

# **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

## **CONTACT INFORMATION**

## **VISA INFORMATION**

## **RESIDENCE PERMIT**

## **U.S. EMBASSY / CONSULATE ADDRESSES**

## **FLYING TO BUDAPEST**

- Purchasing your ticket
- Providing flight information

## **ARRIVAL IN BUDAPEST**

- Luggage
- Exchanging money
- Pick-up at the airport
- The first few days

## **HEALTH CARE IN BUDAPEST**

- Health insurance and medical care
- Counseling

## **STUDENT HOUSING**

- Rented apartments / Flats
- Living at the Star Panzio Hotel

## **TELEPHONE CALLS**

- Public payphones
- Cell phone (mobil)

## **TRANSPORTATION**

- Bus, Metro (subway), Tram, Trolleybus, Local Train (HEV)
- Taxicabs

## **TRAVELING IN EUROPE**

- Trains
- Airlines

## **CULTURE SHOCK**

## **COLLEGE MATTERS**

- Course Registration
- Class Schedule
- Computer Facilities
- Laptops
- College Cafeteria
- Reading Room
- Textbooks / School Supplies

Student ID Card  
Electronic access card to college premises  
Student Newspaper  
Mail sent to Budapest

## **STUDY TRIPS**

### **MONEY MATTERS**

Personal Expenses  
Food  
Initial Expenses  
Automatic Teller Machines  
Currency Exchange

### **SAFETY PRECAUTIONS**

The Budapest Campus  
Budapest—a World City  
Crime Prevention: Do's and Don't's

### **ALCOHOL AND DRUGS**

### **SEXUAL ISSUES / SEXUAL ASSAULT**

### **EMERGENCY TELEPHONE NUMBERS IN BUDAPEST**

### **WHAT TO TAKE TO BUDAPEST**

### **WHAT NOT TO TAKE TO BUDAPEST**

### **OTHER INFORMATION**

What to see (Essential Budapest / Historic Churches)  
Thermal Baths  
Climate in Hungary  
Temperature  
Time Difference  
Weights and Measures  
Electric Current  
Recommended books

### **POLICY ON RESPONSIBLE DRINKING ABROAD**

Appendix: Some basic phrases in Hungarian

## McDANIEL COLLEGE BUDAPEST

### Pre-Departure Guide for Students from Westminster

#### WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW...

Hungary is a landlocked country in central Europe with a population of 10 million people. The capital is Budapest, where around one quarter of the population lives. Its neighbours are Austria, Slovakia, Ukraine, Romania, Serbia, Croatia, and Slovenia. Hungary joined the EU in May 2004.

#### McDaniel College (Westminster) Contact:

Rose Falkner, Director of International & Off-Campus Study  
International Programs Office (Hill Hall 105)  
E-mail: [rfalkner@mcdaniel.edu](mailto:rfalkner@mcdaniel.edu)  
Phone: 410-871-3376  
Fax: 410-386-4601  
<http://www.mcdaniel.edu/budapest> (for U.S. students)

#### Budapest Campus Address:

McDaniel College Budapest  
Bethlen Gábor tér 2.  
Budapest, Hungary  
H-1071  
College Phone: 011 36 1 413 3025 (Note: 36 is the country code for Hungary, and 1 is the code for Budapest)  
Fax: 011 36 1 413 3027  
<http://www.mcdaniel.hu> (for international students)

*(To call Hungary and the Budapest campus from the USA/Canada: dial 011 + 36 + area code + phone number. For calls to a Hungary cellular phone: dial 011 + 36 + network code + cell phone number. Network codes are 20, 30, 70.)*

#### College Administration:

Dean Dr. Laszlo Frenyo	<a href="mailto:lfrenyo@mcdaniel.hu">lfrenyo@mcdaniel.hu</a>
Director of Administrative Affairs: Dr. Gabor Drexler	<a href="mailto:gdrexler@mcdaniel.hu">gdrexler@mcdaniel.hu</a>
Director of Academic and Student Affairs:	
Dr. Matthew Adamson	<a href="mailto:madamson@mcdaniel.hu">madamson@mcdaniel.hu</a>
Personal Assistant to the Dean: Ms. Bernadett Solti	<a href="mailto:bsolti@mcdaniel.hu">bsolti@mcdaniel.hu</a>
Student Program Assistant: Ms. Margo Kovacs	<a href="mailto:mkovacs@mcdaniel.hu">mkovacs@mcdaniel.hu</a>
College Email:	<a href="mailto:admissio@mcdaniel.hu">admissio@mcdaniel.hu</a>

#### VISA / RESIDENCE PERMIT

U.S. citizens going to Hungary are NOT required to apply for an entry visa. However, students who stay longer than 90 days (as is the case with study abroad students enrolled at the Budapest campus) must apply for a **Residence Permit** within 30 days of arrival because you are not considered tourists while you are studying in Hungary. The Budapest campus will assist students with the application procedure for obtaining a residence permit and will take you, as a group, to the Immigration Office before the start of classes.

#### APPLYING FOR A RESIDENCE PERMIT

To apply for a Residence Permit for the purpose of study in Budapest, you will need to take the following with you to the Immigration Office (located at XI. Budafoki út 60; student hours: Wednesday, 8:30 a.m. -12 noon):

- (1) a statement from your bank about the balance of the CHECKING account from which you will be drawing funds with your debit card while living abroad. A balance of \$1,500-\$2,000 should be a sufficient amount to verify that you have the available funds to cover your personal expenses abroad. If the account is not yours, obtain a statement from the holder that he/she authorizes you to draw funds from the account (*e.g.*, a declaration from your parents stating that they assume coverage of all costs of your stay in Hungary).
- (2) one passport-size photo
- (3) a valid passport
- (4) official bill stamp/fee stamp of 18000 Forints (approximately \$78) / can be purchased at any Post Office in Budapest
- (5) A letter from the Budapest campus (MCB will provide you with this school certificate in Hungarian)
- (6) Photocopies of some passport pages—the personal information/photo page; the stamp of Ferihegy Airport on arrival
- (7) ATM receipts, or currency exchange receipts after arrival to prove that you have some Hungarian money

The Budapest campus will provide the other documents required for the Residence Permit application (letter of acceptance and affidavit, health insurance coverage in Hungary, lease contract of the apartment in Hungarian, housing registration form, residence permit application form).

### **U.S. EMBASSY / CONSULATE ADDRESSES**

#### **Hungarian Embassy, Washington, D.C.**

Web-site: <http://www.huembwas.org>

Consular Section

3910 Shoemaker St NW

Washington, DC 20008

Visa Phone: (202) 362-6730/Ext.225

Fax: (202) 686-6412

E-mail: Ms. Gabriella Toth at [gsztoth@kum.hu](mailto:gsztoth@kum.hu)

Office hours: MWF: 10 am to 1 pm

*The Consular Section of the Embassy is open to applicants by appointment only. To arrange an appointment please call 202 362 6730 Monday through Friday during office hours*

#### **Consulate General in Los Angeles**

11766 Wilshire Blvd., Suite

410 Los Angeles, CA 90025

Phone: (310) 473-9344

Office hours: MWF 9:30 am to 1:00 pm

#### **Hungarian Consulate General in New York City**

223 E 52<sup>nd</sup> St

New York, NY 10022

Phone (212) 752-06-61

Office hours:

Monday through Friday: 9:30 am to 12:30 pm

Fax: (212) 759-3277

#### **U.S. Embassy in Budapest**

Szabadsag ter 12. H-1054 Budapest

M-Th: 1-4 p.m. and F: 9-noon, 1-4 p.m.

Phone: (36-1) 475-4164; after hours: (36-1) 475-4703/4924

### **FLYING TO BUDAPEST**

#### **Purchasing your airline ticket**

***Remember that you must add one day on to your travel time to reach Budapest on the designated arrival date. For example, if you depart on the 27<sup>th</sup>, you will actually arrive on the 28<sup>th</sup>.***

A local travel agent—Lynn McCabe at Special Journeys Travel Agency in the Westminster Town Mall on Rt. 140—can arrange a group flight to/from **Ferihegy airport in Budapest** for 10 or more students. If you are interested in a group flight out of BWI or Dulles airports, you or your family must deal directly with the travel agent. *Contact:* [lmccabe@specialjourneys.com](mailto:lmccabe@specialjourneys.com) / phone: 410-876-0001.

However, arranging your own flight will be cheaper than going through a travel agent. An online student travel agency, such as Student Universe ([www.studentuniverse.com](http://www.studentuniverse.com)), offers competitive rates. You must purchase an iNext ID Card ([www.inext.com/inextweb/guestpages/get\\_card/index.html](http://www.inext.com/inextweb/guestpages/get_card/index.html)) to obtain their discount fares.

### **Providing flight information**

As soon as possible before you leave home, you must email the following information to Rose Falkner and Margo Kovacs in Budapest:

- 1) your **flight information (airline, date and arrival time at Ferihegy airport)**
- 2) your **passport number** (found in the upper right hand corner of the page with your photo). *The housing assistant in Budapest needs these numbers to fill out your residence card, which must be signed and submitted to the immigration office immediately upon arrival. Please send this information well before you leave in order to save a lot of time and confusion when you arrive in Budapest.*

## **ARRIVAL IN BUDAPEST**

### **Luggage**

Before you go abroad, check with your airlines about the amount of luggage and weight allowed. When you collect your luggage at the airport in Budapest, you can use one of their free carts. **If by some chance a piece of luggage is lost, be sure to give the College (NOT your apartment/flat) as your address so that the bag(s) will be delivered there.** Staff will be at the reception desk to accept the bag. Otherwise, you will have to wait in the hotel for the delivery while everyone else is touring the city.

### **Exchanging money**

You can do this at the airport in the baggage claim area while you wait for your bags to come down the carousel. The rate will be as good as anywhere in Budapest, so you should exchange around \$300 (approximately 69,000 forints) to \$500 (approximately 115,000 forints). Please be sure to do this for your own convenience, since you will need forints to cover the “Initial Expenses” listed in this booklet. Otherwise, later you will have to locate ATMs in your neighborhood or wait until you visit the College.

### **Pick up at the airport**

The Budapest staff will arrange to pick up a group of students at Ferihegy airport in a mini-bus and transport everyone to the city. **Note: There is usually only one group pick-up at the airport. They determine the time by when the majority of students are scheduled to arrive. If you are going to arrive much earlier or much later than the majority of students, you will be sent an email with information on how to take a taxi or airport shuttle to get to the hotel.** You are welcome to contact the other students who are also going to Budapest and discuss the possibility of taking the same flight(s). Upon arrival, you will be taken directly to the Star Panzio Hotel, where the first two days of on-site orientation will be held.

### **The first few days**

There will be a 4-5 day orientation period, two of which will be spent at the Star Panzio hotel. At this time, you will receive your transit pass, student ID card, insurance card, and computer password as well as go to the Immigration Office to apply for your Residence Permit. You will also visit the campus, complete course registration, and get your class schedules. During the on-site orientation with Dr. Matthew Adamson and Margo Kovacs, you will be introduced to the history of Hungary and various aspects of Hungarian culture, have a “survival Hungarian” lesson, and take several mini-tours to various sites in Budapest in order to get to know the city before you actually move into your apartment. When you are taken to your apartment, a student from MCB will show you around your apartment and the neighborhood, and explain the basics (e.g., where to buy groceries, catch the bus to school, etc.).

## **HEALTH CARE IN BUDAPEST**

### **Health Insurance and Medical Care**

In Hungary, you will automatically be covered by a student health insurance policy provided by Generali-Providencia Insurance Company, at no additional cost to what you have already paid for a semester abroad. This group policy entitles you to free medical care, including full coverage for hospitalization in acute cases or as a result of accidents and prescription medicine. Treatment will be provided by an English-speaking physician at the **Semmelweis University of Medicine out-patient clinic in Budapest**. The clinic address is: Kútvölgyi út 4, XII District (Buda).

Please note that this special insurance covers students ONLY while they are in Hungary.

**If you feel sick, call Margo Kovacs (06-30-495-9420). In the event of a health emergency, contact Margo or the Director Student Affairs, Dr. Matthew Adamson, immediately.**

***Do not forget to have your personal or family health insurance policy extended to cover travel in European countries while you stay overseas.*** Your family policy will cover the cost of medical care from a private practice in Budapest rather than at the university clinic if you prefer (your policy should state what percentage of the costs will be covered at a private facility). Your family policy will also provide coverage while you travel to other countries outside of Hungary during the semester.

An iNext Travel Insurance and ID Card may also be useful supplemental coverage in European countries. The iNext travel card is a good option for travel insurance coverage that includes coverage for medical and accident, mental health, hospital, baggage loss and delay, emergency evacuation, repatriation, document replacement, and travel delay. The iNext travel card includes additional benefits, like a 24 hour hotline that provides assistance with everyday medical, legal, and concierge needs as well as a global calling card. Individuals or groups can choose from several travel insurance packages (for information, visit the website [www.inext.com/inextweb/guestpages/get\\_card/index.html](http://www.inext.com/inextweb/guestpages/get_card/index.html)). Note: iNextTravel Insurance, however, is not sufficient coverage by itself to replace your comprehensive insurance plan.

### **Counselling**

A study abroad student’s mental health is just as important as his or her physical well-being. Adjusting to the academic demands of a new school and a different environment can obviously create stress. Often, talking with a professional therapist can help you find ways to manage personal problems and cultural adjustments. McDaniel College Budapest retains a psychologist who has a great deal of experience working with college students. If you feel the need to talk over any troublesome issues with a trained

therapist, please see Matthew Adamson for details or contact the psychologist on your own: Dr. Thomas Pick at 216-5565. After an initial meeting with Dr. Pick, fees are determined according to student's financial ability. All appointments are strictly confidential.

## STUDENT HOUSING

Study abroad students will live in a double-occupancy apartment within easy commute to campus; they may also choose to live at the Star Panzio, a small hotel (double or single occupancy rooms with private bathrooms) two blocks from campus. The hotel would be a more expensive option than the apartment. Budapest apartment assignments will be made on the main campus by Michael Robbins, Director of Residence Life. He will try to accommodate, as much as possible, the flatmate preference that you indicate on your *Course Pre-Registration Form*—but this cannot be guaranteed.

### **Rented Apartments / Flats**

The Budapest Campus has no dormitory facilities, does not own any apartment buildings, and cannot provide on-campus housing for its students. Most international students live in rented apartments, recommended by the housing service of the College. The contracts are signed between the student and the owner upon arrival. The College does not enter into any business relationship with the owner, except when renting apartments for study abroad students from the U.S.

Most study abroad students on the MCB program choose to live in a shared two-bedroom apartment. In most apartment houses, the main entrance is usually kept locked, so visitors can only enter the building if someone opens the front door for them. When you move in, please be courteous and polite to your immediate neighbors. Always lock up the apartment, even when you are at home. Before you leave the apartment, make sure every time to lock your windows and conserve energy by switching off all lights and electric appliances (irons, coffee makers, etc.). Electric bills can be high, and you will be charged for excessively high bills. Don't open the door to strangers or allow anyone (e.g., electrician, maintenance person) into your flat if your landlord or the College have not given you advance notice. Do not immediately invite new acquaintances to your apartment; take time to get to know them better first.

**Note:** *Living in a city apartment is not like living in a student dormitory, and you are expected to abide by certain basic rules in order to respect the rights of the other residents. After 10:00 pm, you may not disturb the peace of your neighbors (playing loud music, having a wild party, even speaking in corridors and courtyards where sound carries easily). Hungarians usually go out to bars when they want to socialize.*

Apartments will likely be located in different neighborhoods, in relatively safe parts of the city, and approximately a 30-minute commute to the College by public transport. Although the shared apartments differ in location, size, and furnishings, *students can expect to find the following basic features in all apartments: living room / sitting area, fully equipped kitchen, bathroom, individual bedrooms, desk and chair, table, lamp, bed linens and towels, washing machine, and microwave.* Every apartment will have Internet connection (not an optional service) at a fee of \$100 per student per semester; this fee will be included as part of the comprehensive fee charged for the Budapest program. MCB is offering this as a service to you since the College computer room on campus is open only from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. on weekdays. You will be saving time and the expense of commuting to/from the college by bus/metro or regularly going to internet cafes, where there may be few English speakers who can help you.

Apartments should NOT have—and students should not expect—television, telephone landline, clothes dryer, and dish washer. If you do not want a tv or telephone landline, and they are already in your apartment when you move in, you should notify Margo Kovacs right away as you will automatically be charged extra for them. (Occasionally, depending on the landlord, some of these extra features can be provided

upon prior request at an additional cost to the student. Requests for a landline and/or TV connection must be emailed to Margo Kovacs two months before arrival in Budapest.)

### **Living at the Star Panzio Hotel**

<b>Hotel Address:</b>	<b>Star Panzio Hotel</b>	<b>Phone: +36 1-479-0420</b>
	<b>István utca 14</b>	<b>Fax: +36 1-342-4661</b>
	<b>Budapest, Hungary H-1078</b>	<b>E-mail: <i>starpan@axelero.hu</i></b>

Living at the Star Panzio will be a combination of a dorm and hotel environment. Breakfast is included in the price of the hotel. Rooms will be cleaned by the hotel staff. Bed linen and towels will be provided and changed regularly—normally every third day. The pillows are made of synthetic material.

Each room has a separate bathroom with shower and toilet. Each is equipped with a small refrigerator and a color TV set /access to cable networks. There are no alarm clocks in the rooms, so you should take a little battery-powered one. There is only one microwave that is shared by all the students living in the hotel. There are no laundry facilities at the hotel; the closest laundromat is about a 15-minute bus ride from the hotel. Telephones in the rooms can be used for outgoing (long-distance) calls, and you will be expected to settle the phone bill every week.

Note: The hotel is not a student dormitory, so you are expected to respect the rights of the other guests staying at the hotel. You can receive visitors in your room, but if anybody wishes to stay for the night, the hotel management will charge you an extra night for one additional person, as McDaniel College covers the cost of housing for the students only.

You are advised **to keep the door of your room locked even when you are at home**. One key is provided to each room, which should be left with the Reception Desk when you leave the hotel. If your roommate is likely to come home late and you do not want to be disturbed, the receptionist will unlock the room for him/her with a master key.

There is 24-hour service at the hotel Reception desk. When you travel abroad, leave all valuables (laptops, etc.) with the reception desk or entrust a fellow student with the care of them. The hotel does not assume any responsibility for valuable articles left in the room.

## **TELEPHONE CALLS**

### **Public Payphones**

Most public phones in Budapest require the use of **phone cards**, not coins. These cards can be bought at most newsstands, post offices, grocery stores, internet cafes, hotels, and the school cafeteria.

### **Cell Phone (mobile)**

Students are required to have a mobile (cell) phone for use in Budapest. A mobile phone is especially important for communicating with other students in the program and for Matthew Adamson and Margo Kovacs to reach you (and vice versa). Having a phone in a large city of almost 3 million is for both your convenience and safety. If you choose to rent a phone from the College, you will be charged a rental and deposit fee (approximately \$35, depending on the exchange rate of the dollar). Half of the money is the deposit that you will get back when you return the phone before leaving Budapest at the end of the semester. In addition to the actual charge for the use of the phone, you will buy a debit calling card that will give you minutes to talk down—locally or internationally.

In Hungary, incoming calls are free; outgoing calls vary, depending on whether you call another cell or a landline. Text messaging is the cheapest. New types of calling cards (*e.g.*, Neophone, EZ Phone, and Barangoló) can be purchased at larger newsstands for a minimum of 2000 forints' worth of time and can be used from any phone (including cell) and for all (in-country and international) long distance calls. The caller uses an access number to begin the call, enters the card's account number, then the desired phone number. These cards provide flexible use, but check the various rates they charge for international calls.

If you want to buy a cell phone on your own in Budapest or use one that you bring from the U.S., you should inform Margo Kovacs of this two months before your arrival in Budapest so that she does not buy a mobile phone for you. However, before you leave the U.S., you should make sure that your cell phone works abroad and learn how to use it (you'll need to check with your U.S. carrier, manufacturer, or store where you purchased the phone before you go abroad). If you will be using your own U.S. cell phone, **you must have a GSM phone that must be unlocked** at a telecommunication store in the U.S. (for example, T Mobile provider) so that your phone will accept a Hungarian SIM card. You will then have a Hungarian number and some initial minutes that, after you've talked them down, you can supplement with a debit calling card as mentioned above. The Hungarian SIM card and minutes can be purchased at a Vodaphone, T Mobile, or other provider in Budapest.

Mobal phone ([www.Mobal.com](http://www.Mobal.com)) is an International phone company that has reasonable prices, and there is no monthly fee. It is great for students planning to travel to other countries while abroad because it works in 150 different countries without having to change the SIM card.

## TRANSPORTATION

### **Bus, Metro (subway), Tram, Trolleybus, Local Train (HEV)**

Budapest has a very efficient and easy system of public transportation. You can get from one side of the city to the other in about 15 minutes by metro. A network of buses, trams, trolley buses, and subways run across the city. They run quite frequently based on their timetables, with many stops along the way between operating hours from 4:30 a.m. to 11 p.m. daily. **There are also a few night buses that run later, so it is very important to know the night bus schedule. Schedules and information about traveling on the various means of public transportation are posted at the stops as well as at ticket offices, or on the website of the Budapest Transportation Corporation ([www.bkv.hu](http://www.bkv.hu)).** You must have a valid ticket to ride public transportation vehicles. Tickets may be purchased at the Budapest Transportation Corporation (BKV) ticket offices, at metro stops, or at ticket vending machines, post offices and some newspaper stands.

A student monthly transportation pass is the least expensive and easiest way to move around the city. The pass can be bought at all major metro stations, but you need to show a student ID. The pass is valid on all means of transportation and for all transfers within the city and its suburbs—metro, tram, bus, trolleybus, and suburban train (HEV). During your orientation period in Budapest, you will receive your first monthly pass and will be given instructions on the closest places to buy future passes.

### **Taxicabs**

Don't hail a cab on the street because the fare will be higher than calling for one over the phone (ask about the fare when you enter the taxi). There are many reputable taxi companies in Budapest, and you will learn more about them during your on-site orientation. Some reliable ones are:

CITY TAXI / Phone number: 211-1111

FOTAXI / Phone number: 222-2222

RÁDIÓ TAXI / Phone number: 377-7777

BUDA TAXI / Phone number: 233-3333

## ZONA TAXI

## TRAVELING IN EUROPE

**Trains**

Budapest has three major train stations for travelling throughout Hungary and Europe. You will learn about buying tickets and making seat reservations during your on-site orientation.

If you are planning to do a lot of rail travel on your own before, during, or after the program, you may want to look into purchasing a EURAILPASS in the U.S. before you leave for Hungary. The *Eurail Youthpass* offers a special discount for young people under the age of 26. Some passes give you unlimited train travel in and between Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Holland, Hungary, Italy, Luxembourg, Norway, Portugal, Republic of Ireland, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland. Eurail passes are not valid for travel in Great Britain. For more information about the pass, visit [www.raileurope.com/us](http://www.raileurope.com/us).

You should evaluate your own travel plans carefully before you purchase an expensive Eurail pass. There are many types of Eurail passes available—*e.g.*, Eurail Youthpass, Eurail Saver Pass, Eurail Flexipass, and the standard Eurailpass—but other options may be cheaper than these rail passes.

**Airlines**

*Malev* is the Hungarian Airlines; for flight information, visit <http://www.malev.com/bp/eng/index.asp>. Several discount airlines have inexpensive fares for students who want to travel in Europe:

[www.wizzair.com](http://www.wizzair.com)

[www.justairfare.com](http://www.justairfare.com)

[www.skyeurope.com](http://www.skyeurope.com)

[www.skyauction.com](http://www.skyauction.com)

[www.ryanair.com](http://www.ryanair.com)

[www.easyjet.com](http://www.easyjet.com)

[www.jet2.com](http://www.jet2.com)

[www.bookingbuddy.com](http://www.bookingbuddy.com)

## CULTURE SHOCK

Anyone traveling overseas to another country for the first time will experience culture shock, to a greater or lesser degree. Because Hungary is so different from America, you will initially experience some difficulty in adjusting to the local lifestyle and culture in Budapest—not to mention the language barrier. No matter where you study abroad, no matter how long you go for, no matter how much you have dreamed about spending time in your host country, you are bound to come to a point where being there turns into something other than what you imagined. It could be a big thing like being unable to communicate with local shopkeepers; it could be something as minor as not being able to run down to the Wawa at 3 a.m. to buy snacks.

The term “culture shock” describes certain feelings you will experience—the anxiety and psychological disorientation associated with leaving a familiar environment and entering a new world where everything seems new and different. Until you learn how to read the signals of the new culture you find yourself in, you are going to feel some degree of homesickness or confusion. Rarely is culture shock a single moment that hits you like a brick in the face. Culture shock is a process—sometime you recognize when it is happening, and other times you will just feel frustrated or annoyed.

Culture shock can manifest itself in a number of ways: headache, frustration, anxiety, irritability, homesickness, withdrawal, stereotyping of host nationals, and so on. These symptoms will vary from individual to individual and upon your length of stay overseas. Except in very rare cases, these

symptoms will eventually disappear after the first couple of weeks. A great deal depends on your attitude, how flexible and adaptable you are to the cultural differences you encounter while abroad.

## COLLEGE MATTERS

### Course Registration

McDaniel students will be registering for their Budapest courses before going abroad through the *Archway* during their appointed registration time. (Recommended courses for all Westminster students: *Introduction to Hungarian Culture* or *Hungarian Language*.) The drop/add period takes place after you arrive in Budapest and runs through the first week of the semester. Unlike at the main campus, at MCB there is only one section of each course, and classes don't begin until the second week of the semester. ***You will not find out the specific times your classes meet until you arrive in Budapest.*** (It is advisable to have a couple of alternate courses in mind should you have a class schedule conflict and need to drop or add any classes.)

While abroad, McDaniel students will be able to register for their next semester courses on the main campus, via the *Archway*. Adviser approval is needed for registration, so you must email your adviser with a list of the classes you would like to take and get prior approval.

### Class Schedule

Morning classes begin at 8.30 a.m., and afternoon classes at 12:45 p.m. Usually, there are two so-called double (90-minute) classes per week in each course you take. Lunch break is between 11.45 am to 12.45 p.m., depending on your class schedule.

### Computer Facilities

The campus has a computer room with thirty workstations (and a few computers in the reading room). All students will be assigned user names to enable them to enter the network, use the workstations for doing home assignments, and have access to the Internet and email. The computer room is located in the basement in B-07 and is open from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. on weekdays (except when computer classes are in session). Be sure to check your email frequently for information from Dr. Adamson or Margo Kovacs and the home campus.

### Laptops

While it is not absolutely necessary to have a laptop in Budapest, most McDaniel students do travel with them and recommend that you bring your laptop with you. However, be aware of theft since one student had her laptop stolen several years ago. If you do decide to take a laptop, you must take along an adapter that has a "continental" type of plug (3-prong) that is compatible with your computer cord, and you should have your laptop insured as a safety precaution. Internet service will be provided in all MCB apartments, as part of your comprehensive program fee.

Many students with laptops sign up for **SKYPE** (at <http://www.skype.com/products/skypeout/>) – it allows you to call home for next to nothing! (Skype is a little piece of software that enables you to call phones anywhere in the world. It's **free to download** and easy to use.) If you call from computer to computer, it's free. There is a fee for calling a regular phone number; you must first purchase SKYPE credits online. You will need a headset with a microphone to use SKYPE (or a web camera).

### College Cafeteria

A cafeteria is located in the basement of MCB, where you can buy a variety of foods and snacks at reasonable prices. Doors open at 8:00 a.m. when service includes sandwiches, pastries, and hot and cold drinks. *A la carte* hot dishes—from soup to meats, vegetables, and pasta—are served from 11:00 a.m. until around 1:00 p.m. The cafeteria closes at 4:00 p.m. There are also lots of fast food restaurants and snack bars in the neighborhood, including *Wiener Schnitzel* on Istvan Street, which offers a special menu for international students.

### **Textbooks / School Supplies**

Textbooks will be available from the first week of classes. Textbooks cost almost the same as in the US, but you'll be required to buy fewer. If you don't take any school supplies with you, you can purchase notebooks, pens, highlighters, etc. at little stationery shops in the city and Tesco (like Wal-mart). Office Depot has two stores in Budapest, and one is not too far from the college.

### **Student ID card**

Participants on the McDaniel College Budapest program will receive Student ID cards, which entitle them to various discounts, including free entrance to the major museums, reduced-priced monthly pass for public transportation, and half-price on trains. **Be sure to take with you to Budapest at least 4 passport size photos.** These will be used to obtain your IDs and transit passes.

An iNext Travel Insurance and ID Card may also be useful in European countries to obtain discounts on air, rail, bus, and ferry travel; some hostels, student cafeterias, theatres, museums, cinemas, historical sites, and phone card service in many countries. The iNEXT Card also covers the cost of passport replacement and provides a toll-free Help Line for emergency assistance as well as basic sickness and accident insurance, including coverage for medical evacuation/repatriation in the event of serious injury or death.

### **Electronic access card to college premises**

Students can enter and leave college premises by using electronic access cards. The card will be issued when you first enter the building on paying a deposit of 3,000 Forints (@ USD 15).

### **Student Newspaper**

Study abroad students are encouraged to join the College newspaper staff or to contribute articles to the paper. The *Messenger* is published four times a semester, and copies are available at the main information desk and in the cafeteria.

### **Mail Sent to Budapest**

**All mail from home should be sent to the McDaniel College Budapest campus address** because there is someone on 24-hour door duty who can receive the packages. **The words "Air Mail" should be written on all packages so that mail delivery is not delayed.** Packages from home should never be declared over \$49 in value; otherwise, they will be stuck in customs for days and you might have to pay duty!

## **GROUP STUDY TRIPS**

Group field trips are a special educational feature of the MCB program. Each semester study abroad students are required to participate in the **Study Trips** (e.g., a weekend tour to a site in Hungary and a 5-day tour to Prague/Vienna, Venice/Vienna, or Rome), led by MCB faculty and staff, to learn about

Hungary and important cities in Europe. These study trips are structured as a credit/fail course with assignments (called “The European Heritage: A 21<sup>st</sup> Century Grand Tour”), and students will earn **one semester credit** for the experience. These guided study tours are not simple shopping trips or the kind of sight-seeing trips you plan for yourself during the semester; they will include both hands-on activities and academic content. Typically, the trip to the Lake Balaton region in the fall is the 2<sup>nd</sup> weekend after classes start; the trip to Pécs in the spring is the 3<sup>rd</sup> weekend after classes start. The 5-day trip to Prague/Vienna, Venice/ Vienna, or Rome is during Fall Break or Spring Break, as noted on the Academic Calendar on the Budapest website ([www.mcdaniel.edu/budapest](http://www.mcdaniel.edu/budapest)).

#### **Expenses for Group Study Trips:**

- On the trips in Hungary and to Prague/Vienna or Venice/Vienna or Rome, transportation (trains, public transportation, and taxis), hotels, breakfast, and all entrance fees to museums or exhibits are included in the pre-paid trip fee (part of your comprehensive fee).
- On the 5-day trip out of Hungary, the costs of all meals (excluding breakfast) are the students’ responsibility.
- On the weekend trip to Lake Balaton or Pécs in Hungary, College International hosts the students to one dinner; the remaining meals (lunches and another dinner) are the students’ responsibilities.

### **MONEY MATTERS**

The Hungarian currency is the Forint (Ft.). Coins in circulation are 1, 2, 5, 10, 20, 50, and 100 forints. Banknotes come in denominations of 200, 500, 1000, 2000, 5000, 10000, and 20000 Ft. Paying by credit card is not the routine experience that it is in much of the West. Cards are accepted by most tourists-related businesses, such as hotels, restaurants, stores in the shopping districts, and petrol stations, supermarkets, and train or bus stations. Travelers’ checks can be cashed in banks, but they are inconvenient to use and are not accepted in shops. Cash machines (ATMs) are relatively widespread.

#### **Personal Expenses**

Make sure that you have a credit card with which you can draw cash from ATMs in Europe: a MasterCard, Visa or American Express credit card, based on a **CHECKING** account with your bank in America. Checks are not honoured at stores or travel agencies. One past participant suggested that you have approximately \$4,000 to cover personal expenses such as food, gifts, hostels, side trips.

#### ***How much to bring:***

The amount of money you spend during the semester depends on your lifestyle and personal travel plans. And, for those reasons it’s difficult to provide you with any specific figure. Below are some common items that you might buy and their costs in dollars, but keep in mind that the exchange rate changes and things might be a little more or less expensive than indicated below.

#### ***Ordinary expenses:***

Monthly transit pass	\$ 17 (covers all 4 types of transportation in Budapest)
Haircut	\$ 25 for women / \$15 for men (this includes washing, cutting, drying)
Vodafone / T Mobile cards (for cell phone)	start at 3,000 forints (approximately \$15)

#### ***Food:***

Milk	\$ 1.00 (liter)
Bread	\$ 1.00 (loaf)
Cereal	\$ 3.00 (box)
Yogurt	\$ .40 (small container)

Juice	\$ 1.40 (liter)
Coke, Pepsi, etc.	\$ 1.25 (2 liters)
Cheese	\$ 3.00-5.00 (lb.)
Eggs	\$ 1.25 (10 in a carton)
Butter	\$ 2.00 (block)
Coffee	\$ 2.75 (small package)
Potato chips	\$ 2.00 (average, not large, bag)
Lunch meat	\$ 4.00 (lb, good quality ham)

Seasonal fresh fruits and vegetables are generally less expensive than in the US.

### **No Meal Plan**

You are **not charged for a meal plan** while you are studying abroad in Budapest. Students on the MCB program live in apartments with fully equipped kitchens, so most students shop for food and cook their own meals during the semester. Supermarkets and small neighborhood convenience stores are prevalent in Budapest. Food stores open early, and the larger supermarkets stay open into the evening (those at malls usually until 9:00 p.m.). Some students recommend taking along a tote bag to carry the food you purchase at neighborhood grocery stores or markets.

### ***Restaurants and Clubs:***

\$10.00 (full meal with drinks, in an average Hungarian-run place)

McDonald's, Burger King, KFC, Pizza Hut and Friday's may be more expensive in Europe than here.

### ***Tipping in Restaurants***

It is rude not to give a tip. Hungarians do tip at least 10%. Tip taxi drivers 10%.

### ***Costs per day:***

Some days, you may spend more than \$20 (going clubbing, eating at a special place, etc.) or less (just eating at home). Obviously, you will also have to factor in the cost of travel to other countries and expenses there. Be warned! After living in Budapest for about a month, when the Westminster students travel to Munich, Paris, etc., they come back shell-shocked at how expensive it is in other countries. You might want to check the internet for prices for train tickets, airfares, and youth hostels for places you want to visit as a way to determine basic travel expenses.

Feel free to contact former Budapesters and ask how they handled finances. (You can find their names on the MCB web site: [www.mcdaniel.edu/budapest](http://www.mcdaniel.edu/budapest).)

### **Initial Expenses**

**Expect to spend money in the first few days you are in Budapest.** Often students become nervous when they realize that they have spent \$100 in a couple of days, but this is normal and not what will happen throughout the whole semester! Initial expenses will be for the transit pass, the student ID, electronic entry card deposit (reimbursed at the end of the semester), apartment keys, cell phone rental and deposit fee, books, eating out during orientation, and buying groceries for your flat. During your on-site orientation, you will learn how to change money and where to find the closest ATM machines in your neighborhood.

*IMPORTANT: You should be prepared to cover the following expenses, in forints, in the first days after arriving in Budapest (\$1 = approximately 200 forints):*

**Food and cleaning supplies**

**Prices vary.**

<b>Student Activity Fee</b>	<b>3,000 forints</b> (This fee helps to cover the cost of activities that are planned for the whole student body throughout the semester: parties, visits to museums and concerts, and day trips around Budapest. This fee is charged to all MCB students and enables the school to offer these events at a discount to students.)
<b>Student ID deposit</b>	<b>500 forints</b>
<b>Electronic entry card deposit</b>	<b>3,000 forints</b> (This money will be returned at the end of the semester when the card is turned in.)
<b>Monthly transportation pass</b>	<b>3,550 forints</b> (This transit pass is good for unlimited trips throughout the month. It is good for every kind of transportation within Budapest: the subway (called metro), buses, trolley buses, and trams. A student pass is 50% less than the normal pass.
<b>Deposit for apartment keys</b>	<b>approximately 5,000 forints/approximately \$35</b> (This money will be returned at the end of the semester when you turn in your apartment keys.)
<b>Fee for Immigration Stamps</b>	<b>18,000 forints</b>
<b>Cell phone rental and deposit fee</b>	<b>6,000 forints</b> (of which 3,000 forints is a deposit fee that will be returned at the end of the semester if the phone is returned before leaving Budapest.) In addition to the actual charge for the use of the phone, you will buy a debit calling card that will give you minutes to talk down—locally or internationally.

*\* If you plan on buying a cell phone on your own in Budapest or use one that you purchase in the U.S., let Margo Kovacs know two months before your arrival so that the College does not buy you a phone.*

### **Automatic Teller Machines**

***The most convenient way to get money (be it in Hungary or anywhere in Europe) is to use your ATM card.*** There are ATM machines everywhere—at all banks, on major streets, and in shopping malls. There is also one right across the street from the College, at the entrance of the campus of the Veterinary School across Bethlen Gabor Square. ATMs will give you only local currency at that day's current exchange rate, which means "Forints" in Hungary and Euros in other places you'll be visiting. Unless you're in a shop that caters to tourists, Hungarians expect you to pay in forints. The current rate of exchange fluctuates around 180-230 Forints (HUF) to one US Dollar.

There are two important things to know about using an ATM card in Europe, however:

- 1) **Your card must be connected to a checking account, NOT a savings account.** You cannot get money from a foreign savings account through an overseas machine.
- 2) **Your bank at home will charge you a small fee for withdrawing and converting to a foreign currency each time you use the card.**

Even if you must go to the trouble of opening a checking account at your home bank, there are some big advantages to using the ATM card compared to using traveler's checks: (1) You avoid having to go into a bank to cash checks. While some souvenir shops may take traveler's checks, you will need cash on hand for everyday items, groceries, haircut, etc. (2) Some banks don't accept traveler's checks, and smaller stores and restaurants won't accept large bills. If possible, choose an ATM machine located at a bank, hotel, or shopping mall. If you are alone when drawing money from an ATM on the street, make sure that no one sees you entering your PIN code. The ATM at the main entrance of the Veterinary School on Istvan Street, across the street from the college, is safe to use.

If you want to pay with a credit card at a store, always keep an eye on how the shop assistant handles your card. Never allow him/her to take your card to a back room or pull it through the machine twice. It is a common practice to “clone” or copy a credit card in order to have illegal access to your bank account. If you have any suspicion, ask to delete the credit card transaction and pay with cash. (Travelers’ checks are inconvenient because you must go to a local bank to cash the checks.) It’s a good idea to **have a credit card as a back-up** source of funds. Hungary is still basically a cash-oriented society, so most small stores don’t accept credit cards, but you can use the cards in large supermarkets and when purchasing bigger items. Its best use (or non-use!), however, is for emergencies. For example, one semester a student lost her digital camera shortly after arriving, and her parents allowed her to use her credit card to replace it. In that way, her budgeted money for the semester was intact, and the camera came from “emergency funds” via the credit card. Of course, you can use a credit card to pay for just about everything in western European countries.

### **Currency Exchange**

Always exchange currency at banks or at designated currency exchange shops. Be sure to take your passport with you when exchanging currency at banks, and **keep all receipts for exchanges since you will need to show them when obtaining your residency permit upon arrival.**

## **SAFETY PRECAUTIONS**

### **The Budapest Campus**

McDaniel College Budapest is located in the 7<sup>th</sup> district of Budapest on the Pest bank of the Danube. It is a metropolitan area in central Budapest, easily accessible by means of public transportation. There are several schools, colleges, a large hospital, and two university campuses in the neighborhood. The College building is situated on an enclosed property with a front courtyard and a large backyard that is used for outdoor sports, social activities, and car parking. The building contains classrooms, lecture halls, administrative offices, reading room, computer, and cafeteria. Students also use the gymnasium of the Veterinary School of Szent Istvan University (across the street from MCB) for classes in Physical Education. An electronic access system provides greater security to students and staff entering the MCB premises. The attendants at the main reception desk monitor access to the building and campus. These attendants do not work for McDaniel College Budapest exclusively.

Before the start of classes, study abroad students will receive a 4-5 day on-site orientation to the campus and the city, with special attention given to crime awareness. You will also receive a small card with important contact information for MCB staff, clinic, police, ambulance, and fire department to call in the event of an emergency.

### **Budapest – a World City**

Budapest is a large city of 1.9 million inhabitants and attracts visitors from all over the world. Public safety is no worse in Budapest than in any other major city around the world. In fact, it is still regarded as a relatively safe place in comparison with many other major European cities. Budapest has a relatively low rate of violent crimes compared to the United States, but as is the case in every metropolis, you should be careful.

The big city environment is, of course, different from the well-guarded and safe environment of the McDaniel campus in Westminster. However, with certain common sense precautions, you can minimize the danger of becoming a victim of a criminal act. **You will be expected take personal responsibility for your own safety and for the protection of your personal belongings.** It goes without saying that

you will be more exposed to danger and assault if you do not exercise prudent judgment, especially while under the influence of drugs or alcohol. Reckless behavior can do more than ruin your stay in Europe! We want you to return home with pleasant memories and unforgettable experiences, so in this section, we would like to give you a few pieces of practical advice.

### **Crime Prevention: Do's and Don't's**

(1) *Upon initial arrival in Budapest*, visitors are often fascinated by the beauty of the city and often do not keep a close eye on their valuables. Thieves take advantage of this situation. The most frequent crimes committed against foreign visitors are scams, pick-pocketing, burglary, and theft.

**Advice:** Do not leave purses or luggage unattended in public places at any time! If you have a long wait at the train station, you can leave your luggage in lockers. Be cautious around street vendors and beggars, especially around metro stations. Theft of passports, currency, and credit cards is a frequent problem in train stations and on public transportation.

(2) **BE ESPECIALLY AWARE OF PICKPOCKETS** operating on certain buses and trams as well as in game arcades in malls. Some pickpockets are young people in their teens or twenties who may work with a partner. Prime theft areas involve crowds of people where it is easier to distract the unsuspecting victim.

**Advice:**

- Don't put any valuables, documents, or a purse in your backpack, the outer pockets of your coat, or the back pocket of your trousers.
- While travelling, store your passport and money in a secure bag or money belt.
- If you choose another way to carry your money, keep your cash and credit card in different places.
- Watch your money in public restrooms, where you have to pay to use a stall. Don't carry around too much cash.
- Leave your expensive jewelry at home.
- **MAKE SURE THAT YOU ALWAYS HAVE YOUR BAG CLOSED AND FIRMLY IN YOUR GRASP!**
- Make photocopies of all your important documents (passport, credit card, etc.). Should they get lost or stolen, the photocopies will greatly facilitate the crime reporting procedure and replacement of your documents.
- Try to blend in with locals, observe your surroundings, and stay sober.

(3) *Currency exchange:* One scam in certain downtown areas, mainly in the summer, is for a moneychanger to approach tourists and offer to exchange dollars into Forints (Hungarian currency). These moneychangers may also offer very favorable rates at frequently visited tourist spots.

**Advice: NEVER EXCHANGE MONEY ON THE STREET!** This activity is not only illegal, but it can also be dangerous and result in considerable losses as the illicit moneychangers offering their services in the downtown tourist areas will surely try to swindle you. Since the Hungarian Forint (HUF) is a convertible currency, the black market exchange rate will be no different from the official one, and you can always find a bank, bureau de change, or credit card machines at hotels or shopping malls. Exchange money only at banks, hotels, travel bureaux, exchange offices, or one of the many ATM machines in the city.

(4) *Fake policemen:* During the summer uniformed tourist police patrols do their beat with interpreters at their side at the most frequently visited places of Budapest. Since police badges can be bought all over the place, some people try to pose as tourist police and ask visitors for their money, credit cards, or travel documents in order to check them. The sole reason is to cheat tourists. If you do business with an illegal moneychanger or even if you have declined the offer, two other persons may show up, claiming to be plain-

clothes police officers and displaying false police badges or ID cards. They may ask to check all of your money, and while they count your bank notes, half of your money just disappears!

**Advice:** Do not fall for such scams! Hungarian police will be in uniform, and a genuine police officer will always have a number displayed. They will NEVER ask to see your money or demand cash payment of a fine. If you are fined on the spot due to any breach of the law, the police officer will give you a postal check with the exact amount of the fine. If you refuse to take the postal check because you think that you have not committed any offence, the officer will report you and the competent police authority will investigate the legitimacy of the case. To avoid these scams, head in another direction and say that you will consult another police officer in uniform, patrolling the area. All pretty obvious, but if you're new to a large city, you can sometimes think irrationally.

(5) *Night-time:* Although aggravated assaults are not common on the streets of Budapest, it's better to be safe than sorry.

**Advice:**

- If you walk home at night, always stay in well-lit areas and avoid dark public parks.
- If you use the metro in the late evening hours, board a car in which there are passengers.
- It may be more advisable to take a cab home at night. Always choose one that belongs to a company, as it is less likely that they will charge an excessive fare.
- You should not go to late parties with unfamiliar groups alone. Stay sober.
- Do not leave your friend alone at a party, in a disco, at a nightclub, or on the street at night.
- Beware of a common scam involving attractive young women, gullible guys, expensive drinks in a nightclub, and a trip to the nearest ATM to fleece you of your money.

(6) *When traveling to other countries in Europe,* you should take extra precautions.

**Advice:**

- It's safer to travel in groups.
- Always lock the door of your train compartment at night.
- Use locks on suitcases, and don't leave your valuables unattended at any time.
- Leave your valuables in the safe at your hotel; protect valuables in hostels as well; never set your purse or wallet on a café table or bench beside you.
- Don't take more cash with you than necessary for shopping.
- Safe places to meet new friends are restaurants, pubs, and other public places.
- Don't draw unnecessary attention to yourselves as Americans by being loud or behaving in an odd or rude manner in public.
- Never appear drunk in public—you'll be an easy prey for pickpockets and pick-up artists, especially on buses and other public transportation.

## ALCOHOL AND DRUGS

There is a zero tolerance policy in Hungary on the use, possession, sale and trafficking of narcotic drugs. The legal drinking age is 18 in Europe, but certain social customs and rules govern the consumption of alcoholic drinks in Hungary as in the U.S. Students who choose to drink while overseas should do so in moderation. Binge drinking and public drunkenness carry a great stigma in Hungary. While you may think that getting drunk is harmless fun, Hungarians consider public drunkenness boorish behavior.

**NOTE:** When you are on a study abroad semester in Budapest, you are still bound by the McDaniel College Honor Code and Code of Conduct. College policies strictly forbid the consumption of alcoholic beverages and the use of drugs on MCB premises. Students living in accommodations provided by MCB will be subject to the same alcohol policy as those living in residence halls on the McDaniel campus.

Please read the *Policy on Responsible Drinking for McDaniel Study Abroad Students in Budapest* at the end of this booklet.

### SEXUAL ISSUES / SEXUAL ASSAULT

The risks of unsafe sex—disease, unintended pregnancy, social and emotional consequences—don't decrease when you go abroad. In some cultures and parts of the world, those who engage in pre-marital sex (especially women) are judged more harshly and the incidence of HIV/AIDS is much higher than in the U.S. Be aware that McDaniel College Budapest is a microcosm of the world, with students from diverse countries (e.g., Saudi Arabia, Iran, Egypt, Nigeria, China, Turkey, etc.) with different cultural values and attitudes regarding sex and women's roles than you are accustomed to at home. Because MCB is our own branch campus and a small, comfortable learning environment where study abroad students share classes and social activities with international students, you may falsely assume that by and large you also share similar attitudes about dating and gender issues.

If you get drunk at a party or in public places, you are more exposed to the danger of rape and sexual assault. Never go to discos and nightclubs alone. When you are at a club, keep your eye on your drink. If you are invited to a private party by a new acquaintance, allow yourself time to get to know the person first. If you are a victim of sexual assault, contact Matthew Adamson or Margo Kovacs immediately. The college will do everything possible to provide the level of support needed and desired by the victim, including prompt medical assistance and police involvement.

### EMERGENCY TELEPHONE NUMBERS IN BUDAPEST

CENTRAL EMERGENCY PHONE	112	AMBULANCE	104 (in English: 311 1666)
POLICE	107	FIRE	105

Students are expected to report all crimes, emergencies, and suspicious activities to the College administration. Call Margo Kovacs (06-30-485-9308) or Matthew Adamson. The College staff will advise you to call the police (107) and will help you file a police report. If you are arrested or questioned by the police, you should insist that the College administration be informed immediately. Victims of personal crimes, abuses, or molestations in Budapest are also encouraged to report to the *English- and German-language hotline*, a 24-hour telephone service maintained by the Hungarian tourist information agency (438 8080).

If you have reason to believe that a fellow student is missing during the semester, immediately alert the MCB administration. All possible efforts will be made to locate the student to determine his/her state of health and well-being, with the help of all pertinent law-enforcement authorities and the ambulance service. In the event of an international or political crisis during which foreign citizens in general or U.S. citizens in particular may be at risk, MCB will make every effort to ensure the safety of its students.

### WHAT TO TAKE TO BUDAPEST

- 4 passport-size photos for various things. You'll need them for a student ID that will entitle you to a discounted transit pass. (Pack the photos in your carry-on luggage so that you can give them to Margo Kovacs at the airport.)
- 2 copies of the front page /photo page and the visa page of your passport (Keep one for yourself, and give the other to Margo Kovacs.)
- your ATM card and credit card.
- Bank and credit card company "lost or stolen card" phone numbers
- A bank statement showing your name and that you have a least \$1,500 in your account, or a statement from your parents indicating that they have such an account and that you have access

to it (This statement is required by the immigration authorities to show that you have funds to support yourself while in the country.)

- Converter with a “continental” type plug, if you are taking anything electrical. (MCB has some hair dryers bought in Budapest that you may borrow.)
- A first aid kit that includes: band-aids, thermometer, cold medicine, and pain reliever (aspirin, Tylenol, Advil—or whatever you normally use). There are pain relievers in Hungary, but you won’t have to worry about the effectiveness and strength of some brand you’re unfamiliar with. It’s a good idea to have something like Nyquil on hand in case you get sick.
- *Medicines and prescriptions:* A 4-month supply of any prescription drugs you take and extra unfilled prescriptions from your doctor in case you run out or lose your medicine. Medicine of any kind can be purchased only at pharmacies and may not be as readily available in Hungary as in the U.S. If you go to the clinic connected to the College, the doctor there may be able to fill your prescription.
- A watch and a battery alarm clock (These are available in Hungary, but if you have one, don’t spend your money on buying one in Budapest.)
- *Contact solution and cleaner:* If you wear gas permeable lenses, you’ll have to take your own supplies. Products for gas and hard lenses are not as readily available in Hungary as in the U.S. If, however, you wear soft contact lenses, you’ll have no trouble buying Bausch and Lomb products, but they will be more expensive than U.S. brands found at places like Target.
- *Favorite food (optional):* Peanut butter is only available in large grocery stores.
- *Luggage:* On overseas flights, generally every passenger is allowed to check two bags, weighing no more than around 50 lbs. each. You are also allowed two carry-ons (one that can be stored in the overhead bin or under your seat, and one that is considered “personal,” like a purse or book bag). So, you can check two large suitcases and carry on a laptop and a book bag. It’s still best, however, to check with the airline you’re using for specific information on weight allowances and dimensions of bags. All airlines are pretty strict on these matters! Also, remember that you’ll probably be returning with gifts and souvenirs, so don’t use up your whole weight allowance with too many clothes. Some students take one empty suitcase for the souvenirs they buy. It’s a good idea to take along a small suitcase or duffle bag for weekend travelling.
- A tourist guidebook for Hungary/Budapest is a must (such as *Time Out Budapest*, *Lonely Planet Budapest* (Hungary), or *Go Abroad*). Also take a *Hungarian phrase book/dictionary and calculator*—very useful (e.g., *Lonely Planet Hungarian Phrase Book*).
- Some small plastic bottles for shampoo and other liquids when you go on side-trips and don’t want to carry large bottles. Soap, shampoo, conditioner, and toothpaste are sold in Budapest, but you may want to bring some with you.
- *Books* to read! School supplies—paper, pens, notebooks, etc. (school supplies are expensive in Budapest). MCB does not have a student store in their building, so you will have to go to stationery stores or Office Depot in the city to buy these supplies if you do not have them.
- An umbrella or some kind of rain gear
- A swimsuit (Hungary’s famous thermal baths are open all year round)
- *Clothes:* The amount and type of clothes you pack, of course, depends mostly on your “style” of dressing, but clothes that you normally wear in the U.S. are also fine in Budapest. Hungarian students dress very much as you do although wearing sweats on the streets is not so common. Remember, you’ll be doing an “urban commute” each day, not running across campus to class, so you might feel that in general people “dress up” more than you’re used to. Also, you will be going to the ballet, opera or a concert at least once during the semester, and young people in Hungary dress up for those things. So definitely bring along one “dressier” outfit” and high heels if you wear them. Typically, winter in Budapest is very much like winter in Pennsylvania. It will be cold in February and maybe March, so take along a warm jacket and boots. Take clothes that can be layered and things for both warm and cold weather. Don’t forget to pack night clothes, robe, slippers, and seats for the apartment. Almost all students buy some clothing while abroad,

so remember not to load up your suitcase! (See your yellow *Study Abroad Handbook* for other suggested items to pack for a semester abroad.)

- Ample supply of socks and underwear
- Good walking shoes/running shoes/high boots

It's not necessary to take any small electrical appliances (*e.g.*, hair dryers, curling irons, or clothes irons) because they won't work on the 220-voltage in Hungary—unless you have a converter/adaptor plug. You can buy inexpensive small appliances in Budapest

Don't bother taking clothes hangers—it's easy to buy them in the Hungarian version of dollar stores. In fact, any household item is available at large stores similar to Wal-Mart. Tesco (British), Auchan (French), and IKEA all have branches in Budapest.

## OTHER INFORMATION

### **What to see in Budapest**

Citadella (XI., Gellért Hill)

Heroes' Square (Hosok tere, district XIV)

Hungarian State Opera House (VI., Andrássy u. 22)

Parliament (V., Kossuth L. tér 1-3)

Royal Palace (Budavári Palota, District I)

#### *Historic Churches:*

Cave Church (XI., Szt. Gellert rkp. 1)

Lutheran Church (V., Deák tér. 5)

Matthias Church (I., Szentharomszög tér 2)

St. Stephens Basilica (V., Szt. István tér)

Synagogue (VII., Dohány utca 2)

### **Thermal Baths**

Hungary is uniquely rich in thermal waters. Buda has around 120 thermal springs, which feed into mineral baths in such places as the Kiraly Baths, with its 16<sup>th</sup> century pool, and Rac Baths, with its Turkish octagonal pool. Bathing was very popular as far back as the Roman age and later in the Turkish period. Today, the thermal waters in Hungary are especially recommended for maintaining good health because the thermal water in the baths, heated deep within the earth's crust, often contains mineral water with natural healing powers. Many baths are segregated by sex since bathers romp around naked (you will be issued a loincloth and a towel or sheet). Budapest has a number of spa hotels and baths that are popular among tourists and Hungarians alike. The best Budapest baths are:

Thermal Hotel on Margaret Island and Gellert Hotel (XI., Kelenhegyi út 2-4)

Kiraly Bath (II., Fő utca 84)

Lukacs Bath (II., Frankel Leó utca 25-29)

Rac Bath (I., Hadnagy utca 8-10)

Rudas Bath (I., Dobrentei tér 9)

Szechenyi Bath (XIV., Allatkerti krt. 11)

Gellert Bath (XI. Kelenhegyi út 4)

### **Climate in Hungary**

The climate in Hungary is temperate, and sunshine is a dominant feature, except for some rain and snow from November through January. In September and October, the weather is usually mild and sunny. In winter the temperature can sink as low as -10/15 degrees. Centigrade and in the summer rise above 30

degrees Centigrade. Spring usually sets in mid-March.

### **Temperature**

Temperatures are measured in the Celsius or Centigrade system. An approximate, but easy way to convert Celsius temperatures to Fahrenheit is to double the Celsius number and add 30. Therefore, 30 Celsius = 90 degrees Fahrenheit. Budapest has a temperate continental climate.

### **Time Difference**

The time in Hungary is 6 hours later than Eastern Standard Time in the U.S.

### **Weights and Measures**

In Hungary, as in all European countries, the metric system of weights and measures is used.

The following chart converts between the English and metric systems for the most commonly used measures:

1 centimeter	= 0.39 inches	1 inch	= 2.54 centimeters (cm)
1 meter	= 3.28 feet	1 foot	= 0.305 meters (m)
1 meter	= 1.09 yards	1 yard	= 0.914 meters (m)
1 kilometer	= 0.62 miles	1 kilometer	= 0.62 miles
1 gram	= 0.035 ounces (oz)	1 ounce	= 28.35 grams (g)
1 decagram	= 0.35 ounces or 0.022 pounds (lb)		
10 decagrams	= 3.5 ounces or 0.22 pounds		
1 kilogram	= 2.2046 pounds (lb)	1 pound	= 0.453 kilograms (kg)
1 deciliter	= 0.21 pints	1 pint	= 4.73 deciliters
1 liter	= 0.264 gallons (gal)	1 gallon	= 3.785 liters (l)
1 pint	= 0.473 liters	1 pint	= 0.473 liters (l)

### **Electric Current**

All electrical outlets operate with a voltage of 220/230 Volts and 50 cycles. If you bring electric appliances from the United States, you'll need a transformer and plug adapter to use them in Europe. Bring the transformer and plug adapter from home as they can be hard to find abroad. However, because the electrical voltage in Hungary is twice that of the U.S., even with a converter, small appliances such as hair dryers or shavers may become damaged. It's advisable to leave such things at home since they can be purchased in Hungary.

### **Recommended books for you to read before you travel to Hungary**

*Lonely Planet-Guide to Hungary* (paperback)

*Fatelessness* (paperback), by Imre Kertsz., Vintage International Press (2004). This Hungarian author won the Nobel Prize for literature a few years ago. His novel recounts the experiences of a young Hungarian boy who survives the Holocaust.

## **Good To Know...**



Here is a list of services that may come in handy during the semester.

### **Computer Problems?**

Quality service, in English, for all your technical needs.

Expatttech – Ráday utca 32 doorbell #1, ground floor.  
 Open: Mon. – Fri., 9a.m. – 6p.m. [www.expatttech.com](http://www.expatttech.com)

### **Feeling frumpy?**

Budapest has a wide variety of gyms, and most of them offer student discounts.

- Gold's Gym – II District Mammut II shopping center 4<sup>th</sup> floor. Lövház utca. 2 – 6.  
Tel: (061)-345-8544
- Euro Gym – IV District Pozsonyi utca 4/F Tel: (061) 399-0145
- Roxan Fitness club  
V District Akadémia utca 11. Tel: (0620) 975-2441, (061) 311-6828

### **Looking for a good read?**

*Bestsellers* has a wide selection of literature and French and English newspapers; they also special order books. V District Október 6 utca #11 Tel: (061) 312-1295

*Treehugger Dan's* is a used English bookstore that sells magazine and books as well as fair trade coffee. VI. District Csengery utca #48 (first door down on the corner of Andrassy Utca.)  
 Open: Mon. – Fri., 9:30 am – 6:30 pm.; Sat. and Sun., 10am – 4 pm.  
 Email: [info@treehugger.hu](mailto:info@treehugger.hu) Tel: (061) 322-0774

### **No clean clothes?**

Reliable laundry service:

VI District O utca 24 – 26, right next to Broadway hostel. Tel: (0620) 392-5702  
 9 kg 1600 ft. includes wash, dry, and detergent. Ironing available and priced according to needs.

**Wanting to order take-out food on line?** [www.netpincer.hu](http://www.netpincer.hu) (click on “English”)

**ENJOY YOUR STAY IN HUNGARY!**

**Policy on Responsible Drinking  
for  
McDaniel Study Abroad Students in Budapest**

In joining McDaniel's Budapest Study Abroad Program a student undertakes the responsibilities that naturally come with independent living in a large, foreign city. Among those responsibilities are adhering to McDaniel College's policy on the consumption of alcohol.

Since the drinking age in Hungary is 18, students from the main campus are legally allowed to drink while in Budapest. They should be aware, however, that they must use alcohol in a responsible manner, and that the attitude toward drinking among most young people in Europe is different than on American campuses.

First and foremost, the idea of "binge drinking" (drinking to get drunk) is viewed by European college students as a ridiculous goal for a fun night out. Overall, European students grow up in a culture where beer and wine are "everyday" beverages and have learned to drink at home at family celebrations or even at daily meals. This does not mean that all students drink, but it does put alcohol into a different context for those who do. When Europeans observe binge drinking among American students, they regard it as immature and typically "high school-ish" behavior.

American students, coming from a country where the legal drinking age is 21, are often unprepared for the ease with which they can obtain alcohol in Hungary. Some are unprepared to drink in a responsible manner because of attitudes about drinking they bring from their social lives on the main campus.

Second, renting an apartment and living on one's own often requires more responsibility than living in a campus residence hall. Students are expected to abide by basic rules and respect the rights of their neighbors. For example, after 10:00 p.m., one may not disturb the peace of the neighbors (playing loud music, having a wild party, even speaking in corridors and courtyards where sound easily carries). Drinking in the apartments late at night often leads to loud and boisterous behavior that is not only rude but also inconsistent with lease agreements with landlords. If a landlord reports a disturbance of the peace to the local police (as has been the case in the past), this is an embarrassment to the College, may result in a large fine for the students, and may even result in students being forced by the landlord to leave the apartment (at their own expense).

McDaniel College and McDaniel College Budapest do not encourage any student to drink. Those who do choose to drink must drink responsibly.

Responsible drinking means:

- being able to get yourself home after a night out.
- not being out of control of your language or behavior in a public place.
- not ruining your friends' night out by making them worry about how much you're drinking
- not having so much to drink that you can't remember where you were the night before
- not having so much to drink that you can't get to classes the next morning
- not drinking before going to classes
- not allowing drinking to affect your ability to study

The following policies apply at all times when MCB students are on a college-sponsored trip or participating in an official activity.

- At meals, students are permitted to order only one glass of wine or beer with their meal.
- No drinking is permitted when the group is in transit (walking, or on a train or bus)
- No drinking is permitted in hotel rooms or lobbies.

**NOTE:** Students who violate these policies at any time during the semester risk being dismissed from the Budapest program and returned to the US, at their own expense.