

**WASHBURN UNIVERSITY-
UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES,
CAVE HILL**

SUMMER LAW PROGRAM IN BARBADOS



INFORMATION HANDBOOK

HANDBOOK ONE

"PREPARING FOR BARBADOS"

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I. PLANNING

The following are things that should be obtained or arranged well in advance of your departure:

A. PASSPORT

Passports are required for air travel to the Caribbean and are the responsibility of each student. **Apply early because it may take 3-6 weeks for processing and delivery.** Contact the nearest State Department Office or Post Office for further information. See the U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Consular Affairs web site at:

<http://travel.state.gov/passport>

Requirements include *two, 2" x 2" color passport photos* (these can be taken at the Post Office, Walgreens, Kinkos, or AAA—**do NOT smile**—if you do, your passport application will be rejected and you will have to take new photos); *birth certificate* (state certified, **with a raised seal**). Fees for passports can be found at:

http://travel.state.gov/passport/fees/fees_837.html. You can apply for a passport at the U.S. Post Office (Main Post Office is located at 5th Street and Kansas Avenue), or by writing the Regional Passport Agency, U.S. Passport Agency, Room T 1200, 701 Loyola Avenue, New Orleans, LA 70113. The U.S. State Department (<http://travel.state.gov>) provides passport application forms online. The downloaded form will still need to be mailed or delivered in person to one of the government's passport offices.

Visa

Most Caribbean islands do not require a visa, but exceptions may arise at any time. Check with a travel agent and allow 6 weeks for processing.

B. TRAVEL TO BARBADOS

Students are expected to make their own arrangements for travel to and from Barbados. Washburn does not assume any responsibility for this transportation. Make your arrangements early. Airfares can increase and options decrease the closer to summer you book your flight.

The airport that serves Barbados is Bridgetown Grantley Adams (airport code BGI). Scheduled airlines provide a variety of reduced fare plans. There also are several organizations that specialize in discount fares for students. One of the first steps is to find the cheapest, most convenient way to the Caribbean. The prices for scheduled commercial flights between the U.S. and the Caribbean range from \$600.00 to \$2000.00 coach. The Sunday papers in most major cities provide information on current airfares. Former students also recommend comparing prices and checking flight schedules by using online ticket aggregators such as Kayak, Priceline, etc. **Be aware when booking your flights that many airlines flying to and from Barbados have overnight stays in connecting cities. Check the flight time and dates carefully before booking a flight. Also, Jet Blue has inexpensive flights out of New York City (JFK), but requires an**

overnight stay in NYC because the flight leaves at 8:00 a.m. Depending on flight plans, you may change planes multiple times on your journey. If you are unfamiliar with air travel, be advised that these layovers and plane changes will be much simpler and enjoyable if you've packed all but the essentials in your checked luggage, so that you're not burdened with numerous bags while at the airport.

StudentUniverse (a subdivision of **STA Travel**, which can be reached by calling 1-800-272-9676 or by visiting <http://www.studentuniverse.com>), is believed to have some of the cheapest flights for students. StudentUniverse is located at 100 Talcott Avenue East, Watertown, MA 02472. You may also contact **STA Travel** online at <http://www.statravel.com>. Another student travel service is **International Student Exchange (ISE)** at <http://www.internationalstudent.com/travel/student-airfare/>. All these services have discount air fares for a minimal membership fee. In addition, students and teachers may obtain identification cards that will garner discounts at museums, hotels, etc.

Some students have purchased tickets through a discount service such as **UniTravel**, (<http://www.unitravel.com>). Also, check for bulk rates or for fly-and-drive or hotel packages. You may also want to try the <http://www.priceline.com> website where you can name your own price, which will be either accepted or rejected. Beware, though, if your bid is accepted, you have bought the ticket and it cannot be changed.

Many charter flights present an alternative, cheaper price than commercial flights. Charter companies purchase large blocks of seats on commercial carriers. What you trade for the lower price is the luxury of knowing weeks in advance the specifics of your flights. Although your days of travel are established, the arrival and departure times and the airlines are not known until four to seven days prior to the flight. Most travel agencies offer charter fares.

Optional Student ID

You may obtain an International Student Identification Card (ISIC Card) from the University of Kansas student travel office. ISIC cards can also be obtained online at <http://www.isic.org>. The ISIC is usually the form of identification to qualify for student discounts. However, some discounts are available only to those under 26 years of age, and some are void during certain times of the year. (The ISIC is different than the "Green Card," which allows for student discounts.) Requirements for an International Student Identification Card: One 2" x 2" photo (black and white, or color), driver's license, student ID and payment of the required fee.

UWI Dormitory ID

If you stay in the university dormitory, your University of the West Indies dormitory ID card will provide discounts at various places in Barbados, generally at bars and night clubs.

C. CHOOSING A TRAVEL AGENT

Although former students recommend the specialized student travel services (described in the previous section) and thereby avoid the additional costs of a travel agent, some people may want to use a travel agent. Some local travel agents are listed below.

Travel Agents in Topeka

- **AAA Travel Agency**, 1223 SW Wanamaker Rd, Topeka, KS 66604, (785) 233-0222
- **Jade Travel**, 2655 SW Wanamaker Rd, Topeka, KS 66614, (785) 273-1226
- **Let's Go Services**, 5601 SW 17th, Topeka, KS 66604, (785) 271-6747
- **Short's Travel Management**, 931 SW Henderson Rd, Topeka, KS 66615, (785) 272-7511
- **Travel Industry Associates of Kansas**, 919 S. Kansas Avenue, Topeka, KS 66612, (785) 233-9465

Internet travel sites: These are some of the most popular, although they have received mixed reviews:

- **Budget Travel:** <http://budgettravel.com>
- **Expedia:** <http://www.expedia.com>
- **Travelocity:** <http://www.travelocity.com>
- **Orbitz:** <http://www.orbitz.com>

D. TRAVEL IN THE CARIBBEAN

Some students do more extensive traveling before or after the program. To make travel more enjoyable and more economical, make some plans ahead. Decide where you want to go and when. Take some time to explore the possibilities by reading and speaking to others who have traveled. *Let's Go (Island)* is a good source of introductory information about a few islands in the Caribbean and any Frommer's travel book is highly recommended. (See Handbook One, Guidebooks and Publications) The Topeka/Shawnee County Public Library has a series of videos about traveling in the Caribbean that are interesting and practical.

If you plan to fly from Barbados to another island, it is cheaper to get your tickets online than using local travel agents. If you plan to rent a car, it is often best (and much cheaper) to arrange for car rental from the U.S. (See Handbook Two, Car Rental). Be aware that cars drive on the opposite side of the road than in the U.S., and thus the driver sits in the right hand side of the car.

Airlines for Intra-Caribbean Travel:

LIAT - <http://www.liatairline.com/>

Caribbean Airlines - <http://www.caribbean-airlines.com/index.html>

Air Jamaica - <http://www.airjamaica.com/>

E.

SUGGESTED TRAVEL DESTINATIONS

Good Weekend Trips – Weekend trips can be to places where you might want to spend the night. Some suggestions are Grenada, St. Vincent & the Grenadines, St. Lucia, Dominica, and Trinidad & Tobago.

F. GUIDEBOOKS AND PUBLICATIONS

English is the official language in Barbados, but other islands may have French, Spanish or Dutch as the official language. Although many people in these Caribbean islands speak excellent English, take the opportunity to learn some French, Spanish, and Dutch words before you go by purchasing a phrase book. Also buy a good guidebook – it makes your trip more enjoyable! Guidebooks supply information necessary for day-to-day survival and planning, and will enhance your understanding and appreciation of the Caribbean cultures and history. Barnes and Noble has a great selection. The following are recommended:

French, Spanish or Dutch-English Dictionary, [Berlitz].

Know Before You Go – Free, write to: U.S. Customs, 1300 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Washington D.C. 20229. The pamphlet explains U.S. Customs Regulations.

How to Get from the Airport to the City – Write to: Crampton Assoc., Inc., P.O. Box 1214, Homewood, IL 60430. It has a comprehensive list of airports around the world and the available transportation to and from each city. Taxis are notoriously expensive!

Let's Go (Island) – This popular guide surveys a particular island, highlighting major cities and regions and provides good historical and cultural introductory sketches and invaluable practical data.

Berlitz Phrasebooks (French, Spanish, Dutch)—Although most islands are English speaking, these may prove to be invaluable. They will help you bungle through a foreign menu as well as provide useful information.

Michelin Guide Series (Green) – These are excellent booklets that point out major sights, give a good overview, and are easy to carry.

For more information about life in the Caribbean, see <http://travel.state.gov>, then search for the specific island. Another good website for several islands in the Caribbean is <http://caribbean-guide.info/>.

II. PREPARATION

Letter of Enrollment (“Dean’s Letter”)

The customs officials in Barbados may ask for verification of your student status when you come into the country and if you don’t have this letter, there may be a big hassle (they will insist on you having a student Visa to gain entry into the country, which is not necessary for our summer program, as explained in the Dean’s letter). You will receive notification late in the spring when a “letter of enrollment” is ready for you to pick up in the Deans’ Office. Pick up the letter before you leave the U.S. and keep the letter with your passport.

Housing

Students who would prefer to stay off campus may make their own, private arrangements through University of the West Indies, Cave Hill’s off-campus housing program, “CHILL Housing.” As noted on the CHILL Housing webpage, UWI offers the assistance of its Accommodations Office staff. Please be very careful to keep transportation in mind, as public transportation may not always be reliable, taxis can be expensive, and driving is British-style, on the left side of the road. UWI Cave Hill’s CHILL Housing website: <http://www.chillhousing.com>

Medical Insurance

Students who do not have medical insurance will be required to purchase medical insurance through the Washburn University International Programs Office.

Insurance

Contact your insurance company to confirm that your coverage extends outside of the U.S. and to inform the company of your travel plans. If you require insurance or wish to supplement existing coverage, consider obtaining a travel-assistance policy from Travel Assistance International, Access International, or a similar company. (The ISIC provides limited coverage.) In some instances your homeowner’s policy covers loss of luggage; however, the monetary reimbursement is not very high compared to specific luggage loss insurance.

Creditors

Let them know that you will be traveling and unable to respond to any correspondence; find out what their policies are and, where possible, prepay minimum balances by automated payment orders. Be sure any credit cards that you will be using are current on payments. Many credit cards will not allow you to prepay – if your minimum is \$30.00 and you send in \$200.00, they may not credit any amount over the \$30.00 to future payments, even if you request them to do so. Get a written confirmation from them if you do this.

Another option for paying bills (i.e. credit cards, cell phone, utilities, etc.) is to set up on-line bill paying through your bank, or the company you wish to pay (there is Internet, both WiFi and ethernet, in the dorm rooms). Some banks, credit card companies, and utilities will allow online account access from outside the United States. It would be wise to confirm this prior to departure. More convenient still is automatic payment, again set up through your bank, or the creditor or company. Then you can have payments made automatically, which is useful because paying bills back home is an easily-forgotten necessity. DO NOT mail anything of value to or from Barbados. You will never see it. While you are gone, either hold your mail at the post office or have it forwarded to a family member or friend who can sort it for you.

Financial Aid

Financial Aid is available for summer programs for Washburn law students, including supplementary graduate loans beyond the typical yearly loan maximum. Contact the Financial Aid Office at Washburn University, Morgan Hall. To minimize the possibility of misunderstanding, and the resulting delay, ensure the Financial Aid Office is aware that your loan is for international study, including living expenses. Submitting the Program's prepared budget estimates is also very helpful. Also, there are scholarships for students studying abroad, awarded by the Washburn International Programs Office (IPO). Apply by March 1—you will need 2 letters of recommendation and a statement from the campus doctor that you are physically fit for international travel, so do not delay in applying for the IPO study abroad scholarships. In dealing with your financial aid for the fall semester when you return, make sure you file your applications and other documents **early** in the spring semester before you leave, to allow time for any mistakes to be identified and corrected. Monitor the process. Inform the Financial Aid Office that you will be traveling and unable to respond to any correspondence.

Dentist

A visit before you leave may save you toothaches during your trip.

Optometrist

If possible, pack an extra pair of glasses or contacts, since they can be expensive to replace. Ask your eye doctor to provide you with your prescription for glasses or contacts just in case.

Medications

Bring your prescriptions in case of loss, or, if necessary, to show to the customs officer. Prescriptions should be written in terms of the chemical composition rather than proprietary names.

International Driving Permit (IDP)

Be aware that, in Barbados, cars drive on the left hand side of the road and the driver's seat is on the right hand side of the car. Also, there are many "roundabouts" or "rotaries" in Barbados, which must be navigated in the reverse direction from what you are used to traveling. Most Caribbean islands allow U.S. citizens 18 years of age and over to drive with a valid U.S. driver's license. Some islands or car rental agencies may, however, require a National Driver's License or the IDP (International Driver's Permit). Check with the American Automobile Association (AAA) for particulars. Specifically in Barbados, tourists are allowed to drive with a valid state license.

Third-party liability insurance is required by law. Driver's insurance for rentals is expensive; however it is wise to purchase the insurance if you plan on driving. Check with your insurance company or use a gold card that will provide insurance to rent.

ATM, Debit and Credit Cards

Some students suggest bringing up to 3 debit and credit cards in case you have problems with one to two of them, then you will always have a backup. You will want to have a card that will work at ATMs in order to get local currency in Barbados. It is suggested that at least one of the cards is a check/debit card, which appears to be a credit card, but the funds used on the card are actually drawn directly out of your checking account. These cards are available at most banks or credit unions that have checking accounts. Be aware that these cards may have daily withdrawal limits – generally \$300-\$500 per day. **Make sure you contact your bank and any other credit card companies BEFORE you leave and let them know you are traveling to the Caribbean.** If you use your card in another country without notifying them, they will likely freeze your account, because their system will indicate that there is potential fraudulent activity on your card. Make sure your card works before you get to the Caribbean.

If you are going to use a credit card, shop around to see if you can get a credit card with no cash advance fee and a three or six month low introductory interest rate. While in the past students were advised to carry travelers' cheques, they are not essential and, since they draw no interest, are not a very good use of your money. In addition, they can only be cashed in certain places and fees are often assessed. If you decide to use travelers' cheques, obtain American Express or Barclays. American Express entitles you to a variety of services offered at its offices at lower prices. Members of AAA can obtain the travelers' cheques with no fee. VISA and Mastercard Travelers' Cheques are also accepted. For a small service fee (i.e., 1% - 2% of the total amount) travelers' cheques can be cashed at most banks and/or businesses.

Cash

Do not buy Barbados dollars in the U.S. before leaving for the Caribbean; this is quite costly. The best way to get Barbados dollars is to withdrawn Barbados dollars from an ATM machine upon arrival in Barbados. There is an ATM machine on campus, next to

the university bookstore. The exchange rates at ATMs are very favorable. VISA, Mastercard, ZIP, Bankmate, Plus, or Cirrus can be used at most ATM machines. In addition, U.S. dollars are accepted throughout the Caribbean, but you will generally receive change in local currency. Consequently you will need to know the exchange rate in order to determine whether you have received the correct change. In Barbados this is relatively easy because the informal exchange rate is 2 Barbados dollars to 1 U.S. dollar.

Spending Money

In determining how much money you will need for the summer, remember you must provide your own meals on the weekends. The student cafeteria has inexpensive meals—items can be ordered a la carte or there are meal options for under \$7.00 US. There also is a kitchen on each floor of the dorm if you want to save money and make your own meals. If you want to eat out, it can get expensive, so allot \$35 - \$50 per day for that purpose, depending on your personal preferences. Add \$15 - \$30 per day for miscellaneous expenses. Finally, determine in advance how much you wish to spend on gifts and souvenirs and avoid impulse purchases. Some students suggest having a cushion of \$1,000 over your expected budget. Some visitors to Barbados find that it can be expensive because its main economy is tourism, however shops, restaurants, and locations not frequented by tourists are generally quite affordable.

Additional Information

For additional information, see <http://washburnlaw.edu/studyabroad/barbados/>