



London Law Consortium 2012

STUDENT GUIDE

TO

LONDON



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2012 London Law Consortium

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STUDENT GUIDE TO LONDON

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This guide is designed to answer the most pressing questions about living and studying in London. The following advice has been compiled over the years and has been updated yearly by past assistants to the London Law Consortium on-site program director. We encourage you to look at other sources about living in London, as well, but we hope this will be a good start in helping you through your preparations for travel and first weeks in the amazing city of London. We have tried to provide contact information as much as possible, and in particular, we have links to relevant websites so that you can learn more. If you are using the electronic version of this document, you should be able to connect to the relevant website by clicking (or CTRL-click) on the portion of the text highlighted in blue.

About London

London, with a population of seven million people, is one of the world's great cities. Situated on the River Thames in the southeastern part of England, London stretches in every direction over more square miles of parks, squares, monuments, museums, and shopping streets than a student could hope to explore in a lifetime, let alone a semester. As the famed 18th century writer, Dr. Samuel Johnson, put it, "[W]hen a man is tired of London he is tired of life; for there is in London all that life can afford."

London has been inhabited since before the invasion by Julius Caesar and his Roman army (in approximately 55 B.C.). The story of its physical growth and development is told in the diversity of its architecture, with fine examples of all styles represented. The Great Fire of 1666 eradicated most medieval buildings, but at the same time provided new opportunities for architects to rebuild the city. Today, Georgian town houses jostle for space with Victorian office buildings. The stone of Westminster Abbey contrasts sharply with the red brick of St. James's Palace, and the stucco of fashionable Kensington provides relief from the glass skyscrapers in the City.

London is renowned for its theater, including Shakespeare's Globe Theatre, the National Theatre on the South Bank of the Thames, and the famed West End productions. Resident opera companies perform at the Royal Opera House (Covent Garden) and the English National Opera. The Royal Ballet, the Sadler-Wells Ballet, and touring international companies provide many opportunities to attend classical and modern dance performances. Concerts at the Wigmore Hall, Royal Festival Hall, Queen Elizabeth Hall, and the Royal Albert Hall are complemented by church music and recitals all over the city. Students can enjoy the treasures of the National Gallery, the Tate Britain and Tate Modern Galleries, the Queen's Gallery at Buckingham Palace, the British Museum, the Museum of London, and innumerable other art galleries and museums.

The diversity of London provides unparalleled shopping (and window-shopping) opportunities – exciting Oxford Street, elegant Mayfair, the smart shops of Bond Street, and the street markets of Portobello Road and Camden Town. The great department stores of Harrods, Liberty's, Harvey Nichols, and Selfridges, and the boutiques of Kensington and Chelsea, offer the latest in fashion.

London's climate is generally mild. Temperatures seldom fall below 40 degrees F in the winter months, and snow is rare. (Make sure, however, to bring your umbrella!) Spring is delightful, with parks full of daffodils and other spring flowers. The beautiful Kew Botanical Garden, Regent's Park, Hyde Park, and St. James's Park, among many other outdoor pleasures, offer visitors magnificent landscapes of trees and gardens.

The British legal and political traditions are rich in history. Law students in London can add to their academic program by visiting the Old Bailey and other English courts, attending debates of the House of Commons and House of Lords, and meeting with British barristers and solicitors. Students can also meet experts in specialized areas of law and attend lectures at the nearby Institute of Advanced Legal Studies. A semester in London enables American law students to glimpse the history and institutions of the country where our common law tradition was born, and thereby broaden their understanding of the comparative legal systems of the United States and the United Kingdom.

The Bloomsbury District

The development of Bloomsbury began in the early 1660s. It soon became one of London's most fashionable districts and a place of residence for rich merchants and aristocrats, known for its elegant squares. Bloomsbury is now dominated by two great institutions of learning and scholarship – the British Museum and the University of London, all within walking distance of the Florida State University (FSU) London Study Center, where our program is located. The British Museum comprises one of the largest and finest collections of antiquities in the world.

During the 19th century, Bloomsbury became a favorite haunt of artists and writers, the most famous of these being Charles Dickens. In the early part of the 20th century, the "Bloomsbury Group," an association of artists and writers, including E. M. Forster, Roger Fry, John Maynard Keynes, and Virginia and Leonard Woolf, re-established the area's literary reputation, which lives on today in its many specialist bookshops. The "father" of modern communism, Karl Marx, when an obscure and impoverished refugee, wrote "Das Kapital" under the great beehive dome of the British Museum Reading Room, which is now on display in the British Museum's Great Court.

The FSU Study Center

The London Law Consortium holds its classes at the FSU London Study Center, 99 Great Russell Street, London. The Study Center, which opened in 1993, consists of adjacent buildings dating from the 17th century, which have been completely renovated to include all modern amenities and facilities for education and housing. The reception area is notable for its recently restored, 300-year-old painted ceiling. Six floors contain classrooms of varying sizes, faculty and program offices, a general reference and video library, 24-hour computer labs and study room, student lounge, lecture/theater complex, and student housing facilities. Students from several American colleges and universities make use of the Study Center, creating a diverse and collegial student body. The Study Center is wheel chair accessible in certain sections and there is an elevator for access to certain parts.. Students with concerns about accessibility should contact the program director as soon as possible.

The Study Center is located one block from the British Museum, and less than two blocks from the Tottenham Court Road Underground Station. The “Tube” provides convenient transportation, along with links to many bus lines. You’ll find London’s West End theater district, Covent Garden, and bustling Oxford Street within walking distance. The area is brimming with restaurants, recreation facilities, and shops.

Nearby are many buildings of the University of London, including the Institute of Advanced Legal Studies, where Consortium students have library privileges. The nearby University of London Student Union (which can be joined for a small student fee) offers an array of student services.

Checklist

The following is a very short checklist to help you track essential items and necessary preparations before your trip to London.

Checklist of Essentials

- Determine Arrival and Departure Dates
- Airline Ticket
 - Passport
 - Immigration letter certifying participation in the program (you will receive this in December from the program’s on-site director)
 - Baggage Preparation (Quantity and Weight)
 - Transportation from the Airport
- Money
 - Set-up Internet Banking
 - Notify ATM/Credit Card providers
 - Initial/Emergency cash
- Accommodations Plan
- Print out directions to FSU Center
- Phone number of program director

Passports

Passports are required to travel to the United Kingdom. As soon as you are accepted into the program, please turn your attention to this issue!! If you have a valid passport already, please make sure your passport will be valid for six months *after* your return from the UK. Please apply for a passport right away if you do not have a valid one. If you are an American citizen, passport applications can be obtained at the nearest Post Office. If you are not an American citizen, please check with the nearest Embassy or Consulate from your country in the United States or wherever you are located. British law does not permit the London Law Consortium to give specific advice concerning immigration matters to individual students. Hence, all students are responsible not only for obtaining their own passports, but also for fulfilling any visa requirements that may be imposed, and determining other travel restrictions that may apply.

The program director will provide a visa letter to each person confirming their participation as a student in our program. Depending upon your nationality, you may need to obtain various other permissions from UK authorities. The visa letter does not provide authorization to work in the UK, and we do not encourage students to try to do so. This letter must be hand carried (not in your checked luggage) with your passport and presented to UK immigration upon landing. If you want to seek paid or unpaid employment in the UK, please research the relevant procedures and visa prices.

Please finalize your passport and visa details before purchasing your ticket!! We have had students lose their nonrefundable, nonchangeable tickets to London because they did not have the extra visa requirements met for their nationality, and thus could not fly on the date indicated for travel.

Flight Information

Airfares to London vary greatly. Booking early will generally help you obtain both the lowest fare and the best selection of travel dates. Booking at least a month or two in advance is recommended and will lower stress levels dramatically. Winter fares to London can be quite good, and most 2011 students' round-trip fares, purchased in the latter half of 2010, were between \$500 and \$750. Airfares fluctuate dramatically over time and can change according to fuel prices, so it's difficult to predict what travel will cost for 2012 students. Students typically fly into either Heathrow or Gatwick airport (both discussed in further detail below). Heathrow is closer to central London and offers more transportation options (the Tube, London's underground railway/subway, runs from Heathrow to central London but does NOT run from Gatwick to central London).

Tip: Plan to arrive in London several days before the start of the program. Many students discover they need to adjust to the time change. You'll likely want to settle in, familiarize yourself with the local neighborhood, and discover transportation options from your accommodations to the FSU Study Center.

Before booking your flight please consider both your arrival date in London and your departure date at the end of the program in light of your personal needs. Remember, orientation at the FSU Center on Monday January 9, 2012, is mandatory. Some students need extra time before the term to explore housing options and many students plan to travel at the end of term. Prices may vary widely over the course of just a few days for the same flight on the same airline, so explore your options. Determining your arrival date and final departure date may save you expensive ticket change fees at the end of your trip, so plan accordingly.

Excellent deals can be found on websites like Student Universe, STA Travel, Priceline, Orbitz, Travelocity, and Expedia. Two websites that list many discount ticket brokers are <http://travel2rp.com/consolidators.shtml> and <http://www.lowestairfareshomepage.com>. In addition, many budget travel agencies cater to students and offer lower airfares than commercial airlines or travel agents. When you call to make reservations with a student travel agency, the agency may need your International Student Identification Card (ISIC) number to secure a student

discount. It will take several weeks after you are accepted into the program before your card arrives. If you call for a reservation before you receive your ISIC card, ask if they can hold the reservation until you get your card.

Pay attention to airline luggage weight limits when packing. Most airlines impose a limit of one piece of luggage weighing a maximum of 50 pounds (23 kg) each. Regulations change somewhat frequently, so confirm the luggage quantity and weight limits with your airline. Textbooks are very heavy and may need to be put in your carry on in order to avoid exceeding the weight limits. Airlines charge expensive fees for exceeding luggage weight limitations. You should avoid bringing unnecessary heavy items and will want to weigh your luggage before heading to the airport. A bathroom scale works well for getting an approximate weight for each piece of luggage.

Tip: London's climate will fluctuate daily (and sometimes hourly) over the course of your stay. While you may need one or two pieces of heavy winter clothes, lighter clothes that can be worn in layers will help you to adapt to weather changes more quickly and may help reduce baggage weight.

Transportation from Airports

TAXIS:

Most students fly into Heathrow or Gatwick Airport. In either case, you will need transportation into central London. Taxis are the easiest and most expensive option. One of London's famous "black taxis" will cost £55-£105 (check the current conversion rates to determine the amount in dollars), depending upon the time of day, how far you are traveling, and the amount of luggage you have. Minicabs are less expensive, but they tend to be smaller cars and may not provide enough space for heavy travelers (see below for more discussion on minicabs). Some minicab companies use minivans or trailers to transport several people with large amounts of luggage. You must telephone ahead for minicab service. NEVER accept a ride from someone who approaches you in the airport uninvited. Two of the numerous options for minicabs to central London are (1) OnTime Airports (phone 020 8838 3299) and (2) Eurolink (phone 020 8902 1222). There are several good alternatives to an expensive cab ride into central London.

CAR SERVICES:

A cost-efficient method to get from the airport to your new flat is to share a car service with other Consortium students living in your building, or area, and arriving at the same airport on the same day. These car services can also be more cost-efficient than a taxi for a single traveler and offer the convenience of not struggling with heavy luggage on and off trains or the Tube (London's underground railway). Examples include: www.airportcarsonline.com and www.limohirelondon.org. FSU and past Consortium students recommend using Expressways to book private cabs to your flat from the airport. Mention the FSU to receive a discounted rate. You can book on their website here: <http://www.expressways.co.uk/>.

FROM HEATHROW:

The quickest way to reach central London from Heathrow is the “Heathrow Express” train. This train will take you to Paddington Railway Station in about 20 minutes. Trains leave the airport about every 15 minutes. You can then take a cab or the Tube to your final destination. You cannot take a luggage cart onto the platform to wait for the Heathrow Express or onto the train, so you need to be able to carry your luggage by yourself if you take the Heathrow Express.

A less expensive, but more time-consuming, and potentially back breaking option is to take the Tube from Heathrow airport. Most students find this option is too exhausting with heavy luggage after an overnight flight. In the airport terminal, look for signs with a horizontal line through a circle; this is the symbol for public transportation in London. Follow the signs until you come to the Tube station. Large maps of London’s tube will be posted near the ticket booths and turnstiles. The Piccadilly line (dark blue) runs from Heathrow to a number of stations in central London, including Leicester Square, Piccadilly Circus, and Knightsbridge. Consult a tube map to see which stop is most convenient and whether you need to switch lines to reach your final destination. Be aware that on many weekends, portions of the London Underground and various stations may be closed for scheduled maintenance. Follow the links provided to confirm the availability of your route. If you need more assistance, ask one of the helpful attendants at the Travel Information Centers located in each of Heathrow’s four terminals. They open at 7:15am and close at 10:15 p.m. The Tube hours of service run from about 5:30am until 11:45 p.m. (later on weekends)



Free luggage carts are available in the terminal, however, you can’t take luggage carts on the Tube, so be prepared to carry your luggage. Only a few Tube stations are equipped with elevators, so be prepared to carry your luggage up and down stairs, on escalators, and across platforms. Those stations with elevators are marked with a handicap accessible icon (♿) on the Tube map. Most Tube stations involve walking some distance to make connecting lines or access the street and you are unlikely to find anyone to assist you in the Tube station with your luggage. Depending on the time of day, the Tube can be quite crowded with people, making it even more difficult to move around with your luggage or fit into a train. Never leave your luggage unattended in a Tube station or in any other public place in London.

The National Express train company runs a coach service (a bus) from Heathrow Airport to Victoria Coach Station in central London. Victoria Coach Station is a short walk from Victoria Tube Station or you can take a cab to your final destination.

You may also take one of London’s red double-decker buses. This is probably the least convenient way to get to central London from the airport. At Heathrow simply walk straight out of the international terminal. To the right of the doors leading outside is a store devoted to selling bus tickets to central London. Tell the staff your destination, and they will sell you a ticket and tell you which bus to take. The buses arrive less than 25 yards from the store’s exit. For those in Acorn housing who will be picking up keys at the FSU Study Center, ask for the bus going to Russell Square. From Russell Square, take a black taxi to 99 Great Russell Street.

Tip: There are options for checking your luggage at one of Heathrow's four terminals. This allows one to get familiar with London transport without the burden of luggage. It costs about £8 per day per piece of luggage, and the storage facilities are open from about 6am to 10:00pm (hours vary by terminal). Commercial services include Excess Baggage Company with locations at Heathrow terminals as well as various central London train stations including Paddington and King's Cross.

FROM GATWICK:

The easiest way to reach London from Gatwick is the Gatwick Express train to Victoria Station. Trains run every 15 minutes. Baggage carts cannot be taken out of the airport. There is also a less expensive regional train from Gatwick which takes about the same amount of time, though it may be slower at peak times. You may want to avoid rush hour travel on this line, especially if traveling with lots of luggage. There is no Tube service direct from Gatwick. However, if you have taken the Gatwick Express train to Victoria Station, there are Tube connections and you can purchase a one-way tube ticket to your destination Tube stop. You may also choose to take a black taxi from Victoria Station.

Money

Tip: An English pound is also known as a "quid." Thus if something costs 5 quid, it costs 5 pounds. You may also be told it will cost you "a fiver." Likewise, 10 pounds is 10 quid or a "tenner." "Pence" is the equivalent of our plural "pennies." You may be told something costs "50p," which means 50 pence.

CASH & ATMs:

You may want to exchange some US dollars for English pounds before you leave for London. Doing so will make initial travel to your flat and purchasing your first meal much easier. Few banks now stock foreign currencies so call your branch before arriving to determine whether they exchange currency and what type of lead time they need to meet your currency needs. Once you arrive in London, avoid the bad exchange rates and expensive fees at the Bureau de Change by using your ATM card. You will find ATM machines (referred to locally as "Cash Points" or "Hole in the Wall") in both airports, as well as throughout London. By far, the easiest way to get English currency is through ATM's. They are everywhere and easily accessible in London. Most ATM's in London accept Plus, Visa, and MasterCard. You will also probably get the best exchange rate using the ATM.

Before you leave for London, check with your bank to make sure you can access ATM terminals in London and/or any other countries in which you may be traveling and find out what fees your bank will charge you for those kinds of transactions. In particular, check with your bank

to see if you will incur any surcharge for overseas withdrawals or currency conversion fees. Also, find out the amount of your maximum daily withdrawal. Some banks will raise the daily limit upon your request, and most have a higher limit for purchases. If you plan to pay your rent in cash, it might be useful to ask your bank to increase your daily withdrawal limit. Also find out about wire transfers (usually the most expensive option).

Ensure that you have Internet banking before going to London. British ATM's do not generally give you a statement of your balance when you withdraw money.

It is generally not feasible to open a British bank account. Most banks, such as Barclays, Lloyd's, or Midland, require students to make a large deposit, present student documents, present proof of employment status, and have resided in the UK for six months. However, HSBC, which operates branches both in the US and the UK, has been offering a service (for a fee) to their account-holders that enables them to open a British checking account and obtain a British debit card. It can be quite convenient to have a British debit card because, unlike US credit and debit cards, they use chip and pin technology. Some British sellers, especially those on line and at the train or Tube station kiosks, will accept only chip and pin cards, but most retailers and restaurants are still capable of handling standard swipe cards.

If you anticipate receiving wired money, you may want to use MoneyGram rather than Western Union. The nearest Money Gram location can be reached at 0800-897-198. It is more convenient than Western Union, available at most Thomas Cook offices, and is less expensive. Another option to wire money to the UK is <http://www.xe.com/fx>.

CREDIT CARDS:

Visa and MasterCard are accepted in a very similar manner as in the US. They are accepted at most grocery stores, restaurants, and many other retail outlets. You can also use credit cards at most Tube stops. There are a few instances where you can use ONLY a credit card issued by a British bank. These include using credit cards to make online payments for telephone bills, utility bills, some post offices, and to purchase train tickets online. The fees charged by different banks to exchange currency and the exchange rates themselves may vary. As such, you may want to try both your ATM and a credit card or two to determine which method gets you the best exchange rate.

Notify your credit card company that you will be living abroad before you leave. Several students have experienced having their credit cards denied when their credit card company puts fraud alerts on their cards due to "unusual" foreign activity. For this reason, you may also want to have credit cards, and possibly ATM cards, from at least two different banks for your trip. Also, in case of theft, be sure to keep in a safe place in your papers at your apartment a list of your credit cards, account numbers, any special identifying or authorizing codes, and the phone numbers to report theft of each card.

TRAVELER'S CHECKS:

Traveler's checks are not very convenient to use in London or Europe. There is an American Express Office at Heathrow airport, but it may be inconvenient to use because of business hours and/or location. American Express offers extra services to its customers, so you may want to look into obtaining an American Express card before you go. You may have to pay a fee to obtain traveler's checks from your US bank. The exchange rate may not be as good as the

rate you will get on ATM withdrawals and credit card purchases in London. In addition, you may have to pay a fee to “cash” your traveler’s checks in London. ATM’s and credit cards are probably a better option than traveler’s checks.

Note: You should carefully read the “Note on Safety” below regarding financial transactions.

Upon Arrival

HOTELS / B&B’S:

If you do not have a long-term place to live when you arrive in London, it is highly recommended that prior to arrival, you arrange for a hotel room for the first few days to a week. Priceline, Orbitz, Travelocity, and Expedia, all feature discount hotel reservations. American websites charge in US dollars and you may be able to both save some money and stay in a higher quality hotel by booking online. Remember you will have arrived in London after a transatlantic flight with perhaps several pieces of luggage in tow, on perhaps your first visit to London. Don’t underestimate the value of having your accommodations, for at least the first few days, sorted out prior to arriving. Occupancy is usually low in early January and reduced rates are sometimes available for lengthy stays. Note that many European hotel rooms do not have a private bathroom in the room. Rooms with private bathrooms cost about £10-15 more and are referred to as “en suite.” Note that some hotels may charge different amounts for different days of the week.

If upon arrival you still need accommodations, you may want to use the Tourist Information Center Accommodations Service at Victoria Station. They can help you find a hotel room anywhere in London for a £5-10 fee. Additionally, the following is a listing of some small hotels and B&Bs near the FSU Study Center. Additionally, nearby Goodenough College 020 7837 8888 (a private residence facility for post-graduate students) has a limited supply of rooms for reasonable rates sometimes available for short stays and a Club which functions as a hotel for higher rates.

Arosfa Hotel
www.arosfalondon.com
83 Gower Street
020-7636-2115

Langland Hotel
www.langlandhotel.com
29-31 Gower Street
020-7636-5801

Arran House
www.arranhotel-london.com
77-79 Gower Street
020-7636-2186

Ridgemount Hotel
www.ridgemounthotel.co.uk
65-67 Gower Street
020-7636-1141

Garth Hotel
www.garthhotel-london.com
69 Gower Street
020-7636-5761

Ruskin Hotel
23-24 Montague St.
020-7636-738

Many European hotels, especially budget hotels, require you to leave your key at the front desk each time you leave the hotel. If you are uncomfortable doing this, be sure to inquire about the key policy before you book a room.

Websites for London hotels:

londontoolkit.com Bloomsbury

findlondonrooms.com

lastminutelondon.com

holidaycity.com Bloomsbury

hotels-london-hotel.com Bloomsbury

london.hotelsoffer.com

hotelsandservicedapartments.com

londonhotel.com Bloomsbury

Obtaining Housing

London is a historic, cosmopolitan, multicultural city. Housing is priced accordingly, i.e., London is expensive! It is usually preferable to arrange accommodations before you arrive in London. However, this is not always possible, or advisable, especially if you intend to try a flat-share (roommate situations). Generally speaking, apartments (known as “flats”) in central London are the most expensive. Housing in central London’s central Zone 1 will cost anywhere between £150 and £350 per week, per person, based on double or triple occupancy. Housing will undoubtedly be your largest expense. Please note that rents are usually quoted on a **weekly** basis.

Please note that many London apartment buildings are not wheelchair accessible at all and may not have elevators either. Please contact the program director if you will need assistance in finding accessible housing. You will also have to take into account the accessibility of transportation.

The search for an apartment in London can take a lot of time and patience. You need to find a living situation which fits within your budget but which also meets your most basic needs for comfort and convenience and yet also allows you to get the most out of your stay in London. Different people have different needs. The following discussion considers a number of options in detail to help you think about your particular needs and preferences. Please pay attention to the fact that each option has benefits and costs.

Those choosing Acorn Housing will find that they are centrally located and generally will not require public transportation to and from the FSU Center. The rooms are furnished and secure and often other Consortium students will be living in the same building, which may facilitate socializing and study groups. However, Acorn Housing is quite expensive even by London’s standards and the entire housing fee is due well in advance of the program’s start date.

For some, the experience of living in London means living in one of London’s colorful neighborhoods and among other Londoners. Flat-share opportunities abound but they require an investment in time and advance planning as well as a familiarity with London geography. Flat-shares can provide you with long term acquaintances and a circle of friends outside the program as well as the sense of having authentically lived in London. However, like any roommate situation they can turn disagreeable as well. In general as you travel away from central London, the rents generally become more affordable but students should consider the additional costs of Tube and Bus fares when calculating projected savings.

Finally, some students may wish to live entirely on their own. This is, by far, the most challenging option. Bank accounts, utilities, council taxes, as well as the relative brevity of the stay, make finding private houses and flat rentals a challenge.

Consider thoughtfully what your needs and wishes are in advance of your arrival. It is the experience of this program that housing issues are the most frequently cited source of stress for students who have participated in the Consortium.

ACORN HOUSING:

Website: <http://www.acorn-london.co.uk>. Or contact: Elizabeth Bowey, Acorn Management Services, 52-53 Russell Square, Bloomsbury, London WC1B 4HP; Tel and Fax (direct dial from US): 011-44-207-636-8325, email: elizabeth.bowey@acorn-london.co.uk.

Acquiring housing through Acorn Management Services (which operates the FSU London Study Center) is the easiest way to find a flat before you leave the States, but be aware that Acorn requires full payment for the entire semester's rental paid in advance (usually by December 1). Acorn rents large blocks of student flats within walking distance of the FSU Study Center and other central London attractions and events, which can save on overall transportation costs. Available flats are filled on a first-come-first-serve basis.

Acorn flats are fully furnished and provide internet connections for a small fee. Be aware that the housing blocks owned by Acorn are largely occupied by undergraduate students, and some areas are quieter than others.

If you choose Acorn housing, you can talk to them about the style of housing you prefer. Make sure to specify whether you want to have mixed or same-sex flats, and whether you'd like to be with other London Law Consortium students. The cost will vary, depending on the style of housing you select. Acorn's housing options include a large variety of apartment styles. Contact them early to find the flat that best suits your needs.

Please note that students assigned to Acorn's Janet Poole House in 2010 had a number of problems, including water, electricity, and internet. This building can be very noisy as it is located on a busy street. The single dorm rooms are located on a hallway. The shared kitchen and bath may not be on the same floor. There is one very small common space in the basement for the entire building. There are no elevators in the four story structure. Some short term tenants may be the general public.

Housing in London generally is small and expensive. Landlords may be slow to respond to your problems. Also, if you expect to have guests coming to stay with you, look at the landlord's policy. Many landlords have a policy against overnight guests (or at least those staying for free), but some (like Acorn) are stricter in their enforcement of the rule. Acorn does not permit overnight guests, including family.

Upon request, Acorn will give you the latest information about cost, availability, telephone, services, and payment terms. Be pro-active – those students who expressed their needs and desires to Acorn received better flats. Ask to be as close as possible to the London FSU

Center. If you know others from your school who are participating in the LLC, you may want to consider asking them if they would like to share a flat.

OTHER HOUSING:

Many students have looked outside of Acorn in hopes of finding housing that is less expensive, more spacious, or does not require the entire rental in advance. Living in non-Acorn housing can also be a good way to meet people outside of the London Law Consortium if you have flat mates. However, there are many more “unknowns” when dealing with other landlords.

When looking for your housing, make sure you ask the landlord whether you will be living on a loud or busy street or above a club or bar. Some recent students lived in areas with lots of traffic and late-night noise. Also, inquire about the location of your apartment, as some students found their flat was accessible only through a dark alley. Also remember to inquire about other costs such as phone line, internet, utilities, laundry facilities, council tax, and required deposits. Absent specific agreement with the landlord in the lease, it appears that tenants are generally expected to pay council taxes, which can run several hundred pounds. While there may be a tax exemption for full-time students, students in earlier programs have nevertheless had problems getting the council to grant them the exemption. You may request a letter from the program director to assist in gaining an exemption by attesting to your full-time status as a student in the LLC, but we cannot, of course, guarantee that all councils will accept that claim. We have also found some scams where people rent out their municipal housing units illegally. Such apartments can be in the same building as nonmunicipal units. If the municipality randomly audits who is in the apartment, and it is not the legal tenant, you can be evicted. Some of the students in non-Acorn housing have had problems in getting a return of their damage deposits at the end of the lease. Be sure you have the lease terms in writing, and if possible, finalize the return or adjustment of your deposit before leaving London.

Generally speaking, living near a Tube station is advisable. When you are arranging housing from the US, find out how close the nearest Tube stop is and what line it is on. A useful online resource is Streetmap.co.uk. Tottenham Court Road Tube Station on both the Northern (black) and Central (red) Tube lines is the nearest Tube stop to the FSU Center location. Living somewhere that requires a commute is an extra expense that you will want to factor into your housing costs, and the more changes you have to make during your commute, the longer the commute will take and the more exhausting it will be, even if it does not increase the cost because you are still within Zones 1 and 2.

You may want to keep finals preparation in mind when choosing accommodations. A number of students loved their housing right up until crunch time. You will be required to take finals in London and will be expected to read for class each day! You are also likely to have 4 or 5 exams during a single week. Travel time, quiet space, and your roommate situation all figure into this equation. The ideal studying location may not exist in London, but you might want to try to find something that approximates the study conditions you are accustomed to when choosing a home.

Tip: Housing websites and advertisements are a great way to find alternative housing in London but beware of **Scams, Crooks and Misrepresentations**. Be wary of overly enthusiastic or easily perturbed landlords or flat mates. Also, if an opportunity seems too good to be true, it probably is. Use your own best judgment and verify particulars before any money changes hands and be especially careful about revealing financial details that can be exploited for identity theft.

Here are some web sites that students have found useful in searching for housing:

www.intolondon.com (recommended)

www.housepals.co.uk

www.moveflat.com (recommended)

www.gumtree.co.uk (recommended- search for postings by agencies to be safer)

uk.easyyroommate.com

www.loot.com

www.apartment-centre.co.uk

www.welby.co.uk

Some of these websites might charge a fee in order to contact the persons advertising available housing, but it may be worth the money because several of the students in prior years were successful finding housing this way. Following is a list of some of the resources that students in past programs have used to find housing. These include estate agents as well as housing units. Be sure to ask what fee the agency charges.

Centre Point House

(not recommended by 2010 tenants)

St. Giles High Street

London WC2H 8LW

Contact: Simon James

Tel: 079 7332 4060

E-mail: apt.centre@yahoo.co.uk

Helen Watson & Co

(recommended by FSU)

31 Percy Street

Camden, London W1T 9DD

Contact: Pauline Watson

Tel: 020 7580-6275

020 7589-6276

Fax: 020 7580-1429

Marylebone Apartments

(highly recommended by 2006 students)

53 York Street

London W1H 1PW

Contact: Duncan McGlashan, manager

Tel: 020 7486-3167

E-mail: duncan@mcglashans.co.uk

Central London Apartments

Bloomsbury House

23 Bedford Square

London WC1B 3HH

Contact: Christine Ganjou

(recommended agent)

Tel: 020 7323 1192

Fax: 020 7631 3866

E-mail: stay@cenlonap.co.uk

Chiltern Estates
61 Chiltern Street
London W1U 6NF
Tel: 020 7224-2633
Fax: 020 7224-2693
E-mail: info@chilternestates.com

Goodenough College
London House
Mecklenburgh Square
London WC1N 2AB
Tel: 020 7837-8888
Fax: 020 7278-8631
E-mail: reservations@goodenough.ac.uk

International Students House
229 Great Portland Street
London W1W 5PN
Tel: 020 7631-8300

Lee Abbey International Students' Club
57-67 Lexham Gardens
London W8 6JJ
Tel: 020 7373-7242
Fax: 020 7244-8702

Foxton's Agency specializes in short-term leases and can be found at several locations in London.

When you contact the individual agencies, ask what they charge to help you secure a flat. Some agencies charge the landlord rather than the tenant. Some require a deposit and/or first and last month's rent. Some agencies (like Acorn) may require advance payment for the entire semester. Be sure you have access to funds sufficient to cover these costs when you make a housing decision. Mention that you are a student, and the agency might waive or lower its fees. Make sure you find out what additional bills you are responsible for, and ask about council tax!

The University of London Accommodation Office on Gower Street just off Russell Square is another great resource. The Office is located in the basement of the University College of London (UCL). Unfortunately, the Office can't directly assist non-UCL students in finding housing, but you can look on the accommodation board in the Office where London students from schools around the city post notices for flat mates. Generally, the accommodation board consists of students who are looking for other student roommates, and the rates can be lower than for a private flat. The lease term is usually an academic term, and in many cases a deposit is not necessary. This is also an excellent opportunity to experience living with British or foreign students.

Loot is a resource available at newsstands. It is a rental listing of rooms, flats, and bedsits (efficiencies or studios). Loot comes out each Wednesday and is arranged by price, making it easy to determine what apartments are in your price range.

London Estates
61 Dalling Road
Hammersmith and Fulham
London W6 0JD
Tel: 020 8741-8485
Londonwide Estates Ltd
51 Shirland Road
London W9 2JD
Tel: 020 7266-2211
Fax: 020 7266-2122

Palace Court Holiday Apartments
1 Palace Court
Bayswater Road
London W2 4LP
Tel: 020 7727-3467
Fax: 020 7221-7824
E-mail: reception@palacecourt.co.uk

A Few Words on Adjusting to Living Abroad

You will undoubtedly go through several different emotional states as you adjust to living in a new city in a new country. You will probably be very excited during the weeks before you leave for London. This will likely continue for a few weeks after your arrival as you see and do amazing things you have never before experienced. You may then experience some frustration with the culture and habits in your new city. In general, academic facilities and housing facilities are less spacious than back home. You may become extremely irritable that the grocery store is not open on Sunday evenings or that there is nothing left on the shelves by mid-afternoon. You may become depressed that your “old” friends and family are now so far away. The realization sets in that you can’t just jump in your car and drive to Target to get the supplies you need. In fact, you have to take a bus, a Tube, walk several blocks, and carry your purchase up and down escalators and stairs. Almost every student living abroad goes through this cycle.

Don’t worry! You will soon settle in and become accustomed to your new routine. You will experience new ways to do things. Remember, you have an opportunity to do and see amazing things that your fellow classmates back at home do not. Your time in London is short and the four months will be over before you know it. Many students upon returning home find they miss London’s idiosyncratic lifestyle.

Please remember to be courteous to our British hosts and the FSU staff. Any concerns about the FSU staff should be expressed to the program director.

Weather

The weather during January through April could be described as consistently cool. January and February are particularly cool (near freezing) with little sunlight. It gets a bit warmer in March and April, and the sun appears more often. Even with warmer weather in the latter part of your trip, you will probably not need many summer clothes. A water-resistant coat and umbrella will be particularly useful. You will want a stocking cap, a scarf, and gloves or mittens, but you won’t need them on many days. You may see a few snow flurries from time to time, but snowfall rarely accumulates in London. Check [BBC Weather](#) for further weather details.

Tip: A quick refresher on conversion:

$$(C^{\circ} \times 1.8) + 32 = F^{\circ}$$

0° Celsius is 32° Fahrenheit

15° Celsius is 59° Fahrenheit

5° Celsius is 41° Fahrenheit

20° Celsius is 68° Fahrenheit

10° Celsius is 50° Fahrenheit

25° Celsius is 77° Fahrenheit

Getting Around London

You should buy a copy of London A-Z or other detailed map upon or before your arrival. You can find styles from the most detailed paperback including every nook and cranny of London, to the less intricate fold up A-Z maps. Maps are available at most news agents and bookstores in London. We recommend a color version (easier to read) and a pocket-sized edition (convenience).

THE TUBE:

Transport for London's ("TfL") website, www.tfl.gov.uk, is essential for figuring out how to get anywhere in London by public transport. In addition to information on fares and maps, the "Journey Planner" feature is similar to MapQuest and will explain how to get to wherever you need to go, with any combination of public transportation.

While there are many transportation options available for getting around, London is also a great place to walk. Central London is very compact and you may realize that it's quicker and more interesting to walk from one place to the next than it is to use the Tube or bus. Consortium students are eligible for substantial discounts on weekly and monthly Tube and Bus Passes. This requires that you fill out an online form and submit/upload an appropriate photo to receive a special Oyster Card. Students generally received their discount cards in the mail within 7 – 14 days of submitting the application. Tube maps are available at tube stops and online.

The student discount card gives students 30% discounts on weekly or monthly travel passes. If you travel on the tube more than 10 days per month (about 3 days per week) or for long trips on the tube (outside Zones 1 or 2), you should buy a monthly travel pass at the discounted student rate. A Student Oyster card may also be loaded with "pre-pay" money and used just like a normal Oyster card. All weekly and monthly travel cards are good for travel on the Tube, buses, Tramlink, DLR, and most National Rail services within Greater London. This means that if you use your Student Discount Oyster card to buy weekly or monthly travel passes, you can ride on all the Tubes, buses, etc. you want within Zones 1 and 2 without worrying about the cost of each individual journey. To travel beyond Zones 1 and 2, you pay a surcharge at the station.

Until your Student Oyster Card arrives or if you determine you do not need a discount card, the best travel option is to buy an "Oyster Card" the first time you purchase a Tube ticket. Oyster cards are more convenient than paper tickets and always provide the best fare if you are not using a student discount card. Oyster cards are "prepaid;" when you buy them you put a set amount of cash on the card (say £20.00). As you use the card, the current fare is deducted from the card. Once you hit the daily pricing "cap," which is the price of a one-day travel card, your travel is free for the rest of the day on your Oyster card. The price-capping works interchangeably on buses and the Tube.

Tip: The Tube runs until about midnight, (later on Friday and Saturday nights) and some buses run a little later. In fact, some buses run 24-hours. Look for an 'N' prior to the route number. Keep this in mind when arranging outings on the town, as taxis are can be very expensive.

Tip: Weekly and monthly Tube passes include free bus fare on all London bus routes within the zones included in the pass.

The DLR (Docklands Light Rail) is essentially an extension of the Tube into the Greenwich and Docklands area (east and south of central London). Tube tickets and Oyster Cards (as well as student discount Oyster cards) work on the DLR.

BUSES:

Using the bus system is a good way to save money and get to know the city. Transport for London's ("TfL") website, www.tfl.gov.uk is also the place to plan bus journeys. Bus travel can be cheaper than the Tube and may help you better understand the layout of London. One drawback is that it can be slower than taking the Tube. Also beware that during rush hour, buses can be crowded and may stop to pick up new passengers even when they are at capacity. Since the buses run much later than the Tube and there are more of them, this mode of travel offers more flexibility than the Underground.

Bus fares are not capped if you don't have a prepaid pass or a Student Oyster Card. Therefore, if you have to take three different buses without an Oyster Card to get to your destination, you would pay £6.00. This can make the bus more expensive than the Tube for long journeys. Paying your fare with your Oyster Card deducts 1 pound from your balance whereas the fare is 2 pounds when paid in cash. Also note, weekly and monthly Tube passes include free bus fare on all London bus routes.

CABS & MINICABS:

Use only LICENSED cabs or minicabs. NEVER take a ride from someone who stops you on the street to offer transportation.

Every semester several articles appear on the front page of newspapers about the sometimes tragic fates of victims who use unlicensed minicabs. There are two ways to avoid such problems: (1) use London's famous and well regulated "black cabs" or (2) text Cabwise a service of Transport For London. Simply Text HOME to 60835 to get the numbers of one taxi and two licensed minicab firms, in the area you are texting from. The call costs 35p. You can also call Cabwise at 020 7222 1234. Alternatively, if you have internet access, you can consult www.tfl.gov.uk, and the TFL website will provide a listing of licensed minicabs in your area.

Traveling in the UK

Traveling by train within the United Kingdom is quite expensive compared to continental European countries. A good way to save money if you are 25 years old or younger is to purchase a 16-25 Railcard. Even if you are over age 25, you may be able to get the rail card by showing proof that you are a full-time student. It generally saves you one-third of the standard train ticket cost. It may be wise to purchase the rail card if you plan to do more than two or three trips within the UK or to Stansted Airport. The Young Persons Railcard can be purchased at the ticket counter in any of the rail stations in London. You must bring a passport photo and ID along with you when purchasing the card. Make sure you allow several minutes of extra time to fill out the paperwork before your first journey. If you travel with your family, consider getting a Family & Friends Railcard. Another option is to purchase a BritRail pass. There are a variety of types of passes that allow you to travel via train within England at considerable savings. Fares may vary depending on what time of year you buy it and which months you plan to travel, so check the site well in advance to get the best deal.

Other Travel

The Eurostar high speed train can take you from London's St. Pancras station to Paris in 2 hours and 15 minutes or to Brussels in just one hour and 50 minutes. The train travels at speeds of almost 200 miles per hour. Search the website for deals and remember that the train drops you into Paris or Brussels, whereas the airport requires additional transportation to get into the cities.

Telephone Services

Tip: While you can opt to bring your cell phone from home, be aware that mobile phone sellers in London are plentiful and relatively inexpensive. Be sure that your US phone uses SIM card technology and that the phone is "unlocked." You may be able to get your current US cellular carrier to "unlock" your cell phone so you can purchase a SIM card from a UK carrier and use your existing phone on a new plan overseas.

Using the telephone in London is relatively expensive. Even local calls cost. Students living in Acorn housing need a calling card to make any calls from the landline in their flats.

Prepaid mobile phones are far more popular in the UK than in the US. Most former students bought pay-as-you-go mobile phones. You can buy such a phone in London (recommended) or online prior to leaving the United States.

You can buy "top-up" (phone credit) at most grocery stores or newsstands. Shop around for the best rates on your service provider. Orange, Vodafone, O2 and Virgin offer sales and service plans and most of these mainstream providers can be found on Oxford Street near the FSU

Center. Other dealers like [Car Phone Warehouse](#) carry a variety of service providers and can help you compare according to your needs.

Many students found that their UK phone was good for receiving calls, and using skype for texting, and calling UK numbers was very cost effective. For students with iphones and blackberries or other internet accessible phones, the main cellular carriers have internet options that should be explored to prevent huge international roaming or data charges.

Many companies offer international plans, so ask about rates to the US. If you plan to travel outside of the UK and want your mobile to work, inquire as to whether you will get service in foreign countries. Also check to see what it costs to send text messages. Many students use this as the sole form of communication from their mobiles because it is much less expensive than making a phone call. It is also possible to send text messages to US cellular phone numbers, although these are more expensive than local text messages.

Grocery stores and newsstands offer specials on international phone cards. The cards are good for a predetermined amount of minutes, 100 or 200 minutes. The cards can be used at any touch-tone phone, and they range in price from 4-7 pence per minute. Keep in mind, however, that unless you have a 0800 access number, you're paying for the local call, too. You might also have to pay a line rental fee to your landlord. If you use the card from a pay phone, expect to be charged a premium. Find out about these sorts of costs up front so you truly can figure out the best plan of action. If you are having problems dialing a 0800 number, you may need to dial "9" first, especially if you are staying in Acorn housing.

For those calling you from the States, check out [IDT's](#) international rates or AT&T International One Rate Plan (around 10 cents per minute from the US to one country). This rate should apply even if you call collect, but check to make sure. MCI offers a similar deal through their "Friends" plan. Shop around, though—some students found it was cheaper to call home using international calling companies.

Tip: The international calling code for the United States is **001** (then dial the area code and phone number). The international calling code for those calling London from the US is **011**, country code **44**, and drop the first 0 from the number. Example: if your number in London is 0207 439 3651, then people calling from the US would dial 011 44 207 439 3651.

When using pay phones, dial 100 to reach a local operator; dial 155 for the international operator. "Directory inquiries" now are handled by different commercial businesses with six-digit numbers, including 11 88 88, which claims to have competitive rates for London directory inquiries. For emergencies dial 999. You can check telephone numbers online through [BT](#) or <http://www.yell.com>.

Finally, those with broadband internet access consider [Skype](#) (www.skype.com), [Google Talk](#), [Yahoo Messenger](#), [MSN Instant Messenger](#), [MagicJack](#), or other services. If your friends and

family in the US use the same service (e.g. you both use Skype), you can talk for free over a broadband connection.

Shipping

Shipping packages back to the US is quite expensive and unreliable. Check with international shipping companies before going straight to the post office in London. Some of the companies run specials from time to time. One way to avoid most shipping charges is to leave plenty of room in the luggage you take to London for things you want to bring home or send items home with friends or family who come to visit.

Tip: To receive packages and/or mail while in London, send them to:

**FSU Study Center,
99 Great Russell Street, Bloomsbury London
WC1B 3LA, England**

Staff will be available to sign for packages at all times. A list of all packages is recorded in a book available at the front desk as you enter.

As for shipping things (especially textbooks) from the US to London, be cautious! Several students over the years have had problems doing so, and their packages may arrive late or not at all. Bring what you need with you in your luggage to avoid such difficulties. The FSU Center does NOT accept Federal Express packages for students. Note that every package may be subject to customs duties in the EU, which may delay delivery. One student never received books that were delayed in customs.

Photographs

You will probably need passport-size photographs of yourself for various identification cards while in London. If you have extra passport-size photos, bring them with you. AAA members should consider taking advantage of the free passport photo services at their local AAA office. Passport-size photos are also available throughout London.

Computers & Studying

The FSU Study Center features computer facilities. Two rooms are devoted solely to computer use and are available on a 24-hour basis. Additional computers are located within the library (during regular library hours). Word processing and web access are included in your program fee. FSU has wireless internet service available in all rooms in the FSU Study Center, so you can access the internet with your own laptop computer anywhere in the building. Wireless access was adequate in 2011, though a good connection was not always available in every part of the building. The lab computers are connected to laser printers, and each student is allowed 250 pages of free printing. The FSU library sells copy cards. For additional printing, you can purchase

a ream of paper at an office supply store and drop it off to the IT staff at the FSU center. Your print counter will then be reset. The center can be crowded at times, but the two main rooms are open 24 hours a day. You can almost always find a computer if you wait a few minutes.

While most students will probably scan documents and email them to correspond, the FSU Center does have fax service available as well at the front reception desk.

The FSU library has a good general collection of reference materials and literature, CDs, and some DVDs which students may borrow. However, don't limit yourselves to the facilities available through the program. Many neighborhoods have libraries you can access. They often provide free Internet services and a quiet place to study. The British Museum and the British Library are two notable study spaces within walking distance from the FSU Center.

Most of the 2011 Consortium students brought their laptop from the United States. Many students who did not bring a laptop regretted their choice, as the computer labs were crowded, especially during finals time.

If you do decide to bring your laptop, include your computer in your carry-on bag. Also keep in mind that you do not have lockers or storage space at the FSU Center, so you will have to carry your laptop at all times. In the past few years, two students have had their laptops stolen, so always keep your laptop with you, and frequently back up your notes on a thumb drive or the internet. Also, for those who rely on your computers for class notes, be aware that the number of outlets in the classroom is limited, as is the desktop space in the classroom.

Note: You are not permitted to use laptops, PDAs, iPods, cell phones, or any other electronic equipment for final exams.

Converters

Tip: Most modern laptop computers only require an adapter plug because they automatically convert to the change in voltage, but you should check the input specifications printed on your laptop's power supply (100-240v is an acceptable range). You may purchase a UK style plug end cord segment for your laptop's power cord online or upon arrival at any electronics store on nearby Tottenham Court Rd for 3-5 pounds. Check to see if you require a 3 pin "Mickey Mouse" or 2 pin "Figure 8" model.

British appliances run on a different electric voltage (240) than we use in the US (110). Converters and adapter plugs are needed to operate electrical appliances from the States. US stores like Radio Shack, Office Depot, Wal-Mart, Target, Best Buy, and travel or luggage stores have adapters to suit your needs. Try to find an "all-in-one" converter that adapts to all the world's outlets. This will make it easier to travel in continental Europe, as they too have different

outlets than in England. You can also purchase adapter plugs at the airport upon arrival in London. Remember, the electric voltage may change from country to country. Many hi voltage electric appliances like blow dryers and curling irons will blow out even when proper adapters are used. It is probably advisable to leave these types of appliances at home and buy inexpensive British ones at drugstores (apothecaries).

Books and Supplies

Students will receive a list of required texts several weeks in advance of the commencement of their classes. **Students must bring with them to London all required texts for the American law courses they will take during their semester abroad, as they will not be available for purchase in London.** Required texts for British and EU law courses will be available for purchase in London. The Consortium does not place book orders on the students' behalf, so students must arrange for the purchase of these textbooks with their law school bookstores, or order them directly from the publisher. Book-sharing by students is not permitted, and every student must have all required textbooks in order to take final exams

To ensure you actually get your textbooks, bring them in your luggage. Also, check with the bookstores in London before you purchase your textbooks. For instance, you can buy the (very heavy) European Union textbook for approximately the same price in London from a bookstore as in the United States.

It is difficult to purchase commercial outlines in London, and if you wish to have them, you should purchase those ahead of time as well (bearing in mind that some secondary sources are maintained in the FSU library for each course offered).

You may also find textbooks in London on www.amazon.co.uk and have them shipped to the FSU Center. Again, though, bringing the books with you offers the safest opportunity to ensure you actually receive your textbooks. Be forewarned that there will be just as much reading and studying in preparation for class as there is at your home law school—and possibly even more. Because the class sizes are so small, you will likely be expected to participate actively in class. Mandatory attendance policies are in place for all courses.

You also should be aware that the cost of school supplies, such as pens and notebooks, will be higher than you are accustomed to at home. You may consider bringing some school supplies from home. The standard paper size in London is A4, not 8½ x 11, and you will not find 3-ring binders in London but rather a variety of 2-ring binders.

Finding Things To Do

This will not be a problem. A magazine entitled TimeOut will help you make the most of everything in London. The magazine comes out every Wednesday and lists museum events, theater, live music, ballet, film, special activities, and many other events. An alternative to buying TimeOut is to use the copy available in the FSU library. You might also go to the Britain and London Visitor Centre (1 Regent Street, near Piccadilly Circus) soon after you arrive for a great selection of travel and local information from real people at the desk.

Your International Student ID Card will get you student discounts at many places, but bring your law school ID with you, too. In some cases, your International Student ID Card will not be accepted as adequate proof that you are a full-time student and you will need to present additional proof.

If you're interested in seeing a musical or play, either go to the cream and green "TKTS" gazebo in Leicester Square or to the theater itself to get substantially discounted tickets. Also, watch for deals online at websites like www.lastminute.com. Many shows will offer student discounts or day-of discounts so visit individual box-offices.

Tours of the city are great ways to spend your time while learning about the place you'll be living for four months. The Original London Walks offers no-reservation walking tours to students for a reduced rate and includes such themes as pub walks, Jack the Ripper's London, Legal and Illegal London, and Old Westminster.

You may want to purchase one or two "tourist" guides to London before you leave the US. Making a list of the things you want to see and do will provide some excitement over the holiday / winter break after the fall semester. Rick Steves' London is an especially good resource. The book provides good rankings for attractions and includes a diverse listing of different types of attractions. Rough Guide and Lonely Planet are two other good resources. You may think that you will be able to do everything you want in London in your semester there, but you will quickly run out of time.

Tip: Admission is **FREE** to London's main museums and art galleries – including the British Museum, the Victoria and Albert, the Natural History Museum, the National Art Gallery, the Tate Modern and the Tate Britain . Each is a world class museum located in or near central London.

Gym Facilities

If you are interested in getting back in shape after your initial weeks of chips-with-everything meals, there are several options close to the FSU Study Center. A block away on Great Russell Street is the YMCA. The Y has everything you can imagine, and is quite affordable for students. Inquire about student prices or special promotions. You may need to take a letter from the director of the program stating that you are a full-time student in order to get the student rate.

The University of London's Student Union, located on Malet Street about five blocks northeast of the FSU Center, offers fitness classes and a pool and fitness center, available for a very reasonable quarterly associate membership fee. Regent's Gym (located on the edge of Regent's Park) offers membership to students living in the International Students House at a discounted rate. If you want to go jogging, you may want to consider London's many parks, including Regents Park, Kensington Gardens, Hyde Park and St. James Park. The parks are open all day and have wide paths ideal for running, and you will not be alone, as many runners train in the parks for the London Marathon each spring.

Health

As the UK is a National Health Service country, medical care can be very inexpensive as long as you're a British taxpayer. Generally American students will have to pay for medical care, which may be only slightly less than what they would pay in the United States. If you have a bona fide medical emergency, generally the "casualty center" (emergency room) of hospitals will treat you without charge. However, it has to be a genuine emergency, or you will be turned away and told to go to a regular physician.

Check with your health insurance before you go to see whether you will be reimbursed for trips to the doctor or other medical needs. Students are responsible for obtaining their own health and medical insurance coverage that will reimburse them for the costs of obtaining medical and dental services in the United Kingdom. In general, you will be required to pay for such services in the UK and seek reimbursement from your US insurer. If you currently are covered by a health and medical policy, you must check with your insurer to determine whether and the extent to which it will cover your travels abroad.

If you will not have adequate protection while studying abroad, you should consider the purchase of supplemental coverage designed specifically for international travel and study. (Note: If you decide to purchase a supplemental insurance plan for your overseas study, please do not let your regular insurance coverage lapse while you are out of the country, since any medical condition for which you have already received treatment or which might develop while abroad could be considered a "pre-existing condition" when you attempt to enroll again in your local plan following your return from study abroad.)

Students may wish to consult the Study Abroad office of their home institution to discuss the matter of health and medical insurance. The following are some examples of companies providing supplemental coverage for international travel and study. The London Law Consortium does not endorse any specific company.

Medex Assistance Corp.
www.medexassist.com
1-410-453-6300 or 1-800-537-2029

International SOS Assistance, Inc.
www.intsos.com
1-215-942-8000 or 1-800-523-8930

Wallach & Co.
www.wallach.com/hcglobal2000.asp
1-540-687-3166 or 1-800-237-6615

There are many walk-in medical clinics ("surgeries") in London. Nearest the FSU Center is The Museum Practice (58 Great Russell Street, 020-7405-2739, walk-in hours Monday-Friday 9am -11am). You will receive additional medical providers' contact information at orientation. Also, pharmacists in London offer more extensive services than in the US. If you feel ill, you may want to consult with one of them, who will recommend a medication for you. You can obtain many medications from the chemist without a prescription. Take note that it may be difficult to find your

“favorite” medications such as Advil, Nyquil, or your ideal decongestant or allergy medication, so stock up before you leave.

Bar Exam Applications

If you are a third-year student and plan to take the bar exam in the summer, complete your character and fitness and bar examination applications before you get to London if possible. In past years this has caused headaches for nearly every student who did not heed this advice. Fingerprints are expensive at around £20 per set (some states require two sets). You can get these at New Scotland Yard, but you must first make an appointment. You may be forced to call each day and wait until they tell you they are not busy before you can go. Get your fingerprint cards completed before you go to London.

The American Embassy in London (www.usembassy.org.uk), has a notary service, and this will likely be your best (and possibly only) option if you need to have documents notarized. If you go to the Embassy for notary services or passport replacement, there are generally two lines: a very long line for non-citizens, and a very short line for American citizens. If you are a citizen and you are standing in line outside the Embassy waiting to get in, you are probably in the wrong line! The US Embassy will treat you well, but you will have to go through security before you are allowed in the building. Bring your passport to the Embassy with you.

Notaries are also expensive in London, and even those authorized as notaries in the US cannot provide these services in the UK. Usually British notaries charge for the amount of time it takes to notarize the item. Call around to secure the best price before going to a notary. The cost of mailing a Federal Express envelope overnight to the US is around £30. These expenses really add up, so make every effort to get your application done before coming to London.

Cancellation

Sometimes student plans change and you must cancel your participation. Please consult the application website and accompanying documents for the applicable rules, refund possibilities, etc.

Although the LLC program has never been canceled, the Consortium reserves the right to cancel the program should circumstances warrant such, including lack of sufficient registrations, or acts of war. In the event of cancellation, all fees and deposits paid will be refunded within twenty days of the cancellation.

Note on Safety

Terrorism remains a worldwide potential problem, and there is currently an US State Department global worldwide caution for all Americans, as well as a travel alert for Europe.

For up-to-date information about travel and security conditions in the UK, consult the State Department website. If the State Department issues an alert or warning applicable before or during

the program, the program will notify all participants. If a student withdraws prior to the commencement of the program due to an alert or warning, the student will receive a full refund of all monies advanced within twenty days of their withdrawal. If a student withdraws during the course of the program due to an alert or warning, or if the program is terminated, students will be refunded fees paid.

Most Americans are amazed to note the high volume of cameras all over London on virtually every street corner and covering almost all door entrances. There are many unseen cameras as well. Nevertheless, please be aware of your surroundings. As in any big city, purse and wallet snatchers are everywhere and looking for the right opportunity. Within the last several years, one student's wife had her purse stolen at a restaurant the first night they were in London. Over \$400 was taken and they had to resolve over \$4000 worth of charges on their stolen credit cards. The process of getting new cards and dealing with the charges took nearly two months.

Thieves are likely to target people in pubs and clubs, because drinking tends to make people more careless and less aware of what is going on. Caution: if you spend time in pubs, be very careful with your belongings. One student had his back pack stolen while in a pub in plain sight of other program students. He lost his computer containing all three years of his class notes, research papers, photos, etc. Although police were able to review tapes in the pub and see the actual theft, they were not able to track down the culprit!

Purses and wallets should always be carried close to your person. Some students have bought a pacsafe bag, which is slashproof. For safety, keep additional copies of your passport and credit card information available in a separate place so they may be cancelled and/or replaced promptly. The program director will keep an extra copy of your passport in the LLC office if you provide her with a copy. Additionally, it might not be wise to carry your passport on your person unless you are traveling outside of the UK or need to go to the US Embassy. It is a good idea to keep your passport, extra credit cards or debit cards and some cash hidden away in a safe place at home. That way, if you do get robbed, you will have something to fall back on.

At home, keep valuables locked in a safety cabinet or hidden from plain view. One student left cash and jewelry on her bed, went away for a brief trip, and came back to find everything gone. The earrings were irreplaceable heirlooms. PLEASE LEAVE VALUABLE JEWELRY IN THE US!!! The International Student ID card will reimburse you for certain lost passport expenses. Look at www.isiccard.com for further information.

Personal security items such as mace or pepper spray are illegal in London and the UK. Many pocket knives are also illegal (one student almost got arrested for carrying a 1 ½ inch keychain pocket knife in London because it had a locking blade and was therefore classified as an "illegal offensive weapon"). Also, check carefully the current very restrictive airport security rules, so that your trip will not be complicated or delayed by inappropriate carry-on objects.

Tips on where to buy everyday necessities during your first week:

Groceries: Sainsbury, ASDA, Tesco, Waitrose, Marks & Spencer (M&S is the most expensive, but has great fresh fruit, meat, and individual-sized lunches & dinners!) Some stores will even deliver groceries.

Toiletries, hairdryers, etc.: Boots or Superdrug. Consider bringing special items such as medicines, hair products.

Cold Medicine: Boots, Superdrug, or any Chemist (look for a blue cross on a sign).

School Supplies: Ryman, Paperchase

Home supplies: Argos – you can buy pillows, sheets, lamps, computer printers (there is an Argos on New Oxford Street about 2 blocks from the FSU Study Center). Argos has a very small customer area where you walk in, look at a catalog, then go to the desk and order by catalog number. The items are then “picked” from a warehouse in the same building and delivered to you at a different counter about 15 minutes later. Make sure you have a first, second, and maybe third choices for the item you want, because you will often get to the cash register and be told that they don’t have your first choice in stock.

Cell Phone: CarPhone Warehouse, Mobile World

Books: Borders, Blackwell’s, Foyles, or Waterstone’s are the big chains.

Have a great semester in London!