GUIDE TO WASHINGTON, DC
OFF-CAMPUS STUDY/INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS
201 MCGREGORY HALL
COLGATE UNIVERSITY

The Office of Off-Campus Study would like to extend its thanks to the students and faculty who have helped develop, write and edit this guide.

We welcome your suggestions and any new information you may have to bring this guide up to date. The easiest way for us to make revisions is to receive a marked-up copy of the guide. So if you’re willing to help, make notes and corrections during your semester in Washington and return the guide to the Office of Off-Campus Study in 201 McGregory Hall upon your return.

Thanks in advance for your help and best wishes for a great semester in Washington!

PREPARING FOR YOUR SEMESTER OFF-CAMPUS

DO SOME RESEARCH
The earlier you start thinking about your semester off-campus, the more prepared you will be. Begin by looking through as many books, pamphlets, web sites and other sources of literature as you can find. Talk to Colgate students who went on the NIH and/or Washington study groups in the past and take their suggestions too.

Buy a map: Browse a map of Washington and the surrounding area. Pay particular attention to the metro system. The metro will most likely be your main mode of transportation.

Surf the Web – You can start by heading to the Off-Campus Study home page on the Colgate website for links to information about your study group and general travel information. Below are some other websites worth checking out.

□ http://www.nih.gov – official NIH website
□ http://www.wmata.com - Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority
□ http://www.washington.org – Official visitor information site for the Washington, DC area
□ http://www.si.edu – Smithsonian website
□ http://www.dcpages.com – Attractions, discounts, restaurants, and other events in the DC area
□ http://www.dc.gov/ - Washington, DC government welcoming website

WHAT TO PACK
Some suggestions:
□ Keep in mind: Washington, DC is much warmer than Hamilton, NY.
□ Pack for maximum efficiency. Short- and long-sleeve t-shirts, turtlenecks, and light sweaters are all good because they can be layered and are easy to pack. Do NOT forget a light winter coat, preferably one that is waterproof!
□ A weekend bag that is small and lightweight (yet durable) will be useful if you plan to take any weekend trips. We suggest that you definitely go with an oversized backpack.
□ Bring dress clothes. Occasionally, you may even find it necessary to dress very formally – shirt, jacket and tie for men. For the Washington study group this is especially important. You will be expected to wear professional attire for your internship(s).
□ Bring comfortable shoes (dress and everyday). You will do a lot of walking around the city generally.
□ An umbrella, waterproof shoes, and a water-repellent coat are a must!
□ The general consensus is that a Walkman, Discman, MP3 player and/or Ipod (and of course the music to go along with it) is a must.

2
□ Bring towels or plan to buy some once you arrive in DC. If you opt for bringing rather than buying, we recommend you bring 1 or 2 large towels, 2-3 hand towels, and any wash cloths you plan on using.
□ Portable alarm clock (a battery-powered one that is small enough for weekend travel is best). The smaller, the better. Leave the large, big-numbered ones at home; it will just end up eating away unnecessary space in your luggage. Be efficient!

Clothing/Accessories thought to be Essential
□ Book bag
□ Clothes that can be easily layered
□ Jeans
□ Raincoat
□ Sweatshirts, hoodies, and light sweaters are indispensable
□ Bedding (regular twin)
□ Travel alarm clock
□ Umbrella
□ Waterproof shoes, such as walking boots
□ Shower curtain
□ Cooking utensils beyond the basics
□ Walking shoes – nice, comfortable shoes are a MUST
□ A few pictures or things to make your room feel homey

APARTMENTS
You will be living in apartments in Cleveland House for the semester. This apartment complex has a nice diversity of tenants: some may be fellow students, some maybe professionals and some may be families with young children. Therefore, you will need to be considerate with noise levels, especially at night. Cleveland house is an amazing place to live. The apartments are very spacious and nice; a definite change from Colgate dorm rooms.

Your address for the semester will be:
(Your name)
Cleveland House # (your apartment #)
2727 29th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20008

Laundry facilities are located on the ground floor of the building, and a fitness center is on the lobby level, with basic aerobic equipment, a weight machine, and a couple free weights. There is an ATM in the lobby and there is a 24-hour concierge for all services. Mailboxes are assigned by apartment and are located in the lobby. Some of the items included in your Cleveland House apartment are:
□ Sofa
□ Loveseat
□ Dining Room table set with four chairs
□ Coffee Table and two end tables
Basic utensils, dinnerware, cooking set, and cooking utensils
Twin beds, standard size
Dressers
Refrigerator, stove, oven, toaster, dishwasher, microwave, coffee maker
Lamps

3
An important note is that cable, Internet, and phone are not set up for you when you arrive. You must arrange to have these set up for you by RCN, which you can contact by 1-800-ringrcn or read more about on www.rcn.com/dc-metro.com.

If you are bringing a car to DC, contact Cleveland House before you arrive to inquire about reserving parking in the covered garages. The available parking space is limited, so it is rented on a space-available basis. Parking is a little costly (check with Cleveland House for current rates); however, tandem spaces are available for a slightly discounted rate per car if you want to rent with someone else who will be bringing a car for the semester. Visitor spaces are available for $5 per night, only you must pay with a check and spaces may be limited. Be aware that DC is hands free (no cell phones while driving) and they are VERY strict in enforcing this law.

More information about Cleveland House can be found on their website:
http://www.archstoneapartments.com/Apartments/District_of_Columbia/Washington_DC_Area/Cleveland_House

ENTERTAINMENT
Washington is a hub for entertainment, food, museums, and cafes. Most museums in the area have free admission; however, they may be open limited hours. Also, many of the government buildings are open for tours and information sessions. Some require appointments, so plan ahead. Some of the more popular cultural and entertainment areas of DC include: Adams Morgan (approximately 1 mile from apartments), Georgetown, Dupont Circle, Chinatown, Gallery Place, Bethesda, Friendship Heights (shopping), Tyson’s Corner (shopping), the National Mall (grassy area in front of capitol; also where the Smithsonian buildings are located).

FOOD
Let’s be honest, DC is all restaurants and centered around food. Nothing is produced in Washington except legislation. Therefore, all the space is either government buildings or food! We firmly believe that you could eat every nationality of food other than American for the entire semester. Examples include Ethiopian, Malaysian, Chinese, Cantonese, Lebanese, Italian, Thai, Spanish, Mexican, Japanese, etc. Students from the ’05 group recommend that you just explore! There are so many restaurants to try that one student did not eat at any restaurant twice.

Most of these restaurants are spread throughout the city, however there are concentrated numbers of restaurants in many of the entertainment districts of DC such as Adams Morgan, Georgetown, and downtown Bethesda.

Groceries are expensive in DC. If you have access to a car, you can shop around for the cheapest and your favorite grocery store. Most students shopped at Safeway stores either in Adams Morgan (18th Street NW), Georgetown (Wisconsin Ave NW), or Bethesda (near metro stop). There are also Whole Foods stores throughout the city that are good for fresh produce and specialty items, yet these are very expensive.

HEALTH CLUBS/FITNESS FACILITIES/SPORTS
There is a fitness center in the lobby level of the Cleveland House. There are nice paths to jog or bike on that go all through the city. There is also a gym at the Naval Academy, which is across the street from the NIH campus. A couple of students from the ’05 group did join Golds Gym, which was only a couple of miles away.

As for athletics, if people are deprived of their favorite sport, there are teams in the area to join. During the fall one student joined an adult co-ed soccer team in a DC area recreational league that
was pretty competitive. Some of the recreational leagues require insurance fees (one was $65). The student was also in touch with the captain of American University women’s club hockey team and they were going to let her play with them for the semester. Due to scheduling conflicts it didn’t work out.

IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS AND ADDRESSES

Emergency
For emergencies, dial 911, for non-emergencies and police department, dial 311.

Rape Crisis Centre
DC Rape Crisis Center, Tel: (202) 333-RAPE
Rape Crisis & Domestic Violence/Victim Assistance Network: (703) 360-7273

Pharmacies
CVS Pharmacy, (202) 332-1446 (8am-10pm)
2616 Connecticut Ave NW
Washington, DC
(Cross street-between 24th St NW and Calvert St NW)

Hospitals
Closest hospitals are:
Georgetown University Hospital, (202) 444-2000 Riverside Hospital, (202) 333-9355
3800 Reservoir Rd NW 4460 Macarthur Blvd NW
Washington, DC 20007 Washington, DC 20007
(cross street: between Q St NW and
Columbia Hospital – Women Med (202) 293-6500 Laverock PI NW)
2425 L St NW
Washington, DC 20037
(Cross street: between 25th St NW and 24th St NW)

Police Stations
Washington DC Police Department, (202) 576-8881 US Airport Police Department, (703) 557-2581
1500 Eckington PI NE Washington National Airport
Washington, DC 20002 Washington, DC 20001
(Cross street: near intersection of
Eckington PI NE and Florida Ave NE)

Religious Facilities
See http://www.dcregistry.com/churches.html for information on area religious facilities.

MONEY
You will find that the cost of living in Washington is rather expensive, although there are many options and therefore you may find cheaper areas to purchase needed items. Take advantage of the many specials and deals in DC, and be sure to enjoy the opportunities available in the nation’s capitol while outside of Hamilton. As with any major city, if you want to spend a lot of money it is very easy to do so, but on the other hand if you plan well you can live a more frugal lifestyle while still having a great time.

For obtaining cash during the semester, most people used ATMs. It is a big city so the big banks like Bank of America are available. There is an ATM conveniently located in the apartment lobby, and there are two bank specific ATMs (not sure for which banks) right next to the Woodley Park/Zoo Metro stop (closest to the apartments) so it is not a hassle at all.

TRANSPORTATION/TRAVEL
Your main mode of transportation will be the Washington metro system. The subway is incredibly clean, safe, and convenient. To ride, you must purchase a trip card before entering the subway. For NIH study group members, once you obtain a government ID from the NIH, you can have the NIH fund your metro travel to and from work, and still have leftover passes for
personal travel. You can also purchase a smartcard pass to consolidate all government metro
passes onto one handy card. This makes it a lot simpler.
There are three main airports in the surrounding area: Washington National (Reagan),
national airport is accessed by the blue line metro, and is incredibly convenient yet more
expensive. Washington Dulles and BWI require alternate transportation to get to the airports.
Follow these links to learn more about the buses and shuttles available.
airports
The NIH provides shuttles to the Washington area airports; however they are sometimes hard to
get and may be restricted to patients at times.
DC also has an extensive bus system. They are a cheap alternative, however you may find you
never step foot in a city bus. Also, Greyhounds to all destinations are available at the Greyhound
station behind Union Station on North Capitol Boulevard. There are also cheaper private buses
that run directly to popular cities such as Philadelphia and NYC.
□ http://www.greyhound.com – Greyhound buses, look for DC.
□ http://www.2000coach.com – cheap private buses to major cities

WEATHER/CLIMATE
Washington summers are very hot and humid. We suggest light clothing such as shorts, skirts,
tshirts, etc. Labs at the NIH require long pants and closed shoes, but other than that casual dress is
acceptable.
Washington falls are humid, yet a little cooler. Expect highs of 60°F with rain until October,
then a steady decline to snow in late November. You may want to consider long-sleeve shirts and
sweaters because most labs are intensely air-conditioned.

6
SPECIAL NOTES FOR THE NIH STUDY GROUP
The NIH campus is located at the Medical Center stop of the Metro red line. Familiarize yourself
with a map of the campus because it will make finding your building much easier. The map can
be found on the NIH website (www.nih.gov).
There are various cafeterias in buildings throughout the campus, but many students pack their
lunches. Your lab should be helpful in directing you to any other necessary facilities.
Although computer access is available at the NIH library, all students in the '05 study group
brought their own computers. Most students were also able to use computers in the labs.
Keep in mind that the NIH library does have more limited hours than the Colgate libraries, but
generally the research that students need to do can be done primarily online, since most journal
articles students will want to be looking at are published online and are much easier to access that
way. Students actually had access to even more articles at NIH than at Colgate, so it made
research a little easier. Students did not spend too much time at the library, but the library was
not over-crowded at the times that the students did go there.
Your director will most likely assign the books that you will need, just like at Colgate, and
depending on when they are assigned, they can either be purchased online or at the NIH
bookstore. Keep in mind that there are not many used textbooks available at the NIH bookstore.
The '05 study group suggests talking about books ahead of time with your professor so you can
order them online. Students in the '05 group were able to get books for approximately $50 less
this way.

FINAL NOTES
This guide is meant to be used as a starting point and a tool to help get you oriented when you
first get to Washington DC. Do not rely on the guide too much – half the fun of being in a
different city is exploring and discovering things on your own! You are in for an amazing
semester; just do not expect things to fall into your lap. You will need to get out there and make
the effort to try new and different things!
The best way to find what you are looking for in DC is to explore the city yourself. Your time there will pass quickly, so be sure to get out and enjoy the city while you can!