



## ***ANTES DE VENIR.....***

The Office of Student Life at the Madrid Campus would like to welcome you to Spain. Over the years, we have seen many foreign students come and go. Most students sign up for a program like this with similar goals in mind: experience a new culture, learn the language, make Spanish friends, and travel around Europe.

As educators in the Jesuit tradition we are committed to the education of the “whole” person: mind, heart, body and spirit. The Student Life staff works to provide you with information and opportunities which will help you achieve your goals.

We would like to take the opportunity to make some suggestions about how you can prepare for your time here in Madrid. If you have any questions after reading this, please feel free to e-mail us at [studentlife-madrid@slu.edu](mailto:studentlife-madrid@slu.edu).

### **I. Attitude**

- Keeping an open mind at all times is a must if you want to enjoy the colorful Spanish culture, you need to be flexible with what you encounter. If you feel disoriented with the differences between your home and Spain, don't be surprised, it happens a lot to our new students. For example, you'll find that the tastes and textures of Spanish food are different. A typical Spanish diet is very healthy: fresh ingredients with well-known nutritional value, with lots of seafood, chicken, lean meats and vegetables.
- Expect to take your academics seriously. We understand that besides going to class, you will want to travel and go out, but remember that you are enrolled in an academic program in an American university. Every test, project or paper counts towards your final grade. About 35% of the student body on the Madrid Campus is made up of permanent students pursuing their college degrees, and our courses conform to the same academic standards as those at the Saint Louis Campus.
- Be self-disciplined, in both study and social habits. Madrid social life is very attractive for foreign students. Be prepared to enjoy it in a responsible way and try to find the correct balance. If you feel that you would like help in managing your time, our two on-campus licensed counselors can offer advice and support (and their services are always free to students).
- Make an effort to meet new people. Madrid Campus students represent over 60 countries. Try to interact with everyone, not just the people you already know. Start off in the right way by participating in our [Welcome Sessions](#) and [optional day trips](#) at the beginning of the semester. This is the best way to meet other students who are in the same situation. Take advantage of the trips, activities and programs sponsored by Student Life, or talk with our Campus Ambassadors wearing the orange jackets during the first week.
- Be understanding that “stereotypes” may impact how other people react to you and how you react to other people. In social situations, there are also cultural cues that you might not understand. You may also communicate something unintentionally which can cause miscommunication. You represent more than just yourself: you represent your family, your country, your culture and SLU-Madrid.

## II. Safety

CHECK YOUR @slu.edu EMAIL. That is how you will get SLU-Madrid Safety updates and SLU-Madrid related communications.

- Update your emergency contact information, your current address and phone number in Spain in Banner.
- Provide parents/guardians/families with your current contact information in Spain and keep them informed on an on-going basis, especially when you make plans to travel outside of Madrid.
- Purchase a Spanish SIM card or cell phone. Emergency situations like terrorist attacks and COVID-19 have proven that having a Spanish SIM card with data and more than anything else, the ability to make phone calls is a "must". DO NOT RELY SOLELY ONLY ON WIFI.
- Madrid is one of the safest cities in Europe, but taking the necessary precautions is always a must, especially when you are in a foreign country, so please read the carefully the following tips:
  - When going out at night, always have a cell phone available and charged.
  - Hide a 20 euro note (in your shoe) or somewhere. In case you get pickpocketed you will be able to make it home safely.
  - Do not go out or walk by yourself late at night or the early morning.
  - Remain sensible and vigilant about your surroundings particularly when you walk out of bars and pubs as they are waiting for a target that can be pickpocket, or to whom they can do something else.
  - It is not a good idea to draw attention to yourself.
  - Share a taxi when returning home late at night. Madrid can be dangerous in the first hours of the morning, especially if tired or alcohol has dulled your level of alertness.
  - Behave in a manner that is respectful of the rights and well-being of others and encourages others to behave in a similar manner.
  - Follow policies and suggestions for keeping Student Life staff informed of your whereabouts and well-being.
  - Stay away from large crowds including popular tourist destinations.
  - Exercise heightened vigilance and caution when visiting public access areas, especially those heavily frequented by tourists.
  - Stay away from political gatherings and rallies.
  - Follow the instructions of local authorities in an emergency.
  - Stay at hotels with identifiable security measures in place.
  - Monitor local media.

## III. Medical Information

- All SLU-Madrid Campus students who are registered for at least one credit are covered by the [Multi Sanitas Health Insurance](#), which provides doctor visits at no cost.
- The plan does not cover the cost of medicine.
- Always carry on your Sanitas card which will be given to you by the Student Life staff as soon as you arrive in Madrid. If you are studying at SLU Madrid Campus for more than one semester, remember that your Sanitas card will last for that year.
- If you get sick, the Student Life Staff can help you to find a general practitioner who speaks English, or you can check on our website: [Medical information](#). In Spain, all medicine (prescription and over-the-counter) is sold only in pharmacies and is relatively inexpensive. Although the ingredients are generally the same, brand names are

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different. If you develop a persistent cough or cold, you should see a doctor rather than guess the appropriate medication yourself.

- If you take a prescription drug regularly, bring enough for the full semester with a letter from your doctor in your carry-on luggage, if possible. If that is not a possibility you may contact Dr. Borrás via email [dr.rvborras@gmail.com](mailto:dr.rvborras@gmail.com) prior to coming to Spain to check that you will be able to get your medication in Spain prescribed by Dr. Borrás.
- Do not plan to send or receive medicine through the mail. They will not be allowed through Spanish customs.
- Students with any medical pre-existing condition (physical/mental) will be responsible not only for following the guidelines provided by their physicians in their home countries, but also for seeking the adequate resources to continue any treatment while they study in Madrid. You may use their Sanitas Medical Insurance which is included in the tuition price.
  - For physical pre-existing conditions, you may contact Dr. Borrás, general practitioner in Sanitas, who will be able to refer you to any specialist within Sanitas at [dr.rvborras@gmail.com](mailto:dr.rvborras@gmail.com).
  - For psychiatric or psychologist attention you may contact SLU-Madrid Wellness Center at [wellness-madrid@slu.edu](mailto:wellness-madrid@slu.edu).
- While SLU-Madrid will make every effort to support students with severe medical conditions so that they may be capable of successfully completing their academic work, there could be medical conditions that are so severe that they negatively affect both the student as well as other members of the campus community. Students with such conditions may continue to study at SLU-Madrid and access services such as Housing as long as the medical condition does not affect the coexistence of the student among the SLU-Madrid community members to the extent of being disturbing and disruptive. Examples of these disturbing/disruptive behaviors include but are not limited to: poor social interaction with host family/roommates, or social interaction that is aggressive, hostile, threatening, or disturbing to others; behavior suggesting the presence of a medical and/or mental illness that is causing significant disruption/distress to the student's family/roommates, such as depression (e.g., self-injurious behavior, suicide threats/attempts, isolating oneself in the room while at home, etc.), anxiety disorders (e.g., becoming hostile or excessively anxious when family members/roommates do not follow rigid routines, etc.), eating disorders (e.g., excessive weight loss, binge eating, vomiting frequently, or unusual requests regarding food and menus, etc.), and substance abuse, among others.
- When the presence of disturbing/disruptive behaviors is detected, the Department of Student Life, in coordination with the Wellness Center, and the Dean's Office, will make a determination regarding the appropriate action required, including but not limited to: continuing academic studies, while receiving appropriate treatment for the medical condition; leaving the home stay; taking a leave of absence; or withdrawing from SLU-Madrid.

#### IV. Housing (and additional security) Reminders

- If you are staying in a student residence or with a host family arranged by the University, bed linens, towels and a pillow will be provided.
- When not in use, leave all valuables (jewelry, cameras, money, etc.) locked in a suitcase. The University is not responsible for items that are lost or stolen.
- Pack smart. Travel light. You, your roommate at the student residence, your host family, the airlines and the University will be much happier. For a semester's stay, you really don't need two or three big suitcases of clothes.
- Host family housing arranged by the University is closed during Winter Break and Holy Week Break. Please take a careful look at the Academic calendar to make sure you know these dates. During these periods, most students take the opportunity to travel; however, for those staying in Madrid alternative housing (at the student's expense) can be arranged in a nearby hotel.
- First year students in student residences may not have dining services during Winter Break and Holy Week Break, but they can stay at the residence during the holiday breaks.

#### V. Passports

- All citizens from outside the European Union are required to have a valid passport to enter Spain and the rest of Europe. Check your own local regulations on how to obtain a passport in your country.
- U.S. citizens may apply for a passport at the nearest post office. Check out online for a complete guide on how to apply for a US passport.

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- International students from member countries inside the European Union or from Schengen member countries do not need a passport to enter Spain. However, you will still want to bring one with you in order to facilitate other travel, e.g. mandatory academic trips or optional trips organized by the University.
- Students from the European Union that are going to stay in the country for more than one semester have to register as citizens of the Union in Spain, you can come to the Student Life office to get more information or you can contact Carlos Villar at [carlos.villar@slu.edu](mailto:carlos.villar@slu.edu).
- Note to Fall Semester applicants: Because of the slow delivery of passports resulting from heavy travel in summer, you should apply early.
- NB: Upon arrival in Madrid make two copies of your passport. Always carry one in your wallet and leave the other in a suitcase at your Madrid home. You may also want to scan a copy and email it to yourself. Except when traveling, leave your original passport at your Madrid address.

## VI. Student Visas

- Once you have been accepted to Saint Louis University-Madrid Campus, you are responsible for obtaining your student visa. A visa is a stamp in your passport that allows you to study in Spain for a period of more than three consecutive months. Make sure you get a MULTIPLE ENTRIES Visa to be able to travel around and get back into Spain.
- A long-stay visa, 90-days allows you to study in Spain longer than one semester. You will need to apply for a Spanish Residency Card. The Residency Card allows you to remain in Spain all year. All permanent students MUST do the application for the Residency Card within 30 days of entering Spain. This deadline is a Spanish Law requirement. Therefore, you MUST bring your passport and boarding pass to Campus the first week to the SLU-Madrid Student Life Office.
- Contact the Embassy or Consulate General of Spain under whose jurisdiction your permanent or temporary (university) address falls to request a Student Visa Application Form, a list of all the documentation you need to present, and more detailed information about the application process. Follow your local embassy/consulate's instructions closely. Visa requirements, procedures, and processing times vary from one embassy/consulate to another.
- Following receipt of your confirmation materials and required payments, your admissions counselor on the Madrid Campus will send you an official University letter that you will need to present to the corresponding embassy/consulate. This document is critical. Without it, you will not be able to obtain your visa. You should begin the visa application process as soon as you receive this University document. Do not wait until the last minute! Consulates can take over two months to process student visas.
- For visiting students: If you are certain that you will be spending only ONE semester in Spain, then you should apply for a short-stay (180 days or "*corta estancia*") if you decide to stay another semester or more, please inform the Student Life office so they can help you with the renewal process two months before the expiration date on your visa.
- Address all your visa-related questions directly to your designated Spanish embassy or consulate. You may also visit the Embassy of Spain general web site at <http://spainemb.org> for more information. Although Madrid Campus admission counselors want to be helpful, they are not able to assist you in obtaining a visa.

## VII. Flying to Madrid

Luggage restrictions vary with each airline and are subject to change. Check out your airline website for information. Most airlines allow only one checked bag and one carry-on on international flights, and they will charge you considerably if you have excess baggage. Keep in mind that there are many things that you can easily get in Spain such as shampoo, toothpaste, soap, hairdryer or alarm clock.

- In any event, be sure to inform the Madrid Campus of your travel plans as soon as you know them so that your safe arrival can be verified. You may do this by visiting the SLU-Madrid Campus website and entering into [Arrival Information](#), clicking on the link to the Arrival Form. You will then be able to fill out an electronic form and send it directly to the Office of Student Life.
- Easily identifiable SLU-Madrid staff be at the International Arrival section of T4 of Madrid- Barajas airport from 8.00 am to 12:00 pm on Arrival Day to greet you. Students should go directly to their housing on move-in day instead of going to campus.

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- You will be responsible for arranging your own transportation to your housing accommodation once you arrive at the airport. For those who are not very familiar with Madrid, we strongly recommend you use the taxi rather than using the metro. You should go directly to your housing assignment on move-in day instead of going to campus.
- There is a fixed rate for taxi service from the airport to the city should for 30 Euros. Taxis in Madrid are white with a diagonal red stripe. The taxi stand in the airport is just outside the waiting area. Also keep in mind that taxi drivers in Madrid are not allowed to apply a luggage surcharge. It is recommended that you let the taxi driver know that you will need a receipt. (*Necesito un recibo, por favor.*) This will allow you to have the taxi driver's license number in case you leave anything in the vehicle or you wish to file a complaint. We do not recommend using the metro because the bulky luggage will make it very difficult for you going up and down electric escalators.

## VIII. Mail & Packages

- We strongly recommend students bring all electronic items in their luggage to avoid duty charges. Do not to have packages sent over unless it is absolutely necessary.
- Upon arrival in Spain, packages with declared values will be assessed for custom fees which can be very expensive. Make sure to indicate "for personal use without commercial value" on the declaration form.
- Do not ship medication. They will not clear customs.
- All students are invited to have any packages – that is, anything that requires a signature, or anything larger than a letter – sent to yourself at that same University address. There is always someone to sign for it at the University, and we will call to let you know that the package has arrived for you.

ATT: [Student Name]  
**Saint Louis University - Madrid Campus**  
 Avenida del Valle, 34  
 28003 Madrid,  
 Spain

- All other students should have mail sent to the address at which they reside in Madrid.
- If you are having packets or important documents sent to you from the U.S., we encourage you to use a courier service (e.g. UPS or FedEx), even though it is more expensive than the regular U.S. mail. Their services are faster and more reliable, and shipments can be tracked. U.S. Postal Service Express mail promises five to seven-day delivery to Spain, but that doesn't mean to your door. It goes into the regular Spanish mail system and there is no way to track its progress. Some students have waited for months to receive packets sent by their families through regular mail. A full description of the contents must accompany the package. For information on how customs fees are assessed, please visit the English version of the Spanish Post's website, [www.correos.es](http://www.correos.es).

## IX. Communicating from Spain

- Students usually purchase SIM cards and cell phones since they are cheaper to purchase than they think. We strongly recommend you purchase a SIM card while in Spain. There are cheap data rates you can purchase. Emergency situations like terrorist attacks and COVID-19 have proven that having a Spanish SIM card with data and more than anything else, the ability to make phone calls is a "must". DO NOT RELY SOLELY ONLY ON WIFI.
- Once in Spain, the easiest way to communicate with family and friends back home is through email, Zoom, Skype, etc. On campus each student has internet access through the University's computer labs, and wireless throughout the buildings. Student residences and University host family assignments offer wireless internet access as well.
- Students staying with host families will only be able to receive incoming calls on the family's phone.

## X. Laptop Computers

- You are encouraged to bring your laptop to Spain. However, you need to keep a few things in mind:
- You will have to bring the laptop on the plane with you as a “carry-on” baggage, and you may have to open it and turn it on when you go through airport security.
- Please take time to read carefully the Computer Policies at the computer labs.

### Voltage:

Most desktop and portable computers are able to support a voltage of 220V. This is the voltage in Spain. For confirmation of this, you should consult an approved vendor.

Don't forget to buy a plug adapter for your cell phone, tablet and laptop's battery charger before you come.

## XI. Finances

- Before you leave the U.S., exchange \$150-\$200 to Euros in order to have some cash on hand for your first few days in Madrid. Contact your local bank for details on how to exchange currency.
- Normally, banks will need two to three days to exchange the Euros for you. Upon arrival in Madrid, you will also be able to exchange your money at the airport, but the commission will probably be higher.
- Obtain a debit card or credit card with a PIN. Withdrawing money from ATMs in Spain is the easiest and cheapest way to get money from the US, and ATMs provide the best exchange on the day of the transaction. Be sure to call your bank before you leave the U.S. to authorize overseas withdrawals. Remember that this is the best way to obtain Euros once you are in Spain. Exchanging dollars in Spain has become increasingly difficult and expensive.
- Always keep your money and debit/credit cards in a safe place and do not share your PIN with anyone. Sadly, most of the fraud that takes place at the Madrid Campus is because students share their PIN with friends.
- Do not bring Traveler's Checks. They are not widely honored and can be very difficult to use.

## XII. Academic and Cultural Trips

- University-sponsored trips must be paid for in Madrid. Trips can be paid for in U.S. dollars, euros, credit cards, or personal checks. Please note that trip fees are non-refundable.
- The University reserves the right to change the dates or destination of trips due to scheduling conflicts.
- You may find the Trips policies online, here: <http://www.slu.edu/madrid/campus-life/docs/trips-policies.pdf>

## XIII. Important e-mail addresses

IT:	Fairouz Medjahed	<a href="mailto:support-madrid@slu.edu">support-madrid@slu.edu</a>
Housing:	Margarita Casado	<a href="mailto:housing-madrid@slu.edu">housing-madrid@slu.edu</a>
Registration:	Patricia Blockmon	<a href="mailto:registrar-madrid@slu.edu">registrar-madrid@slu.edu</a>
Academic Advising:	Desislava Nikolova	<a href="mailto:desislava.nikolova@slu.edu">desislava.nikolova@slu.edu</a>
	Jaime Ortiz	<a href="mailto:jaime.ortiz@slu.edu">jaime.ortiz@slu.edu</a>
Wellness Center:	Laurie Mazzuca	<a href="mailto:wellness-madrid@slu.edu">wellness-madrid@slu.edu</a>
Other questions:	Student Life	<a href="mailto:studentlife-madrid@slu.edu">studentlife-madrid@slu.edu</a>

## XIV. Madrid Campus Emergency Contacts

- During business hours (9:00 am – 6:00 pm Madrid time): (+34) 91 554 5858
- After-hours Health and Safety emergency number: (+34) 638 763 758 (Health & safety emergencies are: Sickness, injury, or any health crisis of a student that requires urgent medical treatment and/or hospitalization, or death. A criminal act, including sexual assault, involving one or more students. An act of terrorism that poses a safety threat to students. A natural disaster, civil unrest, act of war, or any other event which causes or threatens the health and safety of students.)
- Counseling crisis number: (+34) 609 269 323
- In case of a national emergency in Spain, you will be contacted via email.
- U.S.A. Government Safety updates which will be linked to the Madrid Campus web page ([www.slu.edu/madrid](http://www.slu.edu/madrid)).

## XV. Tips for packing

- Madrid has the highest number of cloudless days of all European capitals. The weather between September and May is cool to brisk (30° to 50°F/0° to 10°C).
- The rainy seasons are usually November/December and March/April. June through August tends to be hot and dry (70° to 105°F/22° to 40°C).

### DO BRING:

- Clothing for evenings out (Young people dress up more in Madrid.)
- Good walking shoes
- Warm pajamas and slippers (Buildings turn off the heat at night... it can get chilly. Also walking barefoot in the house is not appropriate.)
- A full supply of any prescription medicine you will need during your stay in Madrid (along with a copy of the prescription)
- Spare pair of glasses or contacts
- Winter clothes (down coat, scarf, gloves, sweaters, jackets). Remember that it can be cool until May.
- Lighter clothes for warmer weather. It can be hot until mid-October.
- Swimsuit.
- Don't forget to buy a plug adapter for your cell phone, tablet and laptop's battery charger before you come or once you arrive in Spain.

### YOU MIGHT WANT TO BRING:

- Umbrella (It does rain on occasion.)
- First-aid kit
- Fanny pack/money belt (much safer than carrying money in your backpack or bag)
- Small calculator (not graphing)
- Gift for host family or roommate (great ice-breaker)
- Customs information from your country to know what you are allowed to bring back
- International Student ID Card (ISIC)

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**DO NOT BRING:**

- Expensive jewelry or other "tempting" valuables
- Pets (Believe it or not, a few students have tried!)
- More than what is necessary (Remember: you'll want to buy some things when you travel)

**XVI. Budgeting: Typical Student Items****Food**

On-Campus Cafeteria: 3.20-6.50 €  
Nearby cafeteria (lunch or dinner): 10-15 €  
Sandwich at nearby shop: 4-6 €  
Restaurant: 10-40 €  
Tapas/snacks: 20 €

**Entertainment**

Movie: 9 €  
Theater: 50 €  
Bullfight: 15-80 €  
Soccer game of Real Madrid; 30-150 €  
Flamenco show: 35-75 €  
Weekends (drinks, food, club, cab home): 25-40 €

**Trips**

Day trips: 45-60 €  
Weekend trips:  
- Spain: 350 €  
- Europe: 400-700 €

**Monthly Phone Expenses:** 80 €

**Textbooks:** around 250-350 € or more (depends on the courses and their books)



If an expense is incurred more or less often than monthly, convert it to a monthly amount when calculating the monthly budget amount. For instance, an auto expense that is billed every six months would be converted to monthly by dividing the six-month premium by six.

<b>INCOME SUBTOTAL</b>	MONTH	MONTH	MONTH	MONTH		
<b>EXPENSES:</b>						
Rent or Room & Board						
Utilities						
Telephone						
Groceries						
Transportation						
Insurance						
Cell phone						
Entertainment						
Eating Out/Vending						
Tuition						
Books						
Cafeteria Expense						
Computer Expense						
Miscellaneous Expense						
<b>EXPENSES SUBTOTAL</b>						
<b>NET INCOME (INCOME LESS EXPENSES)</b>						

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