

Orientation Information

All students will have an orientation on the first day of the program. The orientation will include: guided tours of the important facilities on campus as well as the city of Haifa, an opportunity to meet the staff of the International School, and important information regarding all aspects of life at the University of Haifa.

Included below is important information you will need to know before your arrival to the University of Haifa.

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GENERAL INFORMATION

Location:

Haifa is a beautiful Mediterranean city surrounded by miles of natural beaches and the Carmel National Park. In addition, Haifa is Israel's foremost port city for international commerce and a center of high tech industry. Haifa is the world center of the Bahai faith, and the Jewish, Christian, Moslem and Druze communities play important roles in shaping the city's harmonious and friendly social ambiance. Haifa is a city that offers all forms of cultural entertainment with its internationally acclaimed symphony orchestra and theater and numerous cinemas, discos, restaurants and pubs.

The University of Haifa is located on top of Mt. Carmel on the southeast side of the city bordering on the Carmel National Park. Over 16,000 students are enrolled in its undergraduate and graduate degree programs in the faculties of humanities, social science, education, social welfare, science and science education, and law. The University is also the home of a number of research institutes and study centers and offers extensive pre-academic and external study programs.

Dormitory Facilities:

The student dormitories are located on campus and there is a security guard at the entrance 24 hours a day. All full-time students in the International School are encouraged to live in the dormitories. There are two types of dormitory accommodations available to international students:

- Federman Dorms: apartments of three double rooms and a shared bathroom, kitchen, and living space.
- Talia Dorms: apartments of six single rooms, each room with its own bathroom, and a shared kitchen and living space.

All bedrooms are furnished with a bed, desk and chair, bookshelf, and a closet for each student. The kitchen is equipped with a refrigerator and hot plate. Students are provided with bedding (one pillow, one pillowcase, two sheets, and one blanket) but must supply their own towels, cooking utensils and cleaning supplies. Laundry rooms with washers and dryers, a TV room, computer rooms, and a grocery store are available in the dormitories. Students are responsible for maintaining the cleanliness of their suites and for respecting the rights of others to quiet and privacy.

Room assignments are made upon arrival to campus. All international students will be sharing their suite with Israeli students, a very friendly and diverse population of Hebrew, Arabic, English, Russian, and Spanish speakers. You may indicate a particular person with whom you wish to share a room, though we can not guarantee that we will be able to grant your request. You may also indicate if you want a smoking or non-smoking roommate.

Food and Living Expenses:

There is no meal plan at the University of Haifa, but students can prepare meals in their suites. A grocery store is located in the dormitory complex and larger supermarkets are within a short distance from the campus. There are also subsidized cafeterias located on campus serving kosher meals during the day at reasonable prices. Numerous restaurants are located within a short driving distance from campus.

You should plan to spend \$400-\$500 per month for food, independent travel, and incidental expenses. You may need a bit more for the first month to cover initial purchases of household items and books.

ACADEMIC INFORMATION

Registration:

Semester Courses:

Before the start of the semester, students will submit their preliminary course registration. During the first two weeks of the semester, students will have a two-week "shopping period" to select their desired courses. During this period students may freely drop and add courses. After this two week period, students will submit their final registration and registration to courses will be closed.

Students who are proficient in Hebrew may also register for courses in other departments of the University of Haifa. The International School will assist in registration for these courses. Students who select courses in other departments should note that **the semester schedule of the University is not always the same as the schedule of the International School**. Therefore, if you intend to take courses offered through other departments you must be available to stay on campus for the duration of the course.

Our staff will be available to help students plan their course schedule. During orientation and throughout the shopping period, students will be able to make appointments for academic advising with International School faculty and staff.

Intensive Courses:

Registration for intensive courses (intensive language courses and/or Study Tour) will take place on the first day of the course. Because of the short length of these programs, registration is closed after the third day and no changes can be made to a student's course schedule after that time.

Course Load and Course Information:

The normal course load for a student studying in the International School for the fall or spring semester is 15 credits per semester, though 12 credits is the minimum and 18 credits is the maximum. Students who drop below the twelve credit minimum will lose access to campus facilities such as the dormitories and libraries and scholarships may be revoked.

All of the courses in the International School (with the exception of elementary language courses) are upper level undergraduate courses even if they contain introductory subjects. They require a research paper or mid-term examination and a final examination. Students are permitted to audit courses, but audited courses will not count towards the required minimum of credits that students must take.

Syllabi for all courses in the International School are published on our website. Students should consult with an academic advisor at their home university prior to coming to the University of Haifa to ensure that the courses they intend to select satisfy their particular degree requirements. Students are encouraged to seek approval from their home university for more courses than they will actually take while in Haifa so that they have some flexibility when they need to submit their final course registration. The International School will assist all students who may have any questions about the suitability of their courses.

Grading System:

The following is the grading system in the International School at the University of Haifa:

| | | |
|-------------|------------|------------------|
| A+ = 97-100 | B+ = 82-85 | C+ = 65-72 |
| A = 91-96 | B = 77-81 | C = 61-64 |
| A- = 86-90 | B- = 73-76 | D = 55-60 |
| | | F = 54 and lower |

There is no pass/fail option in the International School.

Withdrawal from a Course:

You may withdraw from a course within the first two weeks of the fall or spring semester or within the first three days of a summer or intensive course, and the course will be erased from your registration and transcript. After final registration, no withdrawals are permitted, and all registered courses will appear on your transcript.

Incomplete Course Work, Late Work, and Delayed Final Exams:

Students who have not completed all required assignments by the end of the designated grading period following the end of the semester will receive an "incomplete" on their transcript. Upon completion of the requirements, the incomplete will be replaced by a grade. Late assignments will only be accepted with advance permission from the instructor and may result in a lower grade.

Students are not permitted to leave the program before the end of the semester/course. All final exams will be given by the last day of the program, and your travel arrangements home should be made accordingly. For full-time students studying in the fall or spring semester only, if you have extenuating circumstances and must leave the program early, you must submit the Multiple Petition Form to the International School within the first two weeks of the semester. The form will be reviewed by the Head of the International School and, if approved, arrangements will be made for you to take your final exams at your home university with a proctor.

Transcripts:

Your official University of Haifa transcript is issued by the International School approximately one month after the end of the semester. Before leaving the University, please make sure that you have indicated the precise address and mailing instructions to which the transcript should be sent. This will avoid unnecessary delays in the receipt of your transcript by your home university. You may also request that a copy of this transcript be sent to your home address.

Transcripts will not be issued unless all tuition, dormitory, activities, and gym fees as well as library fines have been paid and you have vacated your dormitory room in good order.

It is possible to order transcripts at a later date. There is a fee for these additional transcripts.

REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

Passport:

You must have a passport that is valid for the duration of the time you expect to be abroad.

Israeli Visa Requirements:

Israeli visa requirements vary based on your country of citizenship. It is your responsibility to verify with the Israeli Embassy closest to you what the specific visa requirements are for a person with your citizenship. Most often it is possible to enter Israel either on a tourist visa or a student visa. The following is an explanation of each option. **Please note:** if you have Israeli citizenship or if you have a parent with Israeli citizenship, special rules apply to you. These rules are explained below.

Tourist Visa: The majority of students (including American, Canadian, and most Europeans) attending the University of Haifa for the summer, semester or full year may enter Israel on a tourist visa. The tourist visa is valid for three months and is issued free of charge at Ben Gurion Airport upon arrival. No previous arrangements need to be made prior to your arrival in Israel. After three months, the visa must be extended for another three-month period at the Israeli Ministry of Interior office in Haifa. The visa may be extended every three months for up to a year. There is a modest fee for each extension. With a tourist visa you do not forfeit your Temporary Resident / New Immigrant rights should you decide to remain in Israel. Although you enter Israel on a tourist visa you can reclassify your visa from tourist to another type if you wish. The International School staff will help you with this simple renewal procedure and provide you with certification of your status as a student.

Student Visa: A student visa is a multiple-entry visa valid for one year during which time you can leave and re-enter Israel a number of times within the period of validation without having to secure a new visa. Student visas are renewable after one year both in Israel and abroad. Students participating in the semester or year programs are strongly encouraged to arrange for a student visa before their arrival to Israel. Due to recent political events both in Israel and throughout the world, entering Israel is not as easy as it once was. If you attain a student visa before you arrive you will eliminate any problems at the airport as well as the need to renew your tourist visa. If you are unable to attain the visa before arrival, we will help you secure the visa once you are in Haifa.

To apply for a Student Visa you must appear in person at the Consulate of Israel in your area. The Israeli Consulate will inform you as to which type of documents you will need. Most likely you will need to submit the following items with your application:

- 1) Your passport, valid for at least two more years.
- 2) Your letter of acceptance to the University of Haifa.
- 3) For students under the age of 18 years, a notarized declaration of permission to attend the University of Haifa signed by both parents (if possible).
- 4) Two copies of the visa application form, with one photograph attached to each copy. Forms can be obtained from the Israeli Consulate.
- 5) Proof of sufficient funds to cover tuition and living expenses.

If you do not live near an Israeli Consulate, please contact the closest consulate by phone. If arrangements are made far enough in advance, a visa can usually be attained by mail.

Students who were born in Israel and/or whose parents are or were Israeli citizens are generally not permitted to enter Israel on a tourist visa, but instead need Israeli travel documents. Due to frequent changes in regulations these students should consult the Israeli consulate in their area to clarify their status and complete any necessary steps before arrival.

ARRIVAL AND FLIGHT INFORMATION

Travel to Israel:

Upon acceptance to the University of Haifa, you will be provided with information regarding when you can move into the student dormitories. Please refer to this information, which changes from semester to semester, before you book your travel. Students need to make their own travel arrangements to Israel and plans to arrive to the University of Haifa. As soon as you know your travel arrangements, please inform the International School so that your room in the dorms will be ready for you. If we are expecting you, a key will be left with the guard at the entrance to the dorms.

Due to heightened security on all flights traveling to Israel, we encourage you to check in three hours ahead of your departure time. Security personnel will routinely ask all passengers questions about their baggage, destination, and purpose for traveling. In addition to your passport and ticket, we strongly recommend that you have a copy of your letter of admission to the International School at the University of Haifa easily accessible to verify your identity and purpose for traveling.

Luggage:

We recommend that you do not ship luggage to Israel. It is best to take your belongings with you and check them on your flight. If you must take excess baggage, it is much less expensive to pay the extra baggage charge than to ship baggage. If you choose to ship luggage, please note that procedures for clearing bags through customs can be quite complicated. You must have a detailed itemized list of the content for each bag, and you may be taxed on personal items whether they are new or used. In addition to customs fees, you may be required to pay port fees and handling charges. Rather than bringing excess luggage or shipping baggage, we encourage you to minimize your packing and consider purchasing necessities upon arrival in Israel.

How to Arrive from the Airport to the University of Haifa:

Ben Gurion International Airport is about a 1.5 hour car ride from the University of Haifa. It is very easy to find your way from Ben-Gurion International Airport to the University of Haifa. The three best options are:

- 1) *Sherut*: Shared taxis called *sherut* wait outside the arrivals hall exit. There are *sherut* that bring people directly to Haifa, and you will see signs "Shuttle to Haifa" as you exit the airport. Let the driver know that you need to be dropped off at the dormitories of the University of Haifa. As soon as the *sherut* van fills with ten people, it will leave for Haifa and will bring you directly to campus. The cost of the *sherut* is 56 shekels, or about \$12.
- 2) *Train*: There is a train station at the airport where you can board a train that will bring you directly to Haifa. You will want to get off at the "Hof HaCarmel" train station in Haifa. From there you can either take bus #46 or a private taxi to the University. The cost of the train is 34.5 shekel (about \$8). A bus to campus will cost 5.6 shekel (about \$1.50). A private taxi to the university will cost 40 shekel (\$11). The train is very comfortable, but if you have large amounts of luggage it probably is not the best option.
- 3) *Private taxi*: Private taxis wait at the airport to take travelers to all destinations in Israel. A private taxi from the airport to the University of Haifa will cost between 400-500 Shekel (\$100-\$130).

WHAT TO BRING

Suggested Packing List:

Dress in Israel tends to be casual, and what you wear at your home university is probably what you will want to wear at the University of Haifa. In addition to your basic clothing, we suggest you bring the following items:

- Hat
- Canteen/Water Bottle
- Sleeping bag (for overnight trips)
- Swimwear
- Mosquito repellent
- Hiking shoes
- Waterproof sandals
- Sunscreen
- Towels
- Prescription medication
- Camera
- Toiletries

If you will be living in the dormitories on campus, the dormitories will provide you with sheets, blankets, and a pillow.

It should be noted that most American and European brands of toiletries can be purchased in Israel, and that Israel offers many comparable brands, so there is no need to bring a year's supply of toiletries. Some items, such as batteries and reading material, are very expensive in Israel, so you may want to bring enough to last you through your stay.

Optional Items:

- Dictionary: If you intend to study Hebrew while you are in Israel, you will want to bring a dictionary that translates between Hebrew and your native language. Dictionaries can also be purchased at the University's bookstore.
- Travel Guide: You may want to bring a travel guide to Israel. *Lonely Planet* and *Let's Go* are recommended because they are geared towards students.
- Photographs: You are encouraged to bring several extra passport photos. You may need these for a gym membership, visa renewal, and other needs.
- International Student ID Card: Although you will be issued a student card by the International School that will give you access to facilities at the University of Haifa, you may want to purchase an International Student Identification Card (ISIC), which will entitle you to certain travel discounts, reduced fares on entrances to attractions, and other reductions both in Israel and anywhere else you may travel. The card can be purchased at most student travel agencies.

Electrical Appliances:

The electrical current in Israel is 220 volts, 50 cycles (as opposed to the 110 volts and 60 cycles in the USA). Therefore, if you choose to bring any electrical equipment, you will need to purchase a transformer. Some appliances, such as hair-dryers and shavers, may be dual-voltage, and for these you will need adapter plugs that are convertible to the Middle East. We suggest that you bring an alarm clock that runs on batteries.

Although there are computers available throughout the campus and in the dormitories, you may want to bring a laptop computer. Most of the University of Haifa is equipped with wireless internet access, though wireless access is not available in the dorm rooms. Be sure that you have a good lock for your computer, and that it is compatible with 220 volts.

COMMUNICATIONS

Mail:

A letter or package sent first class will take approximately 7-14 days to arrive in Israel via standard airmail, depending on the country of origin. "FedEx," "UPS," and "DHL" express mail services exist to and from Israel. We advise you to bring all electronic items and appliances with you and not send them through the mail. Electrical items of any kind that are sent by mail will be subject to customs tax even if they are not new. Packages sent via surface mail from the United States take six to eight weeks for delivery. Students will be asked to come to the main post office in downtown Haifa to clear such items.

All mail should be clearly addressed:

**Your name
C/O International School
University of Haifa
Haifa 31905
ISRAEL**

Your mailbox is located just outside the International School office. Mail is delivered once a day in the morning. You will be notified via e-mail if you receive a package.

Fax:

Students may receive fax communications via the International School office. Our fax number is +972-4-8240391. Unless there is an emergency, students are not allowed to send fax messages via the office. Students may use the fax services located at the campus post office.

E-mail:

Students have free internet access at the computer terminals located throughout campus and in the dormitories. In addition, there is wireless internet access available throughout campus, though not in individual student dorm rooms. Students are encouraged to check their e-mail daily as most of the communications from the International School will come via e-mail.

Telephone:

Since the University of Haifa is first and foremost committed to student safety and security, we require that all students have a cell phone while enrolled in our programs. Students may choose their own provider. Students can choose to either rent or buy a phone for the duration of their stay or borrow a phone from friends and family in Israel. Students are required to have their cell phones charged and with them at all times to enable International School staff to reach them by phone call or text message in the event of an emergency.

For students who are interested in renting a phone, the University of Haifa has signed a contract with Talk 'N Save, providing students with a plan that offers reduced rates on international calls and inexpensive rates to other Haifa students on the same plan. For detailed information about the cell phone rental as well as to order your cell phone, please visit the following website: <http://www.talknsave.net/schools/haf-421.asp>.

There are public telephones in the dormitories and throughout campus. They operate with telecards that are purchased at the campus post office.

Students can arrange with the Bezek Telephone Company to have a private phone installed in their dorm room. Students will be asked to pay a security deposit on the phone that will be returned when the service is concluded and the final bill is paid. Deposits will not be sent to you abroad, but are only refunded in the form of an Israeli check.

The International School is unable to provide students with the means of making or receiving personal calls unless a true emergency exists. The office can receive messages for students during its regular office hours on Sunday through Thursday, 8:00 – 16:00 (8:00 AM to 4:00 PM).

HEALTH CARE AND INSURANCE

Medical Insurance:

Health insurance for all full-time students in the International School is included with your tuition fee. Upon acceptance to the University of Haifa you will receive information about Harel-Yedidim Insurance Agency, the company with whom the University of Haifa works. Please note that the Israeli health insurance does not cover pre-existing conditions and is limited to students under the age of 65. Therefore, if you do not qualify for the Israeli health insurance due to a pre-existing condition or your age, you must continue to be covered by your health insurance from your home country.

Medication:

If you are taking prescribed medication, it is advisable to bring an adequate supply for the duration of your trip abroad. If that is not possible, you should bring a doctor's prescription (clearly typed in English) for the medicine that you are using, or a prescription of a generic medication that is suitable for your condition. If your medication is sent to you through the mail, you will be required to present a copy of the prescription to the Israel Customs Office before it can be released.

Mental Health:

Students who need counseling services are welcome to use the Berman Counseling Center on campus. English-speaking counselors are available for international students. There is a fee for counseling services; this fee is the responsibility of the student.

BANKING AND MONEY MATTERS

Bank Cards:

The easiest way to obtain cash while in Israel is to use your bank/ATM card from your bank in your home country. Be sure to check with your bank ahead of time to find out if your card can be used internationally and if any extra fees apply. Also, if your card requires a password, be sure to bring it with you. There is a branch of Bank HaPoalim on campus with ATM machines that accept international cards.

You are encouraged to notify your bank ahead of time of the dates you will be abroad and where you will be traveling. This will prevent them from freezing your bank card due to what they may consider suspicious activity if they don't know you're abroad.

Credit Cards:

Visa and MasterCard are widely accepted in Israel, and many places will also accept Diner's Club and American Express. Credit cards can be used for purchases in stores, restaurants, movies, and for various services. In addition, your credit card can often provide you with a cash advance.

You are encouraged to notify your credit card company ahead of time of the dates you will be abroad and where you will be traveling. This will prevent them from freezing your credit card due to what they may consider suspicious activity if they don't know you're abroad.

Traveler's Checks:

Traveler's checks are the safest way of bringing money to Israel. They can be used at many merchants and are easily exchangeable at post offices or banks throughout the country. Traveler's checks should be purchased in large denominations (such as \$100.00) because most banks charge a fee per check upon exchange.

We encourage all students to bring at least a minimal amount of money in traveler's checks so that they can have immediate cash upon arrival, as well as a back-up should there be a problem with a bank or credit card.

Opening an Israeli Bank Account:

We do not recommend that students open a bank account in Israel. Israeli banks charge many fees, and it is more cost effective to use your home bank's ATM card to withdraw cash from an Israeli bank.

SECURITY AND LIFE IN THE MIDDLE EAST

As you prepare for your study experience in Israel, the issue of security is undoubtedly on your and your family's minds. First and foremost, know that the welfare of our students is our highest priority. It is an unfortunate fact that we have had to adjust ourselves to difficult times here in Israel, but we have learned to deal with them calmly and professionally. The International School staff has many years of experience making sure that our students live and study in safety and return home enriched by their time here.

The University of Haifa's campus is set on a quiet spot on top of Mount Carmel on the edge of Haifa. The University employs special security guards who check every individual coming into campus and who patrol the campus grounds. Entrance to the dormitory complex is limited to those with a dorms ID card, and a guard is on duty 24 hours-a-day, 7 days a week. This facilitates a secure and relaxed atmosphere where students can focus on their studies. All aspects of our social program, including trips around Israel, are coordinated with the security authorities, thus allowing students to see the country in the safest possible way.

During orientation at the beginning of each semester, students will receive an updated list of security instructions. These instructions will include information about measures students can take to keep themselves safe, parts of Israel where students are not allowed to travel, and what to do in case of an emergency. These instructions change from semester to semester and all students enrolled in the International School are required to abide by these instructions. Failure to abide by the security instructions may result in dismissal from the International School.