

Tel Aviv University Exchange 2019-2020 Handbook



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Program Information

Tel Aviv University

Tel Aviv University (TAU) - Israel's largest and most comprehensive institution of higher learning - is home to over 30,000 students studying in nine faculties and over 125 schools and departments across the spectrum of sciences, humanities, and the arts.

Situated in Israel's cultural, financial and technological capital, TAU shares Tel Aviv's unshakable spirit of openness and innovation – and boasts a campus life as dynamic and pluralistic as the metropolis itself. Tel Aviv the city and Tel Aviv the university are one and the same – a thriving Mediterranean center of diversity and discovery.

Consistently ranked in the top 20 in the world in terms of scientific citations and among the top 100 universities internationally, Tel Aviv University is also Israel's first choice for students, and its graduates are the most sought after by Israeli companies. Global in outlook and impact, TAU advances teaching and research that break down the walls between disciplines, striving to address the twenty-first century's most pressing challenges through bold, interdisciplinary solutions.

TAU International (TAUi), a school within TAU, has already enriched the lives of more than 15,000 international students. By working across all departments and faculties within TAU, TAUi has allowed these students to enroll in a diverse set of programs and courses and reach new pinnacles of scholarly and personal success. The 2500+ TAUi students who come through our doors annually not only receive a superior education but also gain newfound insight into globalization and learn to live as citizens of the world.

A full program of trips and cultural events will give you the chance to explore all Israel has to offer, from the Galilee to the Negev and the Dead Sea to the Mediterranean. In your free time, the vibrant city of Tel Aviv, with its rich cultural life, gorgeous beaches, and exciting nightlife, will be the backdrop for memories you'll cherish for years to come.

Program Team

There are a number of different partners and players that make important contributions to your academic, cultural, and personal experience abroad.

At Northwestern, the team in the Global Learning Office (GLO) is available to support you before, during, and after your study abroad experience. GLO plays the following roles:

- **Liaison with Host University:** GLO works with the international office at your host university to pave the way for you to be successful. GLO collaborates with your host university to facilitate your nomination and application processes and to provide ongoing support.
- **Pre-Departure Orientation and Materials:** GLO provides you with important information about your program to help you prepare for your experience. This includes resources, such as this program handbook as well as online modules and in-person meetings related to health and safety, budgeting, travel, and academics.

- **Course Registration:** GLO will register students at Northwestern for the appropriate study abroad course(s) for their program; you will not register yourself for any Northwestern courses during your term(s) abroad.
- **Academic Credit:** GLO will collect and submit your transcript to the Registrar's Office, which will post general study abroad credits.
- **In-Country Support:** Faculty and staff at your host university will provide support for you while abroad and should be your primary resource, but if you need additional assistance or would feel more comfortable speaking to GLO staff, please do not hesitate to contact your GLO adviser (see below).
- **Re-Integration Support:** Upon your return, GLO will provide you with resources to help transition back into campus life at Northwestern, as well as connect you to other study abroad returnees and program alumni.

Jessica Fetridge

Associate Director, Global Learning Office (GLO)



A native Chicagoan, Jessica graduated with a MEd in Higher Education from Loyola University Chicago and a BS in International Business and Spanish from the University of Dayton. She has studied abroad twice, first as an undergraduate studying Spanish and business for a semester at the University of Deusto in San Sebastián, Spain and later as a graduate student studying International Education at Loyola's campus in Rome. Before coming to Northwestern, she served as the Training Director of the Urban Chicago Chapter of Amigos de las Américas, training students to lead community development projects in Latin America and worked as an adviser at the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC) Study Abroad Office.

Jessica is your **GLO Adviser** and primary point of contact for any questions you may have about your program, academics, preparing for study abroad, health and safety, or any other exchange-related matters, particularly **before your departure or after your return**.

TAU International Office

The staff at the TAU International Office can provide you with information, support, and connections to student and academic life at TAU. They are based in Tel Aviv and are the International Affairs Division that works with students from the United States.

There are a number of contacts in the office who can help and guide you. Refer to this list here: https://international.tau.ac.il/international_center

Program Schedule

All students studying at TAU must arrive to Tel Aviv in time to participate in Ulpan and then depart after exams have completed.

Your program will run from August 4, 2019 (the first day of Ulpan) to December 20, 2019 (the last day of classes for Fall Semester).

For the dates of classes, exams, and holidays, refer to the university calendar here: https://international.tau.ac.il/academic_calendar/%3Ftab%3D2?tab=4

Academics

Refer to the **Academic Planning** section of the GLO website for more information about academic information, expectations, and policies:

<https://www.northwestern.edu/abroad/study-abroad/academic-planning/index.html>

In addition to familiarizing yourself with the information below, it is important that you take some time to learn about the academic culture of your host university. Speak with past Northwestern students who have studied at your host university, as well as exchange students from your host university who are currently studying at Northwestern.

Choosing Courses, Registration, and Enrollment Requirements

For the term(s) that you will be abroad, you will be enrolled at Northwestern in a placeholder course, which corresponds to your program. GLO will register you for your study abroad course(s), so please do not register yourself for any classes.

To maintain full-time enrollment at Northwestern while you are at TAU, you must *receive* the minimum number of credits listed in the table below.

Term	Minimum Credit Requirement
Fall	21 Credits
Winter/Spring	19 Credit
Full Year	36 Credits

You must take all courses for a grade at TAU, and course credit will only be transferable back to Northwestern if you earn a grade of C or above.

For more information about enrollment requirements and credit conversion, visit the GLO website: <https://www.northwestern.edu/abroad/study-abroad/academic-planning/registration-credit/exchange-credit-transfer.html>.

Transcripts and Credit

Following completion of your program, you will be issued a transcript from TAU, and eligible course credit will be transferred to Northwestern, as long as you follow all rules regarding course transferability and earn course grades of C or above. For more information about credit transfer, visit these sections of the GLO website:

- Transfer Credit Rules: <https://www.northwestern.edu/abroad/study-abroad/academic-planning/choosing-courses.html>
- Transfer Credit Process: <https://www.northwestern.edu/abroad/study-abroad/return-home/credit-transfer/index.html>

Also be aware of the following:

- TAU transcripts can take a long time to be issued. You do not need to take any action to request your transcript; it will be delivered to GLO automatically. However, transcripts typically do not arrive until the end of Winter Quarter.

Accommodations

TAU International live in the Einstein dormitories, which are adjacent to campus.

The [Einstein Dormitories](#) are located across the street from the Tel Aviv University main entrance (to the west). Shared rooms are available there for our international undergraduate students. Each dormitory suite is divided into two bedrooms with two students sharing each bedroom. Each suite is fully furnished and includes a kitchen and bathroom, air conditioning, Wi-Fi, and cable TV. A self-service laundry is located within the dormitory complex. Additional laundry and cleaning facilities are available in nearby shopping centers. Prior to arrival, you will receive a “Welcome Kit” which is a handbook with more information on the dorm facilities, the surrounding area, and the rules and regulations of living in the dormitories.

During the housing confirmation process which takes place prior to arrival, you have the opportunity to request specific roommates or suitemates. While they do their best to accommodate such requests, it is absolutely not guaranteed and you should not assume otherwise. In addition, during the confirmation process, you may indicate if there are special circumstances to note for housing purposes. While they also cannot guarantee special accommodations can be met, they take all requests into consideration and do what we can to accommodate needs.

Contact the housing team at housing@tauex.tau.ac.il for all questions or issues relating to TAU provided housing.

Please note that the following items are not supplied by TAU in any of the housing:

- Pillows
- Linens (sheets, pillowcases)
- Towels
- Kitchen utensils
- Household goods (such as dishtowels, cleaning supplies, etc.)

See the [Packing List and Pre-Departure Checklist](#) for more information on what to bring with you or consult the Pre-Departure Handbook sent to you with your admissions email as this has extensive information on how to prepare for arrival.

TAU is not able to refund students for early withdrawal from TAU Housing including the dorms (See [Refund Policy](#) for more information).

[Click here](#) for a virtual tour of the dormitories on campus.

Israel

Israeli history and culture are both rich and complex. We provide some basic information below, but we encourage you to do some research about the history of your host country as well as general country information, including the political system, geography, the economy, population, culture, and current events. Your ability to take full advantage of your time abroad will be influenced by the amount of preparation and research you do before you go, so read as much as you can! Refer to the list of resources in the **Links & Recommended Reading** section.

Fast Facts¹

- Surface Area: 20, 770 sq km (slightly larger than New Jersey)
- Population: 8,424,904 (July 2018 est.)
- Government type: parliamentary democracy
- GDP per capita: \$36,400 (2017 est.)
- Currency: Israeli Shekel
- Major industries: high-technology products (including aviation, communications, computer-aided design and manufactures, medical electronics, fiber optics), wood and paper products, potash and phosphates, food, beverages, and tobacco, caustic soda, cement, pharmaceuticals, construction, metal products, chemical products, plastics, cut diamonds, textiles, footwear

Population¹

- Religions: Jewish 75.6%, Muslim 16.9%, Christian 2%, Druze 1.7%, other 3.8% (2008)
- Ethnic groups: Jewish 76.4% (of which Israel-born 67.1%, Europe/America-born 22.6%, Africa-born 5.9%, Asia-born 4.2%), non-Jewish mostly Arab 23.6% (CIA World Fact Book, 2004).

Languages¹

- Hebrew (official)
- Arabic (used officially for Arab minority)
- English (most commonly used foreign language)

¹ <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/is.html>

Transportation

There are many modes of transportation in Israel, some of which are safer and more reliable than others. Below is some basic information about how to get around, but also refer to the **Health, Safety, and Security** sections of this Program Handbook for tips about safe travel.

Tel Aviv

- **Foot:** Tel Aviv is a fairly large city but still easy to navigate on foot. You'll find that walking is the easiest way to explore specific neighborhoods, but when it comes to traveling between districts, you'll need a set of wheels.
- **Bike:** Set on a grid, Tel Aviv's wide, relatively uncongested streets, ample bike lanes, and (of course) the scenic [Tayelet](#) make cycling one of the best ways to get around. Like several other major cities, Tel Aviv offers a short-term bike rental program – Tel-O-Fun – which maintains bike rental stations all over the city. Bikes are available 24 hours a day. Simply find a station, choose your rental option, grab a bike, and go. You can then return the bikes at any station in the city. Daily subscriptions cost 17 Israeli shekel (less than \$5), and weekly subscriptions cost 70 Israeli shekel (around \$20). You will then have to pay for usage; rates depend on the amount of time you use the bikes.
- **Bus:** Most bus services in Tel Aviv are provided by Dan, but a variety of smaller companies also offer routes in the city and around the country. Within the city center, one-way tickets cost 5.90 Israeli shekels (less than \$2). You can buy tickets when you board the bus. Trips outside of the downtown area – to the airport or [Jerusalem](#), for example – will cost extra.
- **Train:** You probably won't be relying on Israel Railways to get around on a daily basis, but should you want to take a daytrip, the train is your best bet. Israel Railways offers service throughout the greater Tel Aviv area and to nearby cities like Jerusalem to the southeast, Be'er Sheva to the south, and Haifa to the north. The train also provides transportation between central Tel Aviv and the airport, which will only cost you 13.50 Israeli shekels (less than \$4). To save on fares, consider purchasing round-trip tickets, which are significantly cheaper than two one-way passes. You can also opt for a combo ticket, which will include a free day pass for Dan buses. Trains run every day (although not as frequently on Fridays and Saturdays), and rates vary depending on distance traveled. You can purchase tickets at your departure point.
- **Taxi/Uber:** You will never have trouble finding a cab in Tel Aviv. Taxis can be any make and model, and they signal their availability using their illuminated rooftop signs. Before you hop in, make sure that the driver has turned on the meter or you have agreed upon a fixed, total rate; rates start at around 11 Israeli shekel (around \$3) and increase based on time, not distance traveled. To avoid being scammed, write down the exact address of your destination before heading out.
 - If you don't mind having company, consider using sheruts (or shared taxis), instead of regular taxis. Seating between seven and 12 passengers, these shuttle-like minivans run along the same routes as buses and charge a similar fare for a much speedier trip.
 - Although the Uber app works in Tel Aviv, it will only call licensed taxi drivers due to city regulations, so don't expect the same savings you receive in the states.

Getting To/From the Airport

Following is information on how to get to TAU Housing from the airport. Please note that TAU HIGHLY recommends downloading and using the [Moovit app](#) as it will give you real time instructions on how to reach your destination.

By Train:

For the Einstein Dorms, the nearest train station is the 'Tel Aviv University Station'. The train ride is approximately 30-40 minutes from the airport. When you get off at the university train station you can either take a short cab ride to the Einstein Dorms (about 30 ILS) – we recommend downloading [Gett Taxi](#) - or you can take the bus from the train station to the Einstein Dorms (bus number 7 or bus number 45; ask for help at the station for more details).

By Taxi:

The cost is about 150 ILS from the airport to the Einstein Dorms. You should only get a taxi at the airport from the official Ben Gurion Airport Taxi Stand which is outside the doors of the airport (there will be signs pointing you to the stand when you walk through the airport). We strongly recommend that you do not accept a taxi ride from anyone offering inside the airport. These are not regulated and the fare could be much higher. It is recommended that you have cash (ATM's are inside the airport) for the taxi, although some will take credit cards (always let the driver know before you get in the taxi that you want to pay with a credit card in case that is a problem). The address to tell the taxi for Einstein is Chaim Levanon Street 63.

Group Flights

If you are arriving on the designated TAU International group flight, TAU International representatives will meet your group at Baggage Claim and help you proceed to the designated TAU buses which will take you to your appropriate campus housing placement. The bus will not make any other stops other than TAU Housing. Students not on the designated group flight will not be able to join the TAU organized bus to the housing placements.

Visas

All students participating in programs of one semester or longer are required to secure a Student Visa (A-2) before arriving in Israel. The student visa is an A2 visa – a multiple-entry visa - and is valid up to one year. Recipients of this visa are not permitted to work in Israel.

To apply, you must do the following:

- Appear in person at the Israeli embassy or consulate to apply for a student visa
- Submit:
 - Your passport or other travel document, valid for at least two years
 - A letter of acceptance from Tel Aviv University, addressed to the Israeli embassy/consulate
 - A visa application form, in duplicate, with one photograph attached to each copy. (These forms may be obtained from the Israeli Consulate)
 - Proof of sufficient funds to cover tuition and living expenses

Money Matters

Refer to **Appendix I** for cost information for your program. Also reference the Money Matters section of the GLO website and the relevant modules in Canvas for information about billing, financial aid, and budgeting: <https://www.northwestern.edu/abroad/money-matters/index.html>. If you have any questions about billing, financial aid, or scholarships, email Krista Bethel in Undergraduate Financial Aid at krista@northwestern.edu.

Identity Abroad

The sections below provide some basic information, summarized from the Diversity Network Country Diversity Climate Notes for Israel², and reflections from past students about the cultural climate of Israel. Also reference the Identity Abroad pages on the Global Learning website: <https://www.northwestern.edu/abroad/student-experiences/identity-diversity/index.html>.

Cultural Adjustment: Reflections from Past Students

Pre-Departure

- *“Keep an open mind about virtually everything. There are people with radical social views, religious views, etc. so be open to hearing from them and be respectful of what they have to say.”*
- *“Go into the experience with an open mind - there is SO much to be learned no matter what your background is (I am half-Israeli and feel as though this program opened my eyes extensively)”*
- *“Be prepared for a culture that is a lot more aggressive and less polite than American culture.”*

While abroad:

- *“The bureaucracy in Israel is awful! It is impossible to get anything done in a timely matter.”*
- *“I ate less meat because Tel Aviv is quickly becoming a vegan capital of the world. I also grew out my facial hair because that is a very Israeli thing to do.”*

Gender Roles & Identity

Although Israel can be considered one of the most westernized countries in the Middle East, women aren't necessarily always treated equally to the degree that you would find in the United States. Female students shouldn't necessarily be concerned about being mistreated, but should be aware that in some rare cases it does occur. Female students should also be prepared to dress modestly and avoid wearing revealing clothing (shorts, sleeveless blouses, and short skirts) when visiting holy sites. It is important that all students – regardless of gender – follow the guidelines and precautions outlined in the **Gender** and **Health & Safety** sections of the Global Learning website, as well as the pre-departure modules in Canvas related to gender, sexuality, sexual health, and sexual violence response.

² Adapted from the Diversity Abroad Network. (2019).

Race and Ethnicity

Israel's population is made up of a diverse group of Jewish people who have assimilated in the region from many different geographical areas of the world. These people brought with them not only their religion but their own culture, language, and organizational frameworks respective to the location from which they originated. Therefore, the overall culture of the country is by no means homogenous and offers a diverse representation of people from all over the world. Although the differences between the communities caused minor divisions within the population, the majority of the nation's people are united under a common religion of Judaism, memories of the tragedies of the Holocaust, and a general feeling of security. About two-thirds of the population of Israel was born in the country, while the remaining third come from over 100 different countries. The growing number of migrant and immigrant communities in Israel has increased tensions between local Israelis and these newcomers. Incidences of discrimination against the predominately African migrants have subsequently been on the rise. Moreover, the turbulent past and strained diplomatic relations with neighboring nations with predominately Arab populations has increased tensions between the local Palestinian populations. Though Israeli law prohibits discrimination based on race or ethnicity, many Arab Palestinians report cases of discrimination based on their ethnic identity. Several human rights reports, have reported that much of the discrimination takes root in national policies related to housing development in the Occupied Territories (including the Gaza Strip), security check point requirements to enter into certain parts of the country, and access to sound infrastructure like clean water, safe buildings, and adequate space for educational services.

Arab American students may receive questions about their nationality and background, and may find themselves defending their Americanness. Students of all backgrounds should exercise caution in visiting the Occupied Territories given the tense political and security situation in these areas. African American students may be one of only a few minority participants on their program. They may be perceived at first as being African immigrants or migrant workers, a trend that has increased over the past ten years.

Students of color may generally find that they are one of only a few minority students on their program, and thus work and live with individuals who have no understanding of African, Hispanic, and Asian American cultures. As a result of this lack of understanding of minority student experiences, it may be difficult for students of color to find support from their program staff or other students while in country.

Sexual Orientation and Identity

61% of Israelis are in favor of civil unions for same-sex couples, which is legal under Israeli law. It is considered one of the greatest percentages of support in the world. Three-fifths of the population also believe same-sex couples should be able to adopt children.

Furthermore, about three-quarters of Israelis believe that homosexuals should be allowed to serve in the Israeli Armed Forces as well as governmental and religious positions. Israel is relatively tolerant of homosexuality compared to other Middle Eastern countries. Israel also hosts one of the largest annual gay pride parades in the world.

Religion and Spirituality

The majority of Israelis are Jewish (75.6%), while the second largest religious group is comprised of Muslims (16.9%). The third most significant religious population is the Bahá'í Faith at 3% and finally Arab Christians who make up only 2% of the people in Israel. Though the country has seen a growth in the number of organizations focusing their efforts on promoting interfaith understanding and religious tolerance, national policies still heavily favor Jewish traditions and communities. According to the U.S. Department of State Report on International Religious Freedom, Israel was listed at the bottom of the democratic states' list. Though the government allows freedom of religion for all, the strong influence of some religious groups have pushed for the country move towards integrating Jewish traditions into the national governance. Many have contested this movement, including several secular groups and organizations focused on building interfaith dialogue. Though these initiatives are growing, students of the Muslim faith may receive questions about their religious practices and should consult with their study abroad provider prior to their trip to discuss any concerns they may have. Students should feel comfortable to openly practice their religion in Israel. Nevertheless, students should be aware of their surroundings, maintain a safe environment, and be careful not to offend anyone unintentionally by boastfully exhibiting religious practices in public.

Religion and Spirituality: Reflections from Past Students

- *"Israel is a Jewish country but there were many non-Jews on the program (and many non Jews living in Israel)"*
- *"Religiously - being Jewish is much easier in Israel than any other religion but I encourage non-Jewish students to challenge themselves through this program as I feel like a lot of my non-Jewish friends had super positive and eye opening experience."*
- *"Everyone is predominantly Jewish, so you have to be aware that almost everywhere you go, Judaism is a major aspect of the life and culture. In turn, Tel Aviv is incredibly progressive and open to all religions, sexual orientations, races, and ethnicities, which is not necessarily the same for the rest of the country. Tel Aviv is like a paradise in its own bubble, which makes it such a special city."*

Health, Safety, and Security

The sections below provide information about health and safety risks and resources in Israel, including reflections from past students. Refer back to the **Health & Safety** section of the GLO website and the modules in Canvas for more information about preparing for and responding to health, safety, and security concerns.

Staying Healthy

Israel is blessed with an oversupply of doctors and contains a network of well-equipped, modern hospitals and Magen David Adom clinics, where you can get emergency treatment for flu, fevers, fractures, and upset stomachs, as well as for more serious emergencies. You are never far from good medical care.

Sunburn and dehydration are problems throughout the region, but especially in the desert during summer. Although the air is dry, paradoxically, you often don't feel thirsty. Force yourself to drink a minimum of four 1.5-liter bottles of water a day as you travel the area in summer, more if you are in the desert. Sunscreen is a must, though you need less of it at The Dead Sea because the thicker atmosphere screens out the sun.

Safety and Security

In addition to the **Travel Safety** information outlined on the Global Learning and Global Safety and Security websites, you are advised to follow the precautions below during your time in France.

- Refer to the U.S. Department of State Country Information Sheet for safety and security guidelines: <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel/International-Travel-Country-Information-Pages/IsraeltheWestBankandGaza.html?wcmode=disabled>
- The current Travel Advisory for Israel, the West Bank, and Gaza advises U.S. citizens to be aware of the continuing risks of travel to Israel, the West Bank and Gaza due to the security situation and heightened tensions there, and warns against travel to Gaza. U.S. citizens have been killed and wounded in attacks in recent years, though there is no indication they were specifically targeted based on nationality. There is also a danger of occasional indirect cross-border fire from Syria into the Golan Heights.
- **Jerusalem:** Violent clashes between Palestinians and Israeli authorities have occurred in some parts of East Jerusalem and surrounding areas. Acts of terrorism have resulted in death and injury to bystanders. The Department of State advises U.S. citizens to exercise caution in the Old City, particularly around the Damascus, Lion's, and Herod's gates, as these locations have been the scene of recent attacks. Attacks have also taken place in recent years in West Jerusalem. Travelers are reminded to exercise caution at Islamic religious sites on Fridays and on holy days, particularly during the holy month of Ramadan. Many orthodox Jewish communities in and around Jerusalem restrict vehicle traffic on Shabbat (Friday night to Saturday night), and entering these neighborhoods with a vehicle may result in protests and violence.
- **The West Bank:** U.S. citizens should exercise caution when traveling to the West Bank, including to Bethlehem, Jericho, and Hebron, due to the complex security situation there. Violent clashes between security forces, and Israeli settlers and Palestinian residents

have resulted in the death and injury of U.S. citizens and others. During periods of unrest, the Government of Israel may restrict access to and within the West Bank, and some areas may be placed under curfew.

- **The Gaza Strip:** The Department of State warns U.S. citizens against all travel to the Gaza Strip. Gaza is under the control of Hamas, a U.S. government-designated foreign terrorist organization. The security environment within Gaza and on its borders is dangerous and volatile. Violent demonstrations and shootings occur on a frequent basis and the collateral risks are high. While Israel and Hamas continue to observe the temporary cease-fire that ended the latest Gaza conflict in 2014, sporadic mortar and rocket fire and corresponding Israeli military responses continue to occur. U.S. citizens who choose to travel to Gaza cannot rely on the U.S. government to assist them in departing Gaza.
- **Mortar and Rocket Fire:** In the event of mortar and/or rocket fire, a Red Alert siren may be activated. Follow the instructions from local authorities and seek shelter immediately. For additional information on appropriate action to take upon hearing a siren or explosion, see the [Israel Defense Forces Home Front Command website](#).
- **Crime:** The crime rate is moderate in Israel, the West Bank, and Gaza. Parked vehicle break-ins are common at public beach areas, national parks, and other tourist sites. Vehicle theft also remains a problem. U.S. citizens should not leave their valuables (including passports) unattended in parked vehicles, on the beach, or unsecured in hotels.
 - Do not buy counterfeit and pirated goods, even if they are widely available. Not only are the bootlegs illegal in the United States, but if you purchase them, you may also be violating local law.
 - U.S. citizens have occasionally been subject to high-pressure sales tactics in Jerusalem's Old City and other tourist areas. In some cases, vendors have not disclosed the true cost of an item and convinced the buyer -- who is unfamiliar with the exchange rate -- to unwittingly sign a credit card sales receipt worth thousands of dollars.
- Like all public institutions in Israel, Tel Aviv University employs a sophisticated network of security personnel covering all campus entrances and patrolling throughout the campus and dormitory complexes 24 hours a day.
- **Political Demonstrations:** Students are advised to avoid attending any political gatherings or political demonstrations of any nature or cause.
- **Petty Crime:** Compared to most large cities, Tel Aviv has a relatively low rate of petty crime (theft). That said, careful precautions should always be taken just as in any city: keep doors locked, lock bicycles securely, keep personal items in sight at all times (particularly on beaches and other public areas), do not bring valuables on the program, etc.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Packing

Is there anything special that I need to pack for my program?

Israel is a very informal country, so casual, practical clothing is acceptable everywhere. Shoulders and knees will need to be covered for visits to holy sites; we recommend pants, cropped pants, maxi skirts, or dresses. Men must cover their heads when entering Jewish religious places; if you don't have a head covering, most synagogues will have some at the door to lend.

Food & Water

Can I drink the water?

Yes. Tap water is safe and drinkable in Israel, except at The Dead Sea. Although Israeli water is safe, the presence of various minerals in the water may make you a bit queasy. For this reason, bottled water could be a good investment, though in small amounts and for teeth brushing, local water is fine.

What is typical food?

Israeli cuisine has adopted, and continues to adapt, elements of various styles of diaspora Jewish cuisine, particularly the Mizrahi, Sephardic and Ashkenazi styles of cooking. It incorporates many foods traditionally eaten in other Middle Eastern and Mediterranean cuisines, and foods such as falafel, hummus, msabbha, shakshouka, couscous, za'atar, olives, wheat, chickpeas, and fish, are widely popular. Fresh fruits and vegetables are also plentiful in Israel and are cooked and served in many ways.

Israeli eating customs also conform to the wider Mediterranean region, with lunch, rather than dinner, being the focal meal of a regular workday. "Kibbutz foods" have been adopted by many Israelis for their light evening meals as well as breakfasts, and may consist of various types of cheeses, both soft and hard, yogurt, labne and sour cream, vegetables and salads, olives, hard-boiled eggs or omelets, pickled and smoked herring, a variety of breads, and fresh orange juice and coffee.

In addition, Jewish holidays influence the cuisine, with the preparation of traditional foods at holiday times, such as various types of challah (braided bread) for Shabbats and Festivals, jelly doughnuts (sufganiyot) for Hanukah, the hamantaschen pastry (oznei haman) for Purim, charoset, a type of fruit paste, for Passover, and dairy foods for Shavuot.

Although not all Jews in Israel keep kosher, the tradition of kashrut strongly influences the availability of certain foods and their preparation in homes, public institutions, and many restaurants, including the separation of milk and meat and avoiding the use of non-kosher foods, especially pork and shellfish. During Passover, bread and other leavened foods are prohibited to observant Jews and matzah and leaven-free foods are substituted.

Is the local cuisine vegetarian friendly?

Yes! The summer heat is especially conducive to lighter meals, and vegetarians will be delighted to find many vegetarian restaurants and venues serving vegetarian dishes throughout Israel. As kosher restaurants cannot serve both dairy and meat dishes, many add an array of vegetarian dishes to broaden their menus.

Money

How much does the program cost?

See **Appendix I** or refer to the program website for a breakdown of program costs.

Are meals included in my Program Fee?

No. All room and board costs are out-of-pocket costs for students. Only tuition, orientation expenses (if applicable), and GeoBlue travel health insurance are included in the program fee billed by Northwestern.

How much money should I plan to spend?

Refer to the student budget in **Appendix I** for an estimate of costs for room and board, books, local transportation, and personal expenses. The figures included in the budget represent averages reported by past students spent over the entire duration of the program.

Be aware that your student budget does not include personal travel, and traveling can quickly add up.

How much cash should I bring?

For safety reasons, you are advised to bring no more than \$200 cash with you, plus a credit card and an ATM or debit card to use for purchases and to access additional funds. It is also recommended that you bring a second credit card in case of emergency. If you choose to bring more U.S. dollars, be sure to pack safely and monitor your belongings while traveling.

Communications

How do I get a cell phone that works in Israel?

TAU International requires all international students to carry an active and working mobile telephone with an Israeli number so that staff can contact them at any time in case of emergency. At any given time throughout a semester, TAU International may conduct a “test drill” to ensure that all students have working phones and are prepared to be in touch in case of actual emergency.

Tel Aviv University has arranged for all international students to receive a rent-free cell phone through IsraelPhones. To sign up for your phone or for a complete list of benefits, go to <http://www.israelphones.com/tau.htm>. Please note that if you choose to do this, you will be charged a fully refundable \$175 deposit to ensure that your mobile phone is returned. For a complete list of benefits for students, please refer to the above webpage.

Contact previous students for tips on cell phone purchase and use. Also refer to information on the GLO website: <https://www.northwestern.edu/abroad/study-abroad/prepare-and-go/communication.html>.

Transportation & Travel

Will I be picked up from the airport?

No. You will need to arrange your own transportation from the airport to your accommodations.

How will I get back to the airport for departure?

You will be responsible for getting to the airport for your return flight.

How much free time do I have? What can I expect to do outside of class?

This is up to you and how you organize your class schedule. There are a wide variety of places for you to explore in and around Tel Aviv and Israel as a whole. Contact the Ambassadors for your program to get suggestions for things to do in your spare time:

<https://www.northwestern.edu/abroad/student-experiences/ambassador-program/student-ambassadors.html>

Links & Recommended Reading

Program & Country Information

- GLO: Tel Aviv University program page: <https://www.northwestern.edu/abroad/study-abroad/explore-programs/middle-east-and-north-africa/tel-aviv-university-exchange.html>
- Tel Aviv University: Exchange Program Page: https://international.tau.ac.il/Semester_Year_Abroad
- Student Blogs: <https://www.northwestern.edu/abroad/student-experiences/student-blogs.html>
- Connect with past students: <https://www.northwestern.edu/abroad/student-experiences/connect-with-students/index.html>
- CIA World Factbook Israel: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/is.html>
- U.S. Department of State Country Guide for Israel: <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel/International-Travel-Country-Information-Pages/IsraeltheWestBankandGaza.html?wcmode=disabled>
- Living in Tel Aviv: https://international.tau.ac.il/tel_aviv_living

Health & Safety

- Northwestern Office of Global Safety and Security: <http://www.northwestern.edu/global-safety-security/index.html>
- Northwestern Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS): <http://www.northwestern.edu/counseling/>
- Northwestern Center for Awareness, Response, and Education (CARE): <http://www.northwestern.edu/care/>
- Northwestern Travel Health Services: <http://www.northwestern.edu/healthservice-evanston/medical-services/travel-health-services/index.html>
- World Health Organization: Israel: <https://www.who.int/countries/isr/en/>
- CDC: Health Information for Israel: https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/traveler/extended_student/israel?s_cid=ncezid-dgmq-travel-leftnav-traveler
- GeoBlue Health Insurance: <https://www.geo-blue.com/>
- Smart Traveler Enrollment Program: <https://step.state.gov/step/>

Appendix I: Cost Breakdown

2019-2020 Program Cost Information Tel Aviv University Exchange

FEES CHARGED BY NORTHWESTERN			
	Fall 2019	Full Year 2019-20	Winter/ Spring 2020
Program Fee Students are charged a program fee equivalent to the Northwestern University tuition rate. The program fee covers program expenses, including academic fees, program administration, and orientation (if applicable). It also includes GeoBlue Global Health Insurance, which is purchased by GLO on students' behalf for the full length of the program.	\$18,744 1 quarter of tuition	\$56,232 3 quarters of tuition	\$28,116 1.5 quarters of tuition
Study Abroad Administrative Fee Students are exempt from the Study Abroad Administrative Fee.	\$0	\$0	\$0
TOTAL FEES CHARGED BY NORTHWESTERN	\$18,744	\$56,232	\$28,116

ESTIMATED ADDITIONAL COSTS			
International Airfare Students are responsible for making arrangements to fly round-trip to their host city. International airfares vary greatly based on the point of departure, carrier, and type of ticket purchased as well as volatility of airline industry pricing. Students may choose to take advantage of frequent flyer or other airline awards available to them, which could significantly lower their travel costs.	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$1,500
Room & Board Students are responsible for making their own accommodations arrangements, based on suggestions from GLO and the host institution (if applicable). Costs can vary by housing type. Housing and meal costs provided here represent expected averages.	\$5,700	\$10,700	\$5,700
Visa Fees	\$75	\$75	\$75
Books & Supplies	\$200	\$400	\$200
Local Transportation	\$600	\$1,100	\$600
Personal Expenses Personal expenses vary based on individual spending habits and budgets. Figures represent student-reported averages and include incidentals and living expenses, such as clothing, toiletries, entertainment, and communication expenses. Students who plan to travel outside of their program location should estimate an additional \$500-\$2,000.	\$1,000	\$1,900	\$900
TOTAL ESTIMATED ADDITIONAL COSTS	\$9,075	\$15,675	\$8,175

TOTAL STUDENT BUDGET (Fees + Estimated Additional Costs)	\$27,819	\$71,907	\$36,291
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