

# VISAS, HOUSING & TRAVEL LOGISTICS

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March 18, 2025

# Land Acknowledgement



To recognize the land is an expression of gratitude and appreciation to those whose territory you reside on,

and a way of honouring the indigenous people who have been living and working on the land from time immemorial.

Adapted from: <http://www.lspirg.org/knowtheland/>

# Agenda

1. **Travel Health Insurance and Coverage**
2. **Visas: What, Why and How?**
3. **Travel Logistics Tips**
4. **Online Pre-Departure Course**
5. **Next Steps After Today**



# Student Speaker: Andreja Japundzic

Norwegian School of Economics (NHH), Fall 2024





# Student Speakers: Moussa Elsayed, Piyush Verma & Marghoob Ahmad

Audencia, Fall 2024





# **Travel Health Insurance and Coverage**

# Health Insurance

- Research coverage (see MyLearningSpace)
- Some key points:
  - Pre-existing medical conditions
  - Medical evacuation
  - Mental health support services in English
  - Not covered if intoxicated when injured



# Health Insurance

- Buy from any company, some ideas:
  - Laurier student union VIP
  - Guard Me (Laurier rate)
    - Offers Mental health services in English called “Keep.me Safe”
- Credit card
- Travel company
- Parents or their workplace





# Health Insurance

- Host institutions may require you to purchase their insurance as well
  - This means you may have to buy more than one plan!
- Laurier requires that you show proof you have insurance



# Due: Health Insurance

- Provide health insurance info no more than 2 months before exchange
- Summer exchange = 8 weeks before departure
- Submit info through a survey link





# Due: SHERM safety plan and Health Insurance

- **Fall 2025:**

- SHERM safety plan is due **May 9, 2025 by 11:59pm**
- Provide health insurance info no more than 2 months before exchange
  - **Due July 3 at 4pm**

- **Winter 2026:**

- SHERM safety plan is due **September 15, 2025 by 11:59pm**
- Provide health insurance info no more than 2 months before exchange
  - **Due November 3 at 4pm**

# **SHERM – International Exchange Safety Plan**

Deadline of completion: May 9, 2025





# SHERM – International Exchange Safety Plan

Form is found in Journey

SHERM Training – Tuesday, March 25<sup>th</sup>, 12-1pm EDT, online via Zoom

## Search Programs

 Any program that requires a Waiver/Consent Form will be marked with the  icon

### Search Filters

Keywords	<input type="text" value="sherm"/>	Program Name	<input type="text"/>
Institution	<input type="text"/>	Term(s)	<input type="text" value="[select]"/> <input type="button" value="clear"/>
Field of Study	<input type="text"/>	Destination	<input type="text"/>
Language of Instruction	<input type="text"/>		

RESULTS Items 1-2 of 2 Showing

Provider	Program Info	Partner Institution	Languages	Term	Options
SHERM	<a href="#">1.Off-Campus Travel Application</a> <i>Waterloo, Canada</i>				<input type="button" value="Apply For"/>
SHERM	<a href="#">SHERM - International Exchange Safety Plan</a> <i>Wilfrid Laurier University, Canada</i>			Winter	<input type="button" value="Apply For"/>

Items 1-2 of 2 Showing

# Housing



# Housing



## When to book?

- Only book housing after receiving acceptance letter

# Housing and Life in Bergen, Norway

## Student speaker: Andreja Japundzic

- Where do you live?
- How did you find it?
- How you signed up for housing
- Any deposits or issues?
- Did you have to give an address when applying for your visa?





# Housing and Life in Nantes, France

## Student speakers: Moussa Elsayed, Piyush Verma & Marghoob Ahmad

- Where do you live?
- How did you find it?
- How you signed up for housing
- Any deposits or issues?
- Did you have to give an address when applying for your visa?



# Picking Courses

# Picking Courses

When to choose the actual host institution courses:

- Once the host institution invites you to select courses
- Usually, 1-4 months pre-exchange or on arrival (depending on host institutions)





# Picking Courses

## Student speaker: Andreja Japundzic

- When did you choose your courses abroad?
- Any challenges picking courses?
- Tips?
  - Academic system
  - Scheduling
  - Balancing school and travel



# Picking Courses

## Student speakers: Moussa Elsayed, Piyush Verma & Marghoob Ahmad

- When did you choose your courses abroad?
- Any challenges picking courses?
- Tips?
  - Academic system
  - Scheduling
  - Balancing school and travel



# Summary of Timeline

Going on exchange in:	Fall 2025	Winter 2026
Sinthu will nominate you...	March - June	August - November
You fill out the host application...		
The host institution will send your acceptance letter....	April - July	September - December
You apply for your visa...		
You arrange housing and book your flight...	After getting your acceptance letter. Caution! If you make a non-refundable deposit, Laurier cannot reimburse you	
SHERM safety plan due	May 5	September 15
You buy health insurance...	2+ months before exchange starts	
You choose your actual host institution courses...	When the host institution invites you to! 1-4 months pre-exchange, or on arrival	



# Study Permit / Visa

# Is a visa required?

## It depends on:

- The host country
- How long you're staying in the country
- Your purpose of travel
- Your citizenship
  - Dual citizens



# Is a visa required?

## Dual citizens

- You may still need a visa
- The law of your host country still applies to you (and every exchange student!)
- **Example:**
  - You have British and Canadian passports
  - You break the law while on exchange in UK
  - British law still applies to you
  - The Canadian government offers limited services



# Visa does not guarantee entry

==The issuance of the visa does not guarantee your entry in France. This authorization remains subject to the rules in force regarding border crossing .==



# Study Permit / Visa

## Where do I find more information?

- Embassy / Consulate Website
- Host Institution Fact Sheet
- Past exchange students – Caution!
  - Info changes year to year
- **Laurier International staff are not visa experts**
  - We're not Embassy staff
  - We have no authority over processing times





# Beware of non-official sites



consulate of france in toronto



[www.embassypages.com](#) › [france-consulategeneral-toront...](#)

## Consulate General of France in Toronto, Canada

Dec. 15, 2020 — The **consulate** general of **France in Toronto** is located at 2 Bloor Street East, Suite 2200 and can be contacted by telephone on 416 847 1900 as well as by email [info@consulfrance-toronto.org](mailto:info@consulfrance-toronto.org).

[www.facebook.com](#) › [francetoronto](#) ▼ [Translate this page](#)

## Consulat général de France à Toronto - Home | Facebook

Consulat général de **France à Toronto, Toronto (Toronto, Ontario)**. 4908 likes ... Ambassade de **France à Sainte-Lucie / French Embassy in St Lucia. Consulate ...**

[ca.ambafrance.org](#) › [-English-](#) ▼

## [French Embassy in Canada - La France au Canada/France in ...](#)

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[ca.ambafrance.org](#) › ▼

## [Applying for a French visa in Canada - La France au Canada ...](#)

Visa applications filed in Canada are processed by the **Consulate** General of **France** in Montreal.



# Visa may be processed by a 3rd party

## Submit your application to the visa center



Once you have completed your online application, all you have to do is submit it to your local visa center provides you with all necessary information on how and where to submit your application [🔗](#).

In Canada, Visa applications for France can be submitted in four centers :

### VFS Global center in Toronto

2 Bloor street West  
Unit 762  
M4W 3R1 Toronto  
Ontario

### VFS Global center in Montréal

Unit 820, 1010 rue Sherbrooke Ouest  
Entrance on Metcafe street  
Montréal

### VFS Global center in Vancouver

580 Hornby Street Unit 440  
BC V6C 3B6 Vancouver

### VFS Global center in Ottawa

2211 Riverside Drive  
Unit 403  
ON K1H7X5 Ottawa

## Track your visa application



Once your application is submitted [track its progress](#) [🔗](#), and see how and when you can collect your passport and how to prepare for your trip to France.

If you have any question regarding your visa application, you can contact VFS call center (+ 1) 613 927 92 66  
(From 9 a.m Atlantic time to 4 p.m Pacific time)  
[Info.FranceCanada@vfsglobal.com](mailto:Info.FranceCanada@vfsglobal.com)

# Study Permit/Visa

## When to apply?

- After acceptance letter
- **Tip:** Prepare all other documents, then can apply as soon as you receive acceptance letter
- Letter of Acceptance from Partner and letter of offer from Laurier





# Study Permit/Visa

- **How to apply?**
  - In person, online, or through mail
  - Your passport is at Embassy while you wait



# Study Permit/Visa

Tips from past students:

- You may need to enclose a courier envelope so they can courier your passport back to you



# Study Permit/Visa

## Tips from past students:

- You may need to provide photos
- Health Insurance
- Bank account statement
- Letters from Laurier and Home institution
- Address of accommodations

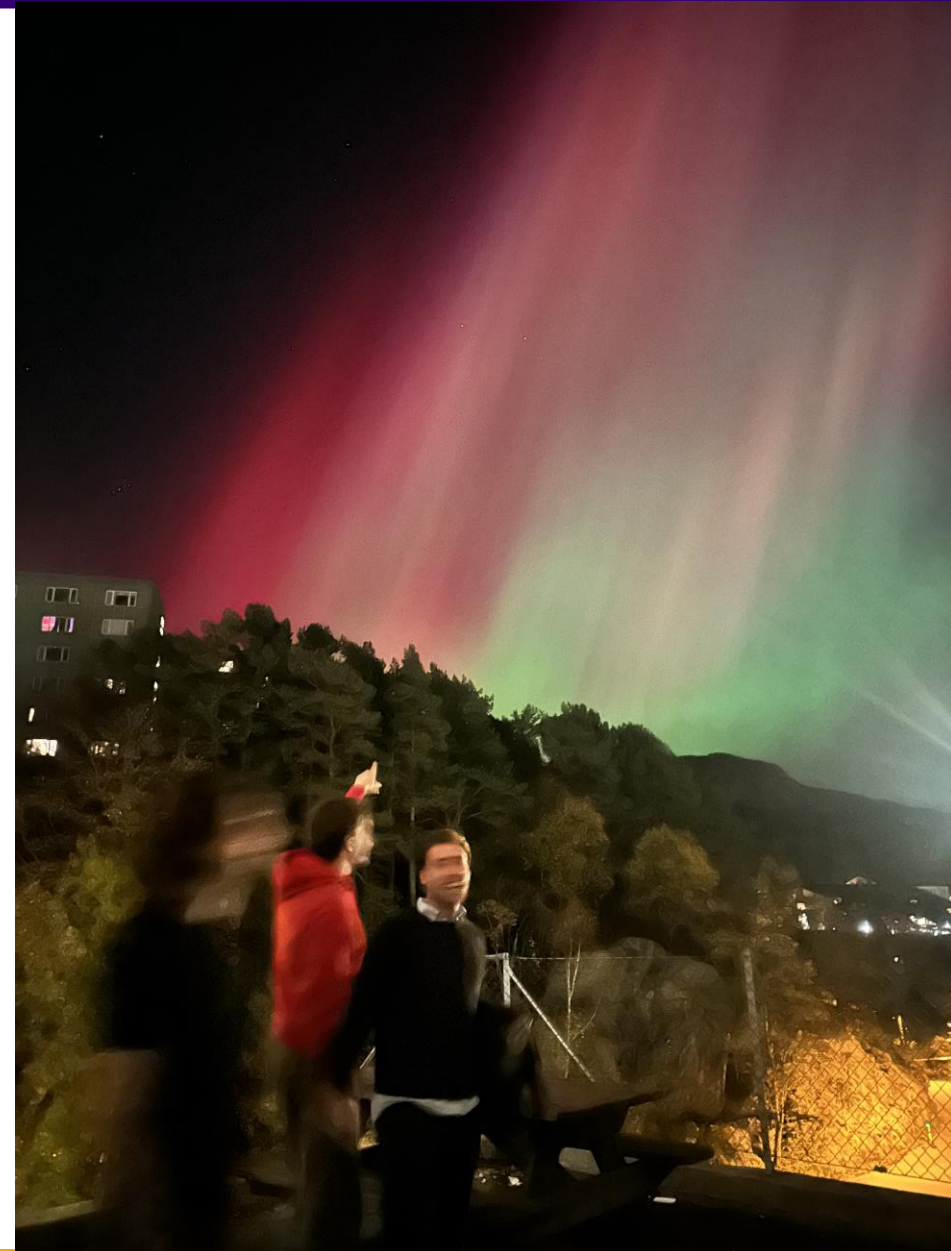




# Study Permit/Visa

## Student speaker: Andreja Japundzic

- Researching a visa
- Did you need one?
- Application process
  - paperwork needed
  - in-person, electronic, by mail
  - Timing
- Tips?



# Study Permit/Visa

## Student speakers: Moussa Elsayed, Piyush Verma & Marghoob Ahmad

- Researching a visa
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  - in-person, electronic, by mail
  - Timing
- Tips?



# REMINDER!

## MyLearningSpace Hawk Abroad Online Pre-Departure



The screenshot shows the MyLearningSpace interface for the 'Hawk Abroad | Essential Toolkit for Thriving in Global Mobility' course. The top navigation bar includes the Laurier logo, the course title, and icons for a grid, email, chat, and notifications. Below the navigation bar is a menu with options: Content, Checklist, Discussions, Quizzes, Links, Awards, and Edit Course. The main content area features a large banner image of a Venetian canal with the text 'Hawk Abroad | Essential Toolkit for Thriving in Global Mobility' overlaid.

LAURIER Inspiring Lives

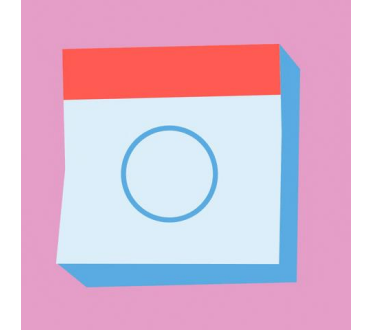
Hawk Abroad | Essential Toolkit for Thriving in Global Mobility

Content Checklist Discussions Quizzes Links Awards Edit Course

Hawk Abroad | Essential Toolkit for Thriving in Global Mobility



# MyLS Hawk Abroad Online Pre-Departure



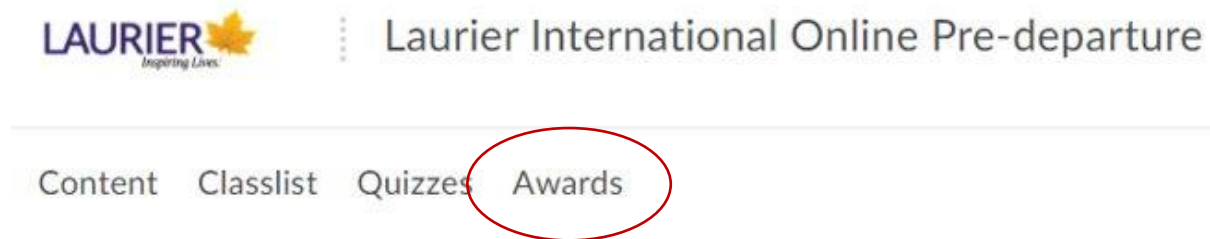
**DUE DATE:**

**May 5th, 2025 at 11:59pm**  
**(Fall 2025 and Winter 2026)**

# MyLS Hawk Abroad Online Pre-Departure

## Certificate of Completion

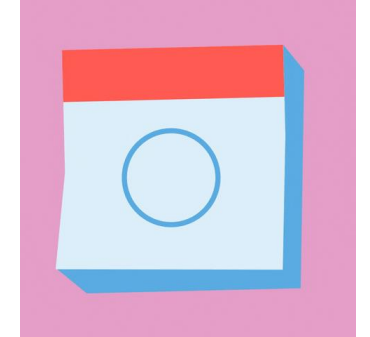
- Once the final quiz is completed you will receive a certificate
- Certificate found under 'Awards'



- Make sure to save it
- Submit in Journey in SHERM safety plan (by May 9<sup>th</sup>, 2025)

# SHERM Safety Plan (Journey)

**DUE DATE:**



**May 9th, 2025 at 11:59pm**  
(Fall 2025)

**September 15th, 2025 at 11:59pm**  
(Winter 2026)



# Tips I Wish I Had Known

Before Going on Exchange

# Tips I wish I had known before exchange

## Students Abroad:

- Packing tips
- Getting your phone set up in the host country
- Meet people by getting involved in activities and events at host institution/country
- Other tips from exchange alumni



# Pre-departure Training

- **March 10, 12 -1pm, Zoom (Mandatory)**
  - ✓ Exchange 101: what's next in the exchange process
- **March 18, 12-1pm, Zoom (Mandatory)**
  - ✓ Visas, housing, and other travel logistics
- **March 20, 12-1pm, Zoom (for students going to France)**
  - France visa process presented by Campus France
- **March 25, 12-1 pm, Zoom (Mandatory)**
  - SHERM Safety Plan Information Session
- **May 5, 11:59pm, MyLearningSpace (Fall 2025 / Winter 2026)**
  - Deadline: MyLS course Laurier International ONLINE pre-departure
- **May 9, 11:59pm, Journey**
  - SHERM safety plan due (for exchanges starting **Fall 2025**)
- **September 15, 11:59pm, Journey**
  - SHERM safety plan due (for exchanges starting **Winter 2026**)



# Your Next Steps

- **Host application**
  - Due date? Prepare documents
- **Research visa**
  - Required? Prepare documents
- **Budget** (financial coaching available)
- **MyLS online pre-departure** due May 5<sup>th</sup>

(**Not** CCTA, housing, or flight right now...)





# Questions?

[exchange@wlu.ca](mailto:exchange@wlu.ca)

