



AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF BEIRUT

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS SERVICES

OFFICE OF STUDENTS AFFAIRS

Arrival Information for International Students



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## **Arrival Information for International Students**

### **Entering on a non-Lebanese Passport?**

All visitors to Lebanon need a valid passport, and all nationalities, except Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) nationals, must obtain a visa to enter the country. Your passport should be valid for a period of not less than 11 months from the date of joining the University. Students from outside Lebanon can request a Certificate for Visa Purpose, from the Admissions Office. The Admissions Office will fax or mail it to you immediately upon request. You should present this certificate to the nearest Lebanese Embassy or Consulate in your country in order to secure an entry visa.

Citizens of the countries listed below, can obtain a visa upon arrival in the country after paying an appropriate fee tied to the amount of time to be spent in Lebanon. However, it is highly advised to check with the Lebanese embassy in your home country and obtain your visa prior to arrival unless you plan on obtaining a Lebanese Residence Permit.

*Citizens of Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, China Rep, Czech Republic, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Finland, France, Great Britain, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hong Kong, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Mexico, Monaco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Panama, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Russia, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United States of America, Ukraine, Venezuela and Yugoslavia can obtain a visa at the airport upon arrival to Beirut.*

Students coming from Palestine should start working on their visas at least two months prior to the beginning of the semester. Usually it takes more time for the General Security to process their paperwork.

In case a student is denied visa to Lebanon, AUB does not endorse visa applications nor does it act as a guarantor. The University issues "Acceptance Letters" and "Certificates for Visa Purposes" and then it is up to the student to obtain a visa.

***An indication of having visited Israel, including exit stamps from Jordanian and Egyptian border posts with Israel, will result in students being denied entry to Lebanon.***

### **Residency Permits**

Students who do not hold a Lebanese Passport are required to obtain a Residence Permit BEFORE the expiration of the entry visa stamped in their passport. It is strongly recommended that you apply for this permit as soon as possible after you have registered for your courses and paid your tuition and fees. Pick up the list of procedures, requirements and application form from the International Student Services. Students have been denied departure at the airport if the visa has expired. Visiting/Special students are also encouraged to obtain the Residence Permit even if they plan on attending AUB for only one semester.

### **Lost Passports**

If you lose your passport, immediately notify the nearest embassy or consulate of your home government. To expedite its replacement, you will need to know all information previously recorded and show ID and proof of citizenship. Your AUB ID can help with these matters but is not considered a proof of citizenship. In an emergency, ask for immediate temporary traveling papers that will permit you to reenter your home country. You may have to submit it to a Lebanese government official (i.e. to obtain your residence permit), but if you don't get it back in a reasonable amount of time, inform your embassy and the ISS.

### **Airport Shuttle Reservation services**

The International Student Services assists students coming from abroad in securing transportation reservation. Please email your request to [rm64@aub.edu.lb](mailto:rm64@aub.edu.lb) with your flight details by September 14, 2009. Rates vary according to destination. Expect to pay about \$20 to AUB and its vicinity. Make sure to include the following in your email:

- Date of arrival
- Time of Arrival
- Airline
- Flight number
- City prior to arrival to Beirut
- Number of passengers

If you get held at customs or arrived later than expected, please head to the AVIS/Budget Rent a Car (sister companies with Allo Taxi) booth in the arrival area near gate #4 and ask about your taxi, they will be able to assist you.

Otherwise, there are many taxis outside the airport which can drive you to your desired destination.

The Allo Taxi driver will meet you after you have gone through immigration and customs. He will be carrying a sign with your name printed on it.

### **Temporary Housing and Accommodation**

Temporary housing is provided for international students from September 23 to 28, 2009 (noon). Places are limited and priority is given to students coming from abroad who have no family in Lebanon. If you are interested in Temporary housing, please send an email to Ms. Rania Murr, Coordinator of ISS at [rm64@aub.edu.lb](mailto:rm64@aub.edu.lb) no later than September 14, 2009.

Temporary housing for the whole above mentioned period costs 100,000 LL (\$65), or 20,000 LL (\$13) per night.

If, on the other hand, you do not plan on staying in the dorm but instead plan on staying in a nearby hotel, please contact Ms. Murr for a partial list of hotels in the area that offer substantial discounts to AUB students and their families

The ISS must receive your Airport Shuttle Reservation and Temporary Housing requests by the indicated deadline in order to allow its staff the time to arrange their schedule. Fax or mail your request as soon as you know definitely when your flight will arrive in Beirut. The timing of your request is crucial. Once the request has been received by the ISS you will get an e-mail response confirming receipt of the information.

### **Letter of Acceptance**

You are strongly advised to carry this letter on your person as you travel to AUB. Don't pack this letter in luggage that may get lost or delayed in transit. The acceptance letter will serve as identification when entering the campus gates and is also needed for certain placement tests and for registration. **If you did not receive this letter, but have an e-mail stating your acceptance, then bring this.**

### **Identification – AUB ID**

While a student at AUB, you will receive an official identification card with your photo and student number. Carry this card with you while both on and off campus. It is usually a good idea to carry two or more forms of identifications on your person while travelling within Lebanon. Many establishments, especially banks, may require several IDs in order to cash traveler's checks or open an account. A driver's license or "hawiyya" (citizenship card commonly used by Arab students throughout the Middle East and Gulf countries) combined with your AUB ID should be sufficient.

Carry original copies of your passport and identity card when opening a bank account and applying for residence permit; however, it is strongly advisable to keep copies of those documents and not the originals in your wallet. It could be quite troublesome if they get lost or misplaced.

### **Medical Form**

You should have received the medical form by mail in the Welcome Package from the Admissions Office. It should be completed and signed by a physician and turned into the campus infirmary upon arrival.

### **Campus Security**

Security guards have 24 hour watch every day of the week at all gate entrances to campus. They must follow strict regulations regarding who may or may not enter the campus. The Main Gate to campus is located on Bliss Street and closes at 11pm. If you arrive later, then enter through the Medical Gate. In case of entrance problems kindly ask the security guards to call Captain Shalak and he will assist you. You are required to carry your AUB ID (or Letter of Acceptance) with you at all times and show it when asked by any campus security guard.

### **Banks**

There are several banks within the vicinity of AUB in the Ras Beirut neighborhood with 24 hour ATMs for withdrawal Lebanese pounds LL or US dollars USD. There is one HSBC (The British Bank of the Middle East) ATM on campus conveniently located outside the Jafet Library. Using an ATM to withdraw from an account outside Lebanon may be easier than receiving a wire transfer. Currently, 1 USD = 1508 LL. US dollars are accepted in most supermarkets, shops and restaurants.

### **Preregistration and Registration**

Preregistration will take place in the Admissions Office on the ground floor of College Hall. After preregistration, the student meets with his/her academic advisor, who must assist in and/or approve course selection. Once the academic advisor's approval is obtained, the student registers the courses on the computer. Registration is completed online in computer labs on-campus with the assistance of student Orientation Guides, or from any computer off-campus with internet access.

### **Paying Tuition**

Students will be issued a statement of fees **after** course registration is complete. The statement of fees includes tuition, on-campus housing, Internet fee, social activity fee, health insurance, and a general deposit. **NO CREDIT CARD PAYMENTS ACCEPTED.** Students who have parents or beneficiaries in North America can arrange payment through the New York office. For more information on methods of payment, please contact Mr. Nizar Younes in the Comptroller's Office at [ny02@aub.edu.lb](mailto:ny02@aub.edu.lb).

### **Insurance**

All students are required to purchase medical insurance. The National Social Security Fund-Medical Branch is required for all Lebanese students, unless exempted based on official subscription of student or parents. The Health Insurance Plan (HIP) through AUB is required for all students registered as non-Lebanese. This can be waived if the student shows proof of other insurance that is equal to or better than what HIP provides.

### **On Campus Housing**

Housing reservation forms are sent to new students from the Admissions Office in the Welcome Package. Please return your housing request immediately to the Office of Student Affairs, who will then assign you a room based on preference and availability. You need to submit your Housing Applications by July 17, 2009. If you have been assigned a hall and arrive during non-office hours, please ask the security guard to call the Head Resident of the hall where you are assigned. If you have not been assigned a hall and arrive after 8pm, you may need to stay in a hotel and make your housing arrangements the following morning. Check with the Director of Housing at, [stdhouse@aub.edu.lb](mailto:stdhouse@aub.edu.lb) or [ns25@aub.edu.lb](mailto:ns25@aub.edu.lb) for further information regarding housing at AUB.

### **Off Campus Housing**

Many apartments are located close to campus and students in the past have been able to secure a place within a few days. It is difficult to arrange such housing before arrival. If you need guidance, please stop by the ISS where many of the students are knowledgeable of the area and might be able to give you a few tips. The ISS also has a list of furnished apartments in the area and personal recommendations from other international students.

### **Water**

Be aware that many water taps in Beirut are not safe for drinking. Bottled water is recommended. However, the water on campus is very safe and you may fill water bottles here from the fountains.

## **Food**

In addition to the campus cafeterias (see below), you will find a variety of restaurants for eating in and take away facing AUB on Bliss Street. You will find everything from hamburgers and pizza to shish taouk and shawerma. Burger King, MacDonald's, Starbucks, TGI Friday's and Hard Rock Café along with many other restaurants with a western and eastern themes are plentiful in Beirut. There are also cafes for tea, Arabic coffee as well as pubs serving alcohol. More information will be provided in the ISP (Incoming Student Package) which will be distributed in the International Student Orientation.

## **Transportation**

There are two types of taxis in Beirut. One is called a "service" (pronounced 'ser-veece') and the other is called a "taxi". A "service" is a fare of 2,000LL and is often a shared ride with the driver trying to pick up other passengers going in the same direction. A "taxi" is a fare of 10,000LL and is a private ride. There are also buses with designated routes throughout the city and the one-way ride is 650LL.

## **Internet**

Off-Campus Internet Cafes are plentiful and in close proximity to AUB. For a small fee you can be charged by the hour. Once you register and pay your fees you will have easy access to wireless internet on-campus. See AUBnet Account below.

## **Hotels**

Many hotels give AUB students, and parents, discounts. A full list of hotels and furnished apartments offering AUB discounts can be sent to you as an e-mail attachment. Simply request the list from the Coordinator of International Student Services. When contacting the hotel, be sure to mention you are a new international student at AUB. All hotels will add an additional government tax (VAT) to the nightly rate and most hotels include breakfast.

## **What to pack**

Note that most international flights allow only 2 bags for check-in and only one carry-on. Ask your airline before traveling about the number of bags allowed, size limits and weight.

**Fall:** (October 1 through the end of November) You will probably arrive in late September or early October when rainfall is scarce and unpredictable and temperatures range from hot and sultry (September) to moderate and dry (October). In November there is more likelihood of rain, but this month is frequently also moderate in temperature--60s-70s Fahrenheit--and dry, with the occasional chance of Indian summer heat and winter chill. Summer clothes can usually be worn throughout this period, with a light jacket ready for the occasional crisp day.

**Winter:** (December through the end of March) Temperatures in Beirut and on the coast rarely fall below 44F in winter, but they seldom fall even that low. The average temperature in January, perhaps the coldest month, is 55F. Traditionally, the heavy rains usually begin only a few days after Christmas. Rainfall during these months is frequently plentiful and severe, accompanied by spectacular thunder and lightning. But the term "rainy season" is deceptive: sunshine is abundant in winter, and many people enjoy sunbathing and swimming year-around.

Conventional weather slogans in Lebanon declare that it is possible to ski and swim on the same day and that a rainless picnic can be planned any day after April 1<sup>st</sup>.

Sweaters and light jackets are usual winter casual wear. Sturdy, waterproof walking shoes (or boots) are almost a necessity during the rainy period. A raincoat is useful, although most people make do with umbrellas. Winter coats are not needed, though a warm jacket or parka is recommended for the mountains.

**Spring:** In the spring (April through the end of May) the temperatures may be in the 60s and 70s, sometimes even higher. But occasionally a surprise shower and chill set in. It is difficult to specify the onset of spring in a land where the ski slopes are still open in mid-April. Light clothing with a sweater or jacket handy is sufficient for the spring months, which all too soon, and unpredictably, blends into the heat of summer.

**Summer:** Summer (June through the end of September) temperatures can rise to highs in the 80s and 90s, rarely falling below the mid 70s, even at night. The hottest months are usually July, August, and September. Consequently, much of the local population moves to the cool of the mountains as soon as schools let out.

Light summer clothing is a must in the hot and humid summer months, with a sweater ready for mountain evenings.

### **Toiletries and Medical Supplies**

Almost everything you will need of these is available in Beirut, although not necessarily in your own brands. People still recommend bringing a small first-aid kit with antibacterial cream and gauze bandages; multivitamins and aspirin.

The AUB Infirmary advises anyone using prescription drugs for long-term maintenance of any chronic ailment such as hypertension, diabetes, controlled epilepsy, allergies, etc., to bring at least a six-month supply of the required medicines along with the prescriptions including generic names of the drugs. Medicines should be in their original, labeled containers and accompanied by a doctor's prescription to avoid arousing the suspicion of Customs officers. Although most prescription drugs are available in Beirut, pharmacies may run out of your brand or may have some drugs that are commonly used to treat your ailment but not the drug you use.

## **Departments on Campus to Assist You during Your Stay**

### **Office of Student Affairs**

The Office of Student Affairs is located in West Hall and hosts the Dean of Students Office, as well as the offices of International Students, Counseling Center, Housing, and Activities. You can find the answer for your student-related questions there and pick up information about the various activities within AUB (sports and clubs).

A basic objective of AUB is to ensure both the academic development of students and their social and personal growth. Therefore, the campus environment is designed to enhance students' academic performance while advancing their social, artistic, athletic, cultural, and intellectual skills.

### **International Student Services (ISS)**

All international students studying at AUB should be familiar with the International Student Services. It is responsible for you in numerous ways, making your stay in Lebanon and your period of study at AUB as smooth, interesting and memorable as possible. It is your home away from home. As soon as you set foot at AUB, the ISS should be your first stop. It is located on the Ground Floor of West Hall within the Department of Student Affairs. You will be asked to fill out check-in forms so that we can better assist you. Please bring your passport and travel documents with you.

Learning about and adapting to a new environment is a valuable and rewarding experience, but it is not always easy. Because international students have particular needs, AUB has made a commitment to provide special services.

The ISS is the first place to come for information on any non-academic matters affecting international students. If we can't help, we'll find someone who can – the Coordinator of International Student Services and Student Affairs staff has a wide range of knowledge and experience in many areas. In addition to international student advising, we also serve all AUB students with advice and resources for study abroad opportunities. On a broader scale, the ISS develops special cultural and educational programs and activities for the AUB community throughout the year.

Some of the services provided by the ISS include:

- Providing orientation sessions for both study abroad (non-degree students) and international students seeking a degree.
- Acting as liaison between international students and AUB's offices and departments
- General advice and problem solving for international students
- Hosting international events on the AUB campus, giving students the chance to promote their cultures
- Maintain the Ambassador Program
- Liaising exchange programs between AUB and other universities

Remember, the staff of the International Student Services is there for you. Do not hesitate to come by with your questions or concerns- if the ISS doesn't have the answer, they will connect you with someone who does. The ISS is open Monday through Friday from 8 am until 5 pm. The Coordinator of International Students can be reached via the contact information at the end of this document.

### **The AUB Counseling Center**

The Counseling Center helps students with a variety of personal, social, or other problems that have the potential for interfering with student's educational or personal development. Services offered in the Counseling Center include study skills, stress management, and workshops on various topics. Clinical services are available to assist a student in addressing personal or interpersonal problems, family issues, conflict resolution, self-esteem, crisis intervention, or other serious problems. Counseling is free and confidential. The Counseling Center is located in West Hall, 2nd floor, Room 210.

### **University Sports**

The University offers a wide range of sports, athletic and recreational programs. The recently completed state-of-the-art Charles Hostler Student Center on lower campus invigorates athletic life at AUB. Sports offered at AUB are subject to student demand, but usually include, though they are not limited to: aerobics, basketball, volleyball, martial arts, swimming, tennis, squash, soccer, body building & weight lifting, track & field, table tennis, and yoga. The AUB Athletics Department organizes intramural competitions, tournaments with other institutions, sports trips outside of the country (Egypt, Greece, Italy, Ukraine, etc.), and recreational events. Students qualified in a sport not mentioned here might be able to form a class or a group in that sport through the AUB Athletics Department or Activities Office. Campus sports facilities are available to all students free of charge.

Lebanon also boasts several outstanding ski areas offering beginner through expert runs (Faraya, the Cedars, Laqlouq, all within a one to two-hour drive from Beirut). The AUB private swimming area located on the seafront just opposite the playing field offers a variety of water sport activities. To sign up to participate in any of AUB's teams, visit the University Sports offices at the Charles Hostler Student Center.

### **Student Organizations**

Student organizations, academic, social and cultural, abound on campus. The Activities Office publishes on its website the clubs that are currently active on campus. Membership in any organization is open to any AUB student; however, clubs depend on participation, so the existence of an organization from year to year will depend upon student interest. To sign up for a society or a club visit the Student Affairs Office in West Hall.

### **Admissions and Registrar Offices**

The Office of the Registrar and Admissions are both located in College Hall adjacent to each other. You can go there to pick-up admissions applications, request official transcripts, obtain statements (for currently registered students only) and get your AUB Catalogue and various forms and brochures.

### **Visitors Bureau**

Staffed by specially trained students who volunteer their services, the Visitor's Bureau provides a central point on campus for all visitors to seek information and help. The Bureau is happy to arrange campus tours and assist you with any questions you might have regarding the AUB campus.

### **Cafeterias**

There are two cafeterias on campus. There are no meal plans; customers pay cash directly for every purchase. Both cafeterias serve three meals a day. Students who use the cafeterias regularly may spend within the range of \$2,500 per semester.

### **AUBnet Account**

AUB e-mail accounts are established through the University's Computer and Networking Services (CNS). Once a student has obtained an AUB ID card, the AUBnet account can be activated by using the bar code on the back of the ID card and following the guidelines through the AUB homepage.

### **Library**

The Jafet Library is open from 8am-11pm Monday through Friday, 8am –5pm Saturday and from 12pm – 6pm Sunday (Schedule subject to change).

### **Laundry**

All residence halls have washing machines for students use. For dry cleaning purposes, one can choose from various services located close to campus. There are no laundrettes in Beirut.

### **Ambassador Program**

The AUB Ambassador Program fosters greater understanding and appreciation of different cultures through the establishment of personal relationships between AUB international students and AUB current students. International students are matched with an AUB Ambassador and enjoy the friendship and guidance that these volunteers offer. The Ambassador Program hopes to help students adjust to and understand the campus and community culture during their first time at AUB.

Students participating in the International Student Orientation Program will be matched with an Ambassador. An Ambassador is an AUB student who would like to meet a new international student and help him or her adjust to AUB while building a friendship.

Once a student is matched with an Ambassador, they meet at least twice a month. Students and Ambassadors choose the activities they want to do. For example, they may wish to visit museums together or meet for dinner or coffee. During these meetings, participants have an opportunity to talk about issues such as life in Beirut and its amazing culture.

## **AUB Contact Numbers**

*Carry these numbers on your person, not in your luggage!*

### **AUB Main Lines**

**Tel: 961 1 374-374 or 374-444 or 350-000**

### **Protection Office**

Captain Shalak, Chief of Protection

Tel: 961 1 374-374 Ext. 2400

Cellular: 03-334-307

E-mail: [ss00@aub.edu.lb](mailto:ss00@aub.edu.lb)

### **International Student Services**

Ms. Rania Murr, Coordinator

Tel: 961 1 374-374 Ext. 3176

Fax: 961 1 744-478

E-mail: [rm64@aub.edu.lb](mailto:rm64@aub.edu.lb)

### **Housing Office**

Ms. Nawal Semaan, Coordinator

Tel: 961 1 374-374 Ext. 3174

Fax: 961 1 744-478

E-mail: [ns25@aub.edu.lb](mailto:ns25@aub.edu.lb)

### **Student Affairs Office**

Tel: 961 1 374-374 Ext. 3174

Fax: 961 1 744-478

E-mail: [sao@aub.edu.lb](mailto:sao@aub.edu.lb)

If you have any questions or comments regarding the information above, please do not hesitate to contact us. We are here to help you!

### **Ms. Rania Murr**

**Coordinator of International Student Services**

**Student Affairs Office**

West Hall

Ground Floor, Room 112-B

PO Box 11-0236 Riad El Solh

Beirut, LEBANON 1107 2020

Tel: 961 1 374-374 Ext. 3176

Fax: 961 1 744-478

e-mail: [rm64@aub.edu.lb](mailto:rm64@aub.edu.lb)

web-page: <http://staff.aub.edu.lb/~webiss/>

Ms. Murr is the contact in Beirut for all international students, their parents, and study abroad advisors regarding *non-academic* issues.

**Reminder:**

Email your airport shuttle reservation and temporary housing requests by September 14, 09

Turn in your Orientation Registration Forms by September 14, 09

International Student Orientation Program is on September 25, 09

The New Student Orientation is on September 28, 09