Valdivia, Chile – Fall 2010
IAP Program Handbook

The Valdivia, Chile program is offered by International Academic Programs (IAP) at the University of Wisconsin-Madison in conjunction with the Universidad Austral de Chile (UACh). This IAP Program Handbook supplements handbook(s) or materials you receive from Universidad Austral de Chile 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.

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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 online at https://travelregistration.state.gov. If you are not a U.S. citizen, register at your home country’s embassy or consulate.

U.S. Embassy in Santiago, Chile  
Avendina Andres Bello 2800  
Las Condes  
Santiago, Chile  
Phone: (562) 330-3000  
Fax: (562) 330-3710  
Email: santiagoAmcit@state.gov  
Web: http://www.usembassy.cl

Program Dates
Fall 2010  
August 2 – December 21

Spring 2011  
March 15 – July 19

**It is recommended that students arrive at least one week prior to the start of classes.

Preparation Before Leaving
Refer to the Pre-Departure Checklist on pages four and five of the IAP Study Abroad Handbook for essential information.

Immigration Documents
Passport  
A passport is needed to travel to Chile 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 Chile. Even if you plan on only staying a semester, you should apply for a year-long visa as the visa extension process in Santiago is long and difficult. In order to complete your visa application, you must first apply for an FBI background check. Your study abroad office will provide you with forms and instructions for the FBI background check and the visa application. The FBI background check is now taking 10+ weeks to process, so you need to apply for the FBI background check as soon as your study abroad office provides you with instructions. For more information please visit [www.chile-usa.org/visasgral.htm](http://www.chile-usa.org/visasgral.htm)

National ID Card (cédula)
In order to stay in Chile for the semester or year, you must obtain a Chilean ID card. When you get your visa, you will receive more information about getting your Chilean ID card. In general, you should have multiple photocopies of all your important documents – passport, visa, entrance stamp, etc. Since customs officials usually put the entrance stamp on the same page as your visa when you enter the country, it is probably a good idea to wait until after arriving in Chile to make multiple photocopies. You should however make 2 or 3 photocopies of the page of your passport containing your picture and information before you leave, since you will need a few for your id card and an extra would be good to have in case of emergencies.

Within 30 days of entering the country, you need to present your passport, visa and entrance form (received and stamped when you fly into Santiago) at the Policia de Investigaciones in Valdivia, Avenida Ramon Picarte. This building is a long walk from the UACh campus, so you could always try to find a ride or a city bus that goes there if you don’t feel like a 30-40 minute walk.

They will give you a certificate of visa registration that you need to present within the next 30 days (along with all of the previously mentioned documents) at the Registro Civil. The Registro Civil is also located in Valdivia, also on Avenida Ramon Picarte, and is within walking distance from campus and downtown. It is a good idea to get there early in the morning because it is only open until 2 pm and the lines get long quickly.

There you will fill out an application form for a national ID card; they will take your fingerprints and your picture. You will get a temporary form, which you will be instructed to turn in at the same Registro Civil in two to two and a half weeks (the date they give you is the earliest date it will be available) to get your official Chilean ID.

You are now a (foreign) Chilean citizen for the 6 month duration of the card! Carry it with you as you would your driver’s license in the United States. Your cédula provides you with your RUT (like a Chilean social security number) and can be used to change money, book flights, pay with a credit card, and travel and eliminates the need to carry your passport with you. **SAFEGUARD THIS CARD! YOU WILL NEED IT ANY TIME YOU TRAVEL OUTSIDE OF CHILE!**

**Handling Money Abroad**
Chile’s currency is the Chilean Peso (CLP). As of April 2010, the exchange rate is 520.7 pesos per U.S. Dollar. You can check the exchange rate online at www.x-rates.com.

You will need to exchange some money at the airport or prior to departure. Be sure to ask for small bills at the airport so you can pay for a van or bus without needing too much change. ATMs are fairly abundant throughout Chile and debit/credit cards are accepted in most places so carrying large amounts of U.S. cash is not necessary. Be sure to ask your bank about any international charges you may receive from using ATMs abroad and let them know when you will be leaving the country.

**ATM**

ATM machines are widely available in Chile, and allow you to access PLUS and CIRRUS networks as well as major credit cards. Redbanc ATM machines are widely available in the airport, banks, shopping malls, and around the town.

The easiest and most common banking system is to keep your bank account at home and have your family deposit money in it. You can withdraw funds as needed from an ATM machine using your home bank ATM card.

**Packing**

Students dress casually at UACH, with guys’ attire casual or sports focused and girls’ a little bit nicer. The current trends for girls in Chile include skinny jeans, bright tops and 80’s style sneakers and coats, they generally dress nicely for class and tend to wear a lot of colorful jewelry. Remember that Valdivia is almost at the same latitude as Madison, so even though it is in South America, it is not that much warmer! The city is, however, too close to the equator to receive any snow (except closer to the mountains). The snow is replaced by rain, so prepare for a wet fall and winter (approximately April through October). Be sure to bring rain gear, including a raincoat, waterproof shoes and an umbrella. Also bring enough warm clothes, since it is wet and cool at the same time and most homes and classrooms don’t have central heating.

Chile is a modern country so you can purchase almost anything there you would be able to buy in the U.S. Don’t over pack bulky or heavy clothing; remember, you will probably purchase souvenirs while in South America so accommodate for those while packing.

Be prepared for pollution. When traveling to Santiago, one of its less pleasant features is smog, induced by its many diesel buses and automobiles. The smog may give you some respiratory irritation. Eye, ear, nose and throat problems might also occur during particularly bad days. If you wear contact lenses you might want to replace them with glasses on those days. If you have respiratory concerns (including asthma), consult your physician for special health tips before leaving the country. Valdivia doesn’t have these issues, although during the winter most homes use wood furnaces for heat, so smaller towns may appear smoky when walking between homes.

**Electronics**

In Chile, electric current is 220 Volt with 50 cycles (compare this to the United States where we have 110 Volt with 60 cycles). This makes electrical appliances impossible to use without a transformer and a conversion plug. It is not recommended that you take...
any appliances with a motor as the motor will work slower than it was made to do. Small appliances will all be available in Chile, and prices are comparable to those in the United States. Past participants have recommended bringing a travel converter and an outlet strip that will allow you to plug in multiple things with US ends at once, while only using one converter and outlet.

Travel and Arrival Information

Traveling by Bus
From the airport there are busses that take you to the subway station “Los Heroes” and to the Terminal de Buses Alameda, an intercity bus terminal that houses popular companies like “TurBus” and Pullman that will take you anywhere you want to go. The terminal is located at the subway station “Universidad de Santiago”. There, the cost of the trip to Valdivia is between 9,000 and 24,000 Chilean pesos, that is approximately 40 dollars, depending on the class in which you choose to travel.

Traveling by Train
If you would like to enjoy the Chilean landscape the best alternative is a romantic train ride. The railway station “Estación Central” at the subway station “Estación Central” permits you to buy a ticket that can take you as far as Temuco; where the trip must be completed by bus. The Temuco-Valdivia bus ticket ranges from 6,000 to 7,500 Chilean pesos; that is about 14 dollars. Valdivia has a comfortable bus terminal located next to the Calle Calle River.

Traveling by Air
There is also the possibility of a short flight with the most important airline “Lan Chile”; the least expensive flights cost approximately 82,000 Chilean pesos, equivalent to 154 dollars, arriving to Pichoy National Airport, 32 km from Valdivia.

Arriving at the Airport in Santiago

- When arriving at the airport, follow all signs and ask questions to security guards if needed. You do NOT have to pay a reciprocity fee when entering, the amount was covered when you obtained your visa, so if there is a line to pay you do not need to be in it.
- After getting through customs and waiting for your luggage you will be able to leave the airport. Do NOT take a taxi or shuttle from individuals waiting outside the airport offering services, go to a TurBus counter where bus (not taxi or van) tickets are sold to go to the Bus Terminal Alameda and ask for a one-way ticket. It should cost no more than a few mil (a few thousand pesos) although they may ask you to pay when getting on the bus.
  - Their buses are silver and green and say TurBus in orange letters, the airport shuttle has an airplane on the side that say aeropuerto. TurBus comes to the airport every 30-45 minutes and will take you directly to the bus station which is its last stop.
  - When getting on the bus, as in all buses in South America, you will get in line to put your luggage in the underneath compartments. The attendant
will ask you where you are going and give you a ticket stub that matches the one attached to your luggage. Do NOT lose the stubs, as you will need them to retrieve your luggage when you arrive at your destination.

Terminal Alameda: Getting a ticket to Valdivia
- When arrive at the Bus Terminal Alameda, you will recollect your luggage and enter the building, going down the hallway to the right where you will find TurBus and Pullman Bus counters, offering passages to all different parts of the country. These are two of the nicer companies, and a great option for your first ride since it will be a long one (at least 11 hours depending on road construction). TurBus can help you at any window, Pullman has a special window that says “Sur” somewhere on it that will be able to help, and usually it has little to no line whereas their other windows to different regions might be a long wait.
  - There are different costs of buses depending on the type of seat. Clásico reclines pretty far but lacks leg room whereas Semi-cama has a leg rest and more leg room and Cama is more like a recliner. Most of the buses (except for a few Clásico) have TVs and may show movies in Spanish, all serve you at least one snack in the morning.
  - Due to the length of the bus ride there are often more that leave at night so passengers can sleep along the way. Pillows and blankets are handed out before they turn off the movies and the internal lights.
- Once you have your ticket which will vary depending on type of service (Semi-cama can be anywhere from 8-20 mil) they will tell you which terminal you will board at, there is also a terminal across the street where many buses pick up. Wait by the spot where your bus leaves at least 15 minutes before scheduled departure, many buses run late but they will leave without you. Look for a bus with the name on it that matches your receipt and ask security guards if you have any questions.
  - Keep your passport and receipt out once you board the bus. For long rides the attendant will come around once or twice to mark your receipt and then to get your information. By handing them your passport they can get your name and passport number more easily, and will know you don’t have a contact phone number. If they ask just tell them that you don’t.
  - Many people get pre-pay phones later on, and once you get your cédula you can give them your RUT number instead.

Spare time in Santiago?
- Since buses to Valdivia only leave a certain times of the day, you may have some spare time to spend in Santiago, looking up some sites before you go may be a good idea.
- To store your luggage for a day there are many custodias that will guard your luggage for a fee. In the basement-level of the bus terminal there is a TurBus Custodia and the entrance to the metro.
  - Keep all valuables with you when you guard your things, if you have small luggage locks that you could put on your luggage after leaving the airport it is recommended.
  - Even when keeping things in a purse or backpack in the city be sure to be aware of your surroundings. Put zippers down and to one
side, do not put anything in outer pockets of your bag, keep things in front of you when on the metro.

- Bags can be picked up from the custodia when you want, once again be sure to keep the receipt they give you so that you can retrieve your luggage.

### The Academic Program

**Universidad Austral de Chile (UACH)**

The Universidad Austral de Chile (UACH) was founded in September 1954. The University began with Faculties of Medicine, Veterinary Science, Forest Engineering and Agronomy.

Today, the University has expanded to nine Faculties and over 30 different schools. There are campuses located in three different locations, including Isla Teja, Puerto Montt, and Mira Flores. While studying in Chile, you will attend class at UACH’s Isla Teja campus.

Currently, about 11,000 students are enrolled at UACH. To learn more about the Universidad Austral de Chile you can visit their website: [www.uach.cl](http://www.uach.cl)

**Isla Teja Campus**

The Isla Teja Campus is the ecological heart of Valdivia. It is like a classical impressionist oil painting in which the colorful flora and extensive fauna catch the eye and meld together with the University’s architecture. Eight of UACH’s nine departments are found here. This is the most extensive Campus of the University, which possesses, aside from lecture halls, a library, a computer lab, science laboratories and a language center, additional services such as cafeterias, a post office, a bank, a movie theater and the Aula Magna, where the most important events of the University are held.

**Campus Culture**

Although classes at UACH and UW-Madison have some similarities, some aspects of studying abroad in Valdivia will be very different. The following are some observations made by past Chile study abroad participants:

- Don’t mind the stray dogs around campus and in classrooms.
- Strikes and student demonstrations (not necessarily violent) are a common occurrence. Many people tend to think that public demonstrations of protest are the only way to get the government to take notice of them and their concerns.
- Although some students and teachers may always be late to class, some professors are very strict and will lock you out after it is time for class to start so play it safe and always get to class on time, it will also look good in the eyes of your teacher.
- Introduce yourself to the professor the first day of class, if they know you are there they may “look out” for you and give you extra help.
- It is also recommended that you talk to your Chilean classmates since classrooms might change on certain days and it they will know who to ask to figure out where to go.
- There isn’t necessarily a specific textbook for each class, and there isn’t an official university bookstore. Borrowing books from the library is pretty essential, as well as getting photocopies of readings and assignments.
- Bringing a digital voice recording device is a good idea since teachers may not always have PowerPoint’s or may say important details about assignments and tests in class.
• No smoking rules in and around public buildings are not enforced, and so smoking is pretty common among students
• White lab coats are generally required for all laboratory courses.

Student ID card
Getting your student ID card is not quite as much of an ordeal as getting your national ID card (see section on National ID Card). To get a student ID card, you will need a few ID card size (passport size) photos of yourself with your RUT (cedula ID number), plus your visa and passport information. Don’t forget to bring a lot of copies of your passport and visa information with you! Take all these documents to the Office of Admissions and Enrollment, fill out a form, and return in a few days for your card. It is not the same card issued to regular students, but it is sufficient for proving that you are a student at UACh and for checking out library books.

Course Information
All of your courses will be taught in Spanish. Courses are offered in any of the Universidad’s nine faculties:
• Facultad de Ciencias Agrarias
• Facultad de Ciencias
• Facultad de Ciencias de la Ingenieria
• Facultad de Ciencias de Economicas y Administrativas
• Facultad de Ciencias Forestales
• Facultad de Ciencias Juridicas y Sociales
• Facultad de Ciencias Veterinarias
• Facultad de Filosofia y Humanidades

Registration
Students register for courses upon arrival at the university. Registration is manual and involves visiting various departments to find out when courses are offered. There is no clear enrollment/registration system for exchange students; everything really depends on the specific department that you will be enrolled in. The first week of classes each faculty posts timetables in paper form near their main office, exchange and first year students are able to walk around and see what classes are offered at what time. Usually foreigners must talk to the faculty secretary or professor of the class to see if they can enroll in that section since all other students are on specific tracks and the class may already be full. For the most part professors are extremely helpful and will make room in their classes for exchange students, if you have any concerns about getting into a course your coordinator Marcelo or the professors themselves will help you get things figured out. Also, it may take a while for foreign students to have access to the student course information online (similar to Learn@UW and D2L), and it probably won’t happen at all unless you ask for it!

Classes are relatively small, with an average of 25-40 students per class, although larger science lectures may have up to 100 people.

Course Equivalent Requests and My Study Abroad
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 a 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.

Credits
Amount of credits assigned for each class depends on number of class hours. UACH credit hours are very similar to UW-Madison, although classes sometimes meet less often for longer periods of time, so instead of having three 50 minute classes per week like at Madison, you may have two 90 minute classes at UACH.

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

Grades and Grade Conversions
Grades for most courses are based on tests and the final exam. Each class typically has one large project which involves a group project and a paper. Other than that, to get a good grade, focus on taking good notes and doing well on the exams. Ask other students about studying for exams, because UACH students keep comprehensive records of notes from past classes and everyone studies off everyone else. The professors count on this, so if you do not, you will likely be at a disadvantage.

Chilean grades are on a 1-7 point scale, with any grade falling below a 4.0 being considered “in the red”. It is common for students to get ranges in the 5 range and anything higher than a 6 is considered very good, so don’t feel bad if you get 5/7 even though that seems like a low percentage. UACH calculates an “American Equivalent” of this grade which appears on your transcript. This “American Equivalent” is calculated by multiplying the Chilean grade by (4.0) and dividing by (6.5). The minimum Chilean grade for approval is 4 on the 7 point scale. Once receiving the “American Equivalent”, your grade will be converted to a UW-Madison grade using the following conversion scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UACH “American Equivalent”</th>
<th>UW-Madison</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.6 - 4.0</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1 - 3.5</td>
<td>AB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.6 - 3.0</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1 – 2.5</td>
<td>BC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.6 – 2.0</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.6 – 1.5</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than .5</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

University Facilities
Libraries
Since there isn’t always a specific textbook for each class and there is no official University Bookstore, the library becomes an essential source for books for your classes.
UACh's main library is the Central library, although it also has an Engineering Library and a Medical Library.

Central Library hours:
Monday-Friday 8:30 am - 8:00 pm
Saturday 8:30 am - 5:00 pm
Sundays & holidays Closed
Library facilities include electronic reference services, copy services, and quiet and group study areas. Don't forget to bring your student ID card so you can get in and check out books!

Computer Labs
There are various computer labs located around campus, including one in the main library and in the Nahmilas building and usually one for every school, although not all of them are free. The computer lab in the main library has the same hours of operation as the library, and the larger lab in the Nahmilas is open from 8:30 am- 10:00 pm Monday thru Friday, and Saturdays 8:30 am- 5:00 pm. Don't forget your student ID since you will need it to get access to these labs!

Casino
UACh has a large casino, which actually means cafeteria, not casino! The casino offers a lunch of the day, which is filling and includes a drink. Otherwise, you can buy individual items for less. If you want to eat at the casino, beware of the time: they only serve lunch from about noon to 1:30, and the times are subject to change. There are also snacks offered at smaller casinos around campus if you feel like cookies or a soda while you wait for class.

Recreational Facilities
UACh has fields and courts for a wide variety of recreational activities, including basketball, volleyball, football (soccer), rugby, track and field, wrestling, tennis and more. There is also a small weight room at the university workout facility that has some weight lifting machines, but unfortunately there are no treadmills or elliptical machines so if you are interested in running there is a path across the bridge alongside the river.

Museums
UACh has two museums on campus to help educate the students about Chile's history and culture. The Museum of History and Anthropology explains the history of Valdivia and the Region of the Lakes, the diverse societies of the area and its original inhabitants, and the Spanish presence and the impact of colonization. The Museum of Contemporary Art, founded in 1994, exhibits the diverse artistic expressions of Chile's contemporary artists.

Botanical Garden
The University's botanical garden preserves numerous plant species and provides a diverse hands-on educational experience.

Living Abroad
Chile
Chile borders Argentina to the east, Bolivia to the northeast and Peru to the far north. It has 2,700 miles of Pacific Ocean coast and a great variety of climates and landscapes. There are four distinct geographic regions: the northern desert, the high Andean sector, the central valley (where Santiago is located and where most of the country’s population is concentrated) and the southern lakes district and archipelago.

Seventy percent of the 16.6 million population (in 2009) of Chile belong to the Catholic religion, and the dominant ethnic groups are European and Mestizo. A small percentage of the population is indigenous.

The official language in Chile is Spanish though English may be understood and spoken in bigger cities. You will discover deep differences between the rich and poor in Chile. The rich Chile is very modern and similar to North American and European cities. At the same time you will probably encounter poor sections of Chile with greater poverty than you have ever seen before.

Chile is a Republic. Major political parties are the Christian Democratic Party, the National Renovation Party and the Party for Democracy. Michelle Bachelet became the country’s first female president in 2006 and Sebastián Piñera was elected to replace her in January 2010. The political climate in Chile has been stable for several years and civil disorder is rare, although in the past several years there were demonstrations surrounding General Pinochet’s case, who died in 2006. As opposed to many other South American countries, Chile’s economy is strong.

Chile’s northern region, nearly one-third of the mainland territory, is desert. The region has a dry, arid climate and temperatures vary drastically between night and day. Lush, fertile valleys can be found in the central region, along with pampas and plains. Here, there are four distinct seasons: hot summers, cool autumns, rainy winters and sunny springs. Most of Chile’s major cities, including its capital Santiago, are located in this region. Further south, the climate becomes cooler and wetter. This region is home to vast forests, lakes and rivers. The southern coastline is jagged, with mild and wet maritime climates. Chile’s Antarctic territories have a polar climate, with polar ice caps dominating the islands.

Chile’s population is about 16 million people, and the population growth rate is currently less than 1%. The majority of Chileans are mestizos, who are descendents of both Spanish colonizers and indigenous people or Caucasian due to the large amounts of immigration from Europe. Small indigenous populations still live in the northern region and lakes district.

Chileans in general speak incredibly fast. They also use a lot of modismos, or slang that is not heard in other Latin American countries, since the country is somewhat of an island, separated from the rest of South America by mountains, desert and ocean. A wonderful book translating and explaining all the “Chilenismos” is called How to Survive the Chilean Jungle is highly recommended to students. It was written by John Brennan, a United States native that lives in Chile and has great insight into the language and culture.

Meals are structured slightly differently in Chile than they are here in the
U.S. Chileans typically have a breakfast consisting of toast/buns with jam, yogurt and Nescafe (instant coffee) between 7:30 and 9:00 am. Lunch is the main meal of the day; almost everything, including schools, shuts down for at least an hour sometime between noon and 3:00 pm. The official lunch hour begins at 1:00 pm. *Once* (named after a person, not the number) consists of toast/buns with lunch meat, cheese or avocados and tea or Nescafe and is usually around 7:00-8:00 pm. Chilean food is generally not very spicy. *Mariscos* (seafood) is popular, especially in the southern regions of the country, where the aquaculture industry is an important part of the economy, but be wary of eating any that may have been contaminated by a *marea roja* (red tide)!

When eating out at restaurants, you usually need to ask for the bill (*la cuenta*) when you are ready to leave because the server will not automatically bring it to your table then you are finished eating. Tipping policies are much the same as they are here in the U.S.

**Valdivia**

Valdivia is a city and commune in southern Chile administered by the Municipality of Valdivia. The city is named after its founder Pedro de Valdivia and is located at the confluence of the Calle-Calle, Valdivia and Cau-Cau Rivers, approximately 15 km east of the coastal towns of Corral and Niebla. Since October 2007, Valdivia is the capital of the newly created Los Ríos Region and is also the capital of Valdivia Province. The commune of Valdivia had 140,559 inhabitants (*Valdivianos*) of which 127,750 lived in the city according to the 2002 census.[5] The main economic activities include tourism, wood pulp manufacturing, forestry, metallurgy, and beer production. The city is also the home of the Universidad Austral de Chile, founded in 1954, and Centro de Estudios Científicos.

Valdivia is often promoted for its unique characteristics, which make it different from other cities in Chile: Valdivia has an early Spanish colonial past, plus a later history of German colonization. Both eras left visible landmarks such as the forts of Corral Bay and the German-style wood houses.

The city is nationally distinguished by its interesting activities of museums, concerts, expositions, innovative artistic expressions, architecture, history and gatherings attracting the attention of the country; among them: the *International Film Festival* and the painting contest *Valdivia and its River*.

Every year during the summer months of January and February the municipality organizes many free cultural events along the river site, such as concerts, sporting events, and other entertainment. To mark and celebrate the end of the touristic summer months, half way through February all entertainment reaches its climax with the celebration of *la noche valdiviana* (valdivian night). During this night many local groups and communities present themselves on boats during a night parade over the river. Every boat has its own theme related with one theme of that year. There are also artisan goods and local foods that are sold and a fireworks display, reminding past participants of both the state fair and the 4th of July combined. While the festivities are a wonderful way to experience the culture, unlike more relaxed times of the year, students should be more careful as pickpockets are more likely in large crowds.
Valdivia has a temperate rainy climate with mediterranean influences. Valdivia's climate may also be classified as oceanic, resembling greatly the Northwest of the United States such as the state of Washington. The natural vegetation is the Valdivian temperate rainforests.

Student Life
To fulfill the important task of integrative education, the university is supported by different units such as UACH Choir, the Folkloric Ballet BAFUACH, the Theatre Company, and UACH Radio Broadcasting Corporation, significantly supported by the Cinema Club that yearly organizes one of the two most important international film festivals in Chile, the extension department that develops a yearly plan of activities, including art workshops, among others; and the Student Affairs Department (Dirección de Asuntos Estudiantiles DAE) that carries out important social activities through its Social Action Groups.

There are also events that are organized at the beginning of every semester for the students, including concerts with famous Chilean performers. Furthermore, university sports teams are available for all students and often welcome foreigners who are interested in joining, proving to be a great way to create close ties and possibly learn a new sport.

Housing
Homestays
Homestays are one housing option for you during your stay in Chile - but these homestays are not typical “host family” situations, they are more similar to boarding houses. While a family generally lives in the house, they rent out several rooms in a separated area of the house that may even have an independent entry way.

Homestays generally cost between $200 and $350 per month and include all meals, prepared for you, and usually laundry once a week.

Apartments
Depending on the quality and proximity to the University, apartments can be a very affordable housing option in Chile. An apartment located about 10 to 15 minutes walking distance from UACh costs around $120 per month. Other utilities may be an additional cost; for example, gas may be an additional $5 or so per month.

If you would like to live in an apartment, you will probably want to stay in a hospedaje (like a hostel) for your first few nights, while you look for an apartment. At the beginning of the semester many apartments are available, with different amenities and costs so be sure to look around before making a final decision.

Should you decide to live in an apartment, you will probably do most of your cooking yourself. Many apartments have only a range top and no oven for baking. Food is relatively cheap in Chile and costs an additional $150 or so per month.

Dormitories
UACh does have dorms although they are very few in number. The dorms are in a good location and provide a unique opportunity to live around Chilean students. Almost all the dorm rooms are triples and cost about $200 per month, including meals in the dining hall. Dorm availability is questionable though, as they are generally intended for students with financial needs.

**The Cabaña**
The department of UACh that our program runs through is the Facultad Veterinaria (Veterinary School), and even though we are not required to take courses in that facultad we use it because our onsite advisor, Marcelo, is a veterinary professor. Due to the enrollment, program participants have certain privileges such as the possibility of living for free, except for gas and internet, in the house (cabaña) owned by that school, located a mere 7 minute walk from the campus on the university’s forestry grounds. The cabaña can house up to 6 people and is often full of international veterinary students that come for anywhere from a month to a year. If you are interested in living at the house you can e-mail Marcelo to check on availability, many participants in past years have lived there along with other students from countries such as Mexico, Colombia, Holland and Brazil.

**Transportation-Getting to/from Campus**
If you live far off campus, the buses run frequently and are cheap for students, about 50 cents each way. Valdivia is also a great town for biking and walking. In addition there are colectivos which are numbered cars that run on specific routes around the city and cost about $1 to take.

**Health & Safety**

**Emergency information**
Should you need emergency assistance or get sick or hurt during your stay in Chile, do not hesitate to call the police or go to the hospital. Here are some important phone numbers and other contact information should an emergency arise.

**Emergency Numbers**

- **Police**: 133
- **Fire Brigades**: 132
- **Ambulance**: 131
- **Drug Enforcement**: 135
- **Andean Mountain Rescue Squad**: 136
- **Sea Rescue**: 137
- **Centro Clínico Militar Valdivia**: 56-6-247300
- **Hospital Regional de Valdivia**: 56-6-329-7000
- **Clinica Las Condes**: 210-4000 (Located in Santiago, some English spoken)

There is also a university health clinic for students that will give you exams and prescriptions at cheaper rates. If it is not an emergency you can go to the clinic you’re your id card and make an appointment. The building is located across the street from Telepizza, near the Facultad of Visual Arts.

**Communication**
Telephone: 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.

Calling to Chile
*International access code: 011*
*Country code: 56*
*Valdivia city code: 63*
To call Chile from the United States, your family and friends must dial the international access code, followed by Chile’s country code and Valdivia’s city code, and finally your phone number: 011 + 56 + 63 + telephone number

Calling from Chile
*International access code: 00*
*Country code: 1*
To call the United States from Chile, you can purchase an international phone card from any convenience store in Chile. Follow the instructions on your phone card. After entering your phone card number and PIN, you will need to dial the international access code, the United States’ country code, the area code and phone number: 00 + 1 + area code + telephone number.

Internet
Your residence may not have internet access (although the majority do have it available) but there are various computer labs and wireless internet on campus, as well as an abundance of internet cafes in downtown Valdivia. Hourly rates at the internet cafes are usually fairly inexpensive. If the school building is closed, the Terpel near campus as well as McDonalds has free wireless internet with the purchase of food.

Although bringing a laptop with you is not necessary, it may be helpful to you for writing papers for class or staying in touch with family and friends at your house. If you do bring a laptop, it is also necessary to bring a surge protector. Your computer will require a plug adaptor, but those are more easily found in Chile than here. Some stores here offer universal adaptors with surge protectors built in, which are highly recommended.

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 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.

**Cell Phones**
Cell phones are relatively cheap to have in Chile and are convenient, as they are here. Cell phones cost about $25-30, which includes your first $15 of calls. After that first $15, you buy phone cards in about $10 increments and charge your phone with them. Some apartments do not have phones so a cell phone may be a good option for you. Cell phones can get expensive if you talk a lot, just as they can here in the U.S., but people text message a lot more rather than calling since it is cheaper.

**Transportation**

**Bus**
If you travel while in Chile, traveling by bus is the cheapest and most common way by far to get around the country. The bus terminal in Valdivia contains the offices of several different companies offering trips to different cities in Chile and Argentina.

City buses also run throughout Valdivia. However, many of these buses are owned by different private companies and the system in general, although efficient, is not very well defined. There are numbered routes, but there is no published guide for them; routes are written on the front window. They are not on specific schedules but they do run often and are cheap for students, about 50 cents. There is no cord or buzzer to signal the bus driver you want to get off; instead, just stand up when your stop comes or yell to the driver. It may be helpful to talk to local students to figure out how the buses work.

**Colectivos**
Colectivos are taxis with a fixed route and a fixed price. Colectivos cost about 60 cents and will take you right to your destination if it is within a few blocks of their fixed route. Since colectivos can only carry four people at one time, they are much faster than taking a bus. Tips are not expected but are appreciated.

**Taxis**
Taxis have a base fare of about $1 and have an additional price per kilometer. A ride from the university to the “club area” would be about $2-$3. Again, no tip is expected but would be appreciated.

**Department of Tourism**
The Department of Tourism, run by Chile’s government, may be a helpful resource for planning trips or researching different areas of Chile. The Department of Tourism has offices located throughout the country, including one in Valdivia:

Department of Tourism - Valdivia Office
Prat N 555
Tel: (63) 342300
Fax: (63) 344046
Email: infovaldivia@sernatur.cl
Web: http://www.sernatur.cl

ADDITIONAL RELEVANT INFORMATION/WEBSITES OF INTEREST

U.S. State Department Students Abroad site:
http://www.studentsabroad.state.gov/

UW-Madison International Academic Programs
http://www.studyabroad.wisc.edu

U.S. State Department:
http://travel.state.gov
Center for Disease Control
http://www.cdc.gov/travel/

Current exchange rates
http://x-rates.com

Lonely Planet
http://www.lonelyplanet.com

Diario Austral de Valdivia (local Valdivian newspaper):
http://www.australdelosrios.cl/matriz/index.html

El Mercurio (national newspaper):
http://diario.elmercurio.com/2010/03/22/_portada/index.htm

VisitingChile.com Tourism website:
http://www.visitingchile.com/eng/

Travel guides & other good books about Chile
Learn as much as you can about Chile before you leave. Travel guides are helpful for providing background information on Chile’s history, geography, politics, and culture as well as for assisting you if you travel to other regions of the country. Novels also provide a glimpse into Chilean history, landscape, and way of life.

Recommended Travel Guides:
• *Lonely Planet Chile & Easter Island* by Carolyn Hubbard et al.
• *How to Survive the Chilean Jungle* by John Brennan
• *Rough Guide to Chile 2* by Rough Guides
• *Chile: A Traveler’s Literary Companion* by Katherine Silver
• *Footprint Chile* by Toby Green & Janak Jani
• *Chile Guide* by Becky Youman
• *Insight Guide Chile* by Kerry Mackenzie
• *Chile in Focus* by Nick Caistor
Recommended Novels:
• *I Dreamt the Snow was Burning* by Antonio Skarmeta
• *Curfew* by Jose Donoso
• *Clandestine in Chile* by Gabriel Garcia Marquez
• *Travels in a Thin Country: A Journey Through Chile* by Sara Wheeler
• *Ines of My Soul* by Isabel Allende