



casa de las américas

**STUDENT
HANDBOOK**

CONSORTIUM FOR
ADVANCED
STUDIES
ABROAD (CASA)

FALL 2017

HAVANA, CUBA

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INTRODUCTION

Congratulations on your acceptance to the Consortium for Advanced Studies Abroad (CASA) Divisional Program in Cuba. This semester-length program provides you with an unparalleled opportunity to examine, firsthand, the key political, social, economic and cultural issues affecting this island nation and its Caribbean and Latin American neighbors.

This handbook will provide you with a wealth of information that will guide you as you prepare to immerse yourself fully into the academic and cultural context of Havana and of greater Cuba. Use it as a resource but don't consider it to be your only guide to Havana and the CASA-Cuba program. Dedicated staff at each of the CASA member institutions, together with our experienced personnel on-site are fully committed to delivering a program that will challenge you to go beyond your comfort zone, to gain an understanding of the subtle – and sometimes not so subtle – nuances that have come to define Cuba.

As you prepare for your experience abroad, heed the advice provided in the following pages, read up on this fascinating island nation, and allow your mind to be open to discovery. The true value of a lengthy and profound sojourn abroad is that it erases the frontier between cultural awareness and cultural experience. Experience Cuba in a way that no short-term wayfarer could ever imagine.



PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Consortium for Advanced Studies Abroad is a collaborative initiative involving several high caliber U.S. universities – Brown, Columbia, Cornell, Dartmouth, Harvard, Johns Hopkins, Northwestern, the University of Pennsylvania, Vanderbilt and Trinity College, Dublin. Each CASA member institution reserves the right to participate in a given CASA Divisional Program.

CASA's Divisional Program in Cuba provides students with a unique opportunity to have direct access to Cuba's leading institution of higher learning, The University of Havana, and to Casa de Las Américas, the Cuban government's premier research institution on Caribbean and Latin American studies, Cuban culture and the arts. CASA-Cuba, the University of Havana and Casa de Las Américas have worked together to develop a program of study that will challenge you to achieve a critical understanding of the key issues facing Cuba today and enable you to interact with some of the country's leading academic experts in the social sciences, arts, and the humanities.

You will immerse yourself in Cuba, taking credit-bearing lectures in Spanish from recognized experts on key issues facing the country and interacting with peers who share your intellectual curiosity about Cuba's past, present, and future. CASA-Cuba offers a non-credit bearing Spanish language course to practice and improve your Spanish as well as individual language tutorials to meet students' specific needs.

CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Your courses will be complemented throughout the semester with special seminars and guest lectures by respected experts from other key research centers in Cuba as well as actors from Cuba's civil society and innovative new projects. We will arrange for city tours on the weekends to explore different neighborhoods of Havana and several important cultural sites. We will also have three program sponsored field trips to explore current Cuban society outside of Havana.

The program aims to ensure that students will return to the United States with an invigorated sense of inquiry, a better calibrated critical understanding of the complex situation facing Cuba today, and a wealth of newfound knowledge obtained through in-country learning experiences.



La Escalinata of the University of Havana, Cuba's largest and oldest university

**PROGRAM
STAFF
IN HAVANA**



CENTER DIRECTOR, DR. RAINER SCHULTZ

Dr. Rainer Schultz is the Center Director for the Consortium for Advanced Studies Abroad/Cuba Divisional Center. As the Director, he is charged with the overall responsibility for administering the CASA-Cuba program, including its day-to-day academic and programmatic management, student advising, liaising with CASA's partner institutions in Havana and supervision of local faculty and staff.

He previously worked with the Cuban Studies Program at Harvard University and the Harvard College Program in Cuba. As a historian, his research focuses on education, development, and nationalism in republican and revolutionary Cuba with a special attention to American and Soviet influence. His doctoral research in Cuba and the US was sponsored by grants from the Mellon Foundation and the German DAAD, among others.

As an undergraduate at Humboldt University, Berlin, Dr. Schultz was an exchange student in Havana himself in 2000. In Cuba, he has taught at the University of Havana and worked for Cuban journals such as Temas and OnCuba.

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ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR, DR. HOPE BASTIAN

Dr. Hope Bastian is the Associate Director for the Consortium for Advanced Studies Abroad/Cuba Divisional Center. Since 2014 she has been a professor at the Colegio Universitario San Gerónimo de La Habana, Universidad de La Habana. Her research looks at social capital, social networks and social mobility and economic and social inequalities in contemporary Havana. As an anthropologist she has done research in Cuba since 2012. Her PhD research in Havana from 2012-14 was funded by a National Science Foundation Doctoral Dissertation Grant.

As Associate Director Dr. Bastian assists in academic programming, extracurricular activities, and private cross-cultural support and overseas housing. She will be your first point of contact for everyday concerns and challenges. Before joining the consortium team she directed study abroad programs for American University and CIEE in Havana. She has also worked in Cuba at the Martin Luther King Center in Marianao, and as a public health reporter for MEDICC Review. Dr. Bastian was an exchange student in Havana in 2002.

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THE GALERÍA HAYDEE SANTAMARÍA

CASA's academic center in Havana is located in the historic Galería Haydee Santamaría, a spacious art gallery in the Vedado district of Havana. Built in the early 20th century in the Spanish colonial style, and restored in 2015 for use by CASA, the Galería provides classroom space, two interior patios and administrative office space for the program. It is outfitted with limited Wi-fi access.

The gallery is open for student use from Monday through Friday from 8 AM to 8 PM and on weekends from 8 AM to 4 PM.

From Monday through Friday during class hours, 9AM to noon and 2PM to 5PM there are some restrictions on Wi-Fi to guarantee that students, faculty and staff are able to access their e-mail and do online research at reasonable speeds. During these time periods social networking sites, VOIP calling services (Skype, IMO and similar), video and audio streaming and download sites like YouTube, Netflix, torrents and other pages and programs that require high-bandwidth are blocked. High-bandwidth sites and software updates should be done during evening and weekend Wi-Fi hours.

Galería Haydee Santamaría
Casa de las Américas
Avenida de los Presidentes (G) esq. 5
El Vedado, La Habana
Cuba

Tel. + 53 7 835-1569



Casa de las Americas



FALL 2017 ACADEMIC CALENDAR

- August 26th** Student cohort meets up in Miami, Florida at Hampton Inn Brickell Downtown. Arrive at hotel by 3 p.m. as there will be a welcome dinner that evening. Students are responsible for making their own domestic flight reservations from their home to Miami, and for transportation to the hotel. The student will be expected to pay for his/her ticket.
- August 27th** Group pre-departure orientation in Miami.
- August 28th** Group departs Miami for Havana, Cuba. Group travel arrangements from Miami to Havana are made by CASA through a travel agency specializing in travel to Cuba.
- August 28th- September 1st** Onsite Orientation conducted by CASA-Cuba and Casa de las Américas
- September 4th** CASA classes and University of Havana classes begin
- September 16- 17th** First weekend trip
- October 7-8th** Student Independent Research Trips
- October 28th - November 4th** Mid-term break; Week-long trip to Oriente
- November 23rd** Thanksgiving Dinner at Gallery
- December 11-15** Finals week, CASA and University of Havana
- December 16th** Program officially ends; students depart as a group from Havana to Miami. Students are responsible for making their own domestic flight reservations from Miami to their homes. The student will be expected to pay for his/her ticket home.

ACADEMIC OVERVIEW

Upon arrival to Havana, the program begins with a one-week on-site orientation geared toward providing students with an introduction to the city of Havana so that students will be prepared to understand basic social, political, and cross-cultural elements that will be a part of their everyday lives. Field visits throughout Havana will help students become comfortable navigating their way through their host city. Additional excursions will be structured during the remainder of the semester.

Students will then have an opportunity to enroll in up to four full-time courses, choosing between courses offered at CASA and on the main campus of the University of Havana (up to two courses).

CASA COURSES

The CASA courses are delivered to a combined audience of CASA students and some Cuban university students at the CASA program center in Havana. A combination of CASA courses and select courses offered at the University of Havana is possible and recommended. We encourage students to take at least one course at the University of Havana to enhance the cultural and social immersion into Cuban society. CASA-delivered courses will be taught by a group of carefully selected faculty, recognized experts from Casa de Las Américas and faculty from the University of Havana. They will each meet for a total of 60 hours, the equivalent of four semester hours each.

COURSE OVERVIEWS



CUBAN PUBLIC HEALTH: PAST AND PRESENT

Dr. Enrique Beldarraín Chaple, M.D., Ph.D., is chief of the research department at the Centro Nacional de Información de Ciencias Médicas, and full professor and researcher in the history of public health at the University of Havana Medical School. Dr. Beldarraín Chaple has published five books and 46 articles about the history of medicine and epidemics in Cuba.

In the decades since the success of the 1959 Cuban Revolution, the tiny island has gained a global reputation for its pioneering health system. Although Cuba's GDP is only a fraction of its northern neighbor's, the island boasts a lower infant mortality rate than the U.S., and has among the highest life expectancies and doctor-patient ratios in the world. In recent years, Cuba's "medical internationalists" – medical workers sent overseas to help shore up other countries' health systems or combat new disease outbreaks – have also gained widespread acclaim. What factors account for the seemingly outsized importance of medicine and public health under the Cuban Revolution? What can the study of public health and medicine tell us about broader themes in Cuban history?

The Cuban Public Health course is designed to introduce students to the history of public health and medicine in Cuba. Taking a long historical approach, this course explores both the development of medicine in colonial and

early post-independence Cuba as well as recent innovations in Cuban medical care and public health systems. Some topics that students will explore include: the relationship between slavery and medicine in colonial Cuba; the nationalist politics of health in republican and revolutionary Cuba; popular medicine and its relationship to biomedical ideas; and Cuba's controversial yet successful fight against HIV/AIDS.



GENDER, RACE AND INEQUALITIES IN CUBA: VISIONS FROM CUBAN SCHOLARS

Dr. Marta Núñez Sarmiento is a professor of sociology and a researcher at the Center for Studies of International Migrations (CEMI) at the University of Havana. Her research has concentrated on transition projects for Cuba; women and employment in Cuba; gender studies in Cuba, images of women in Cuban and foreign mass media. At the University of Havana, she teaches courses related to methodology and methods of sociological research, gender studies and contemporary Cuba. She has served as a consultant for several agencies of the United Nations (1988-2003), for the Association of Caribbean States (1999) and for several NGOs. She is one of the founders of the Cuban Federation of Women.

For more than half a century scholars, journalists and artists from all over the world including from the United States have explored Cuba intensely; their visions have been widely spread by the mainstream media. The works by Cuban social scientists living on the island have been scarcely published outside the island Cuba even though they produced their studies while experiencing and being part of the transformations that started in 1959.

This program discusses recent studies produced by Cuban scholars on three of the most relevant challenges to eliminate discrimination in society: gender, race, and social inequalities. Although the works refer to historical events explaining the evolution of the present situation in each of these topics, they will basically focus on case studies elaborated since the crisis and reforms of the 90's in Cuba – following the disappearance of the Soviet Union and the Eastern European socialist countries as well as the strengthening of the US embargo/blockade on Cuba. The course will be co-taught by Professor Roberto Zurbano (racial inequalities) and Professor Lily Núñez (social inequalities).

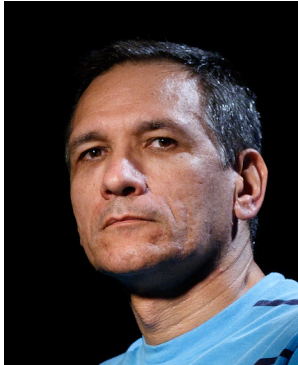


SLAVERY: MANIFESTATIONS OF ITS LEGACY IN CONTEMPORARY CUBAN SOCIETY

Professor Bárbara Danzie León is a history researcher and specialist in resources on the African presence and lecturer of the Instituto Superior de Ciencias Aplicadas del Ministerio de Ciencia Tecnología y Medio Ambiente. Three additional professors are invited to guest lecture the course as well.

The enslavement of Africans and their forced arrival in Cuba from the 16th to 19th centuries is an important axis around which a significant part of the history of Cuba moves. This course proposes to address, from an interdisciplinary perspective, the African influence and contribution to the shape of Cuba's nationality, where they are recognized as members of an important part of the values with which Cubans identify themselves. The multiethnic and multiracial state of the country is based on Cuba's historical memory and diverse contemporary

expressions. In the same way, the course will also distinguish the implications of the period of discriminatory and racist ideology based on skin color. Many times this is and has been expressed unconsciously and through colonial systems of marginalization, through which slavery came about.



THE IMAGINED ISLAND: CUBAN CINEMA

Professor Gustavo Arcos is a cinema critic and professor at the Instituto Superior de Arte (ISA). He studied Art History at the University of Havana. He is member of the Association of Cuban Artists and Writers (UNEAC) and the Cuban Association of the Cinematographic Press. He worked as a film cameraman assistant in the Movie Studio of the Armed Forces from 1983 to 1986. He studied at the State Film Institute of Moscow (1986-1989). From 1994 on, he has been an active film critic and journalist in different radio and TV stations of the capital city of the country. He is an assistant professor now. He has given lectures, workshops of creation, and academic tutorage in post graduate courses for university students, experts, and professionals from different countries, including the United States, France, Brazil, Norway, Spain, and Germany.

In 1959, following the revolutionary victory, the Cuban Film Institute (ICAIC) was established to oversee a vast array of cultural projects and related work, and well into the 1990s, it continued to oversee nearly all of the country's film production. With new technologies emerging in Cuba, through digital media and two new schools of cinema and television, productions have been and will continue to become more diversified, as the ICAIC previously controlled all productions. In the last two decades, new generations of filmmakers and audiovisual artists have been emerging who intend to tell stories from a more independent lens.

This course uses film as a way to understand Cuba through its own images. We will verify how the artistic discourse of filmmakers interprets, legitimizes, dialogues or generates conflict with the official discourse. Students will learn about aesthetic values, formal and artistic, as proposed by Cuba's filmmakers in recent decades. This course will also aim to stimulate creativity between the students, encouraging student discussions based on their own experiences during their time in Cuba.



21st CENTURY CUBAN AND LATIN AMERICAN LITERATURES

Susana Haug is Professor of Literature, Faculty of Arts and Letters, University of Havana. She is the recipient of a number of important literary awards and her work has been included in diverse anthologies of contemporary literature in Cuba, Spain, Brazil and Mexico. She contributes frequently to Cuban and foreign journals and magazines and her work has been translated into Italian, French and Portuguese.

The Latin American “boom” resulted in an unprecedented revolution in Spanish language literature. The eyes of the world turned to a production of novels and stories by a group of authors who began publishing in the 1960s and constituted (and may continue to constitute) the literary version of “Greenwich mean time.” In

this course, we will explore the directions taken by Latin American literature after the boom and focus on the literary production of younger authors, particularly those who began publishing in the 21st century. We will explore their many themes, esthetics, continuities and disruptions.



IDENTITY AND NATION IN CUBA: CURRENT CHALLENGES

Dr. Ivette García is a full professor at the Center for Advanced Studies Fernando Ortíz, at the History and Philosophy Division, University of Havana. She presides the Historians' Division of Cuba's Union of Writers and Artists, UNEAC and is a member of the Cuban Academy for History. Dr. Ivette García has previously taught at the Higher Institute for International Relations (ISRI), the Institute for Cuban History and the Cuban Institute for Anthropology. Prof. García has previously worked in diplomatic missions for Cuba in Europe. Professor García is also a consultant for academic programs in Central America.

The course examines the moments in the history of Cuba that have been key to its national and cultural formation, focusing on the most important aspects of its history, including its social composition, architecture, religion and popular traditions. The concepts of nation and culture, and the country's notions of identity, Cubanidad, idiosyncrasies and Cuban identity will be reviewed by the instructors from a variety of perspectives. Beginning with a review of the principal events of the colonial and republican periods and leading up to the Revolution, the course will focus on those elements that have come to define contemporary Cuba, including its economic development, international relations, social changes and generational conflicts, religion, ethnicity, history of ideas racial relations, music and dance. As a complement to the lectures, students will read a variety of carefully selected Spanish texts, observe audiovisual offerings, observe "in situ" locations of historical and patrimonial importance, visit museums and other cultural institutions and exchange ideas with specialists on these topics. Two additional professors, Látvia Gaspe (Cuba's Institute of History- IHC) and a specialist from the Anthropological Institute will co-teach the course.



US-CUBAN RELATIONS: A DEBATE PROF. RAFAEL M HERNÁNDEZ

Rafael Hernández is a Political Scientist and editor-in-chief of the acclaimed Havana-based journal *Temas*. This seminar will discuss the complexities of the U.S.-Cuba conflict, a case-study at the crossroads of North-South and East-West tensions, focusing on its most recent developments since the Cold War to the present, on domestic and multilateral interactions, national interests and international actors, as well as points of convergence and clash in the bilateral, regional and extra-hemispheric arenas. This conflict is explored as an intermestic relationship, considering the roles played by both countries in each other's internal affairs. The seminar will emphasize the case of US-Cuba relations as a paradigm to understand nationalism and imperialism, the limits of US power and the dynamics of Third World revolutions. It focuses in depth on the major themes that

have shaped current U.S.-Cuban relations, their different political values and national interests, ideological and cultural representations, and their current meanings; but also its “ties of singular intimacy”, cultural affinities, mutual images and civic cultures. This special relationship offers a case-study to discuss how a conflict matrix also involves instances of cooperation, actual and potential, where creative policies may thrive, and develop the current process of normalization, with all its complexities and perspectives.



ELEMENTS OF SPANISH GRAMMAR, WRITING AND STYLE

Susel Gutiérrez Torres graduated from the University of Havana in 2012 with a degree in Literature. She is a professor of Spanish as foreign language. Ms. Gutiérrez also works as a journalist, editor, researcher and literary critic. Her texts have been published in various specialized journals in Cuba and internationally.

The course Elements of Spanish Grammar, Writing and Style seeks to consolidate students’ previously acquired knowledge of the language. It is not for credit and offered in addition to the other classes. It offers tools and exercises that will be helpful for reading skills, discussions, presentations, research activities and the crafting of academic essays, as well as for everyday usage of the Spanish language. The course helps the student in his/her linguistic and socio-cultural immersion in Cuba. It is an integral part of what it means to study abroad, in a foreign language, with the goal to maximize the productivity of your semester abroad.

The classes are balanced between a practical and theoretical part and focus on expression, written and oral comprehension, as well as other interests and necessities of students. Students’ profiles, needs, and interests are an integral part in the delivery of this course.

As an additional and complementary exercise to the Spanish course CASA-Cuba offers the possibility to practice Spanish as part of a “Language Tandem.” The tandem brings together speaking partners, CASA students and Cuban students, interested in improving their Spanish and English skills. This activity is an excellent opportunity to socialize with young Cubans and at the same time practice and apply the skills learned at the Spanish course. The tandem takes place on a weekly basis. Professor Gutiérrez also offers individual tutorials to students that are especially useful to improve academic essays and class assignments.

Students may enroll in courses in two divisions of the University of Havana: in the Social Sciences Division (Facultad de Filosofía y Historia-FFM) and the Division of Humanities (Facultad de Artes y Letras-FAyL). These divisions of the University of Havana offer a variety of courses in history, philosophy, political and economic theory, sociology, anthropology, gender studies, art history, musicology, sociolinguistics, and literature with concentrations in Latin America, the Caribbean and Cuba.

Opportunities to take courses at the University of Havana outside of these two divisions are extremely limited. **Students hoping to take courses in other parts of the University must notify the program director upon application so that requests may be made to the departments before you arrive.** Such requests are not possible to guarantee and depend on the prior approval of University of Havana administration before the semester begins.



University of Havana courses usually vary in length from 32 to 64 contact hours. You will need at least 48 contact hours for a three-point credit and 64 hours for a full credit. On an exceptional basis arrangements can be made with the Cuban professor or department offering a course to arrange to do extra work to earn additional credits (for example in a 32 hour course, which in the US system is worth two credits you may be able to complete additional assignments and earn a full three credits). Professors and apartments vary on their willingness to make these accommodations and students should speak to their professors about such requests at the first class meeting to have time to drop the class and add another if such arrangements cannot be made.

There is a two-week drop-add period for foreign students at the University of Havana. By the end of the second week of classes students must decide and register for their classes. Final determinations of semester course load and credit transfer policies are made by the CASA home institutions for their respective students. The Cuban education system does not frequently provide students with syllabi the way that US institutions do. Keep in mind that, in order to grant departmental credit for a course, some home university departments may ask to see your syllabi. Since syllabi are rarely provided we recommend that you keep a log of lecture topics, required readings, your notes, assignments and final papers that you may be able to provide your home university department when you return from Havana. Students should communicate with their corresponding home institutions about the transfer of credits as early as possible. Because the Cuban academic calendar differs considerably from the US, the program will end about one month before the official end of the Cuban semester. Program students are therefore responsible to inform their professors early on about their departure date and arrange for final examinations ahead of time. Most professors in FFH and HAYL are used to this common practice by all international programs.

STUDENT VOICES: STUDYING AT THE UH CHOOSING COURSES

Setting up a class schedule that works for both the classes at CASA and UH can be a challenge. Between selecting courses that interest you, making sure you have enough time between CASA and UH classes, and ensuring you can get credit for that 32 hour UH class, class selection was proven to be quite the overwhelming experience.

But no fear! Official course enrollment takes place two weeks after classes begin, which means you will have ten very useful weekdays before finalizing a schedule. Use this time wisely. Explore multiple classes at the

University-the trips over there can be exhausting, but it won't be time wasted; you truly never know what a class might be like until you sit through a few sessions. This is especially true with respect to understanding the classroom environment.

For example, some students this past semester who were almost certain they were taking a particular class, completely changed their minds because the rowdiness in the classroom was too distracting, and made it difficult to focus in class. To breakdown rowdiness, think of your average middle school classroom in all its note-passing and video-game glory. Though this is the unfortunate case with multiple university classrooms, if it doesn't affect your learning experience, or distract you too much from the lecture, just enjoy the trip back in time.

Another issue students only resolved after having attended a class or two, and spoken with the UH professor, is credit transfer. A first look at the class schedule might turn you away from any 32 hour class, despite your interest in the subject. Fear not. Some UH professors might give extra work to exchange students, and some US universities might be willing to compromise credit transfer. If your UH professor is willing to give you more work-take it!-that is your cue to negotiate with professors back home, or your department head, and see if there is a way for you to be awarded an extra credit for a 32 hour class.

JASMIN ANOUNA, Swarthmore College

SOCIAL LIFE

Because we are limited to taking two UH courses during the semester, it can be somewhat challenging to integrate deeply into the university culture and environment. Since UH students take all of their classes together in small cohorts, they generally have strong pre-established group dynamics. That said, the best way to mold into the fabric of your classroom(s) is to reach out to people and identify who may be willing to update you on university parties and events. Additionally, the Casa de la FEU (located on Calle 27 de noviembre between K and L) is a good place to socialize with other students and find out about upcoming events. Members of the FEU (especially those who work in the International Relations section) are generally good about keeping us in the loop, but don't be afraid to keep reaching out to ask about upcoming events and parties. By making the effort to keep in touch with them, you let them know that you are interested in their work and in university life in general, and it will be easier for you to make friends and integrate generally into university life if you know what's going on in and around the UH. Likewise, if you have plans, invite UH friends! Cuban students are generally very sociable and will be happy to go out if you invite; reciprocal relationships are key. Especially since our stay is relatively short, it can be easy to forget how many new foreign students pass through the university every semester. Don't be afraid to reach out to people and make your interest in university life known!

ACADEMIC LIFE

Again, because we are trying to merge into the often pre-established classroom routine, and because we have a modified schedule and semester compared to the non-exchange students, we run the risk of being left out of at least part of the academic trajectory of classes. The most important thing to do to avoid this is to establish open lines of communication with your professor(s) early, and to identify at least one student in each of your classes that you feel comfortable reaching out to if you are uncertain about an assignment. (Be sure to identify the “jefe/a de grupo” from the beginning, since they are the person who will keep in close touch with the professor and distribute class readings and assignments to all fellow students.) Unlike at our home universities, there is often no class-by-class syllabus or schedule to follow; rather, professors assign readings as topics are covered in class. (Class bibliographies generally include a combination of print and digital texts, distributed in the first few classes.) Therefore, it’s essential that you keep up with changing assignments. It is often helpful to read all material on a topic that appears in the class bibliography, even if the professor does not explicitly assign it. This will help facilitate your participation in class and get more out of your academic experience, since UH professors don’t usually have/make time to meet individually about class topics or assignments. Ultimately, you get out of your academic experience what you put in. While classes aren’t usually discussion-based, there is generally ample opportunity for discussion, as long as you are willing and prepared to participate!

KILLIAN MCGINNIS, Swarthmore College

ACADEMIC STANDARDS

All course instruction will be conducted in Spanish, and students will be expected to attend classes regularly, participate in-group discussion and keep up with all assignments and required readings. Evaluations and assessment will be based on a combination of written assignments, oral presentations, exams, and class projects.

ACADEMIC SUPPORT

CASA-Cuba offers an additional not for credit Spanish course that focuses on improving oral expression but also covers grammar and writing practices. The instructor, professor Susel Gutierrez, also offers individual tutoring for our students. We encourage students to use this valuable resource from early on in the semester if they find they are having problems with academic coursework in Spanish. If necessary, CASA Cuba can assist students in finding tutors for other academic subjects upon request. We recommend that students bring a serious, academic dictionary for their studies in Cuba, either in digital format as an application or a printed book.

CO-CURRICULAR AND EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

WEEKLY GROUP MEETINGS

During the semester the program will hold mandatory weekly meetings with all students to coordinate activities and discuss experiences. No student should sign up for University of Havana courses which conflict with this meeting period.

LUNCH SEMINARS

Once a week throughout the semester we invite important researchers and practitioners to give short talks on subjects of current interest in Cuba over a light lunch in the gallery for participants in the seminar.

In addition to the Eastern Cuba field trip, CASA will, over the course of the term, organize a variety of special lectures and local field visits that expose students to the tremendous cultural mosaic of Cuba. Topics may include Cuban music, food, religion, race and ethnicity, sports, and politics and will capitalize on CASA's extended network of contacts throughout Havana.



Lunch Seminar at Gallery Classroom with Julia Sweig and Program Director Rainer Schultz

INTERNSHIPS AND RESEARCH PROJECTS

For interested students, extracurricular activities may include community-based volunteer opportunities and working with Casa de las Américas on a project in one of their many branches of activities: publication, exhibitions, theatre, conferences, as well as other established institutions and novel initiatives. Internships in Cuba are less common than in the United States and not always possible to accommodate in all realms but CASA will offer a variety of activities and help facilitating others. In the fall of 2016 students participated in internships at Cuba's premier academic Journal Temas and at OnCuba, today one of the most read online media sources about news in Cuba. In addition, interested students will be encouraged to carry out focused research projects that will engage them with recognized Cuban experts in given disciplines and connect them with local archives, museums, and key cultural organizations.

BEYOND THE SUGAR CURTAIN

CASA- Cuba collaborates with a Brown-based initiative to facilitate critical reflection on your experiences in Cuba to facilitate publications in *Beyond the Sugar Curtain: Tracing Cuba-U.S. Connections (1959-Present)* which seeks to contribute to a new age of diplomatic normalization by exploring the past and present of travel and encounter between the two nations. Against depictions of a "sugar curtain" or "emotional embargo", this project features spaces and moments of connection in the post-1959 period, including but not limited to those between the United States and Cuba. From students to activists, family members and journalists, human ties have long defied political obstacles, bridging the material and affective barriers wrought by diplomatic isolation. Even in the most unpropitious circumstances, citizens of both countries have thus found room for mutual inspiration, productive disagreement, and even friendship and love.

Students participating in the CASA Cuba Consortium are invited to contribute to the project in the following ways:

1. Reflecting on their own experiences in writing for either private consultation or publication in a digital archive
2. Conducting research on U.S.-Cuba human ties in Cuban or U.S. libraries, newspapers, and archives
3. Interviewing Cubans and U.S. Americans about their past travels to and experiences in the two countries
4. Writing analytical essays about historical or present-day travel accounts
5. Conducting primary or secondary research on issues of diversity and inclusion in student mobility to Cuba

Contributions may be written in either English or Spanish, and may also include photographs, visual art, music, film, and other media.

For more information or to participate please contact:

Jennifer Lambe

Assistant Professor of History, Brown University

jennifer_lambe@brown.edu

OTHER CULTURAL EVENTS

Depending on student interests CASA Cuba offers yoga and Cuban dance classes to students. Beyond the cultural opportunities offered by the CASA Cuba program specifically for our students the city of Havana is full of opportunities for getting in contact with the rich cultural life in Cuba. We keep students informed through notices posted in the gallery and group e-mails. Our Facebook group is updated regularly with information about cultural and academic events taking place at the Casa de las Américas and in and around Havana.



Program visit to agro-ecological Finca Marta

PREPARING FOR YOUR DEPARTURE

GROUP TRIPS

Eastern Cuba Trip: Mid-semester, the group will undertake an academic field visit to eastern Cuba. In each place visited, students will be guided by academics, local intellectuals and community members who will take them to important sites to learn about local history and contemporary community life.

Weekend Trips: At the beginning and towards the end of the semester two more weekend trips will be organized by the program. The destinations for these trips vary from semester to semester. Past trips have included visits to Santa Clara-Cienfuegos-Trinidad in the central part of Cuba or to the beautiful valley of Viñales in western Cuba. The second weekend trip is student led. Students propose destinations for weekend study trips to explore different academic themes outside of Havana and are responsible for making their travel arrangements with support from CASA staff. The student organized trips (minimum two students) allow students to expand their knowledge of Cuba beyond the capital city of Havana. All of these tours are an integral part of the program. Dates will be confirmed before the beginning of the semester so that there is no calendar conflict with other activities. Students should not schedule any outside activities or family visits during these dates.

YOUR PASSPORT

Remember: Your passport is the most important document you have when outside the United States. Know where it is at all times and always carry a copy of your passport identification pages with you in your purse or wallet when you leave home.

We strongly recommend that students NOT carry their passports with them on an everyday basis in Havana. You should leave your passport in a safe place in your residency and only take it out when you need to change money or when traveling outside of Havana.

When you receive your passport you should make several copies of your passport and keep the copies separate from your baggage. You should also leave a copy of your passport with your parents at home and e-mail yourself a digital copy. This will facilitate replacement if your passport is lost or stolen.

Do NOT pack your passport in your luggage as you will be required to show it when you check-in for your flight to Cuba and on your return, and in Cuba to customs and immigration authorities (both entering and exiting).

CUBAN STUDENT VISA

CASA and Casa de las Américas coordinate to obtain the necessary student visa on your behalf, no matter what your country of citizenship.

All CASA students enter Cuba with a single entry visa for the exact dates of the program. This means that **students cannot travel outside of Cuba for the duration of the program. Students are also not allowed to arrive or leave early or stay late after program dates.** All students must enter and leave Havana on the approved group flight.

Once in Havana you will receive a student ID card from Casa de las Américas that you should carry with you at all times in addition to your passport copy. Many students have chosen to laminate their passport copy and student ID card.

GROUP MEETING IN MIAMI AND GROUP DEPARTURE TO HAVANA

Students are responsible for making their own domestic travel arrangements from their home to Miami, Florida. All students are required to attend the group meeting and should plan to arrive in Miami no later than **3:00 pm, Saturday, August 26th, 2017**. Upon arriving in Miami, you should make your way to the Hampton Inn Miami Brickell Downtown. The program will formally begin with a welcome dinner the evening of **Saturday, August 26th**. The CASA program will cover the cost of hotel accommodations for the nights of **August 26th and 27th**, and all meals and excursions related to the program in Miami.

In Miami, students will be expected to stay with the program group until departure to Cuba on **Monday, August 28th**. Other pre-orientation activities will take place the following day. On **Monday, August 28th**, students will depart Miami for Havana as a group, accompanied by the CASA-Cuba Director and the Associate Director.

CASA is in charge of making group travel arrangements through a travel agency that, for years, has specialized in travel to Cuba. The entire group is required to travel to/from Cuba together. Students will not be allowed to fly to/from Havana separately. The corresponding cost from Miami to Havana will be billed by CASA to each student's home university which will, in turn, bill its students.



BAGGAGE- GENERAL ESTIMATES ONLY – COSTS ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Charges for luggage vary by airline and change frequently. Check the airline policies online before travel. Make sure to carry plenty of cash when leaving Miami and Havana (at the end of the program) to pay for your luggage.

Past students have recommended bringing whatever you need as you may have a difficult time finding toiletries, medicines and other items—it is worth the extra cost of baggage. Cuba is a much less developed country and for a variety of reasons, part of which are the continued US sanctions, you will find very few of the consumer goods in Cuban shops that you are used to in the U.S. There is a scarcity of many basic goods and supplies. If you have special dietary needs, need to take specific medication, or can't live without certain hygienic articles make sure to bring plenty of these with you.

GROUP RETURN TO MIAMI FROM HAVANA

The program officially ends on **Saturday, December 16, 2017**. Students will return to Miami from Havana as a group on that day. Please wait to make travel arrangements to return home from Miami until after the return travel time has been confirmed. It would be wise to schedule a connecting flight from Miami as late as possible (minimum 3-5 hour layover) on **December 16th**, perhaps a flight to your home leaving Miami after 8:00 PM. The flight from Havana to Miami can be slightly unpredictable with respect to its departure time from Cuba, and it is wise to select an evening flight from Miami to your home. Please note: Once you are back in Miami, all hotels, food, and other travel accommodations are the responsibility of the student and are not reimbursed CASA.



STUDENT HOUSING IN HAVANA

Students will share living accommodations in a residence provided by Casa de las Américas or administrated by Cuban families. All residences are safe, clean and secure, located in the Vedado district, within walking distance to Casa de las Américas and the University of Havana. Students will share ample bedrooms (double occupancy) with modern toilets and showers, and will be provided with breakfast and dinner each day, whereas lunch will be on your own. Laundry will be taken care of by each residence. Safe drinking water will be provided.

Students will be required to sign a written code of conduct for use of the residence and, as part of the on-site orientation, will be provided with clear instructions as to the importance of adhering to Cuban cultural and societal norms and to strictly abide by any and all Cuban policies governing their conduct as visitors to Cuba. **Under no circumstances will students be granted permission for independent housing.**

We recommend you budget approximately \$5.00 to \$10.00 per day for mid-day meals taken outside of the guest residence.

Students will not be permitted to participate in the program without valid U.S. health insurance. Students will either need to demonstrate that they have health insurance independently or purchase continuing coverage through their home university. If you are currently covered by a plan through your home university, you may be provided the option to continue this coverage while abroad. If not, you will need to present evidence of coverage to your home CASA institution before you travel abroad. Check with your study abroad office for additional details.



RESIDENCIA CASA

Overlooking the Malecon (sea wall) of Havana, the Residencia of Casa de las Americas is the original and largest living space of CASA-Cuba. In a beautiful rosy pink art deco building, the Residencia offers its students a two-story penthouse suite with four double-occupancies, complete with four balconies, including one with a 360-degree view of all of Havana. Your host mother, Maria, will teach you many life lessons using personal anecdotes and *rantitas*. She will shower you with love and become, as she says, your mother, grandmother, sister and friend. The Residencia is centrally located next to different food and drink options and two blocks away from the closest ETECSA Wi-Fi hotspot. Maria's granddaughter, Miladi, will cook you some of the best *criollo* (traditional Cuban) food in all of Havana, including *conгри* (rice and beans), avocado, juices, tasty meats and, for dessert, rice pudding.

PETER DUNPHY, Wesleyan



RESIDENCIA LUPE

Think of Casa Lupe as a modified homestay. Six students live together in the apartment owned by Lupe. Lupe and her husband, Rogelio (we call him Molina), live nearby and are always in and out of the apartment.

Dani helps clean the house and other chores. Margarita cooks breakfast and dinner. There are three bedrooms, each with one queen and one twin bed. The rooms are very comfortable and there are two bathrooms with all of the amenities you are accustomed to in the US (or Ireland).

Breakfasts are at 8:30am and dinners are at 7:00pm. In the past, Casa Lupe has been the house for vegetarians and others with dietary restrictions. When Rainer and Hope email you asking about dietary restrictions, make sure you let them know if you have any! This will play an important role in the housing allotment process. Lupe, Dani, and Margarita work hard to make sure everyone receives healthy, delicious, and balanced meals. As a vegetarian, I was pretty nervous about traveling to Cuba, but living in Casa Lupe has made everything much easier than I anticipated.

HAZEL MILLARD, Middleberry College



RESIDENCIA MARÍA

Casa Maria is right down the block from Casa Lupe. In fact, Maria is Lupe's aunt. This apartment houses 3-4 additional students, who eat breakfast in their house but have dinners with Casa Lupe. Magaly lives in the apartment and helps with chores around the house. There are two bedrooms and one bathroom.

HAZEL MILLARD, Middleberry College



HOMESTAY CASA ANOLAN

Casa Anolan has a room with two double-sized beds and a bathroom. The two residents share the bathroom, which is complete with a shower and toilet. Anolan is married with a 11 year old daughter. Her husband is at home only a few nights a week, as his job requires that he drive to Matanzas, a neighboring province several times a week. Anolan prepares breakfast for the two residents of her apartment. Typical breakfasts include scrambled eggs, fruit and coffee or fruit with yogurt.

SASHA ZIENTS, Columbia University



HOMESTAY MARINA AND LOLI

Marina and Loli's residence is a wonderful place to live. To begin with, they are very kind and caring women. Loli is your typical grandma who makes sure you have everything you need. Marina is full of interesting stories and also very opinionated. You can be sure that living in this residence will be a true homestay experience. They always sit down and talk with you during your meals and really make an effort to get to know you. This homestay will provide the best way for you to constantly practice and improve your Spanish. Loli doesn't speak any English but Marina is a translator and thus if you do have some trouble communicating in Spanish, there is always an outlet in English. I would recommend this living situation to someone who truly wants to immerse themselves within Cuban culture from day one and doesn't have a problem with close personal interactions. In fact, a lot of my cultural understanding of Cuba has come from my interactions with my host family. If you are someone who likes to be alone or is not very talkative then I don't recommend living here. In terms of living conditions, the apartment is beautiful. It's on the second floor of the building (which is important to know for when the elevator stops working). You get the best of all worlds because you'll be able to hang out with your friends that live upstairs and right across the street while also being able to take a break from the group dynamic and relax at home when you need to. The room is spacious with 2 beds, a couch, a desk, a large closet, a refrigerator, a safe, air conditioning (very cold), and a view of the ocean. There is a private bathroom as you exit the room. There is a beautiful living room with comfortable couches and it connects to a terrace with a perfect view of the ocean. On good days you can even connect to the public WiFi from the terrace. Marina and Loli both each have their own rooms relatively close to yours so it's important to be considerate when you get home late or you have friends in your room late in the evening. There is great water pressure (not as common as you would think) and hot water for showering. Loli is a great cook so in terms of the food you should have absolutely no problems. Even with food and gas shortages she manages to make some unbelievable meals that will never cease to impress. The building is 10 minutes walking from the gallery and 25 minutes in public transportation to the University of Havana. All in all, this is a wonderful homestay and you'll feel like part of the family.

RAFAEL NÚÑEZ, Dartmouth College

HOMESTAY

Living in the homestay can be an especially rewarding experience if you choose to take it. Here are some tips for the homestay, that'll enrich your experience.

Tips for the homestay:

- Don't worry about being by yourself! The homestays are two apartments right across from each other and located a few floors down from one residence and across the street from the other. "I was so scared of being far away from everyone but I got the best of both worlds in my homestay! I got to stay up late talking to my family and bonding with my host sister. I also would just ride the elevator up after dinner and hang out with my friends in the residency. I basically lived in both homes and it was great." Amira Chamber Ottley, Cuba 2017
- Get to know your host family! Getting to know your host family can provide you with a support system that can only make your time in Cuba easier.
- Spend time with your host family! The host families that CASA pairs students with are especially welcoming and excited to get to know and let you know them. Spending time with your host family can even open up opportunities that students outside of the homestay won't get. In the past this included: a visit to the rural hometown of the host family and going rock climbing, celebrating the birthday of a member of the family with all of their relatives and an amazing variety of food, experiencing a Palm Sunday in Cuba, cooking lessons in common Cuban dishes, workout days with your host family, practicing English with your host family, and more.
- Treat your host family how you would treat your family (or better)! This means keeping your room relatively clean so they don't have to pick up after you, picking up your dishes, etc.

Ask for advice! Your host family has lived in Cuba their entire life and can be an amazing resource when looking for the most economic forms of transportation, the best places to eat and great places to visit while in Cuba.

HEALTH RELATED ISSUES



CUBAN HEALTH INSURANCE FOR FOREIGN VISITORS - ASISTUR

All students on the CASA program will be provided with a local health insurance that will allow students to receive care at the Cira Garcia Clinic in Miramar and other international health clinics in Cuba.

ADDITIONAL EMERGENCY TRAVEL ASSISTANCE COVERAGE THROUGH CASA

Brown students and those from non-Consortium universities applying through Brown will also be automatically covered by a supplementary travel assistance plan administered by International SOS, whose services range from telephone advice and referrals to full-scale evacuation by private air ambulance. International SOS has more than 3,500 professionals in 24-hour alarm centers, international clinics and remote-site medical facilities across five continents. Cuba is serviced by International SOS.

Cuba is known internationally for its well-developed public health system. Even in the most remote areas of the country there are highly trained doctors and health facilities so you are never far away from good medical care! Cuba has two healthcare systems: one for Cuban nationals and another for tourists and international visitors/residents. The one for foreign residents does not suffer from the same sort of shortages due to the US embargo from which the regular public health system suffers. Unless you are in a remote area, far away from an international clinic we recommend that you seek care in the second system for foreign visitors/residents. Students will be provided with a local Cuban health insurance through ASISTUR for the duration of the program which is accepted at the Cira Garcia clinic.

Havana has good doctors who can provide excellent care. The main facility for foreigners in Havana is the:

Clínica Internacional Cira García
Calle 20 No. 4101 esq. 41
La Habana, Cuba
Tel: + 53 7 204-2811

GETTING HEALTH CARE IN CUBA

During orientation we will visit to make sure that students know how to get there and feel comfortable with using the services. Think of Cira Garcia as your student health center on campus. There is an emergency room and walk-in clinic and you can also make appointments for seeing specialists.

We recommend this facility for any medical and/or prescription needs. There is also a very good pharmacy across the street from the clinic. In the unlikely event that you experience a medical emergency in a remote area of Cuba in which there is not an international clinic you should go to the nearest health center and you will be transferred to the international clinic system once you are stabilized.

VISITING CIRA GARCÍA

Keep a copy of your passport and proof of Cuban insurance on hand for medical emergencies. If you're sick enough that you feel like you need to seek medical care you should do so!

To visit the international clinic (emergency room, walk-in and prearranged appointments) you should always bring with you your passport and your proof of Cuban ASISTUR insurance policy (US insurance and SOS international insurance are not accepted). To speed up the processing of your insurance we highly recommend sending an e-mail to ASISTUR asisten@asistur.cu with your full name, insurance number, passport number, the hospital or clinic that you are going to and the reason you're seeking treatment. You may also call the ASISTUR before your visit: 7-866-4121, 7-866-8339, 7-866-8527.

To make an appointment at the Cira García clinic in Havana call 7-204-2811 extensions x 445, 666, 429, 400, 496

TAKING GOOD CARE OF YOURSELF IN HAVANA

You are required to complete a Physician's Medical Report form in order to participate in the program; please be sure it indicates any allergies you have, in particular to medications, as well as dietary restrictions. This information is confidential and has no bearing on your participation in the program. If you have a chronic illness that needs medical attention, have your doctor write a clinical report that can be given to a specialist in Cuba if necessary. In addition, we strongly urge you to have a complete physical and dental checkup before departing.

PRESCRIPTION MEDICATIONS

If you require prescription medication, you should bring a supply with you to last the entire time that you will be abroad. Although many medications are available worldwide, they are not always identical in strength or composition to what you take at home. Bring an adequate supply of medications in your carry-on luggage, in their original containers, along with a letter from your doctor explaining the dosage, why the medication has been prescribed, and why you are traveling with a large quantity. Be sure to get a typewritten diagnosis/prescription with the generic name of your prescription in case you lose your prescription or it is misplaced, so a doctor in Cuba may use it to write a valid prescription. If you use contraceptives, please bring an adequate supply with you. International or very specialized drugs may be difficult to obtain. Since brand names vary, it is important to know the generic (chemical) names of your medications.

Students who wear glasses or contact lenses may choose to bring an extra pair as well as a copy of their prescription, however it is relatively cheap and simple to get an eye exam and a new pair of glasses made in Havana.

It is recommended to bring your own supply of common over-the-counter medications as they are often not available for purchase (or only after scouring the city's international pharmacies, and when you are sick you want to take a pill and go to sleep, not be going from pharmacy to pharmacy looking for cough syrup!)

It is best to be prepared for the common cold, allergies stomach and intestinal disorders often caused by changes in diet and drinking water. Bring medications in case these problems arise; your doctor may suggest which drugs to consider. Over the counter cold/flu medications are very hard to come by in Cuba, so bring them with you. Remember, however, to be careful about treating yourself, and be sure to seek professional help when necessary.

Pack medication for constipation, heartburn or upset stomach, surface scratches and cuts, sore throat, yeast infections, coughs or colds. Be sure to bring medicine for any recent or chronic ailment which might reoccur in Cuba. Some over-the-counter medications are available, but it is highly advisable that you bring extra supplies of any medications or prescriptions that you use regularly. Most people seriously underestimate the amount of medicine they will need.

WHAT OTHER PRECAUTIONS SHOULD I TAKE?

Inform the resident staff of any existing health problems, including mental health, or any potential problems you anticipate arising throughout the course of the program. This includes allergies to any medications or foods. CASA staff will use this information to ensure that appropriate accommodations are made. Please inform the resident staff if you become ill during the program.

If you suffer from asthma, allergies, or any other medical conditions, you will be expected to take responsibility for your own condition and to keep staff informed in case you need assistance in accessing care. It is very important to seek medical advice and to follow doctor's orders.

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Mental health facilities in Cuba for international visitors are very limited and mostly available in Spanish. Should you need access to mental health facilities, contact your home campus resources is one possibility. CASA can also help you identifying local mental health resources.

Michele Frank, M.D., is affiliated to CASA-Cuba and available to students upon request. Michele Frank is a Physician / Child & Adolescent Psychiatrist, Neuroscience Researcher and Journalist who has studied, worked and taught in Cuba since 1983. She has been bringing U.S. and Cuban people together in the medical, mental health, environmental, religious and academic fields for over 40 years. She is co-founder of Eco Cuba Network, and a member of a number of Cuban and U.S. professional organizations, including the Cuban Society of Psychiatry; the Cuban Society of Natural, Traditional and Bio-Energetic Medicine; the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry; the American Orthopsychiatric Association.

ENDEMIC DISEASES

You are living in a tropical environment where everything flourishes, including bacteria and viruses. Hepatitis A, B, C, typhoid, cholera, tuberculosis, are all present and dengue fever is common.

Because you live in a perfect climate for growing germs, you must be particularly careful to practice good hygiene. Drink only bottled, filtered, or boiled water. Avoid food cooked in areas where proper hygiene is not possible. **Always wash your hands before eating.** We recommend several small units of disinfecting gel. Avoid exposure to the sun, and drink lots of water to avoid dehydration.

TAP WATER

Since the Cholera outbreak in July 2012 most families in Havana boil or treat water. Your residences will boil or chemically treat your drinking water. Safe drinking water is also available at the gallery for all students. We recommend you to fill up a bottle and carry it around with you. We recommend bringing a reusable water bottle with you. Bottled water is usually available for purchase throughout the country as well.

DENGUE FEVER

In recent years, dengue fever outbreaks have occurred with increasing frequency in Cuba and most countries of the tropics. Cases are common in Havana. Cuba's public health system has a rigorous prevention program in place with regular fumigations in the city of Havana to destroy the larvae of the Aedes Aegypti mosquito which spreads Dengue.

Dengue is a mosquito-transmitted viral disease occurring chiefly in tropical and subtropical areas of the world. Generally, there is a low risk of acquiring dengue during travel to tropical areas except during periods of epidemic transmission (during or shortly after the rainy season). Dengue viruses are transmitted by Aedes mosquitoes, which are most active during the day. Mosquitoes that transmit dengue usually are found near human dwellings and are often present indoors. Dengue is predominant in urban centers, but may be found in rural areas.

There is no vaccine for dengue fever. Therefore, the traveler should avoid mosquito bites by using insect repellents on skin and clothing and remaining in well screened or air-conditioned areas.

VAGINAL INFECTIONS

Women are often prone to vaginal infections in the heat and humidity of the tropics. You can minimize such problems by wearing cotton underwear, which breathes, and by not wearing tight-fitting pants full-time. Talk to your gynecologist about bringing suitable medication in case you do get an infection. These medications can be

extremely hard to find in Havana so it is recommended that you pack them!

AIDS

Take the appropriate precautions. Many U.S. doctors are concerned about needle re-use in some countries. Should you need an injection while in Cuba, make sure the needle comes sealed in a special package and is torn open in front of you. This is normally done in the clinics you would go to in Havana.

SMOKING

Smoking in the Cuba is much more common as it is in the United States and the anti-smoking regulations that are common in the U.S. are not common and are not enforced in Cuba. Therefore, if you are allergic to or easily bothered by smoke, be aware that it will be more difficult to avoid in Cuba than it is in the United States.

VACCINATIONS

Make sure you are up-to-date on routine vaccines before every trip. These vaccines include measles-mumps-rubella (MMR) vaccine, diphtheria-tetanus-pertussis vaccine, varicella (chickenpox) vaccine, polio vaccine, and your yearly flu shot.

- Typhoid: You can get typhoid through contaminated food or water in Cuba. CDC recommends this vaccine for most travelers, especially if you are staying with friends or relatives, visiting smaller cities or rural areas, or if you are an adventurous eater.

- Hepatitis A: We recommend this vaccine because you can get hepatitis A through contaminated food or water in Cuba, regardless of where you are eating or staying.

- Hepatitis B: You can get hepatitis B through sexual contact, contaminated needles, and blood products, so it is recommended to get this vaccine if you might have sex with a new partner, get a tattoo or piercing, or have any medical procedures.

CDC RECOMMENDATIONS

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, has put in place a webpage for students studying abroad. It pulls together a number of documents that participants can find on the CDC site as well as a few links to other resources. The document is available at http://www.cdc.gov/travel/study_abroad.htm

SAFETY & SECURITY



US CASA Program and Cuban students at the weekly language tandem

CULTURAL DIFFERENCE

Remember, you are in another country with its own laws and customs, and they are different from the ones you are used to. Be aware of this and conduct yourself accordingly. The orientation will also cover practical aspects of living in a new place, Cuban laws, proper social conduct, and cultural differences, including race, gender, and class.

Just as it is impossible to define a typical American, it is equally impossible to define a typical Cuban. You will meet many types of people in Cuba who have different opinions, attitudes, and habits. The more you interact with Cuban people, the better chance you will have of forming relationships and understanding the culture. During these interactions, use common sense, intelligence, and a sense of objectivity. Be prepared to discuss your views freely and openly, try to listen with an open mind, and be respectful of others' views, no matter how much they may be different from your own.

You may arrive in Cuba with some preconceptions about Cubans and may encounter some Cubans with preconceptions about people from the United States. Try to put aside stereotypes and draw your own conclusions based on real experiences. If you are confronted with what you feel is a false stereotype about the United States, be frank and truthful, yet tactful in your response. A positive and serious response from you will help dispel myths about the United States.

Experience has shown that the single most important factor in assuring a safe study abroad experience is the sensible and cautious behavior of the participants themselves. When traveling abroad, you should exercise additional caution until you become familiar with your new surroundings. Always remain alert to what is going on around you, especially in crowded tourist areas and on public transportation.

While we provide you with important safety information, please remember that your safety is in your own hands. Since we cannot be with you at all hours of the day to ensure you remain safe (and we are pretty sure you wouldn't want us to be!), you must take it upon yourself to practice caution.

CRIME

Havana, and Cuba more broadly, remains a safe destination for travelers, though petty crime is on the rise in urban centers. It is important to observe caution when traveling alone or at night, as many streets are not well-lit.

Although Havana is safe and violent crimes are rare, you must be careful about what you do and where you go, just as you would in any major city in the world.



Always take pertinent safety measures

Follow these general rules:

- Tourists are common targets for pickpockets and muggings. Be aware of your backpacks and cameras especially on crowded buses. Do not carry large amounts of cash or your passport with you.
- Within Havana the only reason you would have to carry your passport would be when you need to change foreign currency in the CADECA. Otherwise LEAVE IT AT HOME! When you must carry your passport, wear it around your neck in a thin pouch inside your shirt or in a moneybelt under your clothes. If you must carry it in a bag, use one that can be slung diagonally across your chest and that has a sturdy strap that cannot be easily ripped.
- Never carry valuables in the back pockets of your pants. As in any major city in the U.S. or elsewhere, one should be careful about wearing or displaying expensive jewelry or electronic equipment. Pickpocketing is an annoyance confronted by foreigners and Cubans alike, and the best approach is always to relinquish items rather than engage in a struggle.
- Never accept rides from strangers, and stick to established collective taxi (also known as máquinas, almendrones, boteros, and colectivos) and bus routes. Especially at night it is best to travel with at least one other person.
- Never walk alone after dark. Be especially cautious in areas frequented by tourists.
- As noted earlier, keep a photocopy of your passport in a separate place. This will speed up the process of replacing your documents should they be lost or stolen.
- Always be aware of your surroundings and immediately leave the site of arguments. While guns are extremely rare in Cuba in places where drinking gets out of control like Tropical on 41 in Marianao or in shady discotheques (we will tell you more places to avoid) can result in knife fights or broken bottles being used as weapons. Leave immediately if things look suspicious!
- If you are the victim of a pickpocketing, or if something is stolen, inform the CASA staff who can help you make a police report.



Cuban Police securing major musical event near the US Embassy

ILLEGAL DRUGS

Do not bring in or buy illegal drugs of any kind while in Cuba. Penalties for Drug violations in the Cuba are much harsher than in the United States. If you use illegal Drugs, you will be expelled from the study program, and the local police will prosecute you as a criminal. Remember that you are subject to Cuban laws. You are

not protected by your own country's laws. The United States and other governments can only seek to ensure that their citizens are not discriminated against; that is, that they receive the same treatment as do citizens of the country in which they are arrested who are charged with the same offense. Note that possession of marijuana is considered a serious offense in the Cuba, and users are often given the same penalties as sellers (approximately 15 years for simple possession!).

INFRASTRUCTURE HAZARDS

Because Cuba is a small developing country, you will find that conditions in general do not compare with those at home. An inadequate infrastructure means that electrical power is irregular at best, and power may disappear for hours at a time with no warning. We recommend that you always carry a small flashlight on your keychain.

Most streets and sidewalks in Cuba are in disrepair. You must always be on the lookout for holes, unmarked ditches, etc. Many streets are badly lit. Be careful walking or running on the Malecón Boulevard as the sidewalk is often wet and very slippery!

Although the municipal water in Havana is treated at a modern plant, water and sewage pipes are in disrepair and the water can be contaminated as it travels through them. We recommend that you drink only bottled, boiled or treated water. All residencies are instructed to provide this for our students, as well as to use proper hygiene in the preparation of food. Treated water is also available at the gallery.

NATURAL DISASTERS

Hurricane season is from June to November. The threat of hurricanes exists during this period. Because Havana is located on the coast, it has experienced hurricanes in the past. CASA staff monitors the weather, and will post warnings against weekend travel if necessary. Extreme weather conditions may also affect planned program activities and field trips. Housing is sturdy, and the residency staff and most families are well practiced in preparing for hurricanes with adequate water and food supplies on hand. During orientation we will explain our Hurricane Response plan to you.

The greatest potential danger to you from hurricanes is after the storm. Electrical lines may be down, water and communications may be cut off, and services are rarely restored promptly. Local rivers and streams may be flooded, and sanitation conditions may decline. The danger of injury from debris makes cleanup difficult. You should stay at home until contacted by CASA staff. We will contact you about what to do concerning classes and communicating with your families in the United States. We will make every attempt to stay in touch with the study abroad advisors at your home universities about local conditions, and your parents can contact them as well.



Student identity card provided by Casa de las Americas

BEING YOU IN HAVANA: GENDER, RACE AND SEXUALITIES

Women, both foreign and Cuban, and foreign men are likely to be the object of unwelcome advances. These practices include catcalls, known in Cuba as piropos. Younger men are less likely than older ones to make such approaches, and recent public campaigns in Cuba have drawn attention to street harassment as a social problem. Nonetheless, the best strategy when confronted with such attention is simply to ignore it.

Public displays of sexuality are common in Havana, ranging from relatively benign kissing and necking among couples to occasional public masturbation. The roots of this phenomenon are complex and multifaceted, but it is best regarded as unpleasant rather than dangerous. Cubans tend to react to instances of public sexual behavior with humor, but the most effective response is to simply avoid and ignore. Anything that feels threatening should be immediately reported. Nevertheless, rape and sexual assault remain quite rare, and all Cubans are aware of the consequences that would arise from a physical attack on a foreigner. In short, women should approach travel to Cuba with the same caution as they would any other major urban center, but without trepidation.

Similarly, prejudice and discrimination on the basis of ethnic or racial identification or sexual orientation are not uncommon in Cuba. Especially in everyday life and out on the street comments and identification based on perceived physical features (negro, rubia, chino, gorda, etc.) are very common. The discourse and terminology on race, gender, and sexual orientation are very different from the United States and some students in the past have perceived this as discriminatory. Over recent years, there has been an increasing awareness about these issues and there are various academics, as well as state and civil society institutions that address these issues. The program will introduce you to some of them, facilitate debates and awareness of these issues and will do its best to provide you with a safe learning experience. However, students should be prepared for very different discourses and practices as they relate to gender, racial, and sexual orientation. To understand and navigate these topics can be at times be challenging.

MONEY MATTERS

How much you spend will depend on how much you integrate into life in Havana the way that most Cubans live. There is a double economy in Havana, the hard currency economy, initially and mostly tied to tourism, and the traditional state economy. If you stay in the tourist economy your expenses will be considerably higher! In the tourist economy the cost of living for a student in the Cuba is comparable to that of a student in the United States, while in the Cuban economy it is considerably lower (remember the nominal average salary here is about 30 CUC!).

For example, if you travel like a local, in collective taxis and busses local transportation will run you about \$1-3 CUC (\$1.13-3.40) a day. If you travel like a tourist, a one way cab ride will cost you between \$3-15 CUC (\$3.40-17 USD). Be sure to budget enough for local transportation. If you like to go out at night, plan to be taking taxis, which will run you about \$5-10 CUC round trip each time you go out, but this is usually split among a group of students who go out together.



Different denominations of the Cuban Peso, Moneda Nacional



The Cuban Convertible Peso, or CUC

CURRENCY RATES - CUBA'S DUAL CURRENCY SYSTEM

There are two types of currency in Cuba, both popularly referred to as the peso (to make things extra confusing!).

CUBAN PESO: (MN)

MN or CUBAN PESOS

The regular Cuban peso (approx. \$.05 USD) is referred to as “moneda nacional” or “pesos cubanos” and identified on signs as MN or less commonly CUP.

CUBAN CONVERTIBLE PESO: “CUC” (1.13 USD)

CUC: The Cuban Convertible Peso, or CUC (approx. \$.87 USD) is used tourist places, and many stores and restaurants.

CADECAS

CADECAs are the official currency exchange houses (the name comes from: Casa de Cambio). NEVER change money on the street or with a money changer!!!! This can be extremely dangerous and you will probably be given false bills. US dollars can be exchanged for convertible pesos, but a charge of 10 percent will be levied that the Cuban state justifies with its extra-costs caused by the US economic sanctions. Euros, Canadian dollars, British pounds sterling or Swiss francs can be exchanged for convertible pesos and there is no service charge.

It is possible to exchange any currency for convertible pesos (CUC) at airports, banks and hotels, and re-exchange them when leaving the country. For changing money from foreign currency to CUC you must present your passport. For safety we recommend that you do these transactions in hotels such as the Hotel Nacional and Melia Cohiba. At these places you may only convert from foreign hard currency to the Cuban CUC, not the Peso Cubano. There are ATMs in Cuba, particularly in the larger cities, but they do not accept any U.S. issued debit or credit cards.

To change from CUCs to CUP there are many CADECAs scattered around the city. The closest CADECA to the gallery is on Línea between Paseo and A. There are two other CADECAs close to the University: one across the street from Copellia ice cream parlor on Calle 23 between J and L, and the other in the Focsa Building on Calle N and 17. In Habana Vieja there is a CADECA on Obispo Street.



MONEY MATTERS

Always make sure you have a decent amount of CUP on you (at least \$5 CUC worth, or, \$125 Pesos MN) because many local and state-run businesses will not accept large CUC bills.

In terms of money, you do not need to travel with large amounts of cash unless you are looking to buy gifts or go to higher-end restaurants. During a regular day that includes transportation, meals and nonessentials, it is best to carry \$10 CUC on you and \$5 CUC worth of Moneda Nacional (\$125 MN).

If you have a large amount of USD and need to change them, it may be better to ask the owner of your residence first. They may offer to change it for you at a more preferable rate.

JUSTIN JIMENEZ, Oberlin College

The Banco Metropolitano is also an option to change your foreign currency into CUC. It usually has a slightly higher exchange rate than the MelhiaCohiba but at times there can be very long lines and thus the MelhiaCohiba is the the most efficient location to exchange your foreign currency.

RAFAEL NÚÑEZ, Dartmouth University

BUDGETING ADVICE

At the end of my trip I will have spent \$1500 USD including all my independent travel, gifts, meals, going out to bars/clubs, etc. I've had a relatively generous budget in that I tend to have more expensive meals and buy a lot of snacks/extras in CUC. On a normal day I usually carry about 20 CUC broken up in small bills because it is hard get change. In addition, I always carry about 100 CUP to be able to pay for certain things such as collective taxis (máquinas) or snacks on the street.

Since Americans can't use credit or debit cards in Cuba, it is necessary to bring all the money that you think you will need in cash. All the apartments should have safes where you can store valuables. It is very easy to trust people throughout your stay in Cuba but always be cautious and don't let your guard down, especially in your first couple of days. Watch your money and valuables around people that you just met.

Lastly, the free internet at the gallery is spotty at best so if you plan on doing something important through email you will need to purchase wifi cards to use at wifi hotspots around town that cost \$1.50 CUC per hour. Also factor this into your budget.

RAFAEL NÚÑEZ, Dartmouth University

WHAT WORKS

CASH-USD

Good old USD cash can be brought to Cuba and changed in the CADECA for the CUC (and then MN) you will spend here. USD cash (and only USD) is subject to a 10% tax by the Cuban government. The tax is first applied and then the exchange rate. If you change \$100 USD you will receive \$87.16 CUC.

CASH- EURO AND CANADIAN DOLLARS

One way to avoid this tax is by changing their USD to Euros or Canadian dollars prior to coming to Cuba. These currencies are not subjected to the 10% tax in Cuba.

You should decide whether this is the best option for you by checking your local banks for their USD-EUR or USD-CAD exchange rates to see how much you would lose in the transaction. If it is considerable less than 10% it is probably worth it. Remember however you will have to change the EUR or CAD for CUC in Cuba. These rates fluctuate daily as any international currency. You can check the exchange rate online.

Remember that at the end of your trip whatever EUR or CAD you have left over you will have to trade back into USD when you get back home or keep for future international trips. It is advised that you calculate a minimum overall budget and convert only that from USD to EUR or CAD and bring some extra cash in USD.

Sometimes changing USD to other currencies is worth it, sometimes it is not. It depends on the exchange rates, which are constantly changing. Some students prefer to just use USD.

WESTERN UNION

Your family in the United States may also send money to you via Western Union. The costs are slightly lower than bringing US dollar cash and exchanging it upon arrival in Cuba (Western Union charges between 7% and 10%, depending on the amount). If you decide to use this method for spending money we recommend that you bring a couple hundred dollars in cash to begin the semester in case there are difficulties or delays. It can be a good option should you need more cash towards the end of the program than initially anticipated.

REMITTANCE CARDS: CARIBBEAN TRANSFERS, TRANSCARD, ETC

These services are available online and allow you to create a prepaid debit card which you (or your family) can load online using your US credit card. This process has to be initiated before you come to Cuba. Service charges can be considerable (up to 20%). When you arrive in Havana you can go to the card office to help you pick up your card. If you decide to use this card we recommend that you also bring a couple hundred dollars in cash in case there are delays with your card or account.

TRAVELER'S CHECKS

Traveler checks can only be exchanged at the Banco Financiero Internacional (BFI), again with a 3% service charge. One BFI is within walking distance from the Gallery.

WHAT DOES NOT WORK

US CREDIT CARDS AND ATM/BANK CARDS DO NOT WORK IN CUBA!!!

Credit Cards and ATM/Bank Cards from NON-US bank accounts usually work in Cuba. American Express credit cards generally do not work in Cuba. Make sure to check with your financial institution to be sure and bring some cash to be safe!

INDEPENDENT TRAVEL



Student independent travel

All travel outside of Havana must be approved by the Center Director prior to the trip. Weekend travel plans proposals should include an itinerary for your travel and contact information for the place you will be staying and be submitted to CASA staff by the weekly deadline set by the program. Students should not leave the city until they have received approval. Once you have approval you must inform your residence coordinator or host family of any travel involving an overnight stay outside Havana. While traveling outside of Havana you must carry your cell phone at all times with sufficient funds to make and receive calls.

Failure to follow these regulations or missing classes or other program activities in order to undertake independent travel may result in your dismissal from the program.

All CASA students enter Cuba with a single entry visa for the exact dates of the program. This means that students cannot travel outside of Cuba for the duration of the program. Students are also not allowed to arrive early or stay late after program dates. All students must enter and leave Havana on the approved group flight.

YOUR CUBAN CELLPHONE

The program will provide each student with a Cuban cell phone upon arrival. **All students must provide a \$150 CUC deposit which will be returned at the end of the semester when the phone and SIM card are returned.** If you choose to use your own unlocked cellphone you will pay a deposit of \$100 CUC. The Consortium will give each student a phone pre-charged with a credit of \$10 CUC. It is your responsibility to always maintain a minimum credit balance of \$10 CUC for emergencies.

The cell phones are the best and most immediate form of communication and students should always carry it with them. Cuban cell phones are pre-paid; pre-paid cards for \$5, \$10 or \$20 CUC are available at hotels, most Etecsa offices, and through private resellers. An alternative is to put credit on your cell phone via certain internet platforms, such as ding.com.

Incoming international calls are free; you may receive phone calls from the U.S. through your cell phone, but calls within Cuba are \$.35 cents CUC a minute, and text messages \$.09 cents CUC. If a person calls you from a landline, you as the receiver will bear the costs of the call. Keep this in mind when you call a friend or professor on their cell phones from a landline.

To call the US from your Cuban cellphone:

DIAL [+] + [country code] (US is 1) + área code + phone number

Calls to USA and the rest of the Americas from your cell are \$1.00 CUC/minute. Calls to the rest of the world \$1.80 CUC/minute.

USING CUBAN LANDLINES

Local calling: You may use telephone in your residency for local calls. The phone is generally used as a means of relaying messages and making plans, not for long conversations. Please be respectful of others in the household and don't monopolize the phone. You can also make these calls from public payphones with a Cuban phone card called "Tarjeta Propia" which you can purchase in the ETECSA phone company office in Cuban pesos or moneda nacional. As a general rule, you shouldn't call or receive calls at the residency or your homestay after 10:30 pm.

Long distance calling within Cuba: These calls are relatively expensive for most Cuban families. You should always use your "Tarjeta Propia" when calling from your residence or homestay host's phone.

International Calling: No calling cards purchased in the United States are currently accepted by Cuban operators. You can buy an international calling card in the ETECSA phone company office in CUC (Cuban Convertible Pesos) to call the US or other countries. The best option is to call directly from your Cuban cellphone, or by using online applications such as IMO.

CALLING CARDS TO CALL CUBA

Computer to computer calling via Skype does not work in Cuba without a VPN. Friends and family at home can use it to send you text messages (9.7 cents) to your cell phone or call you (\$.80 a minute with at 8.9 cent connection fee). But you can receive but not respond with a text message. Skype is NOT the cheapest option for calling you in Cuba.

Students in other programs in the past have recommended Nobel.com, Cuballama and Speedy Pin. They all have pages online where you can find more information. They are all phone cards where you dial an access number in the US which will be billed to the caller as a local call (if your area does not have an access number it would be billed as a US long distance call). The caller once connected will enter a pin number and then dial your phone. Recently, several US phone carriers have included Cuba in their international call packages. But calls to Cuba still are considerably more expensive than elsewhere. Check prices before making these calls.

CALLING TIPS

From the US dial 011 to signal you want to make an international call. Cuba's country code is 53. Havana's city code is 7.

To dial a landline in Havana dial: 011(to get out of US) + 53 (CUBA) + 7 (HAVANA) + the 7 digit phone number. For example 01-53-7-870-5228.

To call a Cuban cellphone from the US you would dial: 011(to get out of US) + 53 (CUBA) + 5 (code for CELL phones) + the 7 digit phone number.

US CELL PHONES IN CUBA

Cell phones operated by U.S. operators can now be used in Cuba but charge you considerable roaming charges. Make sure to inform yourself. Past students have used this mostly as an emergency back-up option only, and for occasional texting (also expensive).

INTERNET

Internet access will be limited and not as easily available as students are accustomed. The CASA gallery space will have Wi-Fi available during its daily operation times (currently 8a.m. to 8p.m. on weekdays and 8am to 4pm Saturday and Sunday), but keep in mind that, even in the best of circumstances, Wi-Fi connection in Cuba is sporadic and, oftentimes, slow. Downloading or updating of software, videos, music etc. will most likely not be possible. Voice-over IP programs and video-chat occasionally work but are not always reliable. Social media will be restricted during class hours to ensure a more reliable and speedy connection to do research, work and emailing.

You will not be able to access some internet sites restricted on the island, including Skype and many .edu websites. We encourage you to check to see that your email account is current and learn to access it before you depart the U.S. It is the best way to communicate with academic advisors, friends and family. More information



Public wifi in Cuba

about email use in Cuba will be provided to students shortly before departure and on-site. We recommend opening a gmail account before departing for Cuba and having your campus email forwarded to this account. We also recommend downloading the video application for gmail before arrival as well as the voice-over IP program IMO which tends to work relatively well in Cuba. Finally we recommend having an active, usable VPN connection available to you, either through your home university or a commercial service provider.

TECH TIPS

With Internet in Cuba being slow and unreliable at times, it will be more complicated to complete things. It'll be helpful to download a few items before your semester abroad. These include:

MAPS

- Maps.me (Free) — At the time of writing, Google Maps doesn't allow offline downloads of a map of Cuba. Maps.me allows you to download a map of Havana and gives you walking, biking, and driving directions when needed. You should download the Cuba map within the app before departure.
- Reference Images of Cuba (Free) - It's helpful to download a provincial map of Cuba to situate yourself on the island and to also plan independent trips outside of the city

DICTIONARIES

- SpanishDict (Free) - Offers a wide selection of words and phrases. It also conjugates verbs
- Laptop Spanish Dictionary (Free) - For Macs, you can download an English-Spanish dictionary on the Dictionary app
- *Note: You probably won't need a paper dictionary

MEDIA

- New York Times and News App (can download news to read later)
- Quizlet - A flashcard app to practice vocabulary
- Offline version of Wikipedia (ask Hope about this)

MESSAGING/COMMUNICATION

- To communicate with friends and family back home, IMO, a free application, works best with the Internet in Cuba. Messages send reliably and audio/video calls are more reliable. A handy trick is to record audio messages to send to friends if audio/video calls aren't available. Messenger and WhatsApp also work, but they are apps that require higher-bandwidth which can be complicated when other students are using the Wi-Fi at the same time.
- A good idea is to download the Gmail app.
- Facebook is a bandwidth-heavy site. In order to make it load faster, a good idea would be to use the mobile version of Facebook (m.facebook.com) on your phone and laptop.

VPN

- School VPN or 3rd Party (TunnelBear, HidemyAss) - Free or paid
- If there's one thing you would have to download before your semester, a VPN is the most crucial thing to download. Some websites are blocked in Cuba because some websites/servers blocking internet requests from Cuba. For example, Snapchat and financial websites (i.e. WellsFargo, Chase, CapitalOne) don't work here unless you have a VPN. Be careful with financial websites because you may be blacklisted if you don't use a VPN.
- Check with your school to see if they offer a free VPN. If they don't have one, you can go through third-party VPN services like TunnelBear and HideMyAss, but you will have to pay a fee to use the VPN for the semester.

OTHERS

- Handbrake (Free) - A great application to convert weird movie files to recognizable formats like .mp4 and .mov. You'll need it because some movie files in the Paquete and for classes like Cine Cubano are in certain file formats
- VLC (Free) - A great application that lets you view almost any type of movie file.

MUSIC AND STORAGE

- If you download Spotify music before departure, it often begins to disappear after a month or so. You can re-download music with a VPN connection, but it often requires a strong internet connection and can be a slow process.
- It's a good idea to bring music as MP3 files to avoid losing it through Spotify. You can then share music through the CASA hard drive and build a program music library.
- You might accumulate lots of movies, TV shows, and music through inter-program sharing and the paquete (a Cuban system of distributing and purchasing media). Therefore, it's ideal to have USBs with lots of storage (16-32 GB) and/or an external hard drive.
- Download some games on your phone before you come to Cuba as well! Downloading a 100MB game app will take a long time.

INTERNET STRATEGIES

- Utilizing your phone to access email, websites, and etc. will work a lot faster than your laptop.
- Try to write emails and messages in advance, so that you can send them immediately when you have wifi and get the most out of your wifi time.
- When browsing on your phone through Safari, you can save webpages as a PDF to iBooks if you want to read them later offline.
- Practice transferring text between your phone and computer without Internet. For Mac/iPhone transfers,

you can write a note on your Mac (using the Notes app), export it as a PDF, and AirDrop to your iPhone/Mac. After this, you can save the PDF to Dropbox/iBooks and copy/paste it onto your email application.

- Be sure to turn off data-roaming on your mobile phone so you don't rack up roaming charges on your next monthly phone bill. Also be sure to put your phone on airplane mode!
- A great thing to do collectively for all of the individuals in the program is to turn off background refresh on your phones and laptops. With ~20-25 devices refreshing in the background at the same, it can really slow down the Internet for everyone. Turning it off also saves battery!

INTERVIEWS

- Spring semester is usually the time for internship searches and interviews! Calling the US from Cuba can be very tricky if the interviewer doesn't understand your limitations in Cuba, especially since Skype/FaceTime don't work reliably and international calls are prohibitively expensive from Cuba. Your best bet would be two things: Wi-Fi calling or IMO. Only few carriers offer Wi-Fi calling (ex: Verizon) in Cuba. It is a great option since it allows you to call US phone numbers for free through Wi-Fi. Check with your carrier and activate Wi-Fi calling on your phone before you arrive in Cuba. IMO is another option that works reliably, but some interviewers may be hesitant to download an application.
- If you have bonus credit on your Cuban cell phone (i.e. through Ding promotions), you can also use that to make international calls.

OTHER

- Bring a two-prong MacBook charger. Some houses have mostly or exclusively two-prong outlets.
 - For your voicemail and email, set an extended absence greeting so people will know that you will be gone and that you won't be able to answer right away. Tell them to contact you through IMO or email!
 - For some carriers, you may not get coverage in Cuba.
 - A key thing with the Internet in Cuba (and especially in the Galería), is for you to be flexible! The quality of the connection varies a lot and there will be times when you cannot access websites.
- Pro tip: For those that will miss SnapChat, AirDrop will be your best friend! It's a great way of sharing photos and files. However, keep in mind that this is limited to those with iPhones and Macs.

TIMMY JENG, Brown University
JEREMY SEITZ-BROWN, Swarthmore College

POSTAL SERVICE

Postal service between the U.S. and Cuba had been interrupted for almost five decades and only recently been re-established. It still frequently takes six weeks or more, so you should not count on this as a means to communicate effectively with stateside family and friends. DHL is the most reliable but very costly option to send important documents or smaller items. Check their rates on their website. Some other private providers based in Florida also offer the delivery of packages to Cuba.

ELECTRICITY

In general, you should not have trouble using small electrical appliances brought from the U.S. (hairdryer, electric razor, etc.) as the standard electric current in Cuba is the same as in the U.S. (110 V). However, some homes and hotels may also have 220V connections. Always check before plugging in sensitive equipment.

SHOPPING

Come prepared with everything you need for your stay. Very few quality goods are available in local stores. To get an idea of the types of products available in Cuba you can check classifieds sites like revolico.com and portalivre.com, your Cuban version of Craigslist and portals into Havana's black and grey markets!

WHAT TO BRING

Year-round daytime temperatures in Havana average 65 – 90 degrees Fahrenheit, so pack for a tropical climate. In the hottest parts of the year (roughly May-October) the heat is intense, often with close to 80% humidity. Lightweight cotton, linen, or cotton-blend shirts, pants and skirts are better breathers than synthetics. In the hottest months you may want to take a cold shower several times a day and change shirts a couple times so pack accordingly! Undershirts are often recommended to avoid the uncomfortable image of being 'totally sweated.' In the "cool season" (November-April) the climate can vary significantly during the day—it can be cool at night and in the mornings, hot at midday and in the afternoon, and often cold in air-conditioning. In your daily routine, you will be moving between very different settings. Bring light layers and versatile clothing to be able to adapt to different settings and temperatures.



Cuban and Program students at a US-Cuba soccer match

Even though Havana is right on the Caribbean Sea, the atmosphere is far from that of a "beach town." Havana is a Latin American capital city; people place a great deal of emphasis on looking their best in public. Cubans generally dress as well as they can afford. People, especially women, "put themselves together" considerably more than U.S. students, even for activities you might think of as informal—going shopping on a Saturday, going to the movies, etc. In addition to dressing well, there is a lot of emphasis placed on grooming, especially for women.

Cuban students make an effort to dress well to go to class. Men will wear jeans or khakis with a polo shirt or trendy tee. Women make an effort to wear attractive, trendy clothing, usually close-fitting jeans and shirts in

the latest styles. Many young Cuban women wear high heels and trendy footwear, however uncomfortable, for everything. However, for the campus crowd, a pair of classic Converse seems to go with anything. Theatres, hospitals, libraries and other government institutions or offices usually do not allow visitors wearing shorts or tank tops. Your footwear is very important, especially since you will spend a lot of time away from home and probably walk a lot more than in the US. A pair of good-looking but comfortable shoes is essential (past participants have suggested “cute sandals”), as well as dressier shoes (heels are the norm for women) for going out.

Even though it gets hot, Cubans only wear shorts around the house or in their immediate neighborhood, never to class, to work, or for going about the city. Shorts are not acceptable to wear in theatres, hospitals, government offices and frowned-upon in the university classroom so girls should plan on bringing skirts to stay cool. For women, lightweight jeans and skirts will be your best clothing options. Skirts of breathable material also work well for the heat.

For evening events and going out, Cubans dress up to their glamorous best. If you like to go out dancing, be sure to bring plenty of “going-out clothes”!

It is a good idea in general to leave space in your suitcase for the clothes, gifts, and other items you will acquire.

Some residences do laundry on a near-daily basis, others once a week. Because of the intense Caribbean heat, you will sometimes want to change shirts and bathe several times a day. Bring comfortable walking shoes and bring an umbrella (used to keep off sun as well as protecting from rain)!

We recommend four pairs: a pair of sneakers or running shoes, going-out shoes, flip flops, and a sturdy pair of sandals (ex. Chacos).

TOILET ARTICLES

If you need very specific products you should take a sufficient supply to make it through the semester. Stores carry a very limited supply of basic soaps, toothpastes and cosmetics. Women should bring all the pads and tampons they will use for the duration of the program as they are rarely available and when they are usually poor quality. Tampons are unheard of here so definitely bring a good supply!

Shampoo, toothpaste and all other toilet articles are your responsibility. Black hair care products other than chemical straighteners are not available so if you use them be sure to pack your own. You may want to bring your own water bottle as you will want to carry water with you most of the time. Again, if you wear glasses or contact lenses, bring an extra pair and enough contact lens solution. You may not be able to find items such as saline solution and if you do find them they will likely be extremely expensive!

SUNSCREEN

Bring a high SPF sunscreen. The sun in the Caribbean will be much stronger than you are used to in the United States and it is rarely available for purchase here. Bring hats and light weight long sleeve cover-ups for beach and for around town.

BIRTH CONTROL

If you anticipate needing some form of birth control while you are abroad, bring it with you. If you are taking birth control pills, bring a supply to last you the entire semester, along with a copy of the prescription. Birth control pills are usually available over the counter in Cuba but sometimes they mysteriously disappear from the market and there are not as many options as in the US. Condoms may be available at international pharmacies but it is recommended that you visit the student health center before you leave and stock up.

SCHOOL SUPPLIES

Past participants have suggested bringing your school supplies with you. They are not cheaper in Cuba and the selection, price and quality is often better in the US. You will be taking 4-5 classes; plan accordingly. The basic spiral bound notebooks and 3-ring binders we are used to in the US virtually do not exist in Cuba so bring them along if that is what you will want to use. Bring notebooks, folders, whiteout, and anything special you use. Some students prefer to buy these locally because they feel like their US notebooks make them stick out in the classroom. USB/memory sticks are among the most needed instruments to share readings and academic work. Make sure you bring at least two large ones.

LINENS

You won't need to pack bedding, but definitely bring a beach towel. Your residency or host family will provide you with towels and bed linens for usage at the house/residence. Cuban pillows are usually huge and hard and other types of pillows are not available for purchase so you may want to bring your own.

ELECTRICAL APPLIANCES

The current is 110 volts, 60 cycles, the same as in the United States. There should be no problem with bringing your electrical appliances, but remember the frequent power outages. High voltage surges can occasionally damage electrical devices, bring a good quality surge protector for your room for your laptop just in case. It is a good idea to disconnect electronic devices when you leave your room/residence (You never know when a thunderstorm can hit!).

LAPTOP

It is strongly recommended that you bring a laptop with you as you will need for completing course requirements. Be advised that if you have a Mac computer, it will be very difficult to have it repaired if necessary. Regarding

its safety, you will receive a key to either your room or a closet in your host house where you can lock it. Do not pack the laptop or other valuables in your luggage in your checked bags. Be advised you may also be asked to start up your laptop at the airport.

MENTOS FROM HOME

Bring things from home that you can share with your Cuban host family and new friends. This includes pictures of yourself and your family in the United States, recipes you like to cook, typical items from your community, college, or region of the United States. There will be both formal and informal opportunities for you to share talents in music, drama, dance, athletics, etc. Consider bringing music and instruments or other equipment.

GIFTS

While not expected, if you re in a homestay it is nice to bring gifts for your host family. You will not know your family before arriving and thus not know exactly how many family members there are, but you should bring various small generic gifts such as picture books of the United States, foods and crafts from your hometown, and memorabilia from your university, nice soaps, candles, etc.

BOOKS AND RESEARCH MATERIALS

We recommend bringing a serious, comprehensive Spanish or Spanish-English dictionary. Either digital or hard-copy for your academic work and readings during your semester. Brown students completing GLISPs (or students working on other independent research) should collect their reading materials beforehand and bring them; library access and printing facilities are extremely limited.

HAVANA PACKING LIST

This checklist was compiled by past participants' suggestions. This is a general guideline and is updated each semester. You will repeatedly wear the same clothes, so choose the essentials carefully. Naturally you'll want to pack what best reflects your own life style and taste, but we recommend the following:

IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS

- ☐ Money belt or pouch
- ☐ Airline tickets
- ☐ Pre-departure materials
- ☐ Home Advisor's address, phone numbers and e-mail addresses
- ☐ Passport/Photocopy of passport (keep a copy separate from your passport)

CLOTHING

Cultural Note: Cubans often wear old clothes and flip flops around the house and dress up when they leave the neighborhood. For men, long pants, not shorts, are the norm. In addition to light and comfortable summer clothes, also bring some more formal clothes for visits or work in more formal environments (office and embassy visits).

- ☐ Belt
- ☐ Everyday Purse or Backpack (1-2)
- ☐ Small purse or bag for just the basics when going out at night (1)
- ☐ Raincoat (Rainy season May-October)
- ☐ Umbrella (both for rain and sun)
- ☐ Baseball cap or floppy hat for sun.
- ☐ Nice shoes (1-2 pairs)
- ☐ Sandals and flip flops (1-2 pairs) Most Cubans wear flip flops as house shoes and they should not be worn to classes or at the gallery.
- ☐ Sneakers (1 pair) particularly if you like jogging or plan to participate in sports
- ☐ Walking shoes, sturdy & comfortable and/or walking gear for hikes and muddy terrain (1 pair)
- ☐ Bras and underwear
- ☐ Exercise clothes (1-2 pairs)
- ☐ Socks (6-7)
- ☐ Pajamas (2)- think super lightweight!
- ☐ Lightweight robe
- ☐ Couple changes of comfy old clothes for hanging around the house.
- ☐ Pants (4-5 pairs) lightweight! For men one should be dressy.
- ☐ Shirts: combo of button down, blouses, T-shirts (10) Can also be bought in Cuba.
- ☐ Undershirts (5)
- ☐ Shorts, informal (1-2)
- ☐ Skirts or Dresses, (2) one should be Dressy
- ☐ Lightweight sweaters/sweatshirts (2-3)
- ☐ Sport coat/lightweight blazer (optional)
- ☐ Swimsuit (2)
- ☐ Beach towel (1)
- ☐ Other beach wear, cover-ups to protect from sun.

GENERAL

- ☐ Laptop with electrical adapter and surge protector.
- ☐ USB flash drives REQUIRED (1-2 of different sizes, minimum 16GB). Many students like to have an external hard drive as well.
- ☐ Camera and SD cards, batteries and chargers.
- ☐ Cell phone (that uses 900Mghz standard with SIM card) with charger. CASA will provide a very simple model you can use with your Cuban cell line, but you may choose to bring your own if you have one you prefer to use.
- ☐ Mp3 player, iPod, or CDs and portable speakers, with charger.
- ☐ Address book, including e-mail addresses
- ☐ Maps (Havana/Cuba), digital/print
- ☐ Journal
- ☐ Reading materials: books, magazines (you can share with other students or donate to CASA library when you leave)
- ☐ Mementos from home, pictures of your family and friends
- ☐ Gifts for your host family and others (if in homestay)

TOILETRIES

- ☐ Pads and tampons (for the duration of the trip!)
- ☐ Medication you are taking and a copy of the prescriptions (supply for the whole trip)
- ☐ Over-the-counter medicine kit: PeptoBismal/antacid/aspirin/band-aids/cold or flu medicine/vitamins/ treatments for yeast infection/heat rash (these things can be nearly impossible to find in Cuba!)
- ☐ See CDC's medical packing list for further ideas: http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/traveler/extended_student/cuba
- ☐ Toiletries: razor blades, brush, comb, deodorants, toothbrush, toothpaste, soap and soap dish, special shampoos face washes, or hair products, etc. (Your favorite brands will be impossible to find here!)
- ☐ Sunscreen, good quality
- ☐ Mosquito repellent

- ☐ Contact lens solution, glasses or contact lenses, extra pairs, prescription
- ☐ Birth control/contraceptives/condoms
- ☐ Hair dryer/straightener

SO YOU WERE A GIRL/BOY SCOUT??

- ☐ Backpack or overnight bag for traveling
- ☐ Rechargeable batteries and charger
- ☐ Keychain flashlight or rechargeable flashlight
- ☐ Hosteller's sack/light sleeping bag for travelling- you will be provided with linens at your residence but cannot remove sheets or towels from your room (optional)
- ☐ Sewing kit
- ☐ Plastic bags (Ziploc type)
- ☐ Pocket knife—pack in your checked bag (optional)
- ☐ Guidebooks
- ☐ Hot sauce and spices (people used to varied and spicy food often find food in Cuba bland.)

FOR YOUR EVERY-DAY BACKPACK

- ☐ Insulated Water Bottle
- ☐ Sunglasses, good pair (you will use them EVERYDAY!)
- ☐ Umbrella
- ☐ Spanish grammar book
- ☐ Pocket Spanish-English dictionary
- ☐ School supplies: notebooks, pens, highlighters, post-its, etc.
- ☐ Hand sanitizer
- ☐ Special snacks: dried fruits, nuts, chocolate, tea, protein bars, supplements



SUGGESTED READING BEFORE YOU TRAVEL

BRENNER, Marguerite Rose JIMÉNEZ, John M. KIRK, and William M. LEOGRANDE, *A contemporary Cuba reader: the revolution under Raúl Castro* (second edition) Lanham, Maryland: Rowman& Littlefield, 2015.

FRANC, Marc. *Cuban Revelations: Behind the Scenes in Havana*. University Press of Florida, 2013

DE LA FUENTE, Alejandro. *A Nation for All: Race, Inequality, and Politics in Twentieth- Century Cuba*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001.

GOTT, Richard. *Cuba: A New History*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2004.

HERNANDEZ-REQUANT, Ariana. *Cuba in the Special Period: Culture and Ideology in the 1990s*. New York: Palgrave McMillan, 2008.

LIGHTFOOT, Claudia. *Havana: A Cultural and Literary Companion*. New York and Northampton: Interlink Books, 2002.

SCARPACCI, Joseph L., Roberto SEGRE, and Mario COYULA. *Havana: Two Faces of the Antillean Metropolis*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002. Sweig, Julia: *Cuba: What Everyone Needs to Know* (Oxford University Press, 2009)



HOME UNIVERSITY CONTACT INFORMATION

IMPORTANT NOTE: IN CASE OF AN EMERGENCY YOUR FIRST POINT OF CONTACT IS YOUR LOCAL PROGRAM STAFF IN CUBA.

BROWN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

Office of International Programs Tel. (401) 863-3555

Fax (401) 863-3311

Office hours: Monday through Friday, 8:30am – 5:00pm www.brown.edu/OIP/OIP@brown.edu

For administrative and academic questions, contact Study Abroad Advisor Macala Lamour at macala_lamour@brown.edu. For program payment and financial matters, contact OIP Financial Manager, Jessica Cortéz at (401) 863-3555.

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

Office of Global Programs

Tel: 212-854-2559

Fax: 212-854-5164 ogp@columbia.edu

For administrative and academic questions, contact Associate Director Sara Ede at see2119@columbia.edu. For financial questions, contact the Office of Global Programs at (212) 854-2559 or ogp@columbia.edu.

CORNELL UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

Cornell Abroad

Tel. (607) 255-6224

Fax: (607) 255-8700

Office hours: M,W,Th,F 9:00am – 4:00 pm; T 10:30am – 4:00pm www.CUAbroad.cornell.edu

For administrative and academic questions, contact Program Advisor Stephen Capobianco at 607-255-7213, slc328@cornell.edu. For program payment and financial matters, contact Financial Services Manager, Kathy Lynch at (607) 255-6224, kl16@cornell.edu.

DARTMOUTH UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

Off-Campus Programs Dartmouth College
44 North College Street, Suite 6102
Hanover, NH 03755
Ph. (603) 646-1202

Fax (603) 646-3838 <http://www.dartmouth.edu>

For administrative and academic questions, contact Executive Director John Tansey at john.g.tansey@dartmouth.edu. For financial questions, contact the Office of Off-Campus Programs at (603) 646-1202.

HARVARD UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

Office of International Education
Tel: 617-496-2722

Office hours: Monday-Friday 9:00am – 5:00pm

<http://oie.fas.harvard.edu/>

For administrative and academic questions, contact Camila Nardozzi at (617) 496-2722, cnardozzi@fas.harvard.edu.

JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

Office of Study Abroad Levering Hall, Suite 04B Baltimore, MD 21218-2685

Ph: (410) 516-7856

Fax: (410) 516-7878

Office hours: Monday-Friday, 10:00am – 4:30pm http://web.jhu.edu/study_abroad/contact.html

For health-related and/or safety emergency outside of business hours, call/text Dr. Lori Citti, (401) 530-6029 or email lcitti1@jhu.edu. For administrative, academic and financial questions, contact Study Abroad Adviser Jessica Mervis at jmervis1@jhu.edu.

NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

Study Abroad Office

Tel: 847-467-6400

Fax: 847-467-6410

Office hours: M/T/Th/F: 9:00am – 12:00pm &

1:00pm – 5:00pm; W: 9:00am – 12:00pm & 1:00pm -

6:00pm Central Standard Time www.northwestern.edu/studyabroad

For administrative and academic questions, contact Assistant Director Jessica Fetridge at (847)467-6401, jessica.fetridge@northwestern.edu. For program payment and financial matters, contact Assistant Director of Study Abroad Financial Services, Krista Buda Bethel at (847) 491-7400, k-buda@northwestern.edu

VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

Global Education Office

Tel: 615-343-3139

Fax: 615-343-5774

Office hours: Monday-Friday, 8:00am – 5:00pm

<https://webapp.mis.vanderbilt.edu/studioabroad/index.cfm?FuseAction=Abroad.Home>

For administrative and academic questions, contact Susan M. Barone at (615) 343-3139, susan.m.barone@vanderbilt.edu.

TRINITY COLLEGE

Dublin 24 Hour Security Office in Ireland: 01-896 1317 / international: +353-1-896 1317

University Emergency number: 01-896 1999

Student Counselling Service: https://www.tcd.ie/Student_Counselling/support-services/after-hours/

Global Relations office hours number: Ireland 01 896 4494 / international: +353-1-896 4494

If you have an emergency that requires assistance from Global Relations, call the Security number listed above and a message will be relayed to the relevant member of the team.

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