

KEEPING IN TOUCH ABROAD

Helpful Tips from SCU International Ambassadors

Cell Phones & Providers

- Check into texting on your phone. See if it is cheap for U.S. and International calls.
- Piccell (and other study abroad specific phone providers)– be careful! Convenient but VERY expensive, so know your plan (ie: roaming).
- Have your American phone unlocked, then put a local SIM card in for local calls; you can also get an International SIM card for calling home which will save you a lot of money. (For Verizon phones you have to get an “unlocking code”).
- Don’t buy a phone from host school/program, it is often a “rip off” (i.e. Piccell phones & plans).
- In Europe & China, it’s cheapest to buy a phone there and use a local pay-as-you-go SIM card.

Calling Cards

- Calling cards in the country’s language are often cheaper.
- “Sprint International Calling Card” works well in Italy (5 cents per minute).

Postal Systems & Mail

- Put more postage than you need and/or go to post office to have packages weighed.
- Know customs regulations; In Europe, if you (or whoever is sending you something) write “used personal items” on customs slips you won’t have to pay (sometimes huge) fees.
- Be careful sending electronics.

Other Resources (e.g. Facebook, Myspace, Blogs, Photo Websites, Skype)

- Skype! It’s necessary, important, and a free way to communicate back home
- Download Skype, make sure it works and you have everything you need (i.e. microphone/headset) & teach your parents how to use it *before you leave*.

Other Challenges/Tips

- Texted my parents for cheap and they called me back.
- Called my parents and they called me immediately back with a very cheap U.S. International calling plan.