



Fall 2017 International Student Guide





THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY IN CAIRO

International Student Guide – Fall 2017

Part I. Ahlan wa Sahlan.....	2
❖ Welcome to AUC.....	2
○ AUC Campuses	
○ Your offices on Campus	
Part II. Before You Leave.....	6
❖ Information for Parents and Families.....	6
❖ Find a Place to Live.....	7
○ AUC Student Housing	
○ About Renting Flats	
○ Tips and Resources	
❖ Packing the Suitcase.....	10
❖ Pre-Arrival Information.....	12
○ Academic Calendar	
○ Advising and Course Registration	
○ Airport Pick-up	
○ Campus Safety	
○ Cell/Mobile Phones	
○ Enrollment Confirmation	
○ Financial Arrangements to Make before you Leave	
○ Maintain a Healthy Lifestyle	
○ Mandatory Orientation	
○ Payment of Tuition and Fees	
○ Receiving Mail	
○ Start-up Costs	
○ Visas	
○ Pre-Departure Checklist	
Part III. Arrival Survival.....	21
❖ Getting to Campus.....	21
○ How to Get to Campus	
○ AUC Bus Schedule and Fees	
❖ Orientation Week.....	21
○ Orientation Sessions	
○ Obtain a Mobile Number	
❖ Survival Arabic.....	22
Part IV. Living in Cairo.....	23
❖ Cultural Adjustment	
❖ Being a Guest in Egypt	
❖ Money Matters	
○ Exchange Rates	
○ Banking in Egypt	
○ Financial Aid	
○ Student Loan Processing	
❖ Climate and Environment.....	25
❖ Emergency Management.....	26

Part I. Ahlan wa Sahlan

Welcome to AUC

Ahlan wa Sahlan! Welcome to The American University in Cairo. As a newly accepted international student at AUC, it is important that you prepare for your journey by learning about AUC, Cairo and Egypt. This guide is a great place to begin. Designed to enhance your overseas educational experience, the International Student Guide highlights everything you need to know before you leave home, once you arrive in Cairo and after you settle in. We welcome your feedback about this book and invite you to assist us in keeping the content up-to-date and relevant. Send feedback and information you think should be included in this publication to international@aucegypt.edu.

AUC Campuses

AUC Tahrir Square

The historic Tahrir Square campus —in the heart of downtown Cairo — is home to the University’s School of Continuing Education, as well as an AUC Press bookstore, the Margo Veillon Gallery for Contemporary Egyptian Art, Ewart Memorial Hall and Oriental Hall.

The American University in Cairo

113 Kasr El Aini Street, P.O. Box 2511
Cairo 11511, Egypt

AUC New Cairo

The New Cairo campus lies in the suburb of New Cairo, a development comprising 46,000 acres of land and with a projected population of 2.5 million people. New Cairo is designed to be a predominantly middle-to-high-income residential community. It encompasses schools, cultural facilities, commercial enterprises, government agencies, hotels, open spaces and parks, with the AUC campus at its center.

The New Cairo campus is home to all the other academic schools — business, graduate education, humanities and social sciences, global affairs and public policy, and sciences and engineering.

The American University in Cairo

AUC Avenue
P.O. Box 74
New Cairo 11835, Egypt

Your Offices on Campus

Office of International Student Life

The mission of the Office of International Student Life (ISL) is to facilitate the transition of international students to life in Egypt and at AUC, and to enhance their experience at the University. It also aims to weave the global dimension into the fabric of student life. The Office of International Student Life provides all nonacademic services, programs and events to international students. This office holds a crucial role in the internationalization of AUC.

Campus Center, AUC New Cairo • Room 1052 • 8:30 am - 4:15 pm • Sunday - Thursday • international@aucegypt.edu

Amal Salah, director, amsalah@aucegypt.edu • ext. 3836

Ibrahim Louris, officer, ibrahim.auc@aucegypt.edu • ext. 3839

Mariam Kamal, specialist, mariam.kamal@aucegypt.edu . ext. 3812

Sarah Saher, senior specialist, ssaher@aucegypt.edu • ext.3834

Arabic Language Intensive Program

The Arabic Language Intensive Program (ALIN) is an essential component of the Department of Arabic Language Instruction (ALI), which was originally established in 1921 as the Center for Arabic Studies. Today, the Department of Arabic Language Instruction is one of the oldest accredited private institutions, attracting thousands of students and scholars from all over the world to study Arabic at every level.

Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Bin Abdulaziz Alsaud Hall, AUC New Cairo • Room 1005 • 8:30 am - 4:30 pm • Sunday - Thursday • alin@aucegypt.edu

Mona Hassan, director • monakh@aucegypt.edu • ext. 2173

Sandra Sami, program specialist • alin@aucegypt.edu • ext. 1730

Business Support Services (Visa Office)

The Office of Supply Chain Management and Business Support handles all services related to passport registration and student visa procedures for all new international (non-Egyptian) students.

Administration Building, AUC New Cairo • Room 2020 • 9 am - 2 pm • Sunday - Thursday

Main, AUC Tahrir Square • Room 424 • 11 am - 2 pm • Sunday - Thursday

Mona Wagdy, Director of Travel and Business Support. mona.wagdy@aucegypt.edu . ext. 2304
• business.support@aucegypt.edu •

Graduate Student Services

The Office of Graduate Student Services works with the Office of the Dean for Graduate Studies and Research to provide local and international graduate students with a variety of services. Orientations are offered every semester for incoming students, and activities are planned throughout the year.

Campus Center, AUC New Cairo • Rooms 1017 - 1022 • 8:30 am - 4:30 pm • Sunday - Thursday
grad@aucegypt.edu

John Sedky, senior specialist, john_s@aucegypt.edu • ext. 2620

Nashwa Abdel Salam, assistant, nashwaa@aucegypt.edu • ext. 3475

Sawsan Mardini, director, sawsanmr@aucegypt.edu • ext. 3477

Yasmine Ibrahim, fellowships coordinator, y.ibrahim@aucegypt.edu • ext. 3474

International Programs Office (IPO)

The IPO office provides information on the advising and registration process required for the courses you plan to take at AUC if you are an international non-degree student.

Waleed Hall • Room P026 • 8:30 am - 4:30 pm • Sunday through Thursday •
ipoadvisors@aucegypt.edu

Dahlia El Tayib, director of international programs, dahlia.tayeb@aucegypt.edu • ext. 3589

Rana El Shabrawy, officer, rana.elshabrawy@aucegypt.edu • ext. 3581

Salma Talaat, specialist, salmatalaat@aucegypt.edu • ext. 2078

Office of Residential Life

The Office of Residential Life manages all AUC student housing applications and assignments, and coordinates a menu of cultural activities, trips and excursions to help residents settle into life in Cairo and the region.

University Residences, AUC New Cairo • 8:30 am - 4:30 pm • Sunday - Thursday •
ResLife@aucegypt.edu

Maissa Ragab, director, maissa_f@aucegypt.edu • ext. 4031

Yasser Allam, senior coordinator, y.allam@aucegypt.edu • ext. 4035

About AUC

Throughout its history, AUC has balanced a strong commitment to a liberal arts education, with a concern for the region's need for practical applications and professional specializations. To learn more about AUC and its history, visit www.aucegypt.edu/about.

About Egypt

Venturing to Egypt is an exciting enterprise. The adjustment and learning opportunities inherent therein are a major undertaking. Reading as much as you can about Egypt and its people will help ease what may be a transformative, and at times, uncomfortable experience.

Egypt is located in the northeastern corner of Africa on the Mediterranean and Red seas, and covers an area of 386,000 square miles —about the size of Texas and New Mexico together. Cairo, Egypt's capital, has approximately 20 million inhabitants and Alexandria, the country's second largest city, has a population of 7 million.

Although Cairo has an urban constituency, a significant number of Egyptians inhabit rural areas. These are mostly the *fellahin*, peasant farmers whose way of life, centered in villages and the fields surrounding them, has only recently begun to reflect some modern changes.

Major cities like Cairo and Alexandria are a blend of many peoples and cultures resulting from successive invasions and migrations since Pharaonic times. Greeks, Romans, Armenians, Gulf Arabs and Italians, among others, came from outside Egypt, while within the country, migration of rural Egyptians to the cities continued over time. Some groups formed their own minority communities, and others mixed more readily with the local population. Today's migration to the urban centers is composed mainly of Egyptians from rural areas who swell the ranks of the urban poor—people beginning the transition from the traditional agricultural economy to city life.

Part II. Before You Leave

For Parents and Families

Studying abroad will be a defining moment in your son or daughter's life — a personal journey that will add to his or her growth and learning as an individual for years to come. The experience of studying in Egypt at AUC will distinguish them from their peers and catch the eye of employers. Yet, we know it can be stressful watching your son or daughter prepare for their study-abroad experience. There are some things you can do to support and maximize your son or daughter's learning experience, and lessen your anxiety and stress.

- Encourage your son or daughter to be in charge of all the pre-departure plans. It will help them cope with the adjustment later on.
- Plan to keep in touch, but allow some distance. AUC strongly encourages international students to keep in touch with family and friends while away. We encourage parents not to panic if their son or daughter allows more time than usual to pass without calling. Several factors could be at play. Their mobile phone may be lost or out of order. They also could be away on an exciting weekend excursion, and therefore out of range. The acculturation process will be slower and more difficult if your student spends a lot of time texting and Skyping friends and family back home.
- Culture shock, a term to describe the roller coaster of feelings that arise when travelers are overwhelmed by cultural differences, will happen. And it will pass. When your son or daughter complains of homesickness or stomach pains and headaches, encourage them to visit AUC's clinic, counseling center, ISL or a resident adviser at the dorms.

Health and Safety

Although the streets of Cairo are among the safest of any large city, verbal and physical harassment of women may happen. Random violent crime is rare except for the occasional pickpocket or purse snatchers who will gladly take your money and/or passport. Like any big city, some neighborhoods in Cairo are safer than others.

AUC considers the health and safety of its students of the utmost importance. There is a campus safety office and a security department on the premises. The safety office safeguards all AUC facilities against fire and other safety hazards. The security department has jurisdiction over those incidents that occur on campus only. They can advise and advocate for students in the local police system, as necessary.

All international students are given an emergency contact card during their participation in the mandatory orientation program. This card contains the 24/7 contact phone numbers of key people who are located on campus in the following offices and departments: the clinic, counseling center, international student life office, residential life and several others. Students are encouraged to contact the appropriate administrator any time during the day or at night if they are in need of assistance. Please encourage your son or daughter to keep this card with them at all times and to use it as needed. To fully equip our students with safety tips for living in Cairo, common issues are addressed in the mandatory orientation program.

Students should be mindful of the laws of Egypt. Should they find themselves in trouble with local law enforcement, the Embassy of the United States can provide only limited assistance, referring them for legal assistance and checking on their well-being.

In Case of Emergency

In the event of a personal emergency, such as accidents, injury, act of violence, family death or emergency travel, international students, their family members or home institution contacts should call the Office of International Student Life emergency number, as follows:

- From the United States: 011.2.010.0006.6907
- From any other part of the world: 002.010.0006.6907

An ISL staff member will answer and provide assistance. The ISL emergency protocol is in place to assist international students at AUC.

Students are encouraged to submit their contact information in Egypt and update it regularly by visiting myinfo.aucegypt.edu, so they are able to receive emergency alerts and updates on their personal phones.

Health Care and Health Insurance

It is AUC's policy that all international students have comprehensive accident, injury and sickness insurance, including emergency medical evacuation, political evacuation and natural disaster and repatriation benefits. AUC holds a group insurance policy with Catlin Insurance Company Incorporated that is issued with the policy number BAH 4002340 0817. This plan allows your son or daughter to choose the physician and hospital for treatment beyond what the Office of Medical Services provides.

The AUC clinic is your primary care provider. All medical services for international students are coordinated by the AUC clinic located on the New Cairo campus (20.2.2615.3916) and on the Tahrir Square campus (20.2.2797.6747). The AUC clinic is open daily from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm and has a 24-hour ambulance service. For medical emergencies after normal business hours, students may contact Dr. Mohamed Amin on his mobile number (012.2100.5947).

Find a Place to Live

Student Housing (On-Campus Residences)

Opened in Spring 2009, the New Cairo residence complex offers townhouse living with the comfort of close proximity to class and University life. For more information on the University Residences, visit the residential life webpage at www.aucegypt.edu/students

Off-Campus (Independent) Living

Disclaimer: The off-campus housing information presented on these pages is public information meant to assist AUC students (only) seeking accommodation in Cairo and should not be misinterpreted as an endorsement of any company, realtor, broker or website. The American University in Cairo and the Office of International Student Life cannot guarantee, and is not responsible for the availability of apartments or the quality or accuracy of the information and services provided by these resources. Nor are The American University in Cairo and the Office of

International Student Life responsible for the behavior of tenants and any damage to the apartments, and therefore, shall not be liable for any indemnity claimed by landlords. ISL and AUC do not claim any responsibility for private disputes between international students and landlords.

Living independently in Cairo is an adventurous and challenging experience. Since the process of seeking and leasing a flat can expose important cultural differences, we want you to keep the following in mind.

1. Living on one's own in Egypt requires maturity, basic Arabic language skills and previous experience traveling to non-Western countries.
2. The on-campus residence provides a high level of security that is not necessarily available off-campus.
3. Be advised, however, that campus housing, in keeping with local customs, observes strict separation of the sexes. Men and women may visit only in the common areas.
4. AUC security checks all bags upon entrance. Illegal drugs and alcohol are strictly prohibited.
5. Ask yourself: Am I an urban warrior or a suburban dweller (mostly)? Am I street savvy?
6. Ask yourself: Am I comfortable resolving conflicts and problems independently?

Given this information, decide what is most important to you, and make your decision carefully.

Some students find that renting a furnished apartment in Cairo is more cost effective for their budget and allows a more independent lifestyle. If you choose this option, prepare to deal with the challenge of finding a flat in Cairo and negotiating a fair rental agreement. Many students have suggested that the list "Cairo Scholars" is useful for finding apartments and roommates. ISL and AUC does not claim any responsibility for private disputes between international students and landlords.

Renting Flats

- Mixed gender living accommodations are frowned upon. Although there are some that will, many landlords are not interested in renting to a mixed gender group.
- Loud boisterous parties where alcohol is served are also strongly frowned upon.
- One-bedroom flats are in very short supply. Most flats are two to three bedrooms.
- It will cost approximately LE 5,000 to LE 7,000 per month for a decent two-bedroom flat in a good neighborhood.
- Apartment hunting in Cairo is something of an art. There are brokers known in Arabic as *samasra* who will show you apartments and charge a fee if you take one. Some students have had good luck in dealing with *samasra*, while others have not. For reliable *samasra*, contact ISL.

The fee for a *simsar*, singular of *samasra*, other than those referred by ISL, is approximately LE 500 to LE 1500. Make sure you agree upon their fee before the search begins. Some will try to charge you a fee for each flat you visit, whether you take it or not. Resist agreeing to this.

Tips and Resources

The easiest way to find a flat in Cairo is to take one over from a student who is leaving Cairo. Use caution in choosing an apartment or a roommate not affiliated with AUC. Once you find an apartment, there are several factors that should be taken into consideration.

Negotiating and Signing the Lease

If possible, have an Arabic speaker with you when negotiating the lease.

Signed leases are legally binding and if broken, could create legal difficulties. Please do not sign a lease until you are sure you understand everything that is written in it. Most lease contracts are, for the most part, usually reprinted forms and are standardized.

Do not allow the landlord to pressure you into signing a lease before you have had time to review it in full.

If the landlord presents you with a copy of the lease and then takes it away to only later present you with an “identical” copy to sign, be sure it is an identical copy. Do not allow the landlord to pressure you into signing two different contracts specifying different amounts of rent. They may claim it is necessary for their purposes, but it may ultimately involve you in a lot of unnecessary argument.

Try to negotiate with the landlord, in writing, that the deposit will be the last month’s rent (depending on the amount involved), barring some kind of serious damage to the apartment that is your fault. This will save you a lot of trouble when it is time for you to vacate the flat, particularly since many landlords are reluctant to return deposits.

Find out who is responsible for your police registration — the official notification of your residence in that apartment. Usually the landlord will do this. It requires going to the local police station with a copy of your passport and registering your residence, something you must do each time you move in Cairo.

Discuss the Condition of the Apartment

Clarify who is responsible for issues such as plumbing, electricity and hot water. Try to have the landlord assume as much of this as possible. Do not pay a deposit or rent until there is agreement in writing, about who is responsible for what. Make sure everything works before you sign the lease and pay the rent or deposit.

Check the meters for utilities (electricity, gas and water) before signing the contract, and keep the records in writing.

Ask other tenants in the building about the availability of water; some neighborhoods are without water most of the day. Find out if the building has a *khazzan* (storage tank) in case the water is cut off.

Find out if the landlord keeps in their possession, an extra key to the apartment. If so, learn under what conditions it will be used. Ensure they will not make unexpected visits or enter without knocking. You may ask permission to change the lock yourself (at your expense) and keep all keys.

Try to obtain and sign, separate from the lease, a list of all the apartment's major furnishings. Note everything that is broken, or snap pictures with your mobile phone during a walk through.

If the apartment is furnished, ask the landlord to specify exactly what belongings in the apartment are for use by the tenant.

Since Egypt has been experiencing recurrent power cuts, we do recommend that you choose an apartment where you won't depend mainly on the elevator.

Make sure the elevator operates reliably. You may ask the neighbors about that.

Packing the Suitcase

It is a good idea to plan to travel with a carry-on bag that contains overnight essentials — change of clothes, mini toiletries and medication — just in case your baggage arrives later.

When packing, keep in mind that upon arrival in Cairo, you will have to get from the airport to your destination by walking to the main building. This includes taking the stairs. You will do all of this with your luggage in tow, so pack wisely.

What to Wear and What Not to Wear

A woman wearing sleeveless tees, knee-high skirts, sundresses or halter tops in public attracts unwanted attention. Scarves are really affordable in Egypt and are a great complement to any outfit, and will create a more conservative look. Clothes made of see-through or translucent fabrics are not a good idea either. While some Egyptian women may wear such clothes indoors, at sporting clubs, on the beach, in automobiles or on campus, it is not advisable to wear these in the public arena. A woman should dress and behave modestly while walking in the streets to lessen being stared at and called out to, as well as reduce the chances of being followed or touched. More guidance on avoiding unwanted street attention is given at orientation. In class, female students wear casual clothes — dresses with sleeves, blouses or sweaters with long or short sleeves, skirts, pants or jeans.

Men wear shorts in public sparingly, since Egyptian men save shorts for sports-related activities and the beach. While it is common to see male foreigners wearing shorts in public, if you prefer to blend in, long pants are the norm.

Some tourist destinations in Egypt have lax rules on dress, and being trendy is part of the scenery. In Dahab and Sharm El Sheikh, women relax in bikinis on the beach, and men walk around town with their shirts off.

However, not all of the popular tourist spots in Egypt allow for wearing what you want. For example, many AUC students visit Alexandria and are surprised to find how conservatively most women are dressed, and how many disapproving looks they seem to receive because they are not dressed conservatively enough.

Toiletries and Medical Supplies

Almost everything you will need is now available in Cairo, although not necessarily in the brands you are used to. The AUC clinic advises anyone using prescription drugs for long-term maintenance of chronic conditions to bring an adequate supply of the required medicines, along with the prescriptions, including the generic names of the drugs. Medicines should be in their original, labeled containers and accompanied by a doctor's prescription to avoid arousing the suspicion of customs officers. Although most prescription drugs are available in Cairo, pharmacies may run out of supplies or may have similar drugs that are commonly used to treat your ailment, but are not the same drug you use. Also, there are occasional problems of quality control in the Egyptian pharmaceutical industry. Tampons are available in Cairo.

If you are used to a certain brand of toiletries or medicine, it is recommended that you bring them from your own country, as they might not be available in Egypt or may not be the same quality you are used to.

Electrical Current and Equipment

The current in Egypt ranges between 220 and 240 volts (but may drop well below 200), alternating at 50 cycles per second. The higher voltage in Egypt can be stepped down to 110 to 120 volts by means of transformers or converters. Transformers are available in Cairo in sizes ranging from 50 to 5,000 watts, although the larger transformers are expensive. For small appliances, voltage converters may be used.

Voltage converters come in two types: one for equipment using 0 to 50 watts such as electric razors and calculators, and another for appliances using 50 to 1600 watts, such as curling/flatirons, hair dryers and irons. Converters will not work on appliances rated at more than 1600 watts. They come in a kit with adapter plugs to fit electrical outlets in all parts of Europe. The outlets usually found in Cairo are the continental type, requiring plugs with two round prongs (as opposed to the British type with two slightly shorter, fatter, round prongs). Voltage converters and adapter plugs are widely available. European and Asian students should find that their electrical equipment will need no adaptations. If you do not plan to live in one of the University dormitories, it is recommended that you buy a flashlight when you arrive in Cairo in preparation for power outages.

Metric Converter

Egypt uses the metric system. Those not accustomed to it should bring a pocket converter.

AUC Payment Receipts and Acceptance Letter

All new students should pack (and have readily accessible) a hard copy of their AUC acceptance letter. This is the best guarantee for initially entering AUC campuses until your student ID is issued. (It may help in that process too.) Having the acceptance letter in your email inbox will not help you unless you have a laptop and printer. It is in your best interest to print out the acceptance letter, and have it ready to show campus security and other officials until you have secured the AUC student ID card and bus pass (if applicable).

If you have paid your tuition, residence charges and other AUC fees to the New York Office, you will receive receipts to take to Cairo for presentation to the relevant University offices. If you have paid directly to AUC in Cairo, be sure to hold on to all receipts. This will facilitate your initial entry to campus and help you obtain your student ID card.

Extra Photographs

Bring extra copies of your passport photo. You cannot imagine how often you will need them. They will be needed for processing your student visa, membership cards and visa applications for travel to other countries, as well as for a replacement passport should yours be lost or stolen. You may also get passport photos in Cairo, but it is a lot less troublesome for new students if they already have extra copies during the first six months of living in Cairo.

Marriage License

Some married couples find it useful to carry their original marriage license when traveling in the Middle East. This can be helpful if a wife does not use her husband's family name. Couples whose passports do not bear the same last name could potentially have difficulty checking into the same hotel room or renting a flat together, unless they have proof that they are married.

Pre-Arrival Information

Academic Calendar

The normal business hours of the University are Sunday through Thursday, 8:30 am to 4:30 pm. Classes at AUC follow a two plus two schedule. Classes meet on Sundays and Wednesdays or on Mondays and Thursdays. Except for some labs, classes are not held on Tuesdays. Most classes are 75 minutes long. The course catalog indicates the days of the week as:

U = Sunday

M= Monday

T= Tuesday

W = Wednesday

R=Thursday

F=Friday

S=Saturday

The official University academic calendar is online

Advising and Course Registration

For questions concerning academic matters and registration, including requests for course syllabi, contact ipoadvisors@aucegypt.edu.

For questions regarding Arabic placement and courses, contact alng@aucegypt.edu.

Airport Pickup

For pickup from the Cairo airport:

- 1) Email carpool@aucegypt.edu, and they will send you a form to complete.
- 2) Send the completed form to carpool@aucegypt.edu at least **10 days** before the requested pick-up date.
- 3) You will receive a reservation confirmation followed by the reservation details, including the driver's name and mobile number, at least **48 hours** before arrival or departure.
- 4) A car reservation fee will be charged to your account upon receipt of the reservation confirmation.
- 5) The cost for this service will be approximately \$20.

Note:

Students who wish to cancel or modify their reservation request should send a cancellation or modification request to carpool@aucegypt.edu at least 48 hours before the intended arrival or departure time; otherwise, the full fee will be charged to their accounts.

Campus Safety

The University's security team works in close cooperation with the Egyptian government to safeguard the campus and residences. All entrances are monitored and secured, with access controlled via ID checks, metal detectors and bag searches. An AUC identification card is required to enter campus.

Mobile Phones

International students often want to know if they can use their home country cell phone in Egypt. The answer is yes, if it is a tri-band cell phone, and if you have international roaming, but your calls will be very expensive. We recommend that if you have a tri-band phone and it is "unlocked," meaning you can replace the U.S. SIM card with a local SIM card, bring your cell phone and buy a local SIM card. Local cards are cheap to purchase. You can set up an account to be billed, or you can pre-pay for minutes, which is probably easiest for short-term visitors. If your cell phone is not tri-band or it is locked, you may purchase a cheap phone in Cairo for as little as \$50.

Enrollment Confirmation

All prospective students offered admission to AUC must notify the University in writing of their intention to enroll, defer or decline admission. Student must complete and submit the Enrollment Plan Form contained in the admission packet as soon as possible.

Financial Arrangements to Make Before You Leave

While some costs, like tuition, insurance, visa and, to a large extent, transportation, are pre-determined, other living costs such as housing, meals, books and supplies vary according to the individual student's choices and lifestyle.

The following is an estimate of expenses per semester excluding tuition, housing, transportation to and from Egypt, and extensive travel in the region.

- Food and Board \$2800
- Textbooks and Supplies \$450
- Personal Expenses \$500
- Travel within Egypt \$1000

The easiest way to replenish your funds in Cairo is by using an automated teller machine (ATM) card linked to a major international bank. Keep your bank account open at home, or open up a bank account before you leave. Be sure to check with your bank to determine what fees you may be charged for each overseas ATM transaction. Many international visitors pay a flat \$5 fee for each ATM transaction, plus a small percentage of the amount of the transaction (up to 3 percent). There are ATMs throughout Cairo and on campus. You may consider opening an account at an international bank with a presence in Cairo. HSBC has many ATMs in Cairo and allows you to open a personal checking account online that can be linked to a checking account with another institution so that money may be easily transferred.

To open an account at the Commercial International Bank (CIB) on campus, you will need a valid passport with a proof of residency (a letter of enrollment from AUC or a residency agreement) and a valid student visa. Keep in mind that it takes a minimum of three weeks to obtain the student visa after arrival in Cairo. For more information, call the CIB hotline at 19666.

Exercise Facilities

It is possible to maintain a healthy lifestyle in Cairo, but it will take effort. AUC has a state-of-the-art sports center (facing the University Residences), with a weight room, cardio room, martial arts room, indoor and outdoor tracks, courts and a swimming pool. Your student ID is all you need to use the facilities.

Healthy Food

Upon arrival in Cairo, be moderately careful about the food. Fresh vegetables and fruits are plentiful. Most restaurants serve vegetarian dishes, which are relatively cheaper. Health food stores are not common, but a few may be found. Until your body adjusts, it is recommended that you shop for food at one of the main supermarket outlets such as Seoudi (there is a branch on campus), Metro Market, Alfa Market and many others, where clean and packaged fresh fruits and vegetables may be obtained.

Medical Services

All AUC students should use the AUC clinic as their primary health care provider. Referrals to labs, specialists or other medical facilities will be coordinated by the AUC clinic, which has provider relationships with the best hospitals in Cairo. A list of those hospitals may be found in the orientation handbook, which is available upon arrival and check-in at the ISL office.

All non-Egyptian students are part of a comprehensive medical service plan involving several area hospitals in agreement with AUC. The features of this plan include: examinations by resident physicians or assistant specialists in the outpatient clinic; referral to specialists or specialized clinics in areas such as rhinolaryngology, dentistry and ophthalmology; medicines dispensed by the hospital pharmacy or outside pharmacy when prescribed by a hospital physician; hospitalization in the services of general surgery, urology, gynecology, otorhinolaryngology, osteopathology, internal medicine and physiotherapy; maternity; and treatment of injuries resulting from accidents. For plan rates, please refer to the next page. This is supplementary coverage only, and it will not take the place of the comprehensive medical insurance (see below) mandated by the University for international students. However, it covers the usual deductibles of the larger plan and is sufficient for minor ailments.

Health Insurance

AUC's Office of Medical Services is dedicated to promoting the health and wellness of the student body. The AUC clinic in the New Cairo campus is open on weekdays from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm. A physician and nurse are also available for emergencies after hours. There is a 24-hour ambulance service for critical cases only.

If you are currently taking regular medication, it is important to remember that your medication may not be available in Egypt. You will want to consult with your physician and also contact the Office of Medical Services to verify that your medication will be available. The same medication that you take here could be available in Egypt under a different name.

Pre-existing chronic medications will not be covered by the clinic.

Questions about the AUC clinic should be directed to Dr. Mohamed Amin, director of the Office of Medical Services. All students are charged a medical service fee that covers the use of the AUC clinic. Students are not able to request an exemption from this fee.

Mandatory Health Insurance

AUC requires that all international students have health insurance.

The University automatically charges you for two plans: a local plan with the AUC clinic (see above) and an international plan, administered **only** by the Office of International Student Life. Details about this policy can be found at <http://www.aucegypt.edu/students/international-students/health-care-and-insurance> .

Please note that coverage under this plan extends anywhere in the world **except** your home country. This plan does not include home country coverage.

Important Billing Information

Your AUC bill will reflect charges for two plans: the medical services fee described above and the mandatory health insurance premium. There are no exemptions for the medical services fee. Exemptions to the mandatory health insurance will be considered only if submitted by the deadline which will be **September 13, 2017 for the Fall 2017 semester**. If the exemption is granted, the fee for the health insurance premium will be removed.

2017 - 2018 Premiums

SEMESTER	BASIC PLAN (\$77.38 per month)
Fall Aug 15, 2017 - Jan 14, 2018	\$183.45
Winter Session Dec 31, 2017 - Jan 30, 2018	\$36.69
Spring Jan 15 - Jun 1, 2018	\$165.11
Graduating Seniors, Spring Jan 15 - Jun 30, 2018	\$201.80
Summer Session Jun 1 - Aug 14, 2018	\$91.73
Full Year Aug 15, 2017 - Aug 14, 2018	\$440.28

Important Note: The dates in the chart are the start and end dates of coverage. This insurance plan covers you anywhere in the world except your home country.

Mandatory Health Insurance Exemption

If you are currently covered under an insurance plan that provides coverage in Egypt and includes policy limits that either meet or exceed those offered by the AUC policy, you may request an exemption from the medical insurance fee at

<http://www.aucegypt.edu/students/international-students/health-care-and-insurance>

For more information, contact ssaher@aucegypt.edu.

Please note that the online exemption form will not be accessible after the deadline which is September 13, 2017.

Dependent Coverage

This option is available for students who have dependents (spouse and/or children) accompanying them. To acquire coverage for dependents, fill out the form and submit directly to the insurance company.

Dependent enrollment forms can be found online at

<http://www.aucegypt.edu/students/international-students/health-care-and-insurance>.

For additional information, click [here](#)

Mandatory Orientation

The orientation program for new international students is mandatory. You should benefit from the sessions and free outings offered by the Office of International Student Life (ISL), which aim to make your transition to Cairo a smooth one. The orientation will take place from **August 27 to 29, 2017**. ISL is providing free cultural trips on August 30, September 1 and Orientation Follow-up Session for new international students on September 29-30, 2017

Payment of Tuition and Fees

Read the payment options available in the letter of acceptance. AUC requires payment of tuition and fees from international students in U.S. dollars and does not accept credit cards. Allow 10 business days for a bank transfer to process. Check or money orders should be made payable to The American University in Cairo.

Through the New York Office

All payments must be made in U.S. dollars and should be drawn from a U.S. bank.

Students Admitted Through the Cairo office

Commercial International Bank Cairo

Hoda Sharawi Branch

Account Number - 0510300155

Swift Code - CIBEEGXC005

If you are paying by certified check, it should be addressed to:

The American University in Cairo

AUC Avenue, P.O. Box 74

New Cairo 11835, Egypt

You may send a fax notification to 20.2.2795.7565 that you have made the required payment. All new international students planning to pay *at* AUC must pay by check at Dr. Hamza AlKholi Information Center or by wire transfer.

Loans

If you are expecting a loan check or have any questions regarding loan processing, check with Ania Rejman via email at arejman@aucegypt.edu .

Receiving Mail

Parents and loved ones will want to send you care packages while you are in Egypt. We strongly advise against it. The mail service in Egypt is slow and unpredictable. Bear in mind also that packages containing personal items are subject to delays at the airport and heavy customs duties.

Students may rent a mailbox at the Campus Center, with a \$50 mailbox key deposit. The address to receive mail through the University is:

YOUR FULL NAME The American University in Cairo AUC Avenue, P.O. Box 74 New Cairo 11835, Egypt

Start-up Costs

It is important that students arrive with sufficient funds to cover settling-in expenses, in addition to unforeseen costs. Do not bring traveler's checks. It is difficult to cash them in Cairo.

Egypt is a mostly cash-based society. You will find that credit cards are only useful at major chain restaurants, hotels, supermarkets and popular tourist destinations.

You can maintain your personal checking account and withdraw money from ATMs after verifying that you will be able to use your ATM card while abroad. Keep in mind that withdrawing money from ATMs could mean that you will incur ATM fees and currency conversion rates as established by your lending institution. There are ATMs throughout Cairo and on campus. Alternatively, you may want to consider opening an account with an international bank with a presence in Egypt in order to avoid ATM fees.

Visas

Egypt requires that you have a student visa in order to enter the country. You will need to check with the Egyptian consulate/embassy at your country. A minimum of 12 credit hours (9 credit hours for graduate students) is required for eligibility.

To avoid delays in what is already a long process, you must submit a copy of your passport, along with the international student data form to AUC's New York Office. This should have been done as part of the application process. Note that issuance and renewal of student visas is at the discretion of the Egyptian government.

How to Apply for a Visa to Enter Egypt :

At an Egyptian Consulate

You may acquire a visa application from any Egyptian consulate/embassy. Do not wait until the last minute to apply. Allow several weeks if you are getting the visa by mail. North American and European applicants may also apply for the visa in person, if convenient, and may be able to get it the next day. Some offices may issue the visa while you wait. On the other hand, for citizens of some countries such as Iran and Syria, visa processing usually takes about eight weeks.

Pre-Departure Checklist

Academic

- Obtain course pre-approval from home institution (if applicable)
- Complete and return Preliminary Course Planning (PCP) form
- Contact ipoadvisors@aucegypt.edu
- Take online placement exam(s) (if applicable)

Accommodation

- Read the rules and regulations of campus housing thoroughly
- Submit the online campus housing application and deposit

- Make hotel reservations (for initial stay)
- Contact ISL for roommates and flats (off-campus housing assistance only)
- Read off-campus housing web information

Financial

- Notify the bank you will be using abroad.
- Obtain the phone number to call to replace lost or stolen credit or debit cards.
- Budget frugally for the first semester.
- Pay tuition fees.
- For exchange students: Learn what your institution pays for versus what you are responsible for.
- If you have financial aid through your home university: Complete and process all paperwork needed for financial aid.
- Student loans: Make sure you have loan approval prior to departure.
- Keep receipt or proof of tuition payment readily accessible with travel documents
- Note to self-paying students: Be certain to arrive in Cairo with either proof of payment or proof that the loan or scholarship money is approved and en route. Your “settling in” to AUC and Cairo will be negatively affected if you are not in possession of either one of these documents.

Health

- Complete and submit the AUC health form.
- Obtain a four-month supply of prescription medication.
- Complete and submit health insurance exemption form (if applicable).

Travel

- Apply for or renew your passport.
- Read through the Egyptian consulate web information for entry visa instructions for citizens of your home country.
- Complete and submit the data form included in the application.
- Attend pre-departure orientation at your home school (if applicable).

Part III. Arrival Survival

Getting to Campus

Once you arrive in Cairo and you want to get to the New Cairo campus, your best option is to use the AUC shuttle bus. First, keep in mind that the regular business hours of the University are Sunday through Thursday, 8:30 am to 4:30 pm. Although the University is accessible to students on Fridays, most departments, offices and services are closed for business. Some food stands are open, and the Sports Center has limited hours on Friday. The library, food outlets and the Sports Center are open for business on Saturday.

How to Get to Campus

Unless you have family or friends in Cairo that can drive you, you may reach the University's New Cairo campus by an AUC shuttle bus or by taxi from certain city districts. One needs an AUC student ID to board the shuttle bus. Upon your initial arrival, show the bus driver your acceptance letter, along with your passport, and you should be allowed to ride the bus. Once on campus, head to Dr. Hamza AlKholi Information Center to obtain your student ID and to purchase a bus pass, which may also be obtained from room G012 of the Administration Building.

AUC Bus Schedule and Fees

The bus service covers most of Cairo and parts of New Cairo. The main routes are Maadi, Heliopolis, Nasr City, Zamalek, Downtown, Giza, Dokki, and Al-Rehab. Visit the AUC transportation website at www.aucegypt.edu/bus/

International study-abroad students who will pay for the bus through their home university must contact Bhagyashree Deshpande from the New York Office at bdeshpande@aucegypt.edu and Ahmed Hamzawy from the student accounts office at ahamzawy@aucegypt.edu .

Orientation

ISL communicates with international students as soon as they express interest in AUC. Accepted students receive communication that contains useful links and information material regarding visa matters, health insurance, and airport pickup in case you would like to use this service.

The Fall 2017 orientation will be held from August 27 to 29, 2017. During orientation, you may take care of routine transactions such as obtaining your student ID card, taking placement tests (if applicable) and late registration. You may also take a campus tour to begin learning your way around campus. Upon arrival, you will receive a welcome pack.

Opening Session

The Office of International Student Life will begin the orientation with an opening session. International peer leaders (IPLs) will be present to welcome you and guide you around campus.

Attending the opening session is crucial because it:

1. Introduces you to the ISL team who will help you, not only during orientation, but throughout your stay in Egypt.
2. Takes you through the orientation schedule and introduces ISL services, trips and activities throughout the semester.

3. Gives you the chance to meet your IPL, who will help you get your ID card, bus pass and visa, and take care of things you may need assistance with, not only on campus, but in Cairo in general.

Obtain a Mobile Number

In Egypt, the mobile (cell) phone and the service are not bundled. You may purchase a reasonably priced mobile phone at the many mobile shops around Cairo. We recommend that you get the SIM card and number, visit the service provider shop to prepay for service and purchase a mobile phone (device). If your current cell phone is unlocked (many from the United States are not), you may use the same phone and just change the SIM card.

Survival Arabic

The American University in Cairo is an English-language University. All courses are taught in English. For those of you coming to AUC with no background in Arabic language, the University offers a nondegree, 20-hour crash course in Egyptian colloquial Arabic during orientation.

Part IV. Living in Cairo

Cultural Adjustment

The choice to live and study abroad is a major undertaking in cross-cultural living and learning. It will not be easy, and the process will progress over a number of months. The payoff, if successful, is immense. You will learn about yourself and your home culture as you learn about Egyptians and their culture.

It is common for new arrivals to go through a period of culture shock, a (sometimes) anguishing period of reaction and adjustment to a new, unfamiliar environment.

Being a Guest in Egypt

Always remember that you, as well as every other international student, faculty and staff member, are a guest in Egypt. You are subject to all local laws. Propriety requires good sense, good judgment and respect.

Money Matters

The basic unit of currency in Egypt is the Egyptian pound (LE), which is subdivided into 100 piasters (PT). Unlike the U.S. dollar, a “hard” (internationally-circulated currency), the Egyptian pound is a “soft” currency, usable only within Egypt. It is not possible to transfer Egyptian pounds outside of Egypt.

Egypt is a cash-based society. It is necessary to always have a minimum of LE 300 in pocket. In addition, new students must be certain to bring enough start-up cash, since it may take up to one month to open a bank account.

Exchange Rates

The bank rate of exchange between Egyptian and other currencies is left to complete floatation. At the time of writing, the rate for U.S. dollars is approximately LE 18 to \$1. You should check the website of the Central Bank of Egypt at www.cbe.org.eg for updates. The Euro is worth even more in relation to the Egyptian pound.

Banking in Egypt

There is an active international banking community in Cairo. Not all banks offer services to individuals. Banks differ according to the legal charter under which they are formed. Broadly speaking, there are private-sector banks, including foreign affiliates, such as the Commercial International Bank, which has an office on campus, Credit Agricole Bank, Citibank, HSBC and Cairo Barclays Bank. This is in addition to the public-sector banks, which are wholly owned by the Egyptian government, such as the National Bank of Egypt and Banque Misr.

You may use your ATM card in Cairo to withdraw money in Egyptian pounds from your account at home. Check with your bank at home about associated fees. Money may also be transferred to you through Western Union and American Express, but may take up to 15 days. You will need to check the commission associated with the transfer.

Financial Aid

Student financial aid is administered through the Office of Student Financial Affairs in Cairo. The New York Office administers U.S. financial aid for the University.

Student Loan Processing

U.S. citizens enrolled at AUC in a program leading to an undergraduate or graduate degree, as well as Department of Arabic Language Instruction students enrolled for both the fall and spring semesters, may be eligible to borrow student loans directly from the U.S. government. To apply, you must submit a FAFSA at www.fafsa.ed.gov. The FAFSA school code for AUC is G05034. You must apply for U.S. student loans each academic year.

After your FAFSA is received by AUC, you will be emailed an award letter with additional information. After an award letter is provided, you are able to decrease or cancel the amount you will borrow at any time before the first day of class. You may also request to decrease or cancel the amount you have borrowed up to 14 days after the date your loan money is applied to your student account, as long as any refunds owed to you have not been issued. If you have completed all of the steps in your award letter, U.S. student loan money will be credited to your student account on the first day of class each semester.

Loan funds are used to pay tuition and fees at AUC. Any resulting credit balance is issued directly to you in the form of a check in U.S. dollars, 14 days after the first day of class. U.S. student loan refunds are not issued before the start of a semester, so budget accordingly. Refund checks are mailed to an address in the United States or may be obtained in Cairo. If you do not have a bank account in Egypt, you should not request that your refund be issued in Cairo. Additional details on obtaining an expected refund can be found in your award letter.

Course registration is verified before refunds are issued. You must be enrolled for at least 6 credit hours to remain eligible for student loans. Your award is based on full-time attendance, so your award will be adjusted proportionally if you do not carry a full-time course load. A full-time load constitutes at least 12 credit hours for undergraduate students and nine credit hours for graduate students. The Department of Arabic Language Instruction is a full-time program. Graduate students enrolled in only a thesis course or comprehensive examination retain eligibility for student loans. Students who withdraw before the end of a semester may be required to return loan money immediately to the U.S. government.

You must maintain satisfactory academic progress in order to remain eligible for U.S. student loans. Undergraduate students must maintain a 2.0 GPA, and graduate students must maintain a 3.0 GPA. The GPA eligibility requirement for U.S. student loans may be different from academic requirements within different academic departments at AUC. You must also complete your program within 150 percent of the program's length as indicated in the AUC catalog. For example, U.S. student loans will not be awarded after three years of enrollment in a graduate degree program and after six years of enrollment in an undergraduate program. Satisfactory academic progress is based on attempted hours and not earned hours. If you fail to meet the satisfactory academic progress policy, your eligibility for U.S. student loans will be suspended.

Climate and Environment

Climate

Autumn and winter are pleasant seasons in Egypt. Mild weather prevails; temperatures vary between 60 and 80 degrees Fahrenheit, with cool evenings. In winter, it gets cold at night. Spring is also usually pleasant, though around April, an occasional hot, sandy wind blows. Summer is hot (80 - 105 degrees Fahrenheit). Humidity is fairly low, however, and it is much cooler at night than during the day.

The Environment

Cairo is physically challenging. Some features of the city that often surprise or otherwise affect the emotions of non-Egyptians are detailed below.

Traffic and Transportation

Getting around Cairo can be difficult because of the crowds. The dense population of the city is reflected in its crowded public transportation system.

Transportation during rush hours is difficult when buses and trains are jammed. Remember too, that you are in the capital of a country and that dignitaries abound. Because of the heavy traffic, it is strongly advised that you do not ride a bicycle (except perhaps in Maadi). Owning a car is not practical.

The majority of AUC students reside in Cairo and have to cope with this traffic, commuting to and from campus daily, which means that your best chance of making their acquaintance will be during the day — around campus, in classes and at University-sponsored events and activities. As for getting to your destination, you may sometimes have to abandon hope of catching a taxi and put on your sturdiest walking shoes. Caution: Females shouldn't walk alone late at night, especially in secluded areas.

Safety and Security

It is crucial that you attend the Arrival Survival orientation session, which deals with security and safety in Egypt. Furthermore, you must check your AUC email regularly for security notices and announcements. This will ensure that you are updated and ready to undertake any activities or excursions with the information needed to avoid hazards.

Airport Shuttle

You may reserve an airport shuttle bus to take you from the airport to your destination and vice versa. The bus is air-conditioned and holds up to seven passengers. Reservations can be made prior to arrival via the website or in Cairo at their counter in the airport. For more information, call 19970 or visit www.cairoshuttlebus.com.

Metro

Cairo has an excellent subway system (metro) that operates above ground in some areas and underground in others. The stations are clean, smoke-free, well-lit, easy to navigate (signs are in both Arabic and English) and the fares are cheap. The price per ticket is LE 1, which allows a

single rider on the two major lines. There are two cars in the mid-section of each metro exclusively for women.

National Railway

Ramses Station (reachable by metro at El Shohada station) is a hub for trains to various governorates around Egypt including Luxor, Aswan and Alexandria. For more information, call 2575.3555.

Taxis

Taxis are one of the most common means of transportation in the city. Just raise your hand or call out “taxi,” and they should stop. Name your destination and negotiate your price (if there is no working meter inside) before you get in. You should have an idea of the fair price to your destination. Most taxi drivers speak little to no English. It is common for taxis to pick up additional passengers going in the same direction. Do not get in a taxi that already has a male passenger up front. And, you can protest any attempt to pick up additional passengers once you have commissioned a taxi already. Women should never occupy the front passenger seat in a taxi. It is advisable that you take white cabs with a working meter and air conditioning, which have become more common.

Smoking

Non-smokers will find themselves surrounded by smoking in Egypt, where it is something of a national pastime, particularly for men. Although smoking is prohibited inside AUC buildings, relatively few places in Cairo are designated as non-smoking areas.

Crowds

Crowds are a fact of life in Cairo. New Cairo, still under development, is free of crowds with lots of open space both on and off campus. Downtown and throughout the residential districts of Cairo, there is little relief from the dusty, (sometimes) hot city and the hectic traffic. Cairo has a high population density. In an area of 20 square miles, Cairo proper has a population of about 19 million people and Greater Cairo, an area of 300 square miles, is home to an estimated 22 million.

Useful Websites

www.yellowpages.com.eg

<http://cairodining.com> - restaurants and reviews, night spots, nutritional information

www.yallabina.com - online entertainment guide

www.egypt.souq.com - online local shopping

www.cdf.gov.eg/ - cultural outings

www.cairoopera.org - Cairo Opera House

Emergency Management

ISL is ready and equipped to deal with any student or family-related emergency. The office has an emergency hotline that operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week, including holidays. The number is **010.0006.6907**. Upon arrival, new international students receive this emergency number, along with several other important numbers, on the Emergency Card. If students do not find the emergency service needed listed on the card, they should call the hotline.

Students should check any travel plans within Egypt with ISL to ensure they are safe and to check for updates regarding the best ways to reach different destinations in Egypt.

Examples of emergencies for which it is appropriate to use the hotline number:

1. If a family has not been able to reach their student for more than 48 hours
2. If a student is ill to the point that they need to see a doctor
3. If a student experiences threatening or hostile landlord disputes
4. If a student has to go to a police station for any reason
5. Death-related issues
6. If a student is taking certain medications and is not feeling well
7. If a student is experiencing a mental health crisis
8. If a student experiences Egyptian visa or travel problems
9. If a student needs passport information
10. If a student's flight (either international or domestic) was delayed, and they need to reschedule an airport pickup.

Examples of situations that do not constitute an emergency or use of the hotline number:

1. Student loan processing or reimbursement problems: Contact Bhagyashree Deshpande from the New York Office at bdeshpande@aucegypt.edu and Ahmed Hamzawy from the student accounts office at ahamzawy@aucegypt.edu.
2. AUC financial and housing payment issues: Call Ahmed Hamzawy in student accounts at 20.2.2615.2449 during normal business hours
3. If you lose your credit or debit card, contact the credit/debit card issuing bank to cancel the card. Go to ISL during normal business hours to coordinate the receipt of a new card through the New York Office and receive a mini-loan as needed.
4. Academic problems: Deal directly with your professor, and if the problem remains unresolved, proceed up the hierarchy (department chair, dean or provost).
5. Telephone numbers for different restaurants, pharmacies or grocery stores can be found at www.yellowpages.com.eg.
6. Flight details should be checked online or by calling the airline.

Before long weekends and/or holidays, international students are asked to fill out a "Bon Voyage" form available online

This form tells ISL where students are going and who they are going with, which makes it easier to contact them in case of an emergency. Additionally, upon arriving at AUC, students fill out a check-in form on which they write their place of residence, cell phone and other contact information. ISL strongly recommends that students provide their parents with their Egyptian mobile number, as well as their roommate's mobile number. Parents should be patient and check their email inbox when trying to contact their son or daughter unsuccessfully via telephone. Mobile phones are often lost, stolen or do not work properly. Sometimes, students do not receive calls from their parents because their phones are off during class, labs or outings.

Suggestions or corrections for the online International Student Handbook should be sent to international@aucegypt.edu.