

WELCOME TO
THE CONCORDIA
STUDENT EXCHANGE
PRE-DEPARTURE SESSION




THE PRE-DEPARTURE PROGRAM IS DESIGNED TO:

The exchange pre-departure program is an integral part of your international learning experience, designed to help you in your personal, academic, and administrative preparation. By completing this session, you will learn about visas, budgeting, safety while abroad, health and cultural adaptation, and other important information.

- Provide you with practical information related to pre-departure preparations, your time abroad, and your return to Concordia.
- Help you develop realistic goals and expectations of your experience.
- Equip you with tools and mindsets that will help you while on exchange.





BEFORE LEAVING
CONCORDIA
ACADEMIC PROCEDURES

CONCORDIA INTERNATIONAL: YOUR FIRST POINT OF CONTACT FOR NON-ACADEMIC ISSUES

Concordia International is responsible for:

- Non-academic issues pertaining to the exchange program
- Quebec Mobility Bursary
- Exchange coding
- Receipt & processing of official transcripts, correspondence with the host, advisement on medical & travel insurance, legal issues, emergency contact


Your Faculty is responsible for:

- All matters academic (approval of courses, transfer of credits, waiving pre-requisites, registration assistance post-exchange, potential graduates)

You are responsible for:

- Fulfilling all academic and non-academic requirements and responsibilities both at Concordia and at your host institution

HOST UNIVERSITY LETTER OF ADMISSION

- You will receive your admission letter 2 months post host application deadline
 - Your host university makes the final decision on your admission and your course availability
 - Please assure that your ILO has a copy of your admission letter
 - **It is your responsibility to make certain that you meet all deadlines required by your host**
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REGISTRATION FOR YOUR EXCHANGE SEMESTER

REGISTRATION AT CONCORDIA

- You should be registered for courses at Concordia University for the semester that you will be abroad leading up to your departure for exchange
- All exchange students will be coded with a course place holder called STOQ (Studies Outside Quebec) for the semester(s) on exchange
- The STOQ (Studies Outside Quebec) credits are as follows
 - Undergrad: STOQ =15 Concordia credits = Full-time tuition
 - Graduates: STOQ = Full time status
- The STOQ code will be added closer to your departure once you have completed pre-departure requirements and received host admission letter
- STOQ means that you remain a full-time student at a Quebec university. **DO NOT DROP** this coding on your MyConcordia portal

You are responsible for dropping all Concordia courses you have enrolled in for your exchange semester by DNE deadline. ***FAILURE TO DROP THE COURSES MEANS YOU WILL BE CHARGED FOR BOTH THE STOQ CREDITS AND THE CONCORDIA COURSES***

REGISTRATION AT YOUR HOST UNIVERSITY

- Host institutions can't guarantee that you will be registered in the courses that you wish to register in – **course flexibility is required**
- You can only take courses that have been approved in writing by your department/faculty advisor
- **YOU MUST** verify with your faculty the number of courses / credits you must register for at your host to meet Concordia's minimum full-time requirement
 - Minimum equivalent = 12 credits
 - Maximum equivalent = 15 credits
 - Graduate students = full-time course load
- Number of courses required will vary from one institution to the next
- Each host has its own system of registration, and it varies from one institution to the next
- Courses with pass/fail grading notation (P=Pass or F=Fail) will not be credited


HOW DO I GET MY COURSES APPROVED?

Course approval: Follow the instructions provided on your Faculty's website for course approval

For any questions regarding course approval, contact the academic advisor of your Faculty via email:

- **A&S** e-mail your department advisor and copy fas.exchange@concordia.ca
- **JMSB** CSEPrequest.jmsb@concordia.ca
- **Fine Arts** fofa.studyabroad@concordia.ca
- **GCS** sakib.shahid@concordia.ca
- **Grads** GPD (Graduate Program Director)

PASSPORT & STUDENT VISA

- Passport must be valid for at least 6 months beyond the date of your return
 - A host university admission letter is required to apply for a student visa
 - Your host country's student visa requirements can be found on their immigration office website
 - Your purpose for going abroad is to study, NOT TO WORK.
 - Find out whether dual citizenship will be an issue for you
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ACCOMMODATIONS



- Not all institutions offer on-campus housing. If on-campus housing is available, you must apply for a spot. If on-campus housing is not available, please arrange independent housing. Be aware of possible difficulties finding housing and start your research early. Pay attention to scams
- Your accommodations may not be to the same standards as you are used to at home, so do your research and be prepared to adjust
- Student Exchange Reports from past exchange participants can offer insight into where Concordia students chose to stay while attending their exchange

FLIGHTS



- Do not book any flight until you have received your official admission notice from your host university
- You are financially responsible for all travel costs to and from your host destination
- You may want to purchase a travel insurance package to cover
 - Flight cancellation
 - Trip interruption
 - Baggage/personal belongings
- You can apply for travel funding via LOJIQ if you are a permanent Quebec resident. Information regarding their application process has been sent to all CSEP participants

HEALTH INSURANCE

You're responsible for making certain that you meet your host university's / country's health insurance requirements

Some of you may be able to use your Concordia health insurance coverage while abroad. Please consult Studentcare [website](#)

Other insurance coverage to be considered:

- Emergency and medical evacuation, repatriation insurance
- Travel cancellation insurance
- Property insurance
- Liability insurance

Your host institution / country may require you to purchase their health insurance coverage

RAMQ COVERAGE

If you have RAMQ coverage, you must contact RAMQ to notify them of the dates that you will be studying abroad. If not, your public health coverage may expire if you are away for more than 183 days, and the days that you are on exchange will count toward the 183.

Student who inform RAMQ that they will be studying abroad:

- Will be covered for the entire length of their studies as though they were still in Canada
- The 183 days only start accumulating when the exchange semester ends and if they student remains outside Canada.
- Must complete a specific form (not available on-line) which is mailed by RAMQ to the students home in Quebec

For more information on the RAMQ process for students studying abroad, visit the following [RAMQ website](#)

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

- **Medical Exams:** Ensure you have taken necessary medical, dental and eye examinations prior to departure
- **Vaccinations:** Make certain to get all immunizations required by your host country or any country that you may be travelling to while on exchange
- **Concordia Health Clinic:** Provides medical exams and vaccinations for student travelling to other countries
- **Prescriptions and Medications:** Be certain to take enough of your regular prescriptions (including birth control) or injections that you require for your stay. Make sure that your medication is legal in your host country
- Prescriptions must be kept in original container/packaging and clearly labelled. Bring your prescription medication with you in your carry-on bag to avoid issues in case your checked-in luggage is lost or delivered late
- Pack a First Aid Kit and wear Medic Bracelet if needed

IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS & AUTHENTICATOR APP

Make copies of important documents:

- Passport
- Admission letter
- Prescriptions
- Medical records
- Keep a set in Canada and take a set with you

Install Microsoft Authenticator app:

- Ensures access to your Concordia account while abroad
- Replaces text message which might not work abroad

WITHDRAWAL FROM THE PROGRAM

Common reasons for withdrawal:

- Lack of adequate financial resources
- Death or illness in the family
- Inability to find adequate number transferable equivalent courses
- Please inform your Concordia International ILO **IN WRITING** as soon as you know that you will withdraw from the program
- Make certain that if you have already been STOQ coded, that the code is removed from your transcript
- If you withdraw after DNE deadline / during your exchange semester, you will be responsible for the tuition fees that the STOQ has charged you
- Your bursary application will not be processed or if you have already begun your exchange and withdraw while on exchange, you may be required to reimburse the bursary

ARRIVING AT YOUR HOST UNIVERSITY

SETTLING IN AND STUDYING ABROAD

CONFIRMATION OF ARRIVAL

- Complete and return the Confirmation of Arrival form to Concordia International MAXIMUM two weeks after your course registration is finalized at your host institution
- Take this form to your host institution's International/Exchange office for a signature and/or stamp confirming that you are enrolled at that university
- Return this form to Concordia International by e-mail (international@concordia.ca)
- Not returning this form could result in having your exchange status at Concordia cancelled
- We cannot finish processing your Quebec Mobility Bursary until we have received this form



CONCORDIA INTERNATIONAL

CONFIRMATION OF ARRIVAL

1 GENERAL INFORMATION AND INSTRUCTIONS

This form is intended for students who are participating in an internship/ research project/ study program outside Quebec. For the purpose of receiving your mobility funding, you must return this form within 3 weeks of the start date of your activity abroad along with a boarding pass or other proof of arrival.

1. Complete the "Student Information" section of this form
2. Have your host institution's International office/supervisor complete and stamp the bottom section
3. Return this form to Concordia International by e-mail international@concordia.ca

2 STUDENT INFORMATION

Concordia ID#: _____

First name: _____

Last name: _____

Email: _____

Year: _____

Concordia semester: Summer Fall Winter Academic Year

Host Institution: _____

Host Country: _____

I understand that I must maintain a full time enrolment at Concordia University while abroad.

I understand that I may be required to re-pay all or part of my mobility funding if I do not complete my internship/research/ study program outside Québec.

Date: _____ Signature: _____

3 HOST INSTITUTION (to be completed by your project supervisor or the International office)

First, Last name: _____

Title: _____

Email: _____

I confirm that the student has arrived and started his/her internship/research/ Study program:

Yes No

Start date: DD/MM/YY To End date: DD/MM/YY


Date: _____ Signature and/or institutional stamp

QUEBEC MOBILITY BURSARY

Your CSEP application included your application for Quebec Mobility Bursary. There is no need to complete a separate application

- You must remain registered full-time while on exchange (minimum equivalent 12 (UG) or full-time (G) Concordia credits)
- Must have 24 (UG) or 9 (G) credits by the time that you leave for your exchange
- Your Quebec Mobility Bursary will be confirmed closer to your departure once you have received your official letter of admission from the host institution and STOQ has been added for you
- Your bursary payment will be processed once you have submitted Confirmation of Arrival form to Concordia International

NOTE: *The amount offered by the Quebec Mobility Bursary is not substantial enough to be counted as your primary source of financial resources while on exchange*

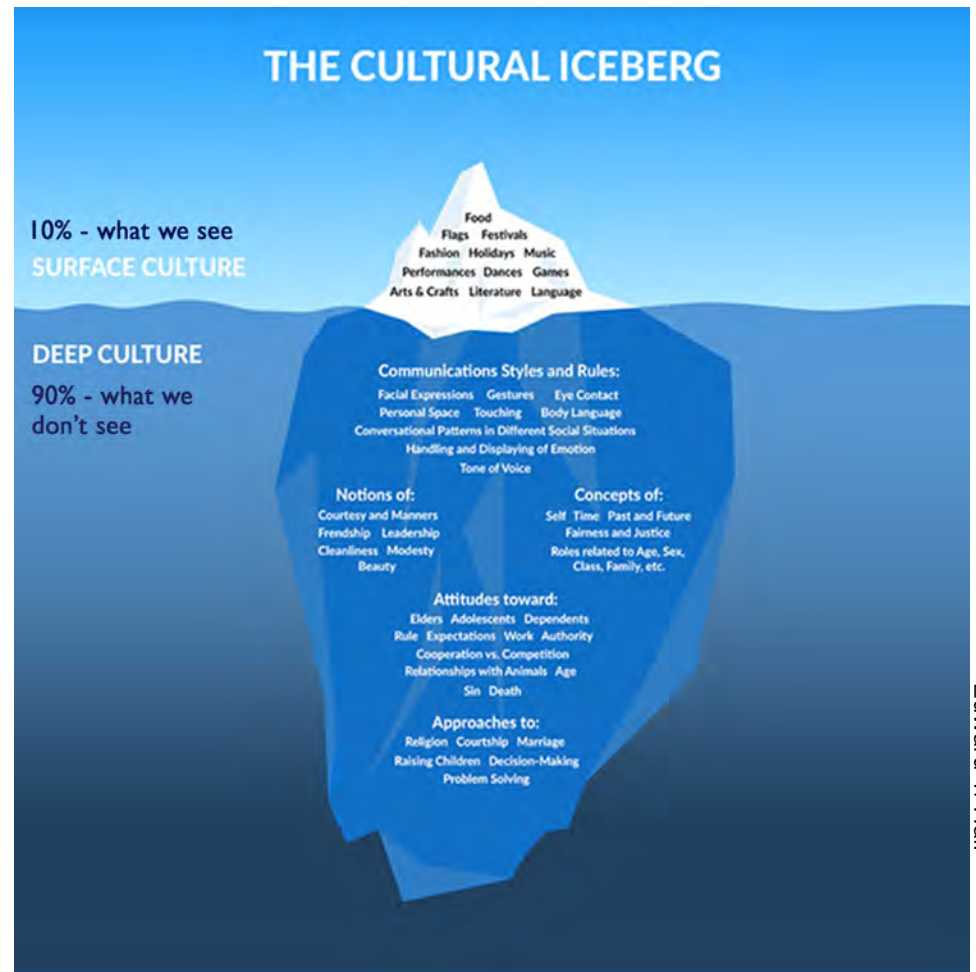
The background features a white triangular area in the top-left corner, which is bordered by a teal triangle on the left and an orange triangle on the right. The rest of the background is a solid orange color.

ADAPTING TO LIFE ABROAD

CULTURAL NORMS AND DIFFERENCES

CULTURAL AWARENESS

- Going abroad is for a student a great opportunity to develop professional, language, and intercultural skills
- Even in a European country, that is relatively similar from a geographic and cultural point of view, the intercultural dimension is not to be underestimated
- A life experience abroad (not a simple holiday) allows to fit in an environment where you can learn about that country's deeper culture
- You may find yourself in situations where a lack of cultural knowledge leads to a misunderstanding of cultural aspects which cannot be immediately perceived



EXAMPLES OF DEEP CULTURAL DIFFERENCES

- **Notions of courtesy and manners:**
 - Eating in class is considered impolite and is strongly discouraged
 - Wearing sweatpants, flip-flops or pajamas in class. At many partner institutions, students dress in a formal and conservative manner while attending courses
 - Writing “one-liner” e-mails to the partner or to university professors. It is best to begin your e-mail by addressing the individual to whom you are writing. Be sure to include your full name, host institution student ID number if you have one, and mention that you are an exchange student
 - Showing up late to class. Habitual lateness is widely considered as showing disrespect
 - Not attending courses. Missing more than two courses without a medical note may result in a failing grade at certain partner institutions

CULTURAL DIFFERENCES

- **Communication styles and rules:**
 - Public displays of affection: in many countries PDA is frowned upon and considered offensive.
 - Body Language: Slouching in your chair, sitting with your arms crossed, or yawning in class may be considered disrespectful
 - Expecting the same “student-friendly” service offered by Concordia University at your host institution’s internal offices/departments
- **Concepts of time:**
 - Waiting for a response from administrative at your host bodies may be longer than what you are used to at Concordia
- **Attitudes toward authority:**
 - Confronting authority figures or professors regarding grading, assignments etc. may not be perceived in the same manner as it would be at Concordia

MANAGING YOUR EXPECTATIONS

- You may find that your personal expectations of the country, its people, the institution, etc. do not match reality
- Identify the reasons you wish to study abroad
- What are your impressions of the country where you will be living? Are they realistic?
- Research your host country as much as you can in advance
- Learn the laws and customs



EXPECTATIONS VS REALITY

EXPECTATIONS

- You will become fluent in the language of your host country
- Your days will be filled with sightseeing and exploring the city
- I will make friends with the local students at my host university
- My accommodations will be to the standards I am used to at home
- You will discover more about yourself and mature as an individual

REALITY

- There is always that language barrier, or even accent barrier, for that matter
- Living the travelers' cultural life every weekend and break is not possible for everyone and can be very expensive. Explore your immediate surroundings instead
- You will make lots of friends, but they are most likely to be other exchange students from all over the world
- Not all accommodations are modern, renovated or to the level of cleanliness you expect. Do your research and be ready to adjust
- You will only discover more about yourself if you get out of your comfort zone

CULTURE SHOCK: MANAGING STRESS AND SYMPTOMS

WHAT IS CULTURE SHOCK

- A feeling of disorientation, annoyance, and/or hostility experienced when you visit a country with norms and traditions different from your own
- Culture shock has different stages but usually results in an understanding of your new host country's norms and traditions
- Everyone experiences culture shock differently -- your past experiences often color how you see your new country
- Try to manage expectations before going abroad. Do research beforehand and engage with the local community once you're there. This will help you integrate

HOW TO MANAGE IT

- Learn as much about your host country as possible
- Set learning goals for your time abroad
- Let go of expectations
- Keep an open mind
- Explore your surroundings
- Focus on language acquisition

MENTAL HEALTH WHILE ON EXCHANGE


Being on exchange can be an overwhelming experience and your emotions can take a toll on your mental health, resulting in bouts of homesickness, culture shock, stress and anxiety. In such circumstances, it becomes necessary to take care and maintain your wellbeing to make the most out of your exchange experience.



- Keep an open mind
 - Attend orientation or any welcome activities
 - Join student groups
 - Develop patterns or routines
 - Explore your surroundings
 - Set and achieve small goals
 - Focus on language acquisition
 - Exercise
- For greater support for managing your stress, please contact the host university's international office or your international liaison officer at Concordia International.
 - Concordia University Health Services has plenty of information on stress management and other health topics including nutrition, physical activity, mental health, sleep and more. Consult concordia.ca/healthyliving

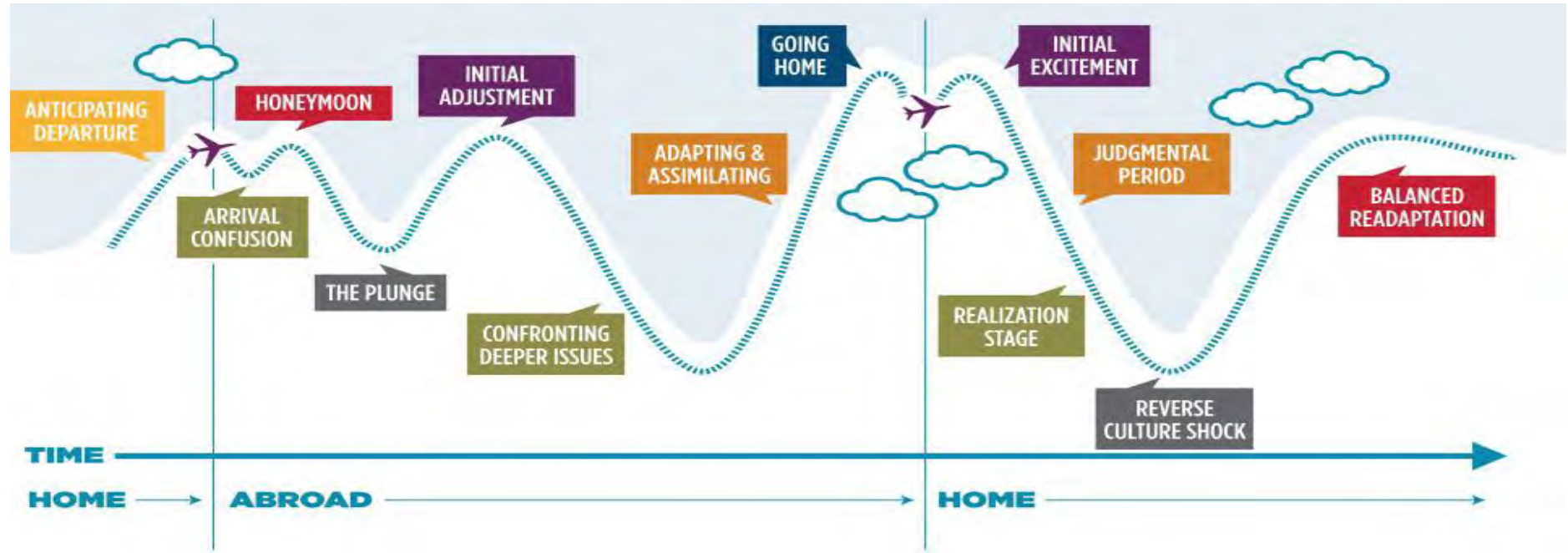
STAYING IN TOUCH

Staying in touch is critical!

- Make sure to check your email regularly for news and updates from your ILO (make sure that we have your most current e-mail address)
 - Join [the MS Teams CSEP Peer-to-Peer Platform](#)
 - Contact our [Student Exchange Ambassadors](#) for practical tips
 - Send us photos or stories of your exchange , we'll be happy to share them on our Instagram account (@Concordia.International)
 - Keep in touch with your family and friends on a regular basis
 - Register at the local Embassy or Consulate of your nationality
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STAGES OF EXCHANGE EXPERIENCE

You may pass through these stages in a different order or skip some stages altogether.





CONCORDIA GLOBAL LEARNING PORTAL
FINANCIAL AND RISK AWARENESS TRAVEL MODULES

CONCORDIA GLOBAL LEARNING PORTAL

You will receive soon an invitation to join Concordia Global Learning Portal which is hosted on Moodle. Via the portal, you can access interactive modules regarding Financial aspects related to your semester abroad and Risk Awareness Travel

It is mandatory for each CSEP participant to join the portal and complete four interactive modules about Risk Awareness Travel. Completing the modules provides Concordia students traveling overseas with the necessary information and strategies to effectively handle personal health and safety and emergency situations



RETURNING HOME

EXCHANGE REPORT, TRANSCRIPT & TRANSFER CREDITS

STUDENT EXCHANGE REPORT

Your chance to let us know what you thought about your host institution and your semester(s) abroad.

- Submitting a Student Exchange Report is a mandatory part of the CSEP
- Your ILO will send you a reminder about the report by email towards the end of your exchange
- If you do not submit the report, your credit transfer will not be requested
- Concordia International publishes a number of Student Exchange Reports on our website as a way to help future exchange participants learn more about the host institutions that interest them. If you do not want us to publish your report, please inform your ILO upon submission of the report
- Concordia International organizes this year CSEP Photo Contest. You will receive more information regarding it soon

TRANSCRIPT & TRANSFER CREDITS

- Credit transfer is requested by Concordia International upon receipt of your official host university transcript
- Your faculty transfers your credits – can take up to 3 months
- Only courses that have been pre-approved will get transferred
- STOQ code remains on your transcript

ACADEMIC YEAR 2010-11										
FALL-WINTER										
Course	Course Name		Credits	Grade/Notation/GPA	Class Avg	Class Size	Program Credits Earned	Other		
PSYC 321	Transfer Credit: MAASTRICHT UNIV					2010-11	3.00			
PSYC 464	Transfer Credit: MAASTRICHT UNIV					2010-11	3.00			
PSYC 483	Transfer Credit: MAASTRICHT UNIV					2010-11	3.00			
PSYC B	Transfer Credit: MAASTRICHT UNIV					2010-11	3.00			
STOQ 001	/2	ZZ STUDIES OUTSIDE QUEBEC A	0.00							
PSYC 333	Transfer Credit: MAASTRICHT UNIV					2010-11	3.00			
PSYC 363	Transfer Credit: MAASTRICHT UNIV					2010-11	3.00			
PSYC 433	Transfer Credit: MAASTRICHT UNIV					2010-11	3.00			
PSYC 387	Transfer Credit: MASSTRICHT UNIV					2010-11	3.00			
STOQ 001	/4	ZZ STUDIES OUTSIDE QUEBEC A	0.00							

ACADEMIC YEAR 2011-12										
FALL-WINTER										
Course	Course Name		Credits	Grade/Notation/GPA	Class Avg	Class Size	Program Credits Earned	Other		
EXCI 251	/2	AA FUNDAMENT-HLTH&PHYS ACTIVITY	3.00	A (4.0)	3.17	158	3.00			
FFAR 298T	/2	A SPECIAL TOPICS IN FINE ARTS (CENSORING POP CULT./AMERICA)	3.00	A (4.0)	3.05	81	3.00			
PSYC 311	/2	01 RESEARCH METHS & DESIGNS II	3.00	A (4.0)	3.52	44	3.00			

TUITION REFUND

- Undergraduates who register for and successfully complete the equivalent of 12 previously approved credits will be refunded the 3-credit difference, once their credits have been transferred by their faculty after their exchange
- Refunds are requested by Concordia International and processed by the Student Accounts office
- You will not receive a credit refund under the following circumstances:
 - You registered for less than the equivalent of 12 Concordia credits
 - You registered for the equivalent of 15 Concordia credits
 - You failed any course at your host university

CLOSING REMARKS

DON'T FORGET ...

FINAL THOUGHTS

Remember:

- This is an **academic exchange**, not a vacation
- You are representing Concordia University and Canada
- You are expected to perform well academically - your reputation and Concordia University's reputation are valuable
- Be considerate and aware of cultural values of your host country and respect them
- Do not behave in a way you would not behave at home

YOUR INTERNATIONAL LIAISON OFFICERS AND CONCORDIA INTERNATIONAL CONTACT

ASIA, AMERICAS, OCEANIA & UK

Christine Archer

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EUROPE, AFRICA & MIDDLE EAST

Pauliina Rouleau

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MOBILITY BURSARY

international@concordia.ca



MAY THIS BE
THE
BEGINNING
OF THE REST
OF YOUR LIFE!

