will be assessed and announced by May 1.

Be aware that, although it is permitted, you do not have to borrow the extra dollar amount for the post-program trip. You can use money you expect to save from the main Arcachon program to finance your costs. Also, any non-participants accompanying students to the post-program are also required to leave a post-dated check for the additional amount.

WARNING: The dollar is very weak against the Euro and is expected to remain so. What this means is that prices may seem very expensive to us, and students should be very careful about splurging on various things until they are accustomed to the costs. We don't want anyone to run out of money.

(2) PASSPORTS AND OTHER IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS

(2.1) Passports

You need a passport to travel to Europe. If you have a Passport, make sure it is still valid and will be so for **six months** after your return. Passports are valid for adults for 10 years. If your Passport is expired you will need to send it in and apply for a new one. The Passport agency will return your old Passport when they mail your new one. Please check with your local passport agency for qualifications.

Passports can be obtained either through the mail or from a U.S. Passport Agency. The Post Office on Clinton St. is the closest place to obtain a Passport in Iowa City. Please check ASAP for how long it will take to get a new passport. Even expedited requests may take several weeks.

Protect Your Passport at all Costs! Keep your Passport with you at all times! Do not leave it in hotel rooms, etc. However, you should be aware that some hotels may hold the Passport of at least one person staying in a room. This is an EU intelligence agency requirement. Make sure you don't forget to get it back before you leave!

If Your Passport is Lost or Stolen, go to the nearest U.S. Embassy or to local police authorities. If you can provide information that was contained on your Passport, you may be able to obtain a new one. It is a good idea to make photocopies of your Passport, birth certificate, and other important identification documents, and keep the copies separate from your Passport. In fact, it is a good idea to leave a photocopy of the passport with a relative in America. The embassy expedites all processing claims if a copy is faxed from the United States. If you bring extra Passport photos with you, it may save you a lot of time replacing it.

You can get additional information from the 24-hour phone number of the U.S. Passport Agency: (202) 647-0518. Toll free: 877-487-2778.

(2.2) International Student Identity Card

It is a good idea to obtain an International Student Identity Card. If you are an Iowa student, these cards can be obtained at the University of Iowa's Study Abroad office located in the Capitol Mall.

These cards may provide you student discounts at some museums and other tourist attractions. Additionally, the card provides travelers health insurance for students. There is no age limit to get a card and all that is required is that you are a full-time student. If you decide to obtain a card, it sometimes takes as much as one month to process an order. They are also available through the following agencies: **Council Travel:** 1-800-2council, www.counciltravel.com, and **Let's Go Travel:** 877-370-ISI C or www.letsgo.com.

A University of Iowa student ID will get you many of the same discounts, but the International Student Identity Card offers some exclusive discounts that might make it worth getting.

(2.3) International Youth Hostel Membership Card

If you plan on staying at youth hostels, some require an International Youth Hostel Federation card. The hostels that require these cards are often of higher quality than independent hostels. This can also be obtained at www.counciltravel.com or directly from American Youth Hostels, P.O. Box 37613, Washington, D.C. 20013-7613.

(2.4) Student Visas

If you are a United States Citizen, student visas are not required for participation in this program. However, if you choose to go to another country during a break while you are in France, you may want to consider that particular country's visa requirements. Many EU countries will not require you to have a visa. However, some pending EU countries, Eastern European, and African countries do require a visa.

If you are NOT a U.S. citizen, you should talk with the French Embassy and the embassy of any other country you wish to visit regarding their visa requirements.

(3) FINANCE AND BUDGETING

(3.1) Banking and Charge Cards

ATM/Debit and Credit Cards

If possible, students should bring both an ATM/debit card and a credit card. Most ATM cards will work in French ATM machines, and there are several machines in Arcachon. ATM/debit and credit cards with the VISA (Carte Bleu) logo are most widely accepted in France. MasterCard and American Express are much less frequently accepted. If you do not have a Visa Card, you would be wise to call the bank that issues your card and ask if they issue a VISA version of your card. If not, you should seriously consider applying for one! Also, credit and debit cards often get demagnetized, so you might want to have a contingency plan.

ATM/Debit and Credit Card Fees

Of course, most banks and some credit card companies charge fees for overseas use of their cards. However, past students have found that banks and credit card companies provide the best exchange

rates. ATM withdrawal fees can be significant. There may be fees from the bank sponsoring the machine as well as your home bank, as well as currency conversion fees, and certain other flat transaction fees. Withdrawing cash in large amounts (e.g. 300 Euro) is often the best way to avoid fees. Some merchants in Europe do not accept American debit cards at the point of purchase, however, as European debit machines are made for cards with a microchip in them and not with the magnetic strip. Also, most banks charge a fee per debit transaction, which could add up quickly. You should check with your bank and/or credit card company to see which fees apply to ATM withdrawals, debit-card purchases, and credit card purchases. Fees can add up quickly, so it is worth doing some research so you can avoid them as much as possible. Finally, some banks (especially those where the account is opened in Iowa) require notification that the card will be used abroad (i.e. what countries the card will be used in) PRIOR to departure or they will not work overseas. Most problems can be avoided by contacting your bank ahead of time.

(3.2) Online Banking

It is also important to sign up for online banking if you haven't already done so. French ATM machines cannot display your account balance, or make transfers from savings accounts.

(3.3) Using Cash

Since the dollar will probably continue to decline, it may make sense to buy Euros in the U.S. before leaving. Depending on the fees your bank charges, it may be less expensive to purchase currency or travelers checks denominated in Euros in your own city. Most banks do not hold foreign currency at the branch, so give yourself enough time to order the currency in advance. Most American Automobile Association travel offices sell dollar and foreign currency Traveler's Checks, but do not charge a commission to members.

You may purchase Euros from exchange booths at the airport when you arrive in Paris, but these booths often charge significant fees and have less favorable rates. Avoid bringing cash in dollars with you. Most banks only exchange currency for account holders, and even the post office places restrictions on which denominations it will exchange. The Casino in Arcachon will exchange money at what seems to be good rate, but beware that the Casino also charges high commissions. However, past students have found that the cheapest way to get cash while in France is by withdrawing it from an ATM.

(3.4) Traveler's checks

Traveler's checks can be a convenient alternative to carrying cash, because they are easily replaceable if lost or stolen. However, past students have found it difficult to exchange traveler's checks while in France, most merchants and banks do not accept them. American Express offices exchange their own traveler's checks, but American Express offices are only found in large cities. The best exchange rates for cashing traveler's checks are available in downtown Paris, so if you plan to spend a day or two in Paris before leaving for Arcachon, you might wish to obtain the bulk of your Euros there rather than at the airport or in the U.S. Often the

best rates are near the Place D'Opera and on the Rue de Rivoli. Rates vary considerably from place to place, so shop around first. Note that some places advertise the price at which they sell dollars, rather than the price at which they buy them.

(3.5) Budgeting

This seems like an obvious point, but many students neglect to plan their budgets in advance, and end up running out of money. Make sure you account for the exchange rate, weekend travel, souvenirs, etc.

(3.6) Wiring Money

Even when you carefully plan your budget, emergencies happen, and sometimes it is necessary to have money wired from home. Both Western Union (800-225-5227) and American Express (800-926-9400) have instant international wire transfer systems. If you visit one of their overseas offices or call them, you can pick up the money from their office shortly after the wire transfer is made. American Express fees are about \$15 to wire \$100. Western Union fees start at \$20 to wire up to \$100. Fees increase with the amount transferred. Another option is wiring money from a U.S. bank to a foreign bank. As a *last* resort, there is the option of contacting the U.S. State Department's Citizen Emergency Center (202-647-5225).

(3.7) Safety Tips: ATM Fraud

A few students have been victims of ATM fraud. While this is not always preventable, there are a few important things to keep in mind:

(1) If you have a money belt, it is probably better to take out larger amounts of money in fewer ATM transactions (however, use common sense about this: you don't want to lose or have 500 Euros stolen). This is also a good idea because most **banks charge fees for overseas ATM withdrawals**, so using an ATM on a daily or even bi-weekly basis can really add up. Also, for safety reasons, the more ATM withdrawals you make from different ATM's, the greater your chances are of being a victim of ATM fraud.

(2) Be very careful booking hotels, flights, hostels, etc. with your credit card in internet cafes. Sometimes the computers are set to remember credit card information. If you don't know how to check the computer settings, it is probably better to call to make these arrangements (but be aware that French airlines usually charge a per-minute fee for telephone reservations).

(3) Most importantly, find a way to check your bank account balance so that you know if you are a victim of ATM fraud, and keep track of your spending! If you do not already do online banking, you might consider starting, so that you will be able to monitor transactions while abroad.

(4) MAKING YOUR TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS

(4.1) Booking your flight to Europe

Rates

This should be done as early as possible because rates tend to increase as you get closer to your departure date. Priceline, Expedia, Travelocity, etc. are not necessarily cheaper than buying your tickets directly through the airline! Student Universe is one of the cheapest ways to purchase tickets. Last year, students paid anywhere from \$700-\$1300 for round trip tickets from Chicago O'Hare to Paris, so shop around!

Destination

If you are traveling alone, and can afford it, you may want to fly into Bordeaux instead of Paris.

There is no French equivalent to the American Disabilities Act, and getting through the Paris Metro stations with your luggage is nearly impossible (no elevators, escalators, wheelchair ramps, etc.) It is considerably easier, however, if you are traveling with friends. Nonetheless, there is a bus from the Charles de Gaulle airport in Paris to the Montparnasse train station where you can catch your train for Bordeaux. The bus ride costs approximately 15 Euros. (Directions on how to find the bus are at the end of this brochure.)

Timing

Many students choose to arrive in Paris a few days before the trip begins. A word of caution: if you plan on applying for a journal, you should seriously consider NOT going early.

Frequent Flyer Programs

If you don't have a frequent-flyer account set up with a particular airline, it might be smart to set one up prior to buying your tickets. Students have received up to 6,000 frequent flyer miles for this trip, which can really help toward free tickets in the future. If you already have a frequent-flyer account, try to purchase tickets through the same airline to benefit from the additional miles this trip will give you. Airlines usually still give frequent flyer miles for tickets purchased on sites like Expedia and Travelocity.

(4.2) Airport Check-In

Arrive early, at least two and a half to three hours before your plane is scheduled to depart. Security measures are even greater for international flights. Upon arrival at the airport, go to the check-in counter for your airline. Call your airline in advance to check international regulations on allowable luggage and weight limits.

For those of you planning to fly within Europe on time off and for all those attending the post-program tutorial, please note that the weight limit is 20 kilos for checked luggage. This is a very light amount!! You will have to pay additional fees at the

airport ticket counter if you exceed it. Check with your airline as to the fees and as to the weight of the carry-on bag as well. You cannot carry on the 21 inch pulley bags that we do in the U.S. when you are in Europe or Egypt. Thus, consider packing very very lightly or plan to incur shipping costs to ship items back to the US.

You should also pack your carry-on bag so it can be easily opened by security. Make sure you have identification information outside and inside the luggage. Your identification information should contain the following address of the Hotel Le Nautic in Arcachon, so that your luggage can be delivered there if it is lost.

Your name
University of Iowa
c/o Hotel Le Nautic
20 Blvd de la Plage
33120 Arcachon
France

Please cooperate with all security personnel. Do not make any jokes with them about terrorists, bombs, etc.

(4.3) The Flight

If you have never flown outside of the U.S., you should be prepared for a very long flight. It takes approximately nine hours from Chicago, not counting layover time. If you are not able to sleep on the plane, you should bring books, magazines, etc. to entertain yourself. Those students applying for journals might want to work on their submissions on the plane. This will alleviate some of the pressure of completing them while in Arcachon. If you get motion sick, don't forget your Dramamine. Chewing gum can prevent your ears from popping on the plane's descent. You will probably be served two meals on the flight, along with several drinks. If you have special dietary restrictions, you need to notify the airline in advance. It is advisable NOT to drink alcohol on the flight, as it tends to prolong jet lag. There is a 7-hour time difference between France and Chicago/Iowa (it is seven hours later in France). Therefore, if you haven't slept on the plane, you will have missed the night. To adjust to the new time zone, you should plan on staying up all day and going to sleep at your normal bedtime in the evening. You also may want to avoid taking a nap the first day in Arcachon.

(4.4) What to Do When You Arrive

If you fly into Paris, you will arrive at the Charles de Gaulle Airport. You will go through customs, where you need to show your passport, and you will then pick up your checked luggage. If you have problems with your luggage, there are several information booths throughout the airport with English-speaking agents. There is a train station in the de Gaulle Airport. If you are going directly to Arcachon, there are TGV's (Train à Grande Vitesse, French for 'high-speed train') that go directly from the airport to Bordeaux. If you arrive in Paris a few days early, or if the TGV is unavailable, you will want to get to the Montparnasse train station (there is a metro from the de Gaulle Airport to Montparnasse, and a bus as well (see the end of the brochure for details) and buy a ticket to Bordeaux there. The ticket should be \$150 or so, unless you have a Eurail pass, in which case

you should only have to pay a 3 Euro (\$5) supplement when you use your pass. Once you get to Bordeaux, you can buy a ticket to Arcachon. These tickets are about \$20, and there is usually a train every hour between around 6:30 A.M. to around 9:30 P.M. For more information about train times and prices, visit www.sncf.com. If you select the British flag at the bottom of the page you can view the site in English.

If you arrive early and plan to stay in Paris, you should surf the web while still in the States and look for accommodations in an area of Paris you might wish to stay in. Buy an up-to-date edition of a France or Paris guide from a company like Lonely Planet or Frommer's to assist you in this process as well as to consult generally. Alternatively, once you get your luggage at Charles de Gaulle airport, visit the tourism office at the airport and make a hotel reservation there. They may have listings for places (maybe some that are cheaper) that do not have web sites. Another option is to take the Air France bus at the airport, go to Montparnesse train station, and find a cheap hotel around there. This is the station you will leave from to go to Arcachon, so being based around there will save you hauling luggage through the metro.

If you fly into Bordeaux, you can take an airport bus to the Bordeaux train station and take the local train to Arcachon. Alternatively, you can pay an expensive private taxi to take you directly to Arcachon, a 45-minute drive, which will cost well over \$100! Don't get into the cab, without asking if the driver will go to Arcachon. If so, tell the taxi to take you directly to Boulevard de la Plage, which is the main street. You want no. 151, the home of Madame Serin, AKA the Beach House, which is very near the gambling Casino in the center of town. The casino is a landmark faux-middle ages castle with turrets. We will give out all keys and directions to the other housing from there. There will be research assistants in the courtyard to assist you. Remember the Serins do not speak English.

(4.5) Arrival in Arcachon

You should arrive in Arcachon on Saturday, May 15, which is the first day your housing will be available. If you arrive earlier, then you are on your own, and should find a hotel. You can check with our host hotel where we have classes, Hotel Le Nautic, 20 Boulevard de la Plage. In any event, on Monday, you should proceed after 9 a.m. to Madame Serin's at 151 Boulevard de la Plage.

If you arrive in Arcachon by train, you have a couple of choices to get to Madame Serin's. You can get a cab. Call 05 56 83 88 88 if one is not at the station. Show the driver the address, 151 Blvd de la Plage. He will probably not speak English. It is a five minute cab ride, but can feel wonderful if you are tired of hauling your luggage around.

You can also walk. From the Arcachon train station entrance, look straight ahead and you will see the Casino, a big white turreted castle a couple of blocks down. Walk down Boulevard General de Gaulle (across the street from the train station) to the casino and you will be on Boulevard de la Plage. Turn right on Boulevard de la Plage, walk about 200 yards to 151, Boulevard de la Plage (on your left), go through the gate, up to the house.

Keys and directions to your housing assignments will be given out at Madame Serin's all day. We will also be giving out any course materials that you have not gotten yet, and a nice city map and guide to the city. If you arrive in Arcachon after 7:30 p.m. (really try not to), we will be at the opening dinner. We will leave directions. If it is after 10:00 p.m., try getting a room at Hotel Le Nautic at 20 Blvd de la Plage. Go to Madame Serin's by 8 a.m. on Sunday, as we will have a part-day of touring that you will not want to miss. **IF YOU WILL BE DELAYED AND NOT ARRIVE ON TIME, PLEASE LEAVE A MESSAGE FOR ME AT HOTEL LE NAUTIC. KEEP THIS PHONE NUMBER: 05 56 83 01 48.** They will know my cellphone number. If you miss us on Sunday a.m., still go to Madame Serin's, where we will try to leave your keys or other instructions.

(5) CALLING/TELEPHONES

(5.1) Pay phones/phone cards

The French telephone system works differently than our own. Public telephones require either coins or telephone cards. Telephone cards are available in various denominations and are sold at the France Telecom Office, Tabac stores and at the PTT (the French post office). These cards are the cheapest option. If you want a phone card for use in a phone booth, ask for one for "une cabine". Otherwise, you may get one only for use in a cell phone. If you arrive on Sunday, be sure to buy a phone card while in the airport. Tabac and other stores are not usually open on Sundays.

STA Travel issues international student ID cards that offer a relatively low cost for telephone service. Moreover, these cards work in all countries.

From anywhere in France, dial 0800-99-0011 for an AT&T operator in the United States (who can handle credit card and collect calls). MCI operators can be reached by dialing 0800-990019. Sprint is available by dialing 0800-99-0087. Those who have other long distance carriers are advised to obtain information on making international calls before leaving for France.

In Arcachon, telephone booths are located throughout town, most notably across the street from Madame Serin's, at the base of the two piers (Jetee Thiers and Jetee D'Eyrac) and at the PTT. To call Paris from Arcachon, dial 01-plus the 8-digit phone number. To call anywhere else in France, dial the regional prefix (02 thru 05) plus the 8-digit phone number. The regional prefix for the Arcachon-Bordeaux region is 05. In addition, many students find it cheaper to call home from a French payphone and ask your party to then call you back at the payphone. Rates are much cheaper from the U.S. to France, especially if the person you will be calling most has an international calling plan. All major telephone companies offer them.

Please note that there is no phone at Madame Serin's house. Some of the apartments may have phones that you can use with a phone card.

(5.2) Cell phones

If you like, you can rent a cell phone for the length of your stay. These are available at car rental counters at the Paris airport.

Many students are now buying French cell phones in various stores and at the post office. For your family's peace of mind, you may want to strongly consider this option. Last year, it cost about 85 Euros to buy the phone and 35 Euros for a phone card that gave around 100 minutes of French domestic phone time or 60 minutes of international time (i.e. calls to the United States which cost 80 Euro cents (\$1.20) per minute.). Cell phone companies offer more free additional minutes the more you spend. For example, if you pay 100 Euros, your phone will often be recharged for the equivalent of 150 Euros. You can resell this phone for a reduced price to future program participants.

Also, check with your cell phone provider about whether your US phone can be adapted for use in Europe. Last year, Cingular phones did work in France if prior arrangements had been made with that company. Check their international roaming and text messaging rates as it may be cheaper to buy a French phone instead. Some companies can unlock your cell phone so all you need is a French SIM card. If you do use a US phone in France, you will need to bring an adapter for the French plugs.

Please leave the following number with your family for use in the event of emergencies. It is the Hotel Le Nautic, which is where we have classes. From the US, dial 011 33 5 56 83 01 48. The fax is 011 33 5 5683 04 67. The person on the switchboard may not speak English. I will also have a cell phone and will let you know that number.

(5.3) Skype

Many students last year used Skype which is the *cheapest* way to stay in contact with your family/friends. The software is free to download (www.skype.com) and you use it to call regular phone lines via the internet. You can use it to call any number in America for \$.02 per minute. Skype also has calling plan options that give you unlimited minutes to call America for a low flat fee (i.e. \$5-\$15 per month of service). Again, this is the cheapest option.

(6) FOOD

The two main grocery stores are on Boulevard de la Plage ("LeClerc" and "Avenue General LeClerc" near the Banque de France). There is also a green grocer one half block from City Hall. There are numerous bakeries, charcuteries (sort of delis), green grocers, etc. scattered throughout Arcachon. A better flavor of France can be obtained by visiting the town market ("le marche") located near the train station. It is open mornings, Tuesday through Sunday; about half the stalls are also open Monday mornings. There is also a small Casino market near the Hotel le Nautic. A large supermarket called "Carrefour" is within short biking distance in the neighboring town of La Teste. It is located next to a McDonald's. Carrefour offers better prices and a larger selection of food and other necessities.

Eating out isn't cheap. Arcachon is a resort town and the restaurant prices reflect a well-to-do French person's vacation budget. There are, however, several less expensive places scattered around town,

including sandwich shops and pizza places. Within a ten minute cab ride is a McDonald's, in case you can't do without. Please note that many more French people smoke than Americans, but the restaurants are non-smoking now. Also, most restaurants do allow dogs.

(7) GETTING AROUND IN ARCACHON AND IN EUROPE

(7.1) Getting Around in Arcachon

Bring comfortable shoes, because walking will be your main mode of transportation in Arcachon. Madame Serin's house is approximately 1/2 mile from Hotel le Nautic (15-20 minute walk), and some apartments are approximately 3/4 mile from the beach and grocery stores.

(7.2) Getting Around in Europe

If you are interested in traveling around Europe, you should seriously consider a Eurail pass, which can ONLY be purchased in the U.S. You can visit a travel agent for further information and schedules or go online. Go to www.RailEurope.com. Passes purchased online may take weeks to be delivered, or you can sometimes pay to have them sent via Federal Express a few days before you leave. If you are under 26 and planning on either going to Europe a few days before the program or spending time in Europe after the program, this is probably going to save you money.

If you do plan to buy a pass, try to coordinate with your friends while you are in the U.S. so you can carefully pre-select the countries you will actually travel through. If you end up not traveling through the countries you pre-selected, the pass is wasted. Also you may then be paying extra on site to travel to countries you did not pre-select.

Bicycles, mopeds and motorcycles are available for rent at a store on the far end of Boulevard de la Plage. It costs about 75 Euros to rent a bicycle for a month, and you can also rent bikes for smaller intervals. Cars may be rented from AVIS and Eurocar (affiliated with National) located in the train station and on Avenue General LeClerc across from the train station.

(8) HOUSING

You will be given your roommate and housing assignment prior to departure. Since housing is very tight and very expensive, please try to work out any rooming problems (who gets the bunk bed, etc.) without involving me. We cannot get other apartments.

French housing accommodations generally do not include towels or sheets. Please bring these items. Since some beds are twins and some are doubles, it is safer to bring double sheets.

Accommodations at Mme. Serin's include sheets, but students with allergies should be prepared to wash their bedding or bring their own. Bring old sheets and towels so you can discard them in France and leave more room in your luggage for souvenirs.

The program will make every effort to assist students if any problems arise with their accommodations. You should expect the landlord to provide approximately the same level of services you would receive in the United States. The landlord is responsible for providing hot water, etc., but, as in the United States, the tenant is responsible for reasonable upkeep, such as cleaning, light bulbs, etc.

(9) PACKING

(9.1) REMEMBER THE “PACK LIGHT” ADMONITION!!

Remember you may be hauling the luggage by yourself through airports, subways, and up and down stairs without elevators. You will also have to pull it a few blocks from the Arcachon train station to Mme. Serin’s house. Remember you are carrying your course materials, notebook and other heavy stuff. I strongly recommend one checked piece, one carry on that hooks or sits on the larger piece and one small personal item such as a purse or small backpack. Put luggage tags outside each piece and put a sheet of paper with the address and phone of the Le Nautic hotel (see infra) inside each bag so that your bag can be sent to you if the outside tags fall off. Check with your airline about the weight limit per bag. Some airlines now charge extra for any bag over 50 lbs and may even put limits on the weight of the carry on too!!! Your books and linens must fit in along with your notebooks. A laptop will count as your carry on or personal item and you should not put it in your checked luggage!! I now wrap my laptop in a T-shirt and put it in my carryon without its brief case, and then put the empty brief case in my checked luggage. Of course, I take the risk of it breaking by not properly encasing it. Also do not check any valuables such as medicines, money, passport, jewelry etc. Carry them on. Leave valuable watches, rings etc. at home totally. At the very minimum, I always carry a travel toothbrush, toothpaste, deodorant, comb/brush in my carry on along with a change of underwear and maybe a fresh t-shirt, as you are flying overnight and will arrive in the early AM. If your luggage does not arrive, you have some basics with you. Wear very comfortable clothes and shoes on the plane as your feet are likely to swell. And remember to wear a flat fabric money belt underneath your pants (not an outside pouch) containing your credit cards, passport, cash, and traveler’s checks if you use them (I don’t). Pick pockets can abound at the airport or train stations.

For those of you planning to fly within Europe on time off and for all those attending the post-program tutorial, please note that the weight limit is 20 kilos. This is a very light amount!! You will have to pay additional fees at the airport ticket counter if you exceed it. Thus, consider packing very very light or plan to incur shipping costs to ship items back to the US or for the excess baggage fees on the plane.

(9.2) Electrical Appliances

The French electrical system is DC, 220 volts. We use AC in the U.S. If you plan to use an electrical appliance, you should purchase both a converter (to convert directly to AC) and an adapter (to adapt to the physical plug) before you leave for France. **YOU WILL NOT BE ABLE TO**

PURCHASE CONVERTERS OR ADAPTERS ONCE YOU GET TO EUROPE, SO IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT YOU DO IT BEFORE YOU LEAVE!! Some places you may find converters include Wal-Mart, Radio Shack, Best Buy, or other major department or travel stores. Students bringing laptop computers may only require an adapter, but are encouraged to check their computer's converter, manual, or contact the manufacturer for compatibility information. There are no computers available for classroom use, so you must bring your own. LeClerc and several other stores sell French hair-dryers for around 25 Euros. This may be a better option than bringing one from home, especially if you plan to return to Europe in the future. Hair dryers tend to get fried, even with an adapter and a converter, especially if you are staying in the beach house or an apartment with older wiring.

(9.3) Clothing

Again, pack lightly: try one week's clothing as a base. Remember that you can do laundry. (Laundromats, however, are *very* expensive (around \$10/load) so you may want to consider bringing some of your own laundry detergent and wash your clothes by hand). Temperatures will range from 50s possibly in early mornings in May, (maybe with rain) to the high 70s or even 80s by the time we leave. Air conditioning in all the countries is RARE. So pack warm weather things along with a sweater, raincoat, socks, umbrella etc. Shorts, low cut or belly tops etc. are not worn much in town on the street and certainly cannot be worn while we are traveling as a group. These items, as well as swimwear, can be worn on the beach. Since we are on the beach, most of you may want to bring a bathing suit, flip flops, sunscreen, etc. Many French women of all ages may go topless on the beach, but I advise our women not to adopt this custom while there!!! You can bring a beach towel or buy one in Arcachon. Relatively conservative dress is expected on the street, even in a resort town like Arcachon. Europeans generally do not wear shorts. You should bring things that are durable, easy to wash, and things that require little ironing.

You should bring at least one nice conservative outfit, since there will probably be a reception at City Hall, a visit to the Magistrate's School in Bordeaux, etc. For men, this will be a sport coat, tie and dress shirt or a suit, along with dress shoes. For women, this can be a dress, pant suit or suit with a skirt. Bring a pair of dress shoes that will be comfortable since you may have to walk a great distance or wear the shoes for long periods. Some women bring a suit for court and a more festive outfit for dinners or going out. If you intend to visit a church, shorts or tank tops are usually not permitted. Sneakers or walking shoes are a must. You should also bring one or more sweaters since May (but seldom June) can be chilly.

For those going on the post-program trip, it will be **VERY** hot. Consider mailing back your cool weather items. You will need very lightweight items that COVER you. NO shorts, spaghetti straps, or tank tops are allowed. Women should consider bringing a scarf that can cover all their hair, as that will be necessary to enter a mosque.

WARNING: Due to anti-American sentiment or the possibility of terrorism, do not bring items that have American flags or American places printed on them such as University

of Iowa, New York, sports teams, etc!!! I will not permit you to participate in a group activity if you are wearing such an item.

(9.4) Other Items

You will need to bring your own towels and you will need to bring a set of sheets, as well, if you don't live in the Beach House.

Buy all toiletries, contacts, prescription and over-the-counter medicines, and personal items in the U.S. The brand you want or the item itself may not exist or may exist under another name with slightly different ingredients. If you do forget or run out, the local pharmacies and grocery stores have many items. Bring a still or video camera and film. If you forget, you can purchase these items in Arcachon, including disposable cameras and film, but the prices are much higher.

(9.5) Sample Packing List

(This is not all-inclusive, and I strongly suggest you make your own!)

Carry-On: [Check with your airlines re allowable items, size and weight of carry-ons, etc.] Passport, printed e-ticket, student ID card, Eurail Pass, credit cards, money, contacts, contact solution, contact case(s), hairbrush, glasses, sunglasses, prescription medicine, Advil, spare underwear, essential toiletries in plastic baggy, (toothbrush, toothpaste, deodorant, etc.) (in case your luggage gets lost), Dramamine, Benadryl/Claritin/Epi-pen, umbrella, camera, computer, ipod, bluebook (if you are planning on doing journal applications), reading material for planes and trains (disposable magazines, xeroxes, and paperbacks are great.)

Suitcase: deodorant, toothbrush, toothpaste, makeup, soap, shampoo, etc., notebook(s), school books, sheets, towels, clothes (see infra. § 9.3), swimwear, comfortable shoes, hair dryer, travel books (for any countries you plan to visit), converter/adapters, travel iron, alarm clock.

(10) OTHER THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW

(10.1) Respect for Foreign Customs

It is often easy to forget when traveling overseas that YOU are now the foreigner. While the French and other Europeans are normally very polite and helpful, you should not expect them to go out of their way to help you simply because you are American. While many French and other Europeans speak excellent English, **do not assume that everyone speaks English or is willing to speak English with you!** It is better to first ask the person whether he or she speaks English. Also keep in mind the following:

-Always respect local habits and customs. For example, in France and elsewhere in Europe, they eat later than in Iowa City. Many restaurants may not open till 7pm or later. They also take two hours or more for dinner, viewing dinner as an opportunity for socializing during

which food will come out at various intervals. When ordering, most waiters do not approach the table to take orders until all menus are closed, as a signal everyone is ready. It can be next to impossible to turn around a meal in an hour or less. I have found if I am in a “hurry,” it is better to eat in my apartment.

-When visiting museums, churches, and other attractions, keep your voice down (Americans stand out because they are loud!) and refrain from touching anything. Also be sure to look presentable (no shorts, tank tops, etc.).

-Usually there will be no warnings to this effect, but Europeans expect these customs be heeded.

-Be careful about getting into political discussions. You may encounter anti-American sentiment or anti-American-government sentiment, particularly about the Iraq war or other Middle East issues.

-Be wary about the combination of alcohol, politics, innocent discussions with local members of the opposite sex, etc. Bar fights can occur in France as well as the U.S..

-Remember rude or unhelpful people can occur in any culture.

(10.2) Tipping

Generally, tipping is not expected in France. There is the concept of a “pourboire,” or a small tip for very good service in French restaurants. This means rounding up to the next Euro or two, instead of the 10-15% amount. However, be aware that large tips can create uncomfortable situations. Consult a guidebook for tipping rates for taxis, hotel luggage carriers, etc.

(10.3) Medical Matters

You should check with your insurance company before you leave to make sure you are covered in Europe. Some companies charge additional premiums for overseas coverage. If you are insured through the University of Iowa’s GradCare plan, it should cover overseas travel without additional charges, but you should verify this in case it has changed. The University’s SHIP plan may not cover overseas travel. Again, the International Student Identity Card includes medical insurance while overseas.

(10.4) Iowa Law Review and Journal Applications

Although it is easier said than done, do the best you can to finish your journal applications before you leave. Access to computers and printing is limited and expensive. The time you will have to complete the applications once you arrive in Europe will fly by as you cope with jet lag, going to classes, coping with new roommates and a new language and environment.

(11) CLASSES

There is a draft schedule of courses available on the program website. Any revised schedules will be distributed when you pick up your materials and there may be later updates distributed if there are any changes.

(12) INTERNET ACCESS

Internet access is available at the Hotel Le Nautic (one broadband computer and wi-fi in the lobby and classroom). Students can also go to the internet cafe on Boulevard de la Plage near LeClerc.

(13) SPORTS

Swimming is an obvious one, although the water may be cold. The sun is certainly warm enough to lay out. Cycling is also an option, as are fishing, boating, and golf. Running on the boardwalk and beach is great, but rare, especially for women. Arcachon has a beautiful 18-hole golf course about one mile from the town's center. There is a tennis club as well. A rather large gym is located near Carrefour in La Teste, a reasonable biking distance away, and students can join on a temporary basis.

If you want to try surfing, Biarritz is a great weekend trip destination.

(14) WEEKEND TRAVEL

The class schedule is arranged to enable students to take a several-day weekend trip, plus a couple of regular weekends. All the minitrips can be arranged while in Arcachon, but should be done as early as possible to secure good prices on tickets, etc. For the long break, destinations have included London, Ireland, Barcelona, Geneva, Germany, Italy, Amsterdam, Greece, and Corsica. The most popular destinations in past summers for the regular weekends have been Paris, the prehistoric cave paintings in the Dordogne, the Bordeaux vineyards, the Riviera (Nice, Marseille, Monaco, Cannes), and Spain. Students may travel by train or rent a car for the weekend. Car rentals can be very expensive. Online sites offer better prices. Car rental companies give better pricing for longer rentals. Gas can be \$10 dollars (USD) a gallon or more. Gas is sold by the liter and there are 3.8 liters per gallon, so you may see prices of 1.12 or 1.20. Be aware that these are in liters and Euros! It might be smart to pack a smaller bag, like a duffel bag, to carry less with you on weekend trips. This smaller bag may be helpful if you end up buying a lot during the program. It is advisable to take your class materials with you so that you will be prepared when class resumes.

(15) TOURIST INFORMATION IN FRANCE

You can call American Express toll-free by dialing from anywhere in France 05-201-202. An English speaking operator can provide information on hotels, restaurants, local events and festivals, etc. This service is available from 8:30 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Monday through Saturday.

Many European cities have their own tourist offices, often staffed with English speaking employees. Consult current travel guides for the location of tourist offices, in addition to local hotel and restaurant information. The internet can be a great source as well.

(16) OTHER LOCAL INFORMATION

Information about Arcachon and the local area can be obtained from the local tourist office, located between the railroad station and the main post office. There is a small office near Le Nautic as well. Check out the city website at <http://www.arcachon.com/>. There are two discos and a casino in Arcachon. The International Herald-Tribune and USA today are available in limited quantities in Arcachon. If there is a TV in your housing, it will only have the standard few French channels.

(17) TOURIST IMPERATIVE

In the words of one Arcachon alum: Ignore the fresh seafood if you want, forget the wine if you must, but *do not miss* the Dune du Pyla. The Dune is the largest sand dune in Europe, which we will visit the first full day.