ESCEM
(Ecole Supérieure de Commerce et de Management)
Exchange Program in Poitiers, France

Student Guide

Web address: www.ESCEM.FR

APPLICATION PROCESS:

Students begin the application process by completing an application for the Exchange Program with ESCEM in Poitiers, France. This application is available at the Office for International Programs. The application is due on March 15. A maximum of two students will be chosen for the spring semester of the following year. Students must have a 3.5 GPA to be accepted. Students will be interviewed by Mr. Michael Thomas, Associate Dean of International Programs and Dr. Patricia McEachern, Associate Professor of French.

Once accepted for the program in Poitiers, the student should complete the application for ESCEM (available on their website at www.escem.fr) and return it Dr. McEachern. After reviewing the application, she will mail it to ESCEM, along with a letter indicating that Drury has nominated the student. When the student receives the official acceptance letter from ESCEM, s/he should immediately apply for housing. Students are encouraged to look at the ESCEM FAQ sheet on the website for information regarding application process.

VISA

Upon approval of the application, ESCEM will write a letter saying that our exchange student has been accepted. The student should talk to Michael Thomas when s/he receives the letter. The student should take that letter to the French Consulate to get the visa, but s/he should consult with Michael Thomas before doing so.

The student will need a visa for January to May. You will have a visa sans carte de séjour (residence permit).

The student will get a student visa (long-stay).
When the student visa expires, s/he may remain in Europe as a tourist.

HOUSING

Students should apply for housing as soon as possible. After Anne Blakiston receives the student’s completed application for admission and Drury’s nomination, the
student will receive an application for housing. Although the deadline for housing is November 15 for the spring semester, the student should apply for housing immediately upon receiving the application.

There are two women’s residence halls that are fairly close to the campus. Some students will live in apartments; each student will have a private room and there will be a common area (6-7 students). Apartments might be co-ed. The common areas will be cleaned by a cleaning woman twice a week. The earlier you contact ESCEM housing, the more choice you have.

Housing runs 200-250 Euros / month. That includes utilities, but not phone.
Students should bring sheets, but everything else should be provided.
There is usually a common kitchen area with a hotplate and refrigerator.
There are some small studios with kitchenette for 250 Euros.
Residence halls are 200 Euros/month.
Students should be prepared to pay up front for housing from January to May plus one month’s rent as a deposit.

FOOD

There is a subsidized university restaurant where lunch and dinner are served for about 3 Euro each. It closes at 7:30 P.M. You can also get burgers, pizza, etc.

Food runs between 400-1000 Euros for the semester depending on the student.

ORIENTATION

Students should plan to arrive a few days before classes begin. ALOHA is a student-led organization that arranges to have someone pick up the student up from the train station and take them to their rooms. Students with ALOHA help with all of the practical issues of getting settled, such as getting a bank account, etc. Their mission is to look after exchange students and help them integrate. They sponsor field trips at affordable prices. In 2005 they went to Barcelona for 3 days for 90 Euros and another weekend trip somewhere in France.

Maggy Sourisseau will send the student a copy of the International Study Guide when s/he is accepted.

COURSES

Students will take 3 core-courses in Business and one course in French Language. Students can take as few as 4 courses (12 hours). They can also take a culture course,
depending on what is offered during the semester they are in Poitiers. In addition, they can take a directed or independent study with a professor at Drury if necessary.

Courses schedules are NOT similar to American schedules, thus students should be prepared to be extremely flexible. They will have classes Monday-Friday. Students might have a course at 8 or 8:30 A.M. and another at 5:15 P.M. Thursday afternoons from 1:00 on are always free to allow for sports activities. On one other afternoon there will be either a group activity or a tutorial. There are no classes after 7:00 P.M.

Students will take the 3 major courses for 10 weeks and 6 weeks for the minor course. There are options for the minor courses, but the 3 major courses are mandatory. Students will take French for the entire semester.

GRADES

Students should NOT expect their grades to be assigned in the same way as the American system. They will receive a score out of a maximum of 20 points. Ten points is passing; anything over 16 is an “A.” Only the top 10% of students receive A’s and the top 35% receive B’s. Students will receive a European letter grade (transfer grade) as well on an A-E system. E is NOT a failing grade. ESCEM will send Drury what they consider an American equivalent.

TRANSPORTATION

Poitiers is a fairly small city and students can usually walk to class and to shopping areas as long as they are living close to the school. The earlier a student returns his/her housing application, the more likely it will be that s/he will have housing close to the school.

There is bus service in Poitiers that runs makes stops every 10-15 minutes. The cost in 2005 was 1.20 Euros.

VACATIONS/BREAKS

During the spring semester, there is no class on the following days:

- May 1 (Labor Day)
- May 8 (Commemorates the end of WWI)
- May 25-26 (Ascension—although this may change)

In addition, there are three breaks:

- February 13-17 (approx)
• March 27-31 (approx)—During this time there are student elections and classes are canceled; however, many of students prefer to stay on campus because they enjoy the elections.
• April 17-21 (approx)—Spring Break

MEDICAL

You must have health insurance.
In France, the patient pays up front to consult a doctor and then applies to be reimbursed. Normally, the cost for a visit to a doctor is 20 Euros.

CONTACT PEOPLE:

How do I call home?
To use a phone booth in France you will need a télécarte. It looks like a credit card. You can purchase one at a post office or in any little shop called a Tabac. You will buy one that has 50 unités or 120 unités (these are units of time). Put the télécarte into the slot. The screen will say “Patientez s’il vous plaît,” which means please be patient. When you get a dial tone, you are ready to make your call. Even for local calls, you will pay according to how long you talk. You will be able to see on the screen how many unités you have left. Be sure to remove your télécarte before you leave the phone booth. It is easy to leave it behind.

Every country has a country code. To call the United States, dial 001-area code-phone number.
If someone in the United States wants to call you, they will dial 011.33 and then your number.

Dr. Patricia McEachern—001-417-873-7875 (if you are calling from France). E-mail: pmceache@drury.edu

Mr. Michael Thomas—001-417-873-7503 (if you are calling from France). E-mail: mthomas@drury.edu

Anne Blakiston: International Coordinator for Master’s degree (ESC). She is in Tours. Anne is supervisor for Helena and Maggy (0)2.47.71.71.07 (if you are calling IN France). Sometimes you need the first 0 and sometimes not. If you are calling from the U.S. dial 011.33.2.47.71.71.07. E-mail: ablakiston@escem.fr

Helena Ferreira (in charge of)
Housing
Visa
Logistics officer
Administrative issues
(0)5.49.60.58.27
WHEN YOU ARRIVE IN FRANCE

General Information and Money
Ideally, you should arrive in France with some Euros. If you do not, you should be able to use your ATM card to get Euros at DeGaulle International Airport. Keep in mind that sometimes ATM machines are out of service (*hors service*). You should have at least two credit cards if at all possible because any ATM card or credit card can get demagnetized, thus unable to function, so you should have a back-up plan. This is another reason to arrive with some cash. Call your credit card company before you leave and tell them that you will be traveling in France. Keep your passport and any money or credit cards that you do not need immediately on your body and hidden. There are such things for that purpose that are sold in luggage/travel shops. Be sure to have a copy of your passport in a separate location in case you lose it. In addition, leave a copy of your passport with your family. If you lose your passport, go to the American Embassy with the photocopy (or the Embassy of your home country). DO NOT inadvertently flash money or your passport around. DO NOT call attention to yourself as a tourist. Be aware of your surroundings.

How do I get to Paris from the Airport
At the DeGaulle International Airport, you can take the shuttle (*Navette*) to the Gare Montparnasse (Montparnasse Train Station). It will cost about 12-15 Euros to take the shuttle. A taxi will cost around 40 Euros. You can take the RER (the train) for 8 Euros, but *I do not recommend* it because you will have heavy luggage. You will have to walk up and down too many stairs with luggage and there are too many variables that you cannot predict. Although the least expensive option, it is *not recommended*.

If you decide to stay in Paris for a while before going to Poitiers, you can still take the shuttle either to the Gare Montparnasse or the Opéra (depending on where your hotel is) and then take a taxi from there to the hotel. You will have to go to a Taxi stand to get a taxi. You cannot wave down a taxi in France.

How do I get to Poitiers from Paris
When you arrive at the GARE MONTPARNASSE look for a sign that says “Grandes Lignes.” This is where you will buy your ticket on the TGV (the fast train) for Poitiers. In 2005, a one-way ticket to Poitiers from Paris cost 34 Euros. (one-way is *aller simple*). Non-smoking is *non-fumeur* and smoking is *fumeur*. When you have your ticket, go to the upper floor to get to your train. Look for the big signs that say *Départ* (departures) to find the correct track (*voie*). The train from Paris to Poitiers will take around one and one-half hours. Be sure to VALIDATE YOUR TICKET (*composter*)
before you board!!!! If you do not, you may have to pay a fine if the controlleur comes by. To validate your ticket, look for the orange or yellow machines close to the tracks and put your ticket in. You will hear it punch. If it does not punch, turn the ticket around and try again. If you forget to validate your ticket, find a controller as soon as possible and tell him/her that you forgot.

**In Poitiers**

When you arrive in Poitiers, someone from ALOHA at ESCEM should meet you at the station (if you have told them when you will arrive). If you should have to take a taxi, it would cost about 5 Euros to get from the station to the school (and the housing should be about the same). You will have to pay a little extra for the luggage (.50-1 Euro)

Laundromats: Washing machines cost about 3.50 Euros. Dryers (sechoirs) cost .50 Euro for 5 minutes.

In France, most stores are closed on Sundays (including in Paris). In the provinces, stores often close in the afternoons also and then re-open. The metro in Paris stops running around midnight. If you have to take a taxi, you MUST go to a taxi stand (you can find the signs). Taxis will NOT pick you up unless you are at a taxi stand.

**Last thoughts**

Have a fabulous time! The French are polite and kind. Sometimes we do not know their codes, so be sure to read the book French or Foe by Polly Platt. It does not cover everything, but it will be a good start. Stay in touch with Dr. McEachern and never, never hesitate to e-mail or call her.