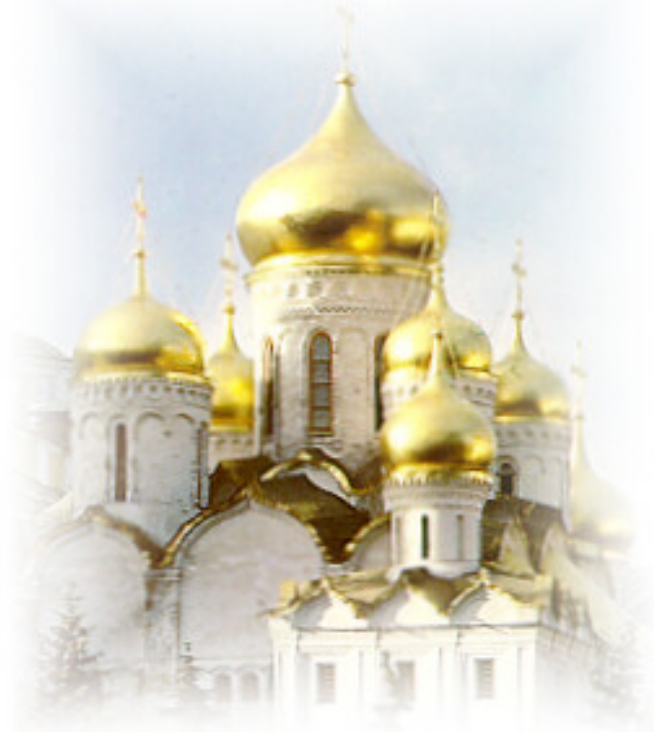


**The University of Arizona
Russian Abroad Program**



Красная книга/Красная Книга
(The Red Book)

Guide to Studying in Russia

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Arizona Russian Abroad Programs organized through The University of Arizona!

We are very pleased to have you participate. Your past and present leaders, who are quite familiar with the Russian experience, have gathered this material. We think that this little booklet contains much that will be of value to you, and we recommend that you read it at least once before you pack.

We want you to have a wonderful time in Russia. There is much to see and do: improve your understanding of the language, visit the magnificent museums and monuments, and attend the unparalleled plays and concerts, and much more. It would be well to keep in mind that Russia is a land that is neither fully Eastern nor Western. Its history is very different from ours. Hence, there are significant differences in the ways that Russians and Westerners perceive the world. From the Western point of view, very often in Russia things happen that, in order to be properly appreciated, will require a healthy dose of one's sense of humor. A great poet once said, "You can't understand Russia with your mind alone!" Murphy's Law has a tendency to operate full-time in Russia. In the real world, this means that you might or might not have hot water on any given day. An excursion bus might show up with no heat in the winter or AC in the summer! In spite of what it says in the guidebook, a museum might be closed when you arrive, even though you called that morning to verify the hours of operation. Remember – be glad that you have any water at all! Keep your sense of humor!

Also remember that your behavior is a yardstick by which American culture is measured and that the Russians are observing you. The old system with its accompanying behavioral norms has fallen. Loud boorish behavior, drunkenness and other inconsiderate, rude behavior plays into the hands of the vocal conservative minority which would like to return to pre-1990 cultural norms, including the traditional xenophobia (fear of foreigners). You as an American are on display. You can see how poor behavior could spoil the business climate, ruin the possibility for cultural exchange, or adversely affect the Russian citizenry against liberalization.

PROGRAM CONTACT INFORMATION

For questions about the ARA program and studying in Russia contact:

Prof. Del Phillips, ARA Program Director

Email: DPhillip@email.arizona.edu

AZ Tel: 520-621-7344

St. Petersburg Tel: 011-7-812-352-1829

Russian Cell Phone: 011-7-921-356-2854

For questions about applying, billing, payments, transcripts or visas contact:

Molly DeStafney, UA Study Abroad Advisor

Email: mollyd@email.arizona.edu

Tel: (520) 626-6406

Program mailing address:

The University of Arizona
C/O Arizona Russian Abroad Program, Molly DeStafney
Office of Study Abroad and Student Exchange
939 N. Tyndall Ave.
Tucson, AZ 85721-0529

ARA Website information:

www.azrussianabroad.com (for program information)
www.studyabroad.arizona.edu/application (for application materials)

St. Petersburg's mailing address:

Please note: This is the order in which the address should be listed...

TO RUSSIAN FEDERATION
St. Petersburg 193311
"Smolny" Uchebny Kompleks
Ul. Smolnogo D. 1/3, 7 podezd
Gruppa Arizona

Moscow's school mailing address for packages:

Please note: This is the order in which the address should be listed...

TO RUSSIAN FEDERATION
Moscow 111395
UL. Unosti 5/1
Moscow Humanities University
Education Center "GRINT"
YOUR Name

Moscow's Dorm number:

011-7-495-374-69-51

(Make sure the person calling can say your room number in Russian)

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Now that you are admitted, there are several administrative aspects to be aware of, please take the time to read through the follow pages to prepare yourself with what to expect and take care of before you leave...

Application Fee and Deposit:

You have probably noticed or will soon notice a \$80 application fee on your Bursar's Account through UAccess. You will also be charged a \$600 non-refundable deposit. The deposit will only be removed if you are not accepted into the program. The deposit

will be applied towards the balance of your program. In order to avoid late charges, you will need to pay these initial charges within 30 days of posting.

- Most non-UA students elect to mail the \$80 application fee and \$600 deposit directly to Molly DeStafney's attention. (All checks must be made out to *The University of Arizona*.) This relieves the stress while students must wait to be admitted into the system and receive a Student ID and PIN, so that you can pay online. (For information about SID and PIN please read below.)

The deposit is considered non-refundable if you cancel from the program. If you need to cancel for any reason, please be aware that you will be responsible for any charges incurred on your behalf.

Program Fees:

The program fees for all programs include tuition, course registration, housing, and complete cultural program. Some meals are included, and vary according to which housing option you chose. In the dormitory, 2 meals per day are included, Monday through Friday. The home stay option includes 1 meal per day (breakfast) every day. Students on Option 2 or 4 in St. Petersburg only have the home stay option. You will need to pay for your own roundtrip costs to Russia and any personal expenses. The Estimated Cost Worksheets included with the application materials offer a **high** estimate of what you might spend.

Payments Due:

You will be charged the remainder of the program fees about 1 month before the program begins. The fee balance must be paid before the program begins **and** the UA semester starts in Tucson. If you will be using Financial Aid for the program, be sure you make arrangements early with your Financial Aid Office. Also, find out if your home institution will need the University of Arizona to sign a Consortium Agreement with your institution.

Student ID and PIN Numbers:

- *If you already are a UA or ASU student, you will have a student ID and PIN number, so this message does not concern you.*

If you have applied to the University of Arizona as a Non-Degree student, you will be receiving a letter of admission from the UA Office of Admissions. This letter is usually sent to the permanent address you listed on your "Non-Degree Application for Admission" about 4-6 weeks after submitting your application. In this letter are your Student ID and PIN (in the top right corner) which allow you to access your "UAccess" account. UAccess can be found here: <http://uaccess.arizona.edu/>

Access to UAccess is important so that you can see your Bursar's charges, pay your Study Abroad fees and order your transcripts. **PLEASE DO NOT MISPLACE THESE NUMBERS!!** If you do misplace these personal numbers or don't receive them, please contact the University of Arizona Study Abroad Office.

*****As a non-degree study abroad student, you do not need to create a Net ID, attend the University of Arizona's orientation or submit immunization records to Student Health.*****

Program Dates:

Russian visas are typically issued for only the program dates. Visa processing takes about 6 weeks, and the Russian Consulate will have your passport until approximately 1 week before leave. You must enter anytime after the first date on your visa, but must leave by the last date on the visa. **Any changes in your plans will affect your visa, housing and airport pick up.**

You are expected to base your travel plans on the dates listed on the University of Arizona Study Abroad website and the ARA website. If the states that your program departs on May 21st, the school is expecting students to actually arrive in Moscow on May 22nd, which includes a day of travel to Russia. Housing is also arranged with the expectation that you will arrive on the 22nd. **Please do not purchase plane tickets outside of the established program dates!**

Some students decide for various reasons to apply for visas on their own. In such cases, these students are responsible for locating their nearest Consulate and finding out what is needed to obtain the Russian visa from that particular Consulate. The University of Arizona is not responsible for advising on visa issues nor is the University of Arizona responsible for any additional charges accrued on these students behalf. The University of Arizona does not expiate visas, nor does it pay for anyone to have their visa expiated. Any and all visas charges are the responsibility of the student.

Visa timeline:

Go to Russia Travel receives the Russian visas back from the Consulate only about 1 week before the program starts (at most). They will FedEx your passport and visa to you as soon as they have it. Make sure you keep Molly informed if you will be moving shortly before you leave for Russia so she has the proper address to mail your passport.

Plane tickets:

Students are responsible for arranging their own transportation to and from Russia. If you are flying into Moscow, you can fly into either of the international airports, which are Sheremetevo (SVO) and Domodedovo (DME). **Delta** and **Aeroflot** typically have good deals to Russia.

- **Please send Molly DeStafney your flight information as soon as you buy your tickets.** Please include the airport, the airline, flight number, date and time of arrival. Then we can arrange for you to be picked up at the airport.

Insurance:

You must have insurance in order to get a Russian Visa. As a participant of the Arizona Russian Abroad program, you will be enrolled in HTH Worldwide insurance through the University of Arizona for only the dates covering the length of your program. If you plan on staying in Russia longer, or arriving early (or staying between the end of the Fall semester to the Spring) you are encouraged to extend your coverage or check with any other provider you might have. For information on the insurance, please visit our website here: <http://studyabroad.arizona.edu/insurance>

Course registration/Grades:

The Office of Study Abroad and Study Exchange will register you in Global Studies (GS) study abroad course credit about 1 month before you depart. Your grades will ultimately show up on a UA transcript. If you are a non-UA student, you must order your transcripts to be sent to your home institution once they are ready. You can order your transcripts through UAccess. For more information about how to order your transcript, you can visit this website: <http://www.registrar.arizona.edu/transcripts>.

Once you arrive in Russia you will take a placement exam to be placed in the appropriate courses for your level of ability. You can discuss your degree requirements with your home institution's academic advisor, but you will not actually enroll in classes until you arrive in Russia.

ARA Listserv:

Prof. Del Phillips creates and maintains listservs for students interested in studying in Russia. This gives you the opportunity to post questions and share information with other students. Contact Dr. Phillips if you have not yet been added to the listserv.

Russian Guide Books:

It is **HIGHLY** recommended that you purchase a guidebook for Russia to prepare you for your trip. You can purchase them at any *Travel* section in new or used bookstores. Previous students have recommended *Frommers* for one of the better Russian guidebooks. The *Lonely Planet* series are also popular with students.

PACKING YOUR SUITCASE

What to Bring:

Pack comfortable, easy care clothes and walking shoes. Clothes should be washable with Woolite or similar products because dry cleaning is expensive and usually unavailable. Pack wash and wear, permanent press clothing whenever possible so that you can launder items every other night in the bathtub. In Moscow your dorm sector has its own washing machine which you may use.

It is not usually necessary to pack formal attire; even for late theater performances; a sports jacket or nice dress will suffice (see the section below regarding additional attire for business internship program participants). If you plan to jog, be sure that you have very warm clothes. You might also take a pair of shorts for those warm spring or summer days.

However, it is important to remember that, as Study Abroad participants we are representatives of our country. Therefore, please plan to attend classes properly groomed and in appropriate clothing. This is simply a sign of respect and shows that we respect the Russian culture.

In the fall, spring, and early summer seasons, rain and mud are a constant problem. Bring a small, collapsible umbrella and rain gear. Remember that a very warm coat and hat are absolutely necessary if you will be in Russia during the winter. Bring everything you would need to be comfortably warm – gloves, sweaters, scarves, long johns, etc. Many participants like to dress “Russian,” which is a good idea, especially from a security standpoint. You might be able to find a good Russian winter coat for about US \$50-\$150.

The summer weather is very unpredictable. In Moscow, it is usually warm and sticky, but even clouds without rain may cool things off. In Petersburg, the usual summertime clothing is acceptable, but you should be prepared for sudden rain and cold spells. Petersburg evenings are usually pleasant, but a cool breeze not uncommonly blows in from the Gulf of Finland. Be prepared! Do not venture out in the summertime without your umbrella, especially in Petersburg.

Check out the Weather Channel to get a better feel for what you might expect:
www.weather.com

Clothes for all seasons:

- Jeans or slacks (minimum 3 pairs)
- Shirts, blouses, and t-shirts
- One suit coat or sports jacket
- Skirt (1-2) plus one nicer dress
- Undergarments

- Shoes – the most comfortable ones you can find are imperative since you will be doing a lot of walking.
- Swim suit (if you wish to take part in the Russian banya tradition)
- Scarf to wear when entering churches (for women the expectation is that your head will be covered)

In winter:

- A warm hat (not just a ball cap – it is really cold!)
- A warm winter coat with a hanging loop sewn inside the collar
- Thick mittens or gloves
- Galoshes, boots or some very warm footwear for Russian snow, slush and mud
- Heavy socks
- WARM long underwear

In summer:

- Raincoat or water-repellent jacket
- Umbrella
- Hat for sun or rain
- T-shirts/warm weather attire
- Flip flops (for showers especially)
- Optional items: swim suit, robe

Business Internship Program Participants:

If you are on the business program, you should bring professional business attire: good slacks, long-sleeved shirts, several ties, a sports jacket, skirts and blouses, and dresses, etc. After having worked in your internship for several days, you may find that you are not required to dress formally. It is impossible to predict this, so be prepared! You will have your internship interviews after the first few days of the program which involves the orientation and placement tests.

Medical Supplies:

Although you can purchase most of the items below in a Russian pharmacy it would probably be a good plan to pack enough of the following for the entire duration of your stay as our bodies are accustomed to our own over-the-counter drugs as opposed to Russian brands:

- Aspirin or acetaminophen
- Vitamin C
- Throat lozenges
- Calcium supplements
- Strong Cold Medicine (Alka-Seltzer Cold Medicine or Nyquil)

- Cough drops
- Antacids
- Penicillin/Erythromycin
- Anti-diarrhea compound/Lomotil
- Extra glasses/contacts and solution
- Insect Repellent (especially for St. Petersburg Summer mosquitoes)

Miscellaneous Items:

Even though you can buy almost everything in Russia these days, you may want to save shopping time and bring some of the following items:

Toilet Paper (1-2 rolls)	Bottle Opener and/or Can opener
Packages of “Wet Wipes”	Condoms
Toothpaste and toothbrush	Cotton balls
Bath towel, hand towel and washcloth	Band-Aids/Ace Bandages
Flat universal sink stopper	Deodorant
Plastic Bags, Zip-Locs, tote bags	Shampoo & conditioner
Battery operated travel alarm clock	Camera, film and extra battery
Feminine hygiene products	Insect Repellent
Calamine lotion or cortisone	Bar soap plus liquid detergent for laundering
Immersion coil (To boil water)	Hand or body lotion
Hairbrush, comb and hair dryer	Travel iron and/or clothes steamer
Moscow/St. Petersburg Guidebook	International Student Identity Card
Converter kit with adapter (see below)	2 passport sized photos for Russian IDs
Swiss army knife (<i>DO NOT PACK THIS AS A CARRY-ON WHEN YOU FLY.</i>)	
American Peanut Butter—If you cannot live without it. It is extremely difficult to find.	

HIV Test:

The Russian government requires that all foreign students show proof of a **negative** HIV test. Make sure that the certificate you receive from your doctor or health center has an original stamp from the center or signature of the doctor. Keep a copy of this test with you while you are in Russia.

CDC Recommended Vaccinations and Preventive Medications:

There are no vaccinations or medications required for visiting Russia. There are some vaccines recommended for your travel to Eastern Europe and Northern Asia. ***Discuss your travel plans and personal health with a health-care provider to determine which vaccines you might get.***

**Center for Disease Control Website: www.cdc.gov **

Converters:

If you intend to take along electrical appliances, be sure that they have the option for European voltage (220V). The U.S. voltage is 110, so your electrical equipment may get fried by the higher voltage.

In addition, the wall outlets in Russian hotels and dorms are of the European/Continental type: they have two large round pins instead of the two American blades, so you will need an adapter. An adapter is NOT a converter. You will need both.

Your laptop may have an internal converter for electricity. However, please consult your User Guide to confirm this. It is probably easier and cheaper to buy a hair dryer in Russia. Stores like Radio Shack or Best Buy should sell adaptors and converters and may be able to give you helpful advice.

Gifts:

Gifts for your host family are customary, especially if they are typical of the giver's home region. Limit your gifts to non-lavish, innocuous items such as books, posters, school pennants, T-shirts, souvenir postcards of your home region, a coffee mug with your home city's/state's name on it, a small picture book of your home city/state, canvas bags, etc. Please be prepared to contribute towards gifts for your instructors (\$5-\$10 for your main instructor plus a small gift item would be nice).

Luggage Limits:

You will be allowed ONE carry-on bag that must be able to fit under the seat in front of you or in the overhead compartment. In your carry-on bag, pack your camera, reading material, medication, and a COMPLETE change of clothes and anything you could not live without. Luggage is sometimes lost. If the airline misplaces your bag, it typically takes several days to find and deliver it to you. Typically, you may take TWO suitcases weighing up to 50 pounds each; depending on the airline, you may be allowed up to 70 pounds. You can expect to pay \$50-\$150 per bag if you are overweight. It is better to take 2 lighter bags rather than 1 potentially overweight bag. Check the Transportation Safety Administration website (www.tsa.gov) as well as your airline's website for any carry on or luggage restrictions.

REMEMBER - DO NOT PACK MORE THAN YOU CAN CARRY!

Try to travel as lightly as possible, as you will be responsible for carrying your luggage. Elevators may not work everywhere and porters are very expensive in railroad stations. Comfort and durability should be your watchwords. You will be glad if you have packed lightly! Furthermore, you will want to buy souvenirs while in Russia. Most participants buy books and other heavy, bulky items. Leave some space in your suitcases for this

eventuality. In the past, some participants have brought older clothing with them, which can be left behind, thereby creating more space for gifts, books, etc.

We used to instruct program participants to pack as if they were going to the moon. This is no longer the case. You PROBABLY will be able to buy everything you need in Russia. Even the Russian department stores are increasingly well stocked with a variety of goods. There are now many western department-type stores that sell the usual range of goods with which you are familiar.

It is wise to bring a shoulder bag to enable you to carry purchases with you while you explore the city. Backpacks are good too, but may suggest that you are a foreigner. Backpacks are also very easy for thieves to slash or grab into from the back and then quickly make off with your possessions; a shoulder bag allows you to pull your bag to the front and keep a safer hold and an eye on it. Food stores in Russia usually require you to buy grocery bags. You might want to bring a couple of your own!

CLASSES IN RUSSIA

After arriving:

You will not have class the first day you arrive, but will be dropped at your dorm or home stay for the remainder of the day. You will be given instructions about how you will be getting to the University the next day. The next day will begin the orientation and placement tests. The orientation includes information about public transportation, classes and internships, class and excursion schedules, cultural and health related info.

Russian law requires that you register with the police within 72 hours after arrival. The representative of St. Petersburg State or of the GRINT Education Center in Moscow will handle your visa registration. Follow their instructions! This will also be part of your orientation to the program. If you will be arriving early in Russia, please notify the school, so they can be sure that you are properly registered with the police. Please bring along a couple of visa-size photos for your new university ID.

Placement tests:

Please don't worry about the placement test! It is only meant to find the best level for you to begin learning in Russia. You will be placed in a study group along with others at approximately the same level. Dr. Phillips will set up UA equivalents for the courses you are taking in Russia. During the semester you will have an advising conference with him.

Class organization:

Students are typically in class related activities about 20 hours per week. Weekly excursions are an integral part of the learning experience. Each class is divided into "paras". One *para* is a 90 minute class. Usually you will have 2-3 *paras* per day. *Para* time may involve lectures, reading, individual time with instructors or singing! Many days you may be done by 1:30, and the rest of the day is yours. Excursions are usually on Saturday, and Sunday is typically free.

Program Credit:

All summer session participants receive 6 units of UA credit per session. Semester participants receive about 15 units of UA credit per session. About 6-8 weeks after the session is over, the UA usually has the transcripts ready for students to order and be sent to their home institution. You will be able to log into UAccess and view your grades. Once your grades have been posted, you can request your transcripts to be mailed to your home institution. Transcripts are not provided for you, you will need to order them: www.registrar.arizona.edu/transcripts/.

HOUSING

We recommend that you bring 1-2 small to medium sized bath towels with you. The towels (issued only to Moscow students) are about the size of typical kitchen towel; in other words, very small. If you bring older towels with you, you could leave these behind at the end of the trip, creating more space for gifts and purchases. Bed linens are changed or “reissued” to you every two weeks in the dormitory. Rooms will also usually have a desk and one or two chairs in them, plus a television.

You will notice that the quality of the furniture in your rooms, including light fixtures, is not very high. Please take this into consideration when handling the furniture or “flopping” down on your bed after a long, rough day. You will be financially responsible for any damages, including loss of towels and any other objects originally in the room (e.g., dishes, hangers, sheets, pillows, blankets, radios, etc.).

Housing in Moscow:

Participants in the Moscow programs may choose to live in dormitory housing on the beautiful campus of the GRINT Language Center of the Moscow Humanities University or in a home stay located usually quite close to the University. Foreign students live in a sector of eight dormitory rooms, each with internet, which have a bath and shower, kitchen, washer/dryer, etc. A typical room contains two beds, study tables, end tables, and wardrobes or built-in closets. Each sector has its own anteroom with television. Linen is provided and changed each week. There is very good security at the entrance to the University. All persons entering the area must display a student pass issued by the University. Two meals per day are included in the program. Students have access to the student union cafeteria, weight room, swimming pool, etc. You have to pay to use these facilities, but it is not much.

The home stay provides a private room for each student in a typical Russian apartment which allows our students to use their Russian in a relaxed and natural way. All facilities are provided (cooking, bedding, television, telephone) and breakfast is provided 7 days a week. This is a popular form of accommodation and offers a limitless opportunity to practice and improve the student’s language skills. Our carefully chosen families are close to campus and are visited on a regular basis by GRINT representatives. If you do chose the home stay option, please be advised that there are often more requests for families than we can accommodate. Students who turn in their applications early are given priority.

Home stays:

Each participant in St. Petersburg will be assigned a home stay, and students who request the option in Moscow. Home stay participants receive breakfast daily. The other meals

are the responsibility of the student (your hostess will probably allow you to use the kitchen)! Each home stay participant has his/her own room that has a bed, pillow, linens, a desk, and a wardrobe.

We only learn about the home stay placements about a week before students leave for Russia. We are sorry that you must wait so long, but that is the earliest we know as well. We will send the information to the listserv as soon as we have it.

Please note that the home stay option in Moscow is available only on a limited basis, and are given out on a first-come, first-served basis.

Visitors to Russia:

You are welcome to have visitors in Russia. **However, your visitor must have a visa just like you and it will not be arranged by GRINT, UA or SPGU.** The easiest way to get an invitation for a visa is to make a reservation at a hotel or hostel. Receiving an invitation is the first step to securing a visa. Then you can download the visa application from any Russian Consular website. It is not possible to have people staying with you because your guest will need an official invitation and will need to register with the police upon arriving.

The Hot Water Phenomenon:

In general, there is no such thing as a “hot water heater” in the American sense. Hot water is supplied from central heating plants located throughout the city. If the plant that serves your section of the city breaks down, the entire section will be without hot water.

More importantly, however, is that various sections of the city’s hot water pipes are shut off and drained for maintenance during the summer. The time period varies, but is typically 2-4 weeks. Therefore, it is extremely likely that in the summer you will not have hot water for some portion of your visit. Unfortunately, there is absolutely nothing that can be done about this by your group leader, the hotel or dorm management, or anyone else in or out of Russia. This is a good reason to have friends in various parts of town. When your neighborhood loses hot water, have yourself invited over “*v gosti*” for a hot shower, but be sure to bring your own towels.

COMMUNICATION FROM RUSSIA

The technology in Russia is not as advanced or prolific as it is in the U.S. So it is best to be patient and to explain to your family and friends that it will be difficult for you to stay in constant contact while you are away. Please make sure to contact your families after arriving so that they know you are safe. However, make them aware that calling and emailing is not as convenient for you as it will be for them.

Email:

It is now possible to phone home using inexpensive calling cards which may be purchased in almost any grocery store. However, most participants now use e-mail (try SKYPE) which is less expensive. There are many internet cafés, where you can use computers or connect to the internet. In Petersburg you will probably need to use an internet café. In Moscow each dorm room is equipped with a high speed internet connection.

You are encouraged to bring your laptops *if you have one already*. This will make it easier to email, word process, download digital pictures and listen to music (if all of that is important to you!). The dorms and home stays are quite safe for keeping your computers. Just be aware that to use the laptop is a lot more expensive in the internet cafes, as Wi-Fi is just starting in Russia. General pricing for the internet café varies between 40 to 80 rubles per hour (about \$2-3), while laptop use with Wi-Fi is about 100 rubles or more (\$3-4). If you have an ISIC (International Student ID Card), you may get a better rate.

More and more internet cafes are now appearing in Russia. The daytime cost per minute can be rather expensive due to high volume use during peak hours; off-peak rates are certainly less expensive, but make life inconvenient when the lower rates are offered after midnight!

Telephones:

HOME STAYS: If you are in a home stay do not expect to be able to make calls from there. Phone bills usually come late, and your hostess may receive your bill after you have already left. As a result most home stay hosts do not allow their guests to make long distance (international) calls.

DORMS: There is no general phone in the Moscow dormitory. It is recommended that students buy a cell phone. Public phones are called TELEFON AVTOMAT or TAKSOFON. These phone booth calls are cut off after 3 minutes.

Long distance calling cards may be obtained at many locations throughout Moscow and St. Petersburg. **Students, who do their homework, have found phone card deals for 4-10 cents per minute.** Really good ones are Mango and Euroset. They are available in most cell phone stores. The program administration can direct you to the best deals once you are in Russia. Pay attention to the cost per minute and whether the rate applies only to late night calls or can be used for daytime calls. *Don't forget the extreme time change when you are calling to and from the U.S.!* www.worldtimeserver.com (Your family and hosts will appreciate it!)

Cell Phones:

U.S. cell phones will not typically work in Europe because of the different phone frequency. You will be able to purchase a SIM card or a tri-band phone which makes it possible to use your U.S. phone on the European system. These websites can help you with more related information: www.telestial.com or www.ekit.com. Also, it is definitely a better deal to wait and buy SIM card once you are in Russia (\$5 to get started). Or if you buy a cell phone in Russia, you can use that phone anywhere in Europe later on.

More often students have been waiting until they arrive in Russia to buy an affordable cell phone (the cheapest models cost approximately \$35 and all incoming calls are free). Students may purchase minutes as they need them and keep track of how much they are using. Cell phones are once again still an up and coming convenience in Russia, not without problems but increasingly convenient.

SKYPE or Voice over Internet:

If you are taking your own computer, Skype provides an affordable way of staying in contact. By downloading Skype and taking a microphone you can call people over the internet. The calls can be only a few cents per minute and are free if the receiver has Skype computer as well. (www.skype.com)

Faxes:

You may send a fax in Moscow from *Tsentral'naya Pochta*. The cost varies because of inflation, but it should cost you about \$3 - \$5 per page. The fax will go out within two business days, if you want instant service, it will cost more. With the Internet it should not be necessary for you to go to the trouble of faxing. You may fax from the GRINT office in Moscow.

Calling tips:

Calling from Russia can be a bit confusing because of the varied area codes.

- If you are calling to the U.S. from a Russian apartment or a dorm phone dial 8 (wait for the dial tone) then dial 101 + area code in America + local American number
- If you are calling by using calling card to U.S. dial 1 + area code + local number
- If you are calling directly from the U.S. to Russia: dial 011 + 7 + city code + local number (city code for Petersburg is 812; for Moscow is 495)
- If you are calling from Europe: dial 00 + 7 + area code + local number
- If you are calling within Russia: dial 8 + area code + local number
- If you are calling locally: dial the local number only

Russia's country code is 7; U.S. country code is 1 or 101

For example:

If you are calling the UA Study Abroad Office directly from Russia: 8-101-520-626-6406

If you are calling the Moscow Dorm from the U.S.: 011-7-495-374-6951

If you are calling the dorm from Europe: 007-495-374-6951

If you are calling the dorm while in Russia: 8-495-374-6951

If you are calling within the same area code: 374-6951

Receiving Mail:

In general, it takes approximately four to six weeks for surface mail to arrive in Russia from the US. If your friends, relatives, in-laws and out-laws will be writing to you, we recommend that you write your address in Russian and leave it with them so they can simply photocopy it and tape it to their envelopes. Any address written in Russian should begin with "To Russia" (written in English) so the US Post Office can get it as far as the border, and then everything after that is usually listed, least specific (e.g. Moscow) to most (e.g. YOUR name).

****Please note: it is easiest to mail things with DHL instead of FedEx if you are trying to send materials quickly! Just remember this is a VERY expensive way to ship.****

BANKING, FINANCE AND MONEY

For currency conversion rates: www.xe.com/ucc

Currency:

The Russian monetary system is based on the ruble, which is divided into 100 kopecks. Russian ruble notes commonly in circulation are 10, 50, and 100, 500, 1,000 and now 5,000R. Coins denominate various amounts of rubles (1, 5) and kopecks (20, 50). The exchange rate for dollars is volatile because of the instability of the Russian economy. As of June 2010, the official exchange rate was approximately 31R=\$1. Of course, you may check exchange rates on-line to get the most recent information.

Please note: If you bring US Dollars, bring only new or nearly new (no torn, creased, or stained) bills with you. Older bills issued before 1989 may not pass the counterfeit tests and may be refused or devalued. The fear of counterfeit US dollars is very great in Russia. You should be aware that this also applies to rubles. The larger denominations have watermarks on them to prevent counterfeiting. Try to check your rubles for these watermarks just as a precaution. If there is no watermark, then the note is counterfeit.

As an American, you will receive large denomination ruble notes when you exchange your dollars. When you make a purchase in stores, these will serve nicely; however, individual street merchants may have trouble making change for your purchase if you use these large bills. Always carry a few of the smaller denominations.

It is extremely difficult to precisely predict the amount of spending money you will need. For a five-week summer program, \$500 will probably be sufficient. For a three-month semester programs, \$1000 should suffice. In reality, you can get by on much less spending money if you stay out of foreign stores and do not eat in fancy restaurants. However, you will probably want to eat out occasionally. If you shop wisely, you can accumulate all the souvenirs you need for very little money.

Credit Cards and Traveler's Checks:

We recommend that you bring a Visa, MasterCard or American Express credit card- NOT WELLS FARGO. While you should not carry it around town with you, this card will be extremely valuable if you have a cash emergency or if you require treatment in one of the western medical clinics, where service will cost you about \$200 just to walk in the door. Keep your card locked in your suitcase at home. We recommend against bringing traveler's checks, however they could come in handy if you lose your wallet and/or credit cards. They are difficult to cash, and sometimes huge commissions are taken. Currently there are ATM machines everywhere. You can usually get rubles or dollars from them. Also call your bank and let them know that you will be in Russia. Many banks have to give you permission on the account for you to use your money abroad. Also ask how much your bank charges you for the ATM fees abroad and remember that these can add up very quickly if you use your debit card often!

ENTERING and LEAVING RUSSIA

Entering Russia:

Your Russian visa will be pasted inside your passport. The first stop at the airport will be a passport control booth at which you must present your passport and visa. The Customs/Immigration officer will examine your documents and stamp your passport. S/he will then return your passport to you. Please do not lose it! Keep a photocopy of the picture page of your passport with you at all times; keep the original locked in your suitcase at home. You will fill out a Migration Card at the airport or on the plane BEFORE you approach the passport control. They will put it in your passport. DO NOT LOOSE IT!!! Without this card the program will not be able to register you in Russia AND you will not be able to leave the country. Not having this card basically means that you are illegal in the country. The Migration Card consists of two equal halves, one for entering the country, the other for leaving. Fill out both halves immediately.

The next stop is baggage claim. This is the usual routine with which you are familiar – baggage carousels, crowds of people, etc. After you claim your bags, proceed through Customs. You have your choice of the Green Line or the Red Line. It is not necessary to fill out a Customs declaration and go through the Red Line unless you are carrying \$10,000 or more. Otherwise, follow everyone else through the Green Line. Usually this means that the Customs officers standing there will do nothing/say nothing to you as you exit. You might be stopped and asked to show your passport and put your bags through the x-ray machine. Remember it is illegal to bring firearms and narcotics into Russia (We trust that you did not have this in mind!)

After you are routed into the International Arrivals area, look for a sign that says either *Arizona* or *Russian Language Center* or *GRINT* or *maybe your last name!* The person meeting you will direct you to a waiting bus or van and take you to your dorm or home stay. In Moscow, this will be probably be Dmitry, who works for the GRINT Language Center. In St. Petersburg you will be met by a representative of the University who will show you where to go. We will let everyone know if you will be sharing common international flights. This will give several of you the opportunity to meet en route to Russia.

Migration Card (again!):

Besides having any valid Russian visa in their valid passports, foreign nationals going to Russia are required to fill out Migration Card at the port of entry and hand it over to the Russian Border Control Officer along with their other travel documents (please note that the arrival/departure card that the Consulate inserted into your passport along with your visa is different from the Migration Card, and you have to contain both cards in your passport). You should present your Migration Card when you register yourself in the local office of the Ministry of Internal Affairs within 3 days after your arrival to the point of destination. Have your Migration Card with you until you pass through the departure

passport control procedure while departing Russia. If you lose your card, please report to the office of the Ministry of Internal Affairs immediately to avoid further legal actions. Migration Cards should be available on board of airplane and at port of entry to Russia.

PLEASE CALL SOMEONE IF YOUR FLIGHT WILL BE ARRIVING LATE:

MOSCOW CONTACTS:

Dmitry (Airport pickup-does NOT speak English)

From Moscow: 8-903-746-5345
From Europe: 007-903-746-5345
From the U.S.: 011-7-903-746-5345

Dr. Alexander Rouchkin (Executive Director of GRINT at MHU):

From Moscow: 721-0277
From Europe: 007-495-721-0277
From the U.S.: 011-7 495-721-0277

Natalia Rodionova (Head of the Russian Language GRINT Program at MHU):

From Moscow: 374-7430
From Europe: 007-495-374-7430
From the U.S.: 011-7-495-374-7430

ST. PETE CONTACT: Summer 1

Dr. Del Phillips (Program Director)

From St. Pete: 812-352-1829
From Europe: 007-812-352-1829
From the U.S.: 011-7-812-352-1829

Leaving Russia:

You will go through the Green Line (“Nothing to declare”) unless you have won the Russian lottery and now have \$3000 or more! Then you must declare your money and go through the red line. If there is any check at all it will be very perfunctory. You might be required to put your bags through the x-ray machine, but usually nothing at all happens. You just file past the inspector and keep going unless he/she stops you. Customs has become the least of your problems in Russia. It is almost easier there than in America. Your next stop after passing the Customs inspectors will be to progress to the airline check-in counter and receive your boarding pass.

Now you proceed to passport control where you present your passport with its visa pasted inside and your migration card. The Customs person will look at your documents and give you back your passport. The visa is your souvenir to keep! The next stop is the airline-boarding gate. As in the U.S., there is a passenger waiting area for everyone to gather until the boarding process begins.

TRANSPORTATION

Getting to class:

The Moscow dorms are within close walking distance of the GRINT classrooms. Home stay students can expect to be escorted on the first day of class to the university, but please bear in mind that you will have to find your way back afterwards, so be sure that you have the right address, apartment number, etc. Students will be taught how to use the public transportation system, so that they can make their own way home after class. Home stay students will also take the public system to and from classes.

Air Transportation:

The Moscow city air terminal is at *37 Leningradsky Prospekt*; the nearest subway stations are *Aeroport* and *Dynamo*. It is open 24 hours a day. Planes from 20 foreign countries land at *Sheremetyevo International Airport* (also called *Sheremetyevo Two*), from which major foreign airlines take off for scores of countries. *Sheremetyevo-II* services passengers on other international airlines. *Domodedovo*, the largest airport in Russia and one of the largest in the world, is on the *Kashir Highway*, about 30 miles southeast of Moscow. More and more airlines are now operating through *Domodedovo*. Be sure that you give us the correct airport where you will be arriving. *Vnukovo Airport* is on the *Kiev Highway*, about 18 miles from the center of Moscow. In *St. Petersburg* you arrive at a much smaller airport *Pulkovo-2 (LED)*, with one international terminal. It is impossible to get lost!

General inquiries about all airports: 155-50-05

Rail Transportation:

Inquiries for all train stations: 266-93-33
Booking of tickets: 266-83-33
Inquiries about booking of tickets 262-67-91

Public Transportation:

There are four primary modes of transportation: subway (*Metro*), bus, trolleybus, and tram. You may get onto a bus/tram/trolleybus through any door, but there will probably be a ticket-taker or “*konduktor*” lurking inside. S/he will approach you and check your pass or sell you a ticket. At this writing a ticket on the *Petersburg/Moscow* transport costs 18-20 rubles.

For the subway you buy tokens (called “zhetons”) or paper tickets which you deposit in one of the turnstile access points. Then it’s down the escalator to the subway cars. You can ride all day on one token as long as you stay underground. In Moscow, you will be given a monthly pass card that should provide you with 30 rides for the month. Please do not lose this card. It is a good idea to carry a subway map and your metro pass with you at all times. The host institute’s representatives may provide you with a copy of the map, and you may also purchase wallet-sized maps at kiosks around town. The metro runs from 6 a.m. to 1 a.m. It is the fastest and most convenient mode of transportation; during the rush hours, trains leave the stations every 90 seconds or so. During regular hours the trains run about every 3 minutes. On the street level, metro stations are identified by a large “M”.

The subway is generally very safe, clean and very crowded during rush hour. Be prepared for the idea that Russians have a much smaller concept of personal space. This means that crowded on the subway really does mean CROWDED. You should get used to the idea that someone else’s face may be in yours during your trip. Buses, trams, and trolleys also may be extremely crowded. Always watch your purses and bags so that you are not the target of a pickpocket. One way of reducing the risk of being pickpocketed is to note the behavior of the Russians on the subway and follow suit. Do not speak loudly, if at all, and try not to use English.

No smoking is allowed inside the subway stations or underpasses or on buses or trains. No food can be eaten while riding on public transport. Do not litter.

Riverboats provide a pleasant, leisurely way of getting about. Small boats ply the Moskva River and Neva River within city limits, from May-June until September-October, depending on the weather.

There are more than 11,000 taxis in Moscow and St. Petersburg, available at 300 taxi stands marked by a “T”. A checkered line on the vehicle doors and a green light on the windshield can distinguish taxis. If this light is on, the taxi is available. A driver who is going off shift will take a passenger only in the direction in which s/he is driving. You can hail a taxi in the street by raising your hand to about waist level; however, it is frequently very difficult, particularly during rush hours, to hail a taxi on the street. You can order taxis by phone (the numbers for all regions of Moscow are 255-00-00 or 277-00-40; for Kutuzovsky, Gruzinky, Sadovaya and the Center 257-00-40; for the Leninsky and Yugo-Zapad district 137-00-40). You can also wait in line at a taxi stand.

If the taxi has a meter you will pay according to the meter. Taxis in Russia have become expensive like they are in America! If there is no visible meter you will have to negotiate the cost of your trip with the driver. Be sure to do this or you might be very uncomfortably surprised!

Many private motorists cruise the streets to find fares and increase their income. You can hail a private car just like a taxi. Be sure that you negotiate the fee in advance. Do not get into a car which contains someone other than the driver.

There are also *marshrutki* or set route taxis. These are little vans or large red buses with the route displayed in the front windows and may stop at many bus stops or just one. Generally, you pay as you enter.

Pedestrian Traffic Laws:

Traffic moves on the right. Some central streets have one-way traffic. Cross the street only where crossings are indicated by zebra stripes or arrows and at a green light. Police officers will fine you on the spot for jaywalking. Use the underpasses where available. If caught in the middle when traffic starts moving, *stay put and do not run*. Cross behind parked buses and trolley buses, only in front of stationary trams. As drivers are not allowed to use their horns, do not count on any audible warnings. While the law states that pedestrians have the right of way, in practice, moving vehicles assume the right of way. DO NOT expect that a driver will stop for you. Drivers will occasionally flash their lights to warn you that they do not intend to stop, meaning that they absolutely will not stop for you, no matter whether you are standing in a marked crosswalk, riding in a wheelchair or standing on your head on an Uzbek camel. Please be very observant until you become accustomed to Russian traffic customs.

Online Travel Guides:

Here are some online travel guides which also carry time tables for trains and buses & advertise many tourist services.

Way to Russia:	www.waytorussia.net
Visit Russia:	www.visitrussia.com
Russia.com	www.russia.com
Lonely Planet Russia:	www.lonelyplanet.com/russia

SHOPPING

Russian Ruble Stores:

Earlier, we told you to bring a shoulder bag. When you start looking around, you'll understand why! Many stores in Russia still operate on the 3-step system. First, you select your merchandise and get a price from the clerk. Then you proceed to the cashier and pay the correct amount. You will be given a receipt. Then you return to the counter, present the receipt and receive your purchase. Generally the purchase will be wrapped in paper, not handed to you in a bag. It is therefore a good idea to carry your shoulder bag with you, although it is sometimes possible to buy a plastic bag for a few hundred rubles. There is no sales tax. Prices are usually stamped on the items. Buy something you want when you see it. It may not be there the next minute.

Items you may want to purchase in local stores other than food, include cds, books, toys, sporting goods, games, fabric, flowers, posters, paper, art supplies, greeting cards, and photo albums. Compact discs are sometimes cheaper at Melodiya Records than at the small kiosks along the street. Antique objects are defined as anything made before 1945 or any book published before 1965. In order to bring such items home, you need written permission from the Ministry of Culture, and even then you will pay a very high duty of up to 100%. Negotiating the bureaucracy is a nightmare. We strongly discourage you from attempting to bring such objects back with you.

When buying western food, ALWAYS check the expiration date, if there is still one on the item. It is not uncommon for Russian stores to sell items that have already surpassed the expiration date and may be spoiled. Again though this may be illegal in the US and the US store would be held liable, these types of western laws and customs do not exist in Russia and are not yet quite understood. So try to be a careful consumer.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

Helpful Tips for the Dorm:

Although we rarely have problems with theft, please do not leave valuables lying about. It is best to keep valuable items locked in your suitcase at all times. If your suitcase does not have a lock on it, you should be able to buy small suitcase padlocks in the luggage departments of most department stores. Lock your door when you leave your room at any time, even for a few seconds. Lock your door when you are in your room sleeping. Do not create conditions favorable for crime!

If you come home late, the building door may be locked. If you will be staying out late, inquire before you leave whether you will be able to get in after 11:00 pm. Security will usually let you in. However, in some dorms the door is locked at 11:00 pm (the exact hour varies from place to place) and no one comes in, period, until the dorm opens up again the next morning.

A little note about dorm/hotel etiquette: we want you to have fun, but please remember that it is not your constitutional right to hold a reenactment of the World's Fair anytime and anywhere you please (e.g.: in your room at 1 a.m. with a herd from downtown). When coming in past 11:00 PM or when visiting after that hour, **KEEP YOUR VOICES DOWN!!!!** Do not, repeat, DO NOT, wake up other program participants or any other hotel/dorm guest with loud, boorish behavior. In the past, those whom noisy, late arrivers have inconsiderately awakened have avenged themselves by holding parties of their own—at 5 a.m.! If you insist on being a noise pest or any other type of pest (including excessive drinking and harassment of other program participants, hotel personnel, or Russians), *your Russian visa may be revoked and you will be given 24 hours to leave the country and you will be escorted by the militia to the next train for Helsinki or Warsaw.* This is extremely unpleasant, not to mention expensive, as you will not be reimbursed for any of that travel. Report immediately to your group leader any instances of loud or other inconsiderate or dangerous behavior.

Safety and Security Away from the Dorm or Home Stay:

Secure your backpack, camera, and whatever else you are carrying. There are increasing numbers of pickpockets in the cities now because of the tough economic times.

Also, there is somewhat of a backlash developing now towards westerners in general and American in particular, as indicated by the new Russian word, "*Macdonol'dizacija*." Russians are a proud people and are quite embarrassed at the state in which they now find themselves. Western firms, advertisements, products, and religion are making an appearance there at the same time that individual Russians are becoming increasingly impoverished. Some connect the two, blaming The West for their predicament. Do not be shocked at various manifestations of anti-Americanism. Try not to call attention to

yourself as an American by any behavior which makes you stand apart from the group on public transportation, etc., (speaking English loudly, wearing baseball caps, college shirts, and even just smiling broadly are things that will easily mark you as an American).

Do not get into arguments on the street about politics, economies, or the Cold War, and do not advertise that you are an American. Do not flash your cash, and minimize the amount of jewelry you wear, at least until after you get your bearings. Dress conservatively. It always helps to travel with another person, especially at night, regardless of your gender.

Now that we have warned you about some of the security issues about which you should be aware, permit us to tell you that this is definitely not the most important thing to know about contemporary Russian life, and you should not worry too much. The overwhelming majority of Russians are warm, wonderful people who will befriend you when they discover that you are an American. Our intent is not to alarm you, but simply to give you some straight talk about contemporary life Russia. In America, we have similar crime problems. However, if a foreigner asked you whether it is safe to visit America, most of you would say “yes.” It’s the same in Russia. Use common sense and the buddy system. Go your own way and have a great time.

OUT AND ABOUT TOWN

Theaters and Movies:

Theater tickets are usually a relatively good buy in Russia compared with prices in the U.S. However, when hotels buy blocks of tickets they add a very high service charge to the price of each ticket – as much as \$50. If there is a performance that you would like to see and for which you have been unable to purchase a ticket, go to the theater the evening of the performance to buy an extra ticket from people who stand around with one to sell.

In Russian theaters, tickets are issued with designated seat numbers in specific rows. If you pass people who are already seated people in order to reach your seat, it is polite to face them rather than pass with your back to them. Programs in theaters and concert halls are not free but must be purchased. If the performance has already started, you may not be allowed to enter the theater until the intermission. Performances usually start at 7:00 p.m. Snacks and drinks are served at stands called “*buffety*” during the intermissions.

Movies are very popular in Russia. Frequently, theaters will show different films all day long, and there are always a lot of people in the theaters. You do not check your coat here. Movie tickets relatively inexpensive, with different prices charged for different seats. You may buy a ticket for a particular seat, as you would in any regular theater. Again, no eating or drinking allowed inside the theater. Movies are excellent practice, and even foreign films are dubbed into Russian. Subtitles are rare.

Food:

The Moscow semester/academic year programs provide dorm residents with two meals per day week days (total 10 meals per week). Home stay residents receive breakfast daily (7 meals per week). Petersburg dorm residents receive a ruble stipend for two meals per day (14 meals per week). Home stay students receive breakfast only in the home stay (7 meals per week). You might want to bring along some snack items, but now almost everything is available in Russian grocery stores. You pay with rubles. Many grocery stores now accept credit cards, but do not depend on this! Be sure and bring a good supply of cash to Russia. If you use a credit card you will probably be asked to show your passport.

The Russian diet provides little fiber in their heavy, fattening meals. If you are a vegetarian or a vegan, you may be unhappy and might make most of your own meals yourself. For example, soup usually has some animal fat in it. This culture is not cholesterol conscious nor is it aware of many of the other modern dietary standards by which we abide. Be prepared!

Restaurants and Cafes:

Restaurants, and especially cafes, are good places to meet local people. Russian people are usually willing to speak with Americans. In cafes, you should feel comfortable being friendly and initiating conversation with others sitting there, though use common sense and be careful. They will more than likely be very pleased to talk with you, although their customary reserve in public will keep them from approaching you first. The best way to meet nice people is to be outgoing and friendly, more than you would be with strangers at home. In restaurants and cafes, it is customary for strangers to be seated at the same table.

When Russians dine out at a restaurant, it is usually a special occasion. Service is slow partly because you are expected to stay awhile. Loud music is typical during the evening hours in cafes and in restaurants. If you want to talk, ask for a seat away from the band.

The noon meal is usually the main meal of the day and includes an appetizer, soup, entree, dessert, and tea. Dinner usually consists of an appetizer, entrée, and dessert. Soup may not be served after 8:00 pm. Alcohol is consumed with the meal, not before. Dessert is usually ice cream, maybe with jam. Coffee is generally Turkish style, with grounds in the cup. Coffee with milk has sweetened condensed milk in it.

Beverages:

Unless you specify that you want tap water- PROSTAYA VODA- you will receive bottled mineral water. Remember that it is probably better not to drink tap water or ice made with tap water in Moscow and certainly not in St. Petersburg! Ice is not served unless you ask for it. On the streets you can buy almost all types of sodas, including diet cola, designated “light” in Russia. Occasionally, you can also find *kvass*, the traditionally Russian beverage made from fermented bread.

All alcoholic drinks are ordered by the bottle or in grams. A small glass is 100 grams, a large is 200 grams, a small bottle is 500 grams (.5 liter) and a standard bottle is 750 grams.

Appetizers:

Called *zakuski*, they are usually the longest and tastiest part of the meal. They may include: caviar, crab, pate, pickles, marinated salads (especially with cucumbers), aspic dishes, herring, julienne (mushrooms in a hot cheese sauce), smoked sturgeon and other fish, cheese, and sliced sausage. The Russian version of a salad is usually prepared with mayonnaise or sour cream and contains a mixture of vegetables and/or macaroni.

Soups:

Traditional Russian soups are usually excellent, although they may be a bit greasy. Common soups include *borscht*, made from sweet beets; *shchi*, made with green cabbage; *solyanka*, made with pickled vegetables; *okroshka*, made with *kvass* and sausage.

Breads:

Usually both white and black breads are served as part of the meal, but butter must be ordered separately and for an additional charge.

Entrees:

Traditional entrees include Chicken Kiev (*Kotleta po Kievksky*), Chicken Tabak (*Kotlet Tabak*), Chicken *Posharski* (ground chicken croquettes), *shashlik* (Georgian shishkebab), *plov* (Uzbek pilaf), *beef filet*, *Beef Stroganoff*, and fish (*ryba*).

Dessert:

Typical desserts might include vanilla ice cream sometimes with jam or shaved chocolate, and *tort* (cake), the main ingredient of which is generally lots of cream.

There are also some special foods with you should try, but which you may not necessarily find in restaurants. These include *blini*, which are pancakes served with a choice of toppings such as ham, honey, or mushroom sauce; *pirozhki*, which are pastries stuffed with meat, onion, or potatoes, and often sold on the street; *pelmeni*, which are Siberian style dumplings, also served with various sauces such as butter, tomato, vinegar, or sour cream. These can be purchased in boxes as well, but if you buy them, make sure they still rattle in the box; if they have been thawed and refrozen, they will be in a solid clump.

Public Sanitation Standards:

Standards are lower in Russia than what you might expect. Even in theaters and restaurants, bathrooms are not often clean. Plumbing may be in a condition somewhere between ineffective and broken. Toilets often do not have seats. It is a good idea to always carry some toilet paper or wet wipes with you in your bag. If using a public restroom, be prepared to pay a small fee to use it.

Orthodox Church Services:

The Orthodox faith was brought to Russia in 988 AD. The 1000th anniversary of Russian Christianity was celebrated during the Gorbachev Era. It may be interesting for you to attend a Russian Orthodox Church Service even if you are not generally a churchgoer. If you stand quietly, no one will object to your presence and you may come and go in the middle of the service.

Everyone stands during the service as there are no pews, but it is considered disrespectful to stand with your hands in your pockets or crossed behind your back. It may also be offensive to elderly women if you stand with a shoulder bag slung over your shoulder. Although there is no instrumental music, the choir vocals are very beautiful. It is rude to take photographs during a service, and at other times you should ask permission. Easter is the major Russian Orthodox holiday, with midnight services and special foods. Arrive early, though, as it will be very crowded. Women might feel more comfortable if they wear a skirt that falls below the knees and have a headscarf handy to put on once arriving at the church.

Medical Service:

Medical service is generally available at a local polyclinic free of charge. The doctors there are pleasant and professional, but only the simplest treatments are available: x-rays, bandages, etc. If you want Western medical assistance, you must understand that it is extremely expensive: about \$200 a visit. This is another good reason to bring a credit card.

EUROMED in St. Pete is extremely nice clinic and not that expensive. It is located VERY close to Smolny – about a 7-10 minute walk. Euromed has everything: 24-hour emergency, ambulance and even dentistry. www.Euromed.ru, Address: Suvorovsky prospect, 60. phone: 327-03-01

THE AMERICAN MEDICAL CLINIC in Moscow (not associated with the American Embassy) is open from 8am-8pm, Monday through Friday and 9am-5pm on Saturday. Call 256-8212 or 956-3366 (FAX: 973-2142) to make an appointment. The address is: 3 *Shmitovsky Proezd* (metro Ulitsa 1905 goda). There are other western medical clinics in Moscow that provide similar service, meaning that we are not recommending this particular clinic. It is one of several.

- *It is also recommended that ALL students purchase the International Student ID card. It provides travel discounts for students: www.myisic.com.*

CUSTOMS AND PRACTICES

It is considered rude to wear one's coat inside a building. In museums, restaurants, theaters, etc., there are *garderoby* staffed with attendants. Your coat should have some kind of hook sewn or attached on the inside collar. If your coat does not have one, sew one on before the trip. Attendants get quite upset when they get a coat without a hook. Even if the line is long, you should stand in line and check your coat. Otherwise, people may be offended. It is also customary to check large bags and sacks; not surprisingly the attendants will also complain if these are too heavy. Remember a little humor on your part can help you get through the day.

In general, they are more reserved in public than we are. Loud talking on public transportation is considered to be extremely rude. You will notice right away that it is much quieter on subways and buses than here in the US. Similarly, whistling is considered rude.

It is customary on public transportation for young people to give their seats to elderly people. In fact, not offering an older person your seat is rude (even in the US, but especially in Russia); you may be chastised for not doing so. Generally, men will give their seats to women, even women of the same age, and everyone will give up a seat to a pregnant woman.

It is also considered rude to sit on the steps or other outdoor parts of public buildings. Older people may be quite offended if they see a foreigner sitting on a monument. You should be aware of this and act accordingly.

As mentioned earlier, littering is *niprilichno*. In fact, if someone sees you litter, you may be approached and told to pick up your trash. They have been taught to respect public property much more so than we have; you will notice a relative absence of litter there.

In theaters, audiences show deep appreciation after a performance by clapping in unison.

Gift giving is more institutionalized in Russia and is very widespread. Very often, a token of friendship is given, such as a book or commemorative pin. If you are invited to someone's home, it's traditional to bring flowers, champagne, chocolates, or some other token of thanks. As mentioned previously, you should bring along some gift items, since you would not wish to be caught empty-handed.

CULTURE SHOCK: THE HOME STAY OPTION

For those of you living with a family while studying in Russia, there are a few morsels of important information that we group leaders believe you should know. Growing up in America, there are certain daily rituals that we take for granted which seem to add to the quality of our lives: long hot showers, pop-tarts and ample room to stretch out and simply be alone. When in Russia, as you might guess, these simple amenities of daily life may not exist on such an abundant level. Then again, the whole point of a home stay is to experience the nuances of daily Russian life in a completely unique environment.

Despite the outward perception of Russians as cold and impersonal, the truly enlightened study abroad student will soon realize that this is, in most cases, simply a mask worn in public which is used to deal with the harsh realities of daily life (i.e., endless miles of bureaucratic red tape, and very expensive groceries). In reality, Russians are very warm and giving once you get to know them in their apartments on a more personal level. Avail yourself of every opportunity to be immersed in the Russian culture. Try the mystery meat for dinner, and do not be afraid to use photographs or hand gestures when describing your home in the U.S. to your host family. The main idea of the home stay option is to sacrifice what is familiar at home in the U.S. in exchange for a mega dose of Russian culture. With some effort on your part, your home-stay experience will greatly improve your conversational Russian and, hopefully, debunk a few stereotypes as well.

THE ROLE OF THE GROUP LEADER(S)

The principle role of the group leader (program coordinator) is to serve as a liaison between local instructors and program participants. Your group leader will attempt to strike a fine balance between structured advice and information about the program, while allowing participants to pace their non-academic activities as they see fit. In other words, he/she is there to help you with any pressing problems, whether they are situational, personal or academic.

HOW TO BE A U.S. GOODWILL AMBASSADOR

Please give us an opportunity to tell you about some of the ways you might inadvertently be an Ugly American while you are in Russia:

- 1) “We won The Cold War! Your system is inferior! Ours is superior! We have the Truth! We know everything, so start doing things our way!”

This attitude is *extremely offensive*, whether expressed verbally or by your mannerisms. By most conservative measures, Russia's culture is approximately five times older than ours. Its traditions and mores are deeply rooted.

The Russian people are extremely strong willed and rightly believe that they are capable of surviving the most severe hardships: eight-month winters, invasions by Napoleon, the Nazis, the Poles, the Lithuanians, the Ottoman Turks, the Mongols (who stayed for 250 years), the Americans and many others; famines, civil war, Siberian gulags, Chernobyl, secret police in various forms, anarchy, and communism, just to name a few. America has never had to endure such compounded misfortune. In spite of the success of the American system and the Russians' fascination with it, Russians feel that we Americans just don't have enough experience to tell them how to get anything done. "Come back in 600 years and talk to us," they'll tell you. Even if Russia is successful in transforming into a democratic, free-market system, it will take at least one generation and probably more to smooth things out. Everything in Russia happens at an excruciatingly slow pace. Why shouldn't it? If your country had successfully lived through so many misfortunes and, in the end, were still called by the same name with which it began over 1,000 years earlier, it wouldn't be in a hurry, either.

- 2) "I'm an American! I have money! I paid for this trip, and you'll do what I want when I want it! We don't do things this way in America!" This is extremely unlikely to impress anyone in Russia, which is just now beginning to develop a tradition of consumerism and where Americans are often perceived as rich, spoiled brats. At some point in your journey, you will probably be a victim of Russian inefficiency (your call didn't go through but you were charged anyway, the tour bus didn't show up on time, etc.). In America you may receive a refund, but in Russia you probably won't. If you shout, stamp your feet, and threaten to hold your breath, as we Americans sometimes do when given poor service, don't be surprised if the reaction you get is less than forthcoming. It will probably not amount to more than a disinterested yawn.

You will meet with much more success if you are simply polite with clerks and officials with whom you will be dealing. Often, a heartfelt appeal to a recalcitrant clerk's human side will yield positive results. The bottom line is that American cultural norms and situational behavior patterns do not mean the same things in Russia and will nearly always be interpreted negatively by the Russians. Before you make a scene, think about the outcome you want.

RUSSIAN vs. AMERICAN EDUCATION: FEELING GOOD vs. DOING WELL

Some American students have difficulties adjusting to the "Russian style of education." We sometimes hear, "The teacher started out with '*Shto eto?*' We've already had all that. I was bored! I should be in a higher group!" Such a complaint underscores one of the basic differences in the Russian style of teaching versus the American style of teaching

the Russian language. Your St. Petersburg and Moscow instructors are interested in what you are actually able to do with the language; they assess and promote your ability to USE Russian correctly in the real world. It is quite possible to study Russian for years and years, to know "all about" Russian, yet still be unable to use Russian well enough to "find the bathroom" in the real world. A student recently complained that the placement interview is too easy, that the questions asked were "too simplistic." (How can they possibly assess my level after a few simple questions like that?") That same student, when asked her age, responded, "*Ja dvatdsat tri let!*"

If asked confidentially to identify the differences between student groups from different parts of the world, our Russian instructors will usually differentiate American students by their overconfidence. In the words of our Russian colleagues, "American students always exaggerate their capabilities. They always think that they know more than they really do!" Perhaps this is the result of education here at home, which is all too often out to promote your self-image, to keep you feeling good about yourself. Perhaps our in-country Russian instructors should be a bit more honest in their assessments of student achievement. Not everyone deserves an "A." The truth of the matter probably is that far too many American students get the "A" and as a result do not have a true understanding of their actual capability.

Our instructors in Moscow and Petersburg are master teachers. The bottom line for them is results. They are not especially interested in promoting your self-image, in making you feel good about yourself. They will do anything possible to move you along the road to free use of the language in real life. They will cajole, criticize, urge you on, tire you out, and sometimes compare you with your colleagues in class. They may all too often give you the gift of their honesty. They will make you form the Russian soft 'L' until your tongue falls off! They will use any means at their disposal to achieve their final goal of producing a foreigner capable of interaction with natives in the real Russian world!

There are several possible reactions to this "true Russian" treatment. One such response might be, "I hate Russia! The weather here is awful! The program is terrible! I am learning nothing! I already know all that they are trying to teach me!" The wise participant, however, will endure with philosophical acceptance and will learn to develop a thick skin, sometimes to take it on the chin. She will be grateful for the supreme efforts of an instructor who, due to the absence of a Xerox copier, might type an exercise 8 times just to have enough for the class! He will be grateful for instructor honesty, for studying with master teachers who will treat you with the same warmth and enthusiasm as they do their own children, whose training and pedagogical focus is on the specific teaching of Russian to foreigners. Americans call it "tough love." Get used to it! Be thankful for it!

TOPICS ON SEXUALITY AND ETHNICITY

HIV and AIDS in Russia: Facts and Fiction

HIV and AIDS do exist in Russia as in the United States, and you should be aware that if you engage in activities that put you at risk, you could be endangering your health. The Russian population has approximately twice the infection rate than that of the United States. It is also important to note that Russia has seen one of the largest HIV and AIDS increases *in the world* over the past decade.

Please be aware how HIV can be spread and what you can do to protect yourself against infection. If you plan on being sexually active while in Russia, bring condoms. It is suggested that you bring American brand condoms, as opposed to some of the locally manufactured condoms in Russia, as the quality tends to be higher Stateside.

Even though statistics show that the highest percentages of HIV cases in Russia stem from drug abuse, that is not to say that the population at large has not been affected by this disease. Please use precaution if you plan on becoming sexually active with anyone.

It should go without saying, but please refrain from using drugs (with or without a needle) while studying abroad, as it is illegal and would be grounds for dismissal from the program. If caught you will be subject to Russian laws and courts which do not have the same due process laws as the United States and simple possession of narcotics can lead to a three year jail term complete with hard labor. Do not risk it and do not do it.

If you are concerned that your lifestyle will put you at risk while you are abroad, please speak with a health care professional who can educate you on ways to reduce the risks while you are in Russia. To read more about HIV and AIDS in Russia, please visit the following websites:

Center for Disease Control and Prevention:

<http://www.cdc.gov/globalaids/Global-HIV-AIDS-at-CDC/countries/Russia/>

Avert: <http://www.avert.org/aids-russia.htm>

UN Regional Report on AIDS Epidemic from 2007:

http://data.unaids.org/pub/Report/2008/jc1529_epibriefs_eeurope_casia_en.pdf

Homosexuality

Moscow and St. Petersburg traditionally have more progressive attitudes than other cities and areas in Russia, however, it should be noted that Russia as a whole does not possess very progressive attitudes towards gays and lesbians as their neighbors in Western Europe do. Homophobia does exist in both cities and gay and lesbian students may want to use caution as to whom they decide to disclose their sexuality. Currently Russian gays and lesbians possess little rights against discrimination and gay marriage and civil unions

are illegal. In 2007, the gay community attempted to host a Pride parade in Moscow, but they were denied by the local government. The community decided to hold the parade anyway, and as a result, hundreds of participants were hurt by protestors *and* the police.

Despite this, gay culture does exist and has thrived in Moscow and St. Petersburg for decades, albeit at times underground. Both cities have numerous gay clubs and other venues. In St. Petersburg, the park that surrounds St. Catherine's statue has long been a gay meeting place. Numerous websites and travel guides have information about where the latest and greatest clubs, cafes, and restaurants are, and what nights of the week are particularly popular, etc. Some places to start looking are here:

GayRussia: <http://www.gayrussia.ru/en/> This website contains a plethora of information regarding what is going on politically and socially in the country. Clubs, restaurants and café listings are for Moscow only.

Way to Russia: <http://www.waytorussia.net/SaintPetersburg/ClubsGay.html> (For list of gay St. Petersburg clubs)

Some basic information about the social climate and Moscow and St. Petersburg can be found here:

<http://www.outuk.com/index.php?http://www.outuk.com/outgoing/europe/moscow/index.html>

For information about the status of LGBT Russians and their history in Russia and the Soviet Union:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/LGBT_rights_in_Russia

People of Color

Russia is a rather homogeneous society, especially when compared to the United States. People of color, including Italians and Greeks with a darker complexion, may find that they receive stares, suspicious or curious looks and/or the occasional remark that their lighter skinned counterparts do not experience. People who do not look Slavic are also more often to be stopped by the police (*militsia*) and asked to be shown the proper legal documents. This may lead some people to feel uncomfortable or unwelcome. People with darker skin or of Asian descent should be aware of this before heading to Russia. In general though, Russians are more curious about people of color than anything else, and do not intend to harm or provoke hurt feelings when asking questions or staring. The more exposure Russians have to people outside of the borders of the former Soviet Union, the less impressive a sight you will be.

Unfortunately, the racist actions of a few have caused much to be made in the international news about “skinheads” who exist in Russia and other parts of Eastern Europe. While a very real threat, this should not necessarily discourage someone of color from studying abroad in Russia. However, due to the presence of hate crime in Russia, it is advised that students of color should take certain safety precautions. Students of color should travel with at least one other student at all times, especially at night. When going

out on the town they should inform the Group Leader where they are going and when they anticipate being back. Avoid groups of young men with shaved heads or political gatherings involving nationalistic-focused political parties. It should also be noted that *any* student should take the same precautions, regardless of their race or ethnicity.

For information on Nationalism and Xenophobia in Russia, please check out the comprehensive SOVA web site which includes monthly news articles about violence against people of color: <http://sova-center.ru/194F418/>

The U.S. State Department also has a travel website that includes information and warnings about crime in Russia:

http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1006.html

Note:

These listed topics are discussed not to instill fear into you, but rather to educate you about the challenges you may encounter while studying abroad in Russia. It is better to go anticipating certain struggles or knowing the social and political climate than to go in naively thinking that it will be just like in America. If it was just like America, you probably would not be as interested in going. Most Russians are curious about foreigners and interested in getting to know you and your culture. Do not let the actions of small radical groups influence your perceptions of the population at large. Imagine if all Russians based their opinions of Americans on one small extremist group in our country. It would similarly not be an accurate or truthful view of Americans.

SPECIAL INFORMATION ABOUT MOSCOW

The International Telephone Call Office in Moscow:

7 *Tverskaya Ulitsa* (metro Okhtonyi ryad), telephone 295-92-68
Incoming telegrams can be collected at the same location: telephone 294-47-50.
You can also make inter-city calls here and exchange money.

International Telephone Exchange:	271-91-03; 295-10-20
International Post Office:	
Ia Komsomolskaya Square.	294-75-55
Inquiries about incoming parcels	295-47-94

Credit Card/Cash Advances:

Credo-Bank in the Hotel "Sport:" VISA only. The hotel commission is 5% on top of all the other fees.

Dialogue Bank in the Slavyanska Hotel (Radisson): American Express only. They charges 3% commission. Note that there is also an American Express office in Moscow.

American Express office: full service for AMEX cardholder only. 21-A Sadovo Kudrinskaya. Telephone 254-45-05. Cash machine.

Russian Baths and Saunas:

It would be interesting for you to experience the traditional Russian Banya -- the public bath -- where you will find steam rooms, showers, and benches to sit upon and soak one's feet in tubs of water. In the steam rooms, you will see people hitting each other on the back with fresh birch twigs, a practice believed to aid in good circulation.

**This material has been collected and edited by
The University of Arizona
Russian Abroad
Leaders, who wish you a great experience in Russia!**