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1. Registration and courses

Courses at UPVM

1. What are the different kinds of courses and how do I choose?

The courses take place at the university or in the case of ISEP Direct students at the Institute for Foreign Students (see IEFE below). The range of courses available is quite wide, from French literature to History to Economics... You are entitled to take any course you like within the university, provided you have the required level in French (B1) and provided there is some space available, just like in your country. Please be aware of the different types of courses available:

- **“Integrated classes”**: you are encouraged to take “integrated classes” within the university. These are the regular courses taken by degree-seeking or other exchange students. They are delivered in French, except for courses offered by the Department of English.
These courses can be taken by students with a good level in French (B1).
- **“Cours RI”**: you are also offered “Support courses” organized by the International Relations Office, ie courses specifically designed for American and Australian students but delivered in French, in French Grammar, Phonetics, French History and Culture, Cinema, Art etc. What we call “Cours RI” are “non-integrated courses” but also give you credits (not ECTS though).
They are not accessible to the Bilateral Exchange Program.

Documents online

[Time table \(Fall and Spring\)](#)

[Cours RI \(Fall and spring\)](#)

IEFE:

If your level of French does not allow you to take regular “integrated classes”, you have the option to take classes within the IEFE (French as a Second Language). There is a fee for those courses which is not included in the cost of your program (1150€ per semester, for 16 hours a week).

These courses are included in the ISEP Direct Program.

If you are an ISEP Direct student see the website of IEFE (<https://www.univ-montp3.fr/fr/iefe>)

You will have time to choose the courses you are interested in during orientation (with the help of your directors and student assistants).

Grades are on a scale of twenty: 10/20 is a pass and grades above this are good marks (don't be disappointed if you get a 10/20, it is not a bad grade here!).

At the end of the semester, all your grades are collected and a transcript will be issued (and sent to your home university, not to you).

Extra-curricular activity for Full year students only : Drama

Practical works: Creation workshop

Each year, these workshops allow every student, whatever their major disciplines, to be involved in a theatrical adventure which is meant to be a formative experience. This is the occasion for them to rate their desire of theatre. Through a problematic of exploration, a workshop program directed by an artist is set up. Through these workshops, work procedures are set up. They will allow the students to grasp the question asked and find their own tools of control, the elements they will choose to use to stage a show entirely by themselves which will represent their answer to the question. There are several possible ways of functioning: acting, staging, scenography, lights... The performances will be presented in May and June at the Theater.

2. What are the administrative procedures I have to follow when I arrive?

When you arrive, you will have to follow several procedures. Please bring all the required documents in time for:

- 1) Registration and health insurance
- 2) OFII
- 3) Bank

2. Miscellaneous

Registration at UPVM

1. What are the different registrations and how do I proceed to get registered?

With our help, you will go through several stages of registration, a process that is sometimes also confusing for French students! You will be helped by student assistants and of course the directors of the program.

- **“Inscription administrative” or “IA”:** you go through administrative registration when you arrive.
- **“Inscription dans les groupes”:** this means you have to be enrolled in specific groups, at specific times, in the class of a specific professor. Once you have chosen the courses you’d like to take, you’ll have to go to the different “Secrétariats” of the different UFRs in order to get the class schedules as well as the room numbers if they aren’t on the internet, which may happen. There is a stressful period when you have to deal with courses clashing, changes etc. Don’t panic, there’s always a solution!
- **“Inscription pédagogique” or “IP”:** this means you have to register for the exams that correspond to the courses you have chosen; this is usually done late September. It ensures your grades can be easily collected at the end of the semester.

Health Insurance, OFII and Bank

1. Registration and health insurance

French law requires all students staying in France to be covered by the French Social Security, the national health system, so as to ensure medical coverage. The students must enroll in the French “Sécurité Sociale” (215€ for 2016-17) as well as the “Vie étudiante” (5.10€ for 2016-17). It cannot be paid in cash (payment instructions are provided during orientation). It MUST be carried out during registration. For most universities, this health coverage will be included in the invoice that will be sent to the home university and will not have to be paid for by the student. Please check in advance what will apply in your case.

The *Sécurité Sociale* covers about 70% of medical and hospital costs, with the possibility of supplementing the remaining 30% with an optional student insurance contract (“Mutuelle” between 10€ and 20€ per month, see below).

Students aged 28 years old do not have access to the Social Security and must purchase their own health insurance at home.

Students are covered by the Social security system from September 1, to the following August 31, for the Full Year students. Students coming for the Spring semester will be covered from January 1.

It does not cover emergency repatriation for which you will have to show a proof of purchase.

If the student has a medical prescription, it must be translated into French.

EXTRA COVERAGE “la Mutuelle”: as noted above, the “Sécu” covers some but not all medical expenses. Thus, upon enrolling in the Social Security system, students can choose between different student health insurance companies which will work as extra health cover (+ 30%) and will be their reimbursement center.

For example, the “Student Mutual Insurance Company”, costs around 7 to 25€ a month depending on the type of coverage. Prices also vary from one Mutuelle to another. The two best known “Sécurité Sociale Étudiante” are the [LMDE](#) and the [MEP](#). Please consult their websites.

2. Visa OFII

Because of new visa regulations, it is no longer necessary to obtain the “carte de séjour” / residency permit. For more information about documents needed, please consult this link: <http://www.consulfrance-chicago.org/spip.php?article675>.

You have to obtain a “visa long séjour” at the Embassy for your stay in France. It is impossible to get a visa once you are in France, so make sure you get one before you leave your home country for the duration of your stay. You will not be able to change the length or the type of your visa once you are in France. Once you have arrived in France, you will have to fill in a form to apply for a medical appointment at the OFII (Office Français de l’Immigration et de l’Intégration). You will need to bring:

- 60€ legal stamp (you will buy it once in France);
- a housing letter (“attestation de logement” or “lettre d’hébergement”);
- the letter for the OFII provided by the French Consulate; please make sure the Consulate stamps the document;
- a photocopy of your passport and visa with the stamped pages showing your arrival date, ID with name, address, and date of birth;
- medical prescriptions if you have a special condition for which you have a treatment (we need to know about this in advance).

ATTENTION: If you have this mention on your visa: “Dispense temporaire de carte de séjour”, you do not have to register with the OFII.

3. Bank

Please refer to : Vademecum

3. FAQ

1. Whom do I contact in case of emergency?

The Academic Coordinator of the Programs of the English-speaking World, Dr. Judith Misrahi-Barak at any time, or the Administrative Coordinator of the English-speaking World, Andrée Meyers. Students from MHC, UMN, UNC will also contact their Onsite directors.

2. What is my temporary address?

The same address as the coordinators of the Programs.

3. Who writes the official letter of acceptance that I need for the visa?

The coordinators of the program at the Direction des Relations Internationales et de la Francophonie (DRIF) write the letter.

4. Who gives the proof of housing (“attestation de logement”)?

This will be provided by the DRIF if you stay in a dorm; it will be provided by the family or the Onsite directors if you have a homestay.

5. My visa is valid for 6 months. Do I have to go back to the USA to ask for a new visa if I want to extend my stay for a semester?

Yes, because you cannot change your visa while in Montpellier. You have to think carefully about the length of your stay in advance since you won’t be able to modify your visa once in France.

6. I have an American health insurance; do I have to pay for the French social security?

Yes, whether you stay for an entire academic year or for a semester you have to be covered by the French Social Security. You also have to have a multi-risk American insurance that will cover emergency repatriation. You must bring proof of that when you arrive so as to be registered.

If you are older than 28, you cannot purchase the student social security and have to provide proof of your health insurance and emergency repatriation scheme.

For most universities, this health coverage will be included in the invoice that will be sent to the home university and will not have to be paid for by the student. Please check in advance what will apply in your case.

7. How am I reimbursed if I visit a doctor?

Do not forget that before going to a doctor you need to have with you the “déclaration de médecin traitant” (you will have one in your UPVM dossier given during orientation).

The doctor will give you a form to fill in called a “feuille de soins”. If you need to go to the pharmacy, go right after the doctor with your “ordonnance”. Then, to be reimbursed, you have to go to the LMDE or the MEP (according to where you were registered) and bring:

- the “feuille de soins” given by the doctor,
- a “RIB” (your French bank account information) so that you are reimbursed directly.

8. Do I need a bank account in Montpellier?

Yes, it is compulsory. On one hand, you will pay fewer taxes in case of money transfers (via the American banks) and, on the other hand, it will facilitate payments. It is much more convenient in order to pay for your accommodation and, if you are part of the ISEP program, to get your stipend, etc. A wire transfer takes less than a week. A check in dollars can take up to 4 or 5 weeks to cash. For students for MHC, UMN and UNC, arrangements are made with your Onsite directors.

9. Do I need a housing insurance?

Yes, it is compulsory whatever the type of housing. You will have one with your French bank account.

10. Is there anyone who will come and pick me up at the station or the airport?

A shuttle will come and pick you up if you arrive on the official arrival date in August for the pre-session (see Bilat Fee-Paying > Pre-session). If you arrive at another date, you'll have to take the airport shuttle that goes to Montpellier (20 minutes, costs a few euros) and then a taxi, or a taxi from the airport (about 30 euros). You will not be picked up at the airport in January if there is no pre-session. For students for MHC, UMN and UNC, arrangements are made with your Onsite directors.

11. How do I find accommodation?

You must indicate on your Application form if you intend to live in a dorm, or find a flat share or a homestay. For students for MHC, UMN and UNC, arrangements are made with your Onsite directors.

There are various options available as far as accommodation is concerned:

- Dorms: around 230€ /month with a security deposit of the same amount;
- *Private apartment: approximately 400€ (your responsibility);
- **Full Family Homestay: around 650€, breakfast and dinner included;
- **Boarding family: around 450€ (no meals included);

*Please note however that accommodation has become challenging in Montpellier and finding housing remains your responsibility.

**We can help you with finding a family through our contacts.

Bilateral Fee-paying program students:

You will all be living in dorms the cost of which MAY BE included in the pre-session which is to your program fee. Some universities pay UPVM directly. In most cases, the students have to pay UPVM directly. CHECK WITH YOUR UNIVERSITY.

ISEP Direct and ISEP Exchange students:

You will be lodged in the Cité universitaire Vert Bois.

12. Who pays for it?

How you pay for your accommodation depends on your program. If you are an ISEP student, it is the DRIF that pays for your room.

In most cases, you will have to foot your bill at the beginning of the month, by check or cash. Some universities pay for your room. Please check.

NB. You will have to pay for a safety deposit (roughly equivalent to a month's rent) before arriving in Montpellier, if you are in private accommodation or in a dorm. This will be given back to you at the end of your stay if your room hasn't been deteriorated. Thus, it is particularly important to do a walk through when you arrive ("un état des lieux").

NB. The other case the safety deposit will not be given back to you is if you leave before the stipulated date on your contract.

13. How long can I stay at the dorm?

You have to pay for the dorm until June 15. If you wish to stay longer, you will have to pay additionally. Even if you leave at the end of May, it is required you should pay until June 15, this is a rule that applies to all students, not only the international ones.

14. I'm an ISEP-Exchange student, who pays my stipend?

The person in charge of financial matters at the DRIF pays your stipend, which is generally transferred directly to your account once you have given the details of your bank account in France (what is called “un relevé d’identité bancaire” or “RIB”). In case of problem, please refer to the Administrative Coordinator of the program.

Please be aware that the stipend can take a couple of months to be paid (refer to your IIS). Bring funds for the first couple of months!

15. Who participates in the pre-session?

All the students who have enrolled in a year or fall semester **Fee-paying program** at UPVM participate in the pre-session organised by the IEFE and the DRIF. Students for MHC, UMN and UNC do not take part in the pre-session.

4. Vademecum

You can find the vademecum on our website.