The Belo Horizonte, Brazil Academic Program is offered by International Academic Programs (IAP) at the University of Wisconsin-Madison as an exchange program in conjunction with Universidade Federal Minas Gerais (UMFG). This IAP Program Handbook supplements handbook(s) or materials you receive from UFMG as well as the IAP Study Abroad Handbook and provides you with the most up-to-date information and advice available at the time of printing. Changes may occur before your departure or while you are abroad.

Questions about your program abroad (housing options, facilities abroad, etc.) as well as questions relating to your relationship with your host university or academics (e.g. course credit and equivalents, registration deadlines, etc.) should be directed to International Academic Programs at UW-Madison.

This program handbook contains the following information:

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Contact Information
On-Site Program Information

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UW-Madison Information
International Academic Programs (IAP)
University of Wisconsin-Madison
106 Red Gym, 716 Langdon Street
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Phone: 608-265-6329 Fax: 608-262-6998
Web: www.studyabroad.wisc.edu

Erin Polnaszek
IAP Student Study Abroad Advisor
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Emergency Contact Information
In case of an emergency, call the main IAP number (608) 265-6329 between 8:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Monday-Friday; after-hours or on weekends call the IAP staff on call at (608) 516-9440.

Embassy Registration
All program participants who are U.S. citizens must register at the U.S. Embassy before departure as this will help in case of a lost passport or other mishap. You can register on-line at https://travelregistration.state.gov. If you are not a U.S. citizen, register at your home country’s embassy or consulate.

The closest U.S. Consulate is in Rio, although you can register with the Federal Police in Belo Horizonte. You will receive information at the orientation on arrival about the procedures.

US Consulate General
Program Dates
UFMG will confirm these dates sometime in late spring.

Preparation Before Leaving

Immigration Documents

Passport
A passport is needed to travel to Brazil and to obtain your student visa. Apply immediately for a passport if you do not already have one. Passport information and application forms can be found on the U.S. State Department website (http://travel.state.gov/passport). If you already have your passport, make sure it will be valid for at least 6 months beyond the length of your stay abroad.

Visa
You are required to obtain a student visa to enter Brazil. IAP will provide you with general instructions on how to apply using information from the Brazilian consulate in Chicago (http://chicago.itamaraty.gov.br/en-us/). It is recommended that you proceed with applying for your student visa as early as the process allows (i.e. completing whatever steps you can, even if you cannot complete others).

When applying for your visa and when registering with the Federal Police in Brazil, you must use your full names, as well as those of your parents. If you arrive in Brazil with your name abbreviated in the passport or the visa documents, you will need to obtain a document issued by the American Consulate in Brazil verifying your complete name.

Those going for a semester or year must apply for a student visa and should list the exchange coordinator and the UFMG International Office address as Contact in Brazil. This contact information is found below in this handbook.

You cannot easily switch from a tourist to a student visa unless you go out of the country and come back in with a new visa.

Keep in mind that regardless of what type of visa you have, there are fines for expiration and you should apply for a renewal of the visa beginning two weeks or more prior to the expiration date. You will need to go to the local immigration police.
In addition to the photos required for the visa, you may also want to bring at least 2-3 passport size photos to Brazil with your name written on the back. These may be required for documents, etc. You can also have photos taken in Brazil after you arrive.

It is possible that you will need to appear in person at the consulate in Chicago. The visa requirements have been changing frequently for Brazil, so please make sure you check the consulate website before submitting your visa application.

**General Recommendations or Requirements:**
Please consult your healthcare provider before departure on the proper medical precautions to take for Brazil and any surrounding countries you may wish to visit.

Currently, there is increased yellow fever activity in Brazil in the states of Minas Gerais, Rondonia, Goias, Amapa, Roraima, Amazonas, Acre, Para, Mato Grosso, Mato Grosso do Sul, Tocantins, Distrito Federal, Maranhao and in partial areas of the following states of Rio Grande do Sul, Parana, Sao Paolo, Piaui, Bahia, Espirito Santo, and Santa Catarina. Please consult your healthcare provider for recommended vaccines, prevention and treatment. If you do have special health needs or health concerns, be sure to talk to your healthcare provider and get any medical instructions for your study abroad session in writing. If you are planning on traveling in rural areas of Brazil, check with your healthcare provider to make sure the area where you are going is not a high-risk Malaria area, and bring traveler’s diarrhea pills if possible. If you are carrying prescription drugs with you to Brazil, you must have an explanation in writing from your physician regarding content and reasons for the drug.

If you wear contact lenses, bring an extra pair, as they are expensive in Brazil, and you should also bring glasses. In any case, bring a typewritten copy of your prescription along. Most therapeutic and non-prescription drugs (as well as some which require a prescription in the United States) are readily available at a reasonable cost.

**Handling Money Abroad**
The name of the Brazilian currency is the Real. There is an Agencia Bancaria (bank) branch and ATM on the UFMG university campus.

The university bank exchanges foreign currency. You can exchange there instead of going to downtown Belo Horizonte. However, prior to departure, either at a major airport in the United States or through a local bank, please make sure you have at least $150 dollars in Real for emergencies before you leave the United States. The currency exchange offices at the international airport may be closed upon arrival and you will need some cash during the weekend before the university classes start.

There are also ATM machines on campus in the International Office building where you can use your ATM/ debit card. The ATM accepts cards on the PLUS system.

If you run out of money and you need some money sent immediately to you, you can use Western Union or have money deposited in your account in the United States so you can withdraw it with your ATM card in Brazil.
To check the current exchange rate or to print out a traveler’s cheat sheet, you can visit Oanda’s website at: http://www.oanda.com/currency/converter/.

Packing
In reference to clothing style, Brazilians are all different. Some dress in nicer clothing and others dress in a more casual style. You will encounter people of all styles, comparable to the United States. For the most part, Brazilians dress more formally than we do in the United States. Clothes are usually ironed.

The climate in Belo Horizonte is typically dry and warm in the summer and cold and rainy in the winter (June, July and August). Most buildings and houses in Belo Horizonte do not have indoor heating, which makes winters quite uncomfortable if you have not packed warm sweaters and long underwear. Warm clothes for the winter are a must. A rain coat or over coat and an umbrella are essential to your comfort in the winter. Many students buy second-hand clothes in Brazil, which are inexpensive & can be of good quality, so that they do not have to pack them.

During the Brazilian winter (June, July and August), you will need clothes that would be suitable for the colder, rainier fall weather in the Midwest; temperatures may fall below freezing. During the remaining months you will need lighter clothes like those you would wear in the late spring or summer at home. Good shoes are important, as you'll do a lot of walking. Bring sturdy, comfortable walking shoes, sandals (which can double as slippers), and running shoes if you jog.

Sturdy hiking clothes are advisable for travel outside of Belo Horizonte, especially if you travel off the beaten track. A down jacket, heavy jeans, and hiking boots will all be useful.

To look at historical temperatures in Brazil, you can search on this website: http://www.wunderground.com/.

Books
Books written in or translated to the English language may be difficult to find in Brazil; however there are some bookstores that sell books in English. If you need to read books in English while abroad you might want to bring a few paperbacks with you to trade with friends. It is, however, a good idea to take this time to try to immerse yourself in the language thoroughly by reading only in Portuguese.

Gifts
You should plan on bringing several gifts appropriate for different ages and genders, especially if you are staying with a family. Most Brazilians appreciate things from the United States, such as T-shirts with American sayings. Anything identified with your university or hometown will be appreciated - a charm or key ring with the university seal or a small stuffed animal. Other suggestions include colorful stationery or postcards (perhaps with scenes of the United States), music cassettes or CDs with the latest American music. While these are good suggestions, they are likely to enjoy any gift that you personally choose.

Electronics
The standard is the same in Belo Horizonte as in the United States but it is not the same all over the country. Some cities may require a converter. You can ask a local electronic store such as Radio Shack or Best Buy for assistance in purchasing the right converter and adapter.

**Immunizations**
If within the last 90 days before entering Brazil you have visited a country in Africa or in South America (except Chile and the following full-member-countries of the Mercosur - Argentina, Uruguay and Paraguay) a **Yellow Fever International Immunization Certificate** is mandatory to enter Brazil. A Yellow Fever International Immunization Certificate is advisable if you plan to visit any of the following States in Brazil: Acre, Amapá, Amazonas, Federal District, Goiás, Maranhão, Mato Grosso, Mato Grosso do Sul, Pará, Rondônia, Roraima and Tocantins.

**Travel and Arrival Information**

**Travel Plans**
You are responsible for making your own flight arrangements. Make sure to send your travel information to UFMG via email as well as to upload your flight itinerary into Your My Study Abroad account.

The semester students have two options of transportation from the Belo Horizonte airport:
a) Take the executive bus, which can be picked up just outside the airport. This bus goes from the airport to downtown Belo Horizonte. From there, you take a taxi to your final destination.
b) Take a taxi from the airport to your final destination.

**Arrival Information**
Note that sometimes upon entering and departing Brazil you may be required to pay airport or reciprocity fees of about $50. Prior to leaving Brazil inquire with your airlines about fees for departure, save another $50 for this.

Also upon entering Brazil you may be given a tourist card. Keep it with your passport and remember you will have to present it upon leaving the country.

**The Academic Program**

**Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais (UFMG)**
Ever since its foundation in 1927, UFMG has been conspicuous in the pursuit of excellence in teaching, research and extramural studies. It offers 51 undergraduate programs with about 20,000 enrolled students in nearly one hundred departments. 5,500 graduate students attend its 84 graduate programs (30 Ph.D. programs and 54 M.A. programs) as well as 42 shorter graduate specialization programs.

This impressive body of undergraduate and graduate students gets the most qualified academic training available in the country. Thanks to the excellence of its teaching, UFMG came out first among all national public and private institutions of higher learning according to the official evaluation by the Ministry of Education.
UFMG occupies an area of 8.8 million square meters, including two campus and seven off-campus centers. This vast space is used daily by a university population of 27,000 teachers and 4,350 personnel. UFMG buildings house 94 academic departments, which are distributed among 19 university units. The Pampulha campus has a daycare center, elementary and high schools and sports center. Two experimental farms and one agricultural school are run further inland in the State of Minas Gerais.

As a result of a consistent policy of investment in the qualification of its faculty, 80 percent of UFMG teachers have either Ph.D. (45 per cent) or MA degrees (35 per cent). Most personnel are secondary school or university graduates. This competence put in the service of teaching, research, and extension activities in the several fields of knowledge makes UFMG an outstanding vehicle for regional and national advancement.

Be aware that life in Brazil is much less organized and things will take much longer than what you may be used to in the United States. Please be prepared for this!

Orientation
Before classes begin, an orientation meeting will be held at the International Office especially for the incoming exchange students. At this meeting, students will receive general information about UFMG, the style of life in Belo Horizonte, and details about the city itself. At this time, each course professor gives an introduction on the course format and description, as well as other academic aspects of the program like activities and evaluation.

General Overview of Academics
The academic year in Brazil follows a different calendar from that of the University of Wisconsin-Madison. A semester at UFMG consists of approximately 15 weeks of classes, with the first semester beginning in February and continuing through June, and the second semester beginning in mid-August and ending in mid-December. January is traditionally the month for summer vacation. There are no classes during this time and many families vacation outside of the city. The program begins with an orientation session prior to the beginning of the semester, which helps students in acclimating to life in Belo Horizonte. Students will enroll in regular classes at UFMG and take regular classes with Brazilian students.

Course Information
Courses
You can choose from a wide variety of courses offered at UFMG. Courses are available in Art, Geography, History, Literature, Philosophy, Political Science, Sociology, and many other disciplines. A representative course listing is available on the web at the address listed below.

UFMG courses have different formats such as lectures, discussions, seminars, written, and oral exams. The evaluation can be by means of a test, a paper or oral presentation, can be individual or in a group.

To choose courses, students can consult the information on the following website: www.ufmg.br:
- On the tabs at the top of the screen click on the word "cursos"
- Still on the left, click on the area of interest (the undergraduate areas are on the first square, the graduation on the second square)
- Once in the area of interest, click on "Graduação" (undergraduate). "Pos-Graduação" are graduate level courses UW students are not eligible to take graduate level courses, as only graduate students may do so.
- Under each course description, click on "+ informação" (+ information); click on "Graduação", and look for the courses.

*you can also look at the sites www.ufmg.br/prograd and www.ufmg.br/prpg

Courses in Professional Schools
UW students are unlikely to receive degree credit for professional schools courses, such as Law and Architecture. We therefore discourage UW students from taking classes in the professional schools at UFMG.

Registration
International students wanting to study for a semester at UFMG must complete the UFMG Application Form. This form requires you to list personal data and the courses that you would like to take at UFMG.

During the orientation week on campus, you will meet professors from the various departments from which you are interested in taking classes. They will take into consideration the level of difficulty, Portuguese level and the classes you have already taken in the past. If applicable, professors may make alternate course suggestions at this time.

Take a copy of your UW-Madison transcript (and any other college or university transcripts) with you.

Equivalents and Course Equivalent Request (CER)
Each course you take abroad must be assigned a UW-Madison “equivalent” course in order for your grades and credits to be recorded on your UW-Madison transcript. In order to establish UW-Madison course equivalents for your study abroad courses, you will submit Course Equivalent Requests through your My Study Abroad account. Detailed information on the UW course equivalent process that you will use through your My Study Abroad account is available in the IAP Study Abroad Handbook.

If you would like more information or clarification on the Portuguese major, please contact Karen Thompson (klthompson3@wisc.edu), Undergraduate Spanish and Portuguese Advisor. For course equivalent issues please contact Professor Severino Albuquerque, (sjalbuqu@wisc.edu) and for questions about practical issues on this program contact Erin Polnaszek (eepolnaszek@studyabroad.wisc.edu).
Credits
Conversions
UFMG offers courses of 30, 45, 60 and 90 hours per semester. For example, 15 hours is equivalent to 1 UFMG credit, and 90 hours is equivalent to 6 UFMG credits. UW-Madison recognizes one UFMG credit as one UW credit.

Limits and Load
UW students must take the equivalent of at least 12 UW-Madison credits, and no more than 18 credits per semester.

Pass/Fail/Drop/Audit
Please refer to the IAP Study Abroad Handbook for academic policies.

Dropping a course
If you register for a course at UFMG, which you later decide to drop, it is strongly recommended that you obtain written confirmation of the drop (you may even have to draft a letter that someone would sign confirming that the course was dropped). The process to drop courses at UFMG is antiquated and sometimes fails, which results in confusion, frustration and delays for all involved.

Grades and Grade Conversions
The UFMG grade report for each student will be indicated as both a percentage and letter grade, according to a scale set by UFMG. The UW-Madison will convert your UFMG percentage grades to letter grades, and will ignore the letter grades.

Grade Conversion Scale (Semester, Year):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UFMG Grade</th>
<th>UW Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>90-100</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>82-89</td>
<td>AB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75-81</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70-74</td>
<td>BC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63-69</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55-62</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-54</td>
<td>F</td>
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</tbody>
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Living Abroad
Belo Horizonte
The Federal University of Minas Gerais (UFMG) is located in Belo Horizonte, the capital of the state of Minas Gerais. The city of Belo Horizonte (BH) has approximately 3 million inhabitants and is surrounded by mountains. The weather is mild and pleasant all year round, with an average annual temperature of 21º C. The summer is hot and rainy.

For specific information on what is happening in Belo Horizonte: www.pbh.gov.br, and www.telelistas.net
Housing
Living with a Brazilian Host Family
For those foreign students who come to study for a semester/calendar year at UFMG, the International Relations Office makes arrangements for them to live with a host family for the first two weeks of the program.

Students will have a private bedroom, breakfast daily and laundry services. Starting the third week of the program, students can choose their housing for the remainder of the program, which include remaining with the host family and the other options listed below.

The housing questionnaire for accommodation is included with your acceptance email.

Other options for accommodation are:
Flat (with hotel services) for an average monthly cost of approximately US$ 450 without breakfast
Furnished apartment for an average monthly rent of approximately US$ 400
Unfurnished apartment for an average monthly rent of approximately US$ 250

If you choose to live with a host family, keep the below mentioned courtesies in mind when you first contact them by mail or by telephone or when you first meet them. Remember that a first impression may be very important. You are responsible for providing arrival information to IAP since you will be met at the airport. Keep in mind that most families will be on vacation the month of February, and if you plan to arrive before the recommended arrival date, you should make arrangements for accommodations in a youth hostel or hotel.

Do not expect to receive any information about your host families until just prior to the beginning of the program (i.e. the week before the program begins).

Interacting with the Family
Go into life with your new family with an accepting and non-judgmental frame of mind. Be as honest, considerate, and communicative as possible. Treat them with respect and they'll respect you back. Always remember that you are a visitor (despite the fact that you are paying for room and board) in the family's home and in another culture. Take the time and make the effort to get to know the family that has accepted you into their home.

Brazilians are accustomed to more outward courtesy and formality than is the average North American. Therefore, the lack of a thank you or other polite expression is much more likely to be taken as ingratitude. This should be taken into consideration in your letter of introduction to the family. Latin Americans usually preface their letters with several lines of courtesies expressing their concern for family and friends.

It is a good idea to use the formal verb forms with the older generation of the household unless, or until otherwise advised. In the majority of homes, students use the informal verb form with host parents, but it is better to start out cautiously. Your host parents will give you clues for using the most appropriate verb form. Observe the way things are done in the household and try to conform as much as possible. When in doubt, ask about a particular thing that puzzles you. It is
the student who should take the initiative in these instances because the family may be hesitant to correct you for fear of hurting your feelings. At the beginning, you can capitalize on your cultural ignorance by asking questions that might later be considered inappropriate.

Despite language problems, try to speak Portuguese from the beginning. The families are aware of your adjustment problems and will try to be patient and helpful.

If you desire a close relationship with the brothers and sisters of the family, be prepared to take the initiative. They will often wait for you to make the first move. This may be difficult since they may be shy about approaching the foreigner. Find out early whether or not there are family rules you are expected to follow, such as cleaning your room, being on time for meals, etc. This may save some embarrassment and/or irritation later on. Try to find out about individual idiosyncrasies in the family. Be tactful. When you leave the house, tell someone where you are going and what time you expect to be home. Telephone if you are going to be late or miss a meal. These customs show courtesy toward the family and save them worries about your getting lost or getting into trouble. Families are especially solicitous toward women. Always speak with another American in Portuguese when in the presence of non-English-speakers. This way, everyone can understand.

It is extremely important that you use the utmost of discretion in terms of a conservative approach to discussing matters pertaining to sexual behavior, sexual choices, sexual politics, etc. If you are taken to a party or other function, especially with family members, act conservatively with the opposite sex because the family may be quite conservative in this respect.

Many of the conveniences that we take for granted in the United States are considered luxuries in Brazil. Your family may constantly tell you to turn off the lights, or limit your phone calls, or feed you more and more rice and less and less meat. In general, be prepared to recognize and deal with the fact that there is a very real monetary factor that will enter into the relationship most students have with their families. This factor may prevent you from achieving full identity as a family member.

For this reason, also, be careful about imposing your guests on your family. Ask permission before you bring home a friend and don't be surprised if the response is cool - the family may simply feel it cannot afford to feed another person. If you have been permitted to have a friend over at the house, stay in the living room. In most houses it is not acceptable to bring a friend into your bedroom, be sure to ask the family their ideas about this.

If you have friends visiting from the States you should make arrangements to have your friends stay in a hotel or youth hostel. If your family offers to have your friend stay with you, be sure to work out the potential financial arrangements (i.e. offer to pay) before your friend arrives.

Maids are common in Brazil, and your family may have one. This is another area in which to take care. There are well-defined social barriers, which prohibit excessive familiarity between family members and maids, and you may be shocked at how some are treated. Although you may feel closer to the maid than to anyone else in the family, the family may resent or disapprove of an openly friendly relationship.
Be sure to be honest with your family about your needs and to tell them right away if you don't like a certain food, etc. Tell them right away, don't lie to them just to make them happy -- you will be part of their family and living with them for at least 5 months. If you are a vegetarian, you need to state this clearly on the housing form so an appropriate family can be matched with you because vegetarianism is not widespread in Brazil. There will most likely be problems due to various cultural differences, but try and keep an open mind and remember that this is a learning experience. Living with a family is truly the only way to completely learn about the Brazilian way of life.

**Transportation**

If you plan on traveling outside of Belo Horizonte, be sure to leave your itinerary with the UFMG on-site staff in case of emergency. Also, do research on costs before you leave, as travel around South America can be more expensive and/or more time-consuming than you might have initially believed.

**Safety**

Although crime is high in Brazil, as in the United States, most travelers avoid becoming victims by following recommendations on how to avoid risk given by onsite administrators and locals. There are common sense precautions that apply everywhere. If you lived in big urban centers in the United States you probably have developed some strategies already. Most of the general conditions that contribute to risk abroad are the same ones that contribute to risk here. However, there are additional factors that will contribute to risk when you are a foreigner. These additional factors are: your lack of familiarity with the local conditions, the safety of certain areas, the typical problems to avoid, the complexities of the culture and the language barrier. Please try to find out as much as possible about the place you will be visiting ahead of time. Also, once on site, please ask your student liaison and your host family and Brazilian friends to fill you in on what you can do to keep safe.

It is also a good idea to save your traveling for after the program when your language skills will be better and you will have learned more about the environment in Brazil. It is a good idea to keep up with the news and regularly read English language news or the Brazilian news on the web before leaving.

On the other hand, sometimes there is nothing you can do to avoid being in the wrong place at the wrong time or with the wrong people. Statistically, Brazil is rated as a country posing moderate risk to travelers but conditions vary from city to city and state to state. Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo are big cities with higher levels of violence. Certain areas may be notoriously dangerous but caution must be exercised everywhere and always in Brazil. This is a country where it is not unusual for a criminal to be armed and violent. You may feel intimidated at bus stations, buses and especially at night even by young street children.

It is simply not worth the risk to your person to fight over valuables so please do not take anything you cannot replace easily. Jewelry and valuable personal effects should be left home unless you really need to take them with you. If you will take a laptop, please make sure you always back up your data before and keep the backup in a separate place in your carry-on
luggage. If you will be conducting research or staying for the whole semester, the convenience of having your own computer may outweigh the terrible inconvenience of traveling with it and possibly having it stolen.

Health
Tap water in Belo Horizonte is not potable, so it is recommended that you drink bottled water or boil the tap water to avoid the adjustment period and its symptoms (diarrhea). Remember to also avoid ice cubes, as they are usually made of tap water.

Water irrigation systems use sewage water for vegetable and fruit plantations. This makes it vital that you carefully wash any vegetables before you eat them and that you peel all fruits that you can peel. The only safe way to clean your vegetables is by soaking them in a chlorine solution according to instructions on the bottle (many brands are available in any grocery store in Belo Horizonte). Raw seafood should not be eaten under any circumstances.

Especially during the summer months, you should be careful to avoid mayonnaise, lettuce, dressing, custard or cream fillings that might have been left in room temperature for some time.

A Special Note about AIDS
The risk of acquiring the HIV infection through sexual contact is growing. If you are sexually active, beware, be smart, be safe, always use a condom and use it properly. Please read general information from your university concerning AIDS and international travel.

If you are or think you may be sexually active while overseas, bring the birth control you will need for the year. Condoms are available, but the quality is questionable. Do not place yourself at unnecessary risk: Bring American condoms and use them if you are going to be sexually active while you are overseas.

In cases of emergency or to speak with someone in more depth about these issues, please contact the on-site staff.

Communication
When making calls, keep in mind time zone differences (www.timeanddate.com/worldclock). To make an international call to the United States, dial the access code for the country from which you are calling plus the United States country code (always “1”) followed by the appropriate U.S. area code and local number. To call internationally from the United States, dial “011”, the country code, city access code (if necessary) and the phone number. Country and city codes can be found online (www.timeanddate.com/worldclock/dialing.html). Some of above steps can vary if you are using a calling card.

For phone calls in Brazil:
You can call collect or buy cards called DDI (discagem direta internacional) at R$10,00 (about US$5.85) each for 8 minutes for the USA. You can use them on public or home telephones but not from cell phones.

For email:
You will have access to email through UFMG. It would be a good idea for you to have either an already existing hotmail or other kind of easily accessed web-email service so you can give this account before leaving to your friends and family.

**Skype:** Skype is a free, downloadable software application that allows users to make live video and voice calls over the internet. Skype users can also add money to their account and can then use the service to call land lines and cell phones internationally at very low rates. Additionally, Skype also provides an instant messaging function as well as file sharing.

To create a Skype account, users must download the application from [www.skype.com](http://www.skype.com) and create a user name and password. Once the application is installed onto their computer, they can search for friends either by first and last name or using their friends' Skype usernames. Once a friend is added to a users contact list, they will be able to see whether that person is available to chat. If two users both have web-enabled video cameras for their computers, they will be able to chat face to face. For users without a web cam, a microphone is all that’s required for calls to another computer.

**Shipping**

Although not recommended, if you need to ship anything to Brazil, please bear in mind the following:

- Packages should weigh less than 1 kilogram (otherwise they are sent to the customs office, where you will have to pick them up and pay a fee)
- Packages may not be of a commercial nature
- The name on the package must match the name on your passport
- Also be aware that some confusion might arise when retrieving your package. It might be alphabetized by your title, your first name or your last name. Be sure to think of all possible alphabetizing combinations when you go to pick up your mail, and bring with you a proper form of identification.