

C.V. Starr ~ Middlebury School in the Middle East
www.middlebury.edu/academics/sa/middleeast/

Director: Nehad Heliel, nheliel@middlebury.edu

Office address:

TAFL Center, Middlebury School in the Middle East
Faculty of Arts
Alexandria University
Alexandria, Egypt
Phone: 011-203-487-5735

International Programs and Off-Campus Study
Sunderland Language Center
Middlebury College
Middlebury, VT 05753
tel. 802-443-5745
fax. 802-443-3157
schoolsabroad@middlebury.edu

Please note that information in this handbook is subject to change.

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Dear Students,

أهلاً وسهلاً

Congratulations on your decision to study with the C.V. Starr-Middlebury School in Alexandria, Egypt. I would personally like to welcome you and tell you what to expect.

Welcome to Alexandria, a city that conjures pictures from history as it has been a stepping stone between Ancient Egypt and Ancient Greece. It has always been a melting pot of diverse cultures and now is part of the Arab culture which enriches the city even more.

Your classes will be located in a cozy center on the campus of Alexandria University. Campuses in Egypt are very different from those in the States; they are in the heart of this busy, vibrant city and are not spread out over large spaces. The Arabic center is extremely close to the Faculty of Arts, Faculty of Law, Faculty of Commerce, and Faculty of Tourism. Being on campus is a great advantage and the best advice I can give is to adhere to the Language Pledge and engage in the language as much as possible. This opportunity to interact with young Egyptian students will help you communicate in an authentic linguistic context. The Arabic center is across the street from the Bibliotheca Alexandria which is a revival of the Great Library of Alexandria, and where many of Alexandria's cultural events and international festivals take place. The Center is also very close to many internet cafés, photocopying shops, cafeterias, and any other services that you may need for your everyday life. The city is as diverse as its people, and I encourage you to explore and discover the language and cultures of the people. The city is safe and the people are friendly. However, you might encounter some challenges. At times you will have to deal with the difficulties and frustrations of adapting to a totally different culture and environment. Be ready for the challenge if you want to make the best out of your stay. I will be there for you and so will our staff. We shall help you settle in and feel comfortable. Please do not hesitate to contact me or email me if you have any questions. I will be happy to help.

Inshaallah, Alexandria will feel like home and your stay will be worthwhile and unforgettable.

Looking forward to meeting you in Alexandria soon!

Sincerely,

Nehad Heliel
Assistant Professor and Director
C.V Starr-Middlebury School in the Middle East

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Pre-departure Information

APPROXIMATE PROGRAM COSTS

The following is an estimate of program costs for full and half-year students as of March 2009. Middlebury College will bill you for the comprehensive fee (and the \$1,100 per semester study abroad fee for Middlebury students); the remaining expenses will be out-of-pocket. Figures may vary depending on individual lifestyles and situations. Please note that the “personal” figure covers only some basic necessities and does not and is not intended to include students’ discretionary spending (e.g. entertainment and travel).

Full Year: \$19,000

Semester: \$ 9, 500

N.B. These figures are used for determining financial aid awards for Middlebury College students and cannot be adjusted to account for fluctuating exchange rates.

Estimated Out-of-Pocket Expenses:

	Semester	Year
Room/Board	\$2,350	\$4,800
Books/Supplies	\$100	\$200
Visa Fees	\$30	\$35
Personal	\$600	\$1,200
Travel from New York	\$1,800	\$1,800
TOTAL	\$4,880	\$8,035

EXPENSES

In general, you should plan to spend as much in a given month in Egypt as you would at home. Keep in mind that the amount of money you spend ultimately depends on the lifestyle you choose, (and recently, on exchange rates that can vary widely from month to month). One School in the Middle East staff member noted, “I would even make a direct relationship here: the less money you spend, the better the experience. Think of yourselves as travelers rather than tourists. Oftentimes, the in-country facilities used by foreign tourists are not those used by the locals. The more money you spend, the more you alienate yourself from the Egyptian experience and miss a main point of the program.”

Remember to budget extra if you are planning to travel before or after your program. If you are a big spender in the U.S., budgeting more money would be a

good idea. Students who plan on regularly sampling the nightlife of the city should budget extra money for taxis.

VISAS

United States citizens studying in Egypt must first obtain a tourist visa, which they will then convert to a student visa through the university in Alexandria. Students may apply for their one month tourist visa in the U.S. or get the same tourist visa in the airport upon arrival in Egypt.

If you wait to apply for your tourist visa in Egypt, you must apply in an airport (Alexandria, Cairo, Luxor, and Hurgada), so if your border of entry into Egypt is over land, you will need to

apply for the visa before leaving the U.S. If you arrive before 12:00 noon, you will receive your visa that same day.

EU and British passport holders must apply in person in the U.S. (i.e. airport visa is not an option), and the cost ranges from \$20-\$25. Citizens of other countries should ask the Egyptian Embassy in the U.S. or their home country for help in determining their requirements.

To obtain a tourist visa in the airport, the current procedure requires the following:

- \$15 in U.S. currency (exact change)

After arrival in Alexandria, you will have to go (with your tourist visa in hand) and apply for a student visa through Alexandria University. Our on-site staff will assist you in this process.

EGYPTIAN CONSULATES IN THE U.S.

Chicago

For the states of Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, N. Dakota, S. Dakota, Wisconsin
500 N. Michigan Avenue, Suite 1900
Chicago, IL 60611
Tel. (312) 828-9162

Houston

For the states of Alabama, Arkansas, Colorado, Kansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Texas
1990 Post Oak Boulevard, Suite 2180
Houston, TX 77056
Tel. (713) 961-4915

New York

For the states of Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, Rhode Island, Vermont, New York
1110 Second Avenue
New York, NY 10022
Tel. (212) 759-7120/7121/7122

San Francisco

For the states of Alaska, Arizona, California, Idaho, Hawaii, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Washington, Wyoming, Utah
3001 Pacific Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94115
Tel. (415) 346-9700
www.egy2000.com/

Washington, DC

For the states of Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Maryland, N. Carolina, S. Carolina, Virginia, Washington, DC
3521 International Court, NW
Washington, DC 20008
Tel. (202) 895-5400
www.egyptembassy.net/servicevisa.cfm

REGISTERING AT THE U.S. EMBASSY

All U.S. citizens are required to register themselves with the U.S. Embassy in Egypt before departure from the U.S. In the event of international, political, or family emergencies, or in the

event that a passport is lost or stolen, the U.S. Embassy will be much better able to assist registered citizens. Please visit the Department of State's website and follow the links to register: www.travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs/ui/.

Please print the confirmation page after you have registered; leave one copy at home and take a copy with you. Students of other nationalities should check to see if it is possible to register with their own embassy in Egypt.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

If you are an international student, you should meet with the international student advising staff at your home institution as early as possible to discuss how study abroad may affect your international student status in the United States and the ways it may impact your future plans.

The U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) requires re-entry documents for some foreign nationals. If you are living in the U.S. but are a citizen of another country, check with the USCIS to determine the regulations that apply to you and be sure to obtain all necessary re-entry documents before you leave the United States.

TRAVEL TO EGYPT

Airline Reservations

Students are responsible for making their own flight arrangements to the orientation in Alexandria. We recommend using a student travel agency for flexibility and the best rates:

- www.studentuniverse.com
- www.statravel.com
- www.travelcuts.com
- www.kayak.com

Flying to Egypt: Flights from the U.S. can go either into Cairo or into Alexandria (with a stop in Europe first); routes vary greatly by carrier, and it is possible to either take a domestic flight from Cairo to Alexandria or to go over land (2.5 hours). For your initial arrival, it may make sense to fly all the way through to Alexandria, but flying to Cairo will likely be substantially more affordable.

There are two airports in Alexandria, Borg Al-Arab (HBE) and El-Nozha (ALY), the latter being considerably closer to the city, and therefore probably the best option for your arrival.

Should you choose to go to Cairo, you can either (1) immediately take a limo (arranged by the director, costing LE 320 plus LE 40 tip, so about \$65) to your destination in Alexandria; (2) take a Superjet bus to Alexandria, taking up to five hours since it goes through Cairo first (costing LE 65); (3) take a taxi or bus to downtown Cairo, and then a train or bus to Alexandria (all in all, costing LE 27 to LE 90).

Departures from Egypt: Return tickets should be booked according to the calendar on the School in the Middle East [website](#). No departures will be allowed earlier than the dates noted, except in the case of medical emergency.

TSA REGULATIONS (FORMERLY FAA)

The [Transportation Security Administration](#) regulates what items may be carried aboard the aircraft and, as these regulations are subject to change frequently, you should consult their website close to your date of departure.

N.B. Possessing certain items while going through security may result in fines of \$250 - \$1,500 or, in the case of firearms, may be considered a criminal offense.

AIRLINE LUGGAGE REGULATIONS

Students should contact their airline to confirm exact luggage allowances. We strongly suggest you stick to these guidelines, or be prepared to pay excess baggage fees, which can be quite expensive. Those students continuing on a domestic flight within their country of destination should be aware that domestic flights usually have more strict baggage requirements than international flights and they should check to see if excess charges will apply in country.

Some travel insurance is included under the HTH Worldwide policy. Furthermore, it is possible that you are covered under a policy held by your parents, so investigate this prior to departure.

IMMUNIZATIONS

Although no agency requires proof of any immunizations for travel to our host countries, experts strongly recommend that travelers consider taking some precautions. The [Center for Disease Control](#) recommends the following vaccines:

- Hepatitis A, and Hepatitis B
- Rabies
- Typhoid
- Booster doses for tetanus-diphtheria, measles, and polio as needed

You should consult with your own health care provider to determine which immunizations you should obtain. Some immunizations can take at least 4-6 weeks to take effect, so please see your physician in ample time. If you plan to travel to other countries in the Middle East be sure to check the CDC website to find out if they require immunizations for any of the areas to which you plan to travel. If you think you may be traveling to a country that requires proof of inoculations for entry, you should obtain an International Certificate of Vaccination through the [World Health Organization](#): (202) 861-3200.

CHECKLIST OF THINGS TO PACK

- Schools Abroad [General Handbook](#)
- This handbook
- Passport (and photocopy)
- Airline Ticket/Itinerary (and photocopy)
- 4 passport photos
- International Student Identity Card (optional)
- Insurance Card
- Insurance Claim Forms
- Calling Card
- Debit and Credit Cards
- Certified copy of original birth certificate (in case your passport is lost or stolen)
- Medications in original containers

GENERAL PACKING SUGGESTIONS

Plan your packing carefully, keeping in mind that you will have to carry all of your own luggage while traveling. This means TRAVEL LIGHTLY. We cannot emphasize this strongly enough.

Consider what you will use for luggage. Durable backpacks are lightweight and easy to carry. As you pack for the flight over, also keep in mind that you will be carrying this same luggage by yourself, sometimes over great distances or in crowded places. Take things that are easy to manage and avoid over-packing. One rule of thumb is to walk around the block with your bags, then re-pack. It is also prudent to bring at least one bag or container that can be securely locked for storage of money or valuables, and a smaller bag that can be used for weekend trips out of town.

Choose each item carefully, and avoid duplication. Egyptians do not have as many changes of clothing as Americans, so a small wardrobe will not be noticed. Less is more when packing.

You should be prepared for extremes in weather. Following are average low/high temperatures in Egypt (in Fahrenheit):

September	70-90
October	65-85
November	60-75
Dec-Feb	50-65
March	55-70
April	60-80
May	65-90

Bring clothing that is comfortable, durable, culturally appropriate (particularly during Ramadan, which in 2009 starts in late August), and suited for the climate. It is a good idea to bring clothes that can be easily layered during the winter months because of the fluctuations in daily temperatures, and because most flats and public buildings do not have central heat. Washing machines are sometimes available, and a list of dry-cleaners is provided in the local information section. Most students will wear clothes longer between washings than they do in the U.S. and wash clothes by hand. Choose hand-washable, permanent press, and drip-dry materials; durable fabrics are preferable. Bring a few items for different occasions: sports, classes, and dress occasions.

You will be walking and waiting for and standing on public transportation a great deal. Comfortable walking shoes are essential.

We recommend that you do not bring expensive jewelry or items that can only be dry-cleaned.

Other suggested items:

- Overnight bag for short trips out of town
- Shoulder bag or knapsack for daily use
- Swiss army knife (in checked bag)
- Small first aid kit
- Zip lock bags to use for wet clothes and other small items
- Plastic containers for medicines, cosmetics, etc.
- Travel-sized sewing kit (in checked bag)
- Insect repellent (not aerosol)
- Camera, film/memory cards, batteries
- Small address book
- Multi-vitamins
- Portable alarm clock
- Portable CD player or MP3 player
- Money belt
- Small hand-held tape recorder for recording lectures
- Tour guide of the region (Lonely Planet Guide, Rough Guide, or other)

Toiletries

Toiletries are readily available throughout most of Egypt. If you are particular about brands, you may want to pack an appropriate supply of the articles you regularly use. Many American brands can be bought in Egypt although Egyptian brands are of high quality and usually less

expensive. If you wear contact lenses, you may want to bring enough solution with you to last your entire stay as it is quite a bit more expensive in Egypt. Sunscreen is also very expensive in Egypt.

Climate and Clothing

Shorts are socially acceptable only at beach resorts (and for women only in private resorts, on cruise ships, or along the Red Sea), and shirts (for both sexes) should cover your shoulders. Some religious sites do not allow shorts or sleeveless shirts. For women, loose opaque clothes that cover all “immodest” areas (thighs, upper arms, chest), and hide your contours will draw less attention to yourself, and are essential if you are traveling alone or in rural or working-class areas.

Gifts

If you are planning to live with a host national, you may wish to present him or her with a token gift. It is probably best to select something that has significance to you and is packable and light. Consider the following items:

- Books--with lots of photos.
- CDs of current American music and your favorite artists.
- Small souvenirs of the U.S.: postcards, buttons, stickers, U.S. stamps, small handicrafts.
- Items representative of where you are from (i.e. Vermont maple syrup).

DON'T FORGET PHOTOS! Your local friends will be interested in where you come from: your family, town, friends, school. Take pictures that help explain parts of your life in the U.S.

Bed and Bath Linens

We do not recommend that you bring sheets, blankets, or pillows with you. They are too heavy and take up too much space in your luggage. These items can be easily purchased once you arrive in Egypt, during the orientation week trip to Carrefour.

Electrical Appliances

Most electrical current in Egypt is 220 volts/50 cycles, rather than the 110 volts/60 cycles found in the United States.

Computers

If you are considering bringing a laptop with you to Egypt, consult your dealer to determine whether it has dual voltage (110/220 with an internal transformer). If not, you will need an electrical transformer to bring down the volts from 220 to what the computer normally uses. Most, if not all, new models are equipped with self-setting transformers; printers may or may not be. Be sure to have back-ups for any hard or floppy disks you take abroad, though there is very little risk to disks, hard or floppy, from the X-ray devices used in airports.

Please be aware that while many people in the cities carry their laptops around with them, you should be very careful as thieves target laptops. If you do not bring your laptop, you will need to go to “cyber-café” or use the internet at the TAFL center (desktop computers and wireless).

Prescriptions

If you are taking any medication that is not available in Egypt, you should bring a full supply of what you will need **with you**. Mailing medicines across international borders is extremely complex and often impossible. Prescription medicines should be left in the original containers. It is also suggested that you carry the original prescription or a note from your doctor to avoid questioning. Please also note that in the event that a prescription must be replaced in Egypt, you should have the generic name of your medication on the prescription, in addition to the U.S. brand name.

If you are under a doctor's care for a specific condition, you may want to bring a copy of your medical history with you or sign a release form with your doctor in case your medical history needs to be sent to a doctor in Egypt.

Customs

If you plan to bring any new, non-U.S.-made articles of value, such as cameras, MP3 players, computers, bicycles, or jewelry that are LESS THAN 6 MONTHS OLD, you should register them with U.S. Customs and Border Protection before departure ([CBP Form 4457](#)). Alternately, you can carry your original sales receipts to prove that you purchased them in the U.S. This avoids your having to pay a duty upon your return. Customs regulations vary from country to country; there are usually limitations on liquor, cigarettes, and other goods.

Arrival in Egypt

IMMIGRATION

Make sure that your passport is stamped by the immigration official when you arrive in Egypt, whether you arrive directly or via another country in the Middle East.

Upon arrival, U.S. citizens who did not apply for tourist visas before leaving the U.S. will have to apply for an (automatic) tourist visas before exiting the airport at one of the bank kiosks next to the passport control area.

HOW TO GET TO ALEXANDRIA

Before leaving for Egypt, the staff abroad will send you housing information. You should then communicate directly with your host and the director to discuss the details of your arrival.

Alexandria is currently serviced by two airports, El-Nozah (ALY), 5km south of the city (Lufthansa, Olympic and EgyptAir), and Burg al-Arab (HBE) (Lufthansa and KLM), 60km west of Alexandria. Neither airport has any exchange facilities, ATMs, or duty-free shops, so you will not be able to procure Egyptian pounds here. If you are planning on purchasing a visa on arrival, this can only be bought with U.S. dollars, pounds sterling, or euros.

Public transportation is limited to bus #555 (about \$1) from Burg al-Arab to Midan Sa'ad Zaghloul; a taxi to Alexandria from Burg al-Arab costs \$14-\$18; from Nozha \$2-3. However, the program director or coordinator will meet you on your initial arrival in Alexandria.

ORIENTATION

On-site orientation sessions will be held for all students during the week prior to the beginning of classes. Orientation is conducted in a relaxed informal atmosphere in which you will get the chance to meet the director and other students in the program. Besides exploring the university and the city, you will be introduced to Egyptian colloquial Arabic. Please consult the School's [calendar](#) for dates:

ORIENTATION SESSIONS ARE MANDATORY FOR ALL STUDENTS.

Please plan to arrive in Alexandria the day before orientation is scheduled to begin.

Academic and Administrative Matters

HOST UNIVERSITY

Alexandria University is one of the oldest, largest (about 200,000 students), and most prestigious public institutions in Egypt. Its history of social activism and political opposition resulted in a decline during previous governmental administrations from which it is now emerging.

Language Institute: Students in Middlebury's School in the Middle East will take their courses at the Teaching Arabic as a Foreign Language (TAFL) Centre located on the Alexandria University campus, facing the Faculty of Arts.

CREDIT

All Undergraduates

A student's workload must be approved by the director in Egypt. *Students are not permitted to take lighter loads, nor will they receive additional credit for heavier loads.*

To facilitate the granting of major credit, students will be asked to complete and bring back a "Course Information" form, available from the director abroad, for each course taken in Egypt. Students should attach to these forms course syllabi, papers, and any other relevant documentation. Students should take these forms and supporting documents will be taken back to the home institution for granting of departmental credit, if applicable.

Middlebury Undergraduates

Middlebury College students receive four units of credit for the fall semester, five units of credit for the winter and spring semesters, and nine units of credit for the academic year.

Students from other Colleges & Universities

Middlebury College considers a semester/ academic year abroad equivalent to a semester/academic year in the U.S. Students who transfer their credits to other institutions typically receive 15-16 credit hours per semester or 20-25 quarter units per semester for four courses. Because an undergraduate student's home institution determines the number of credits awarded for work abroad, students are urged to consult with their advisers well ahead of time.

REGISTRATION

Registration for classes will take place in country under the advisement of the director in Egypt. At that time more detailed information about studying in Egypt will be given, and specific questions will be addressed.

TYPICAL ACADEMIC SCHEDULE

Single semester students and first semester academic year students:

1. Egyptian Colloquial Arabic
2. Advanced Modern Standard Arabic
3. One-on-one tutorial on an academic subject (chosen in conjunction with the director)
4. Two content courses, choosing from options such as Media Arabic, Translation, Middle East History, Islamist Politics, and Political Geography of the Middle East.

Second semester academic year students' curriculum will be developed based on their progress during the first semester, and may include an internship, and/or a course in a regular class at

the University of Alexandria. (Only advanced level students may pursue this latter option, at the discretion of the Director.)

PLACEMENT EXAMS

The School in Egypt uses a number of factors to determine students' language levels: a placement exam given a few days after arrival, previous language study, grades, recommendations, and classroom performance during the first two weeks of classes. Please note: every effort is made to accommodate the academic needs of all our students. In certain rare cases, however, a class may not be offered if there are not enough students. We are unable to determine actual levels until after the placement exam, and adjustments may be made after classes begin.

STUDENT-TEACHER RELATIONSHIP

The relationship between teachers and students in Egypt is different from that in the United States. It is often warmer yet simultaneously more formal. If you keep a few of these differences in mind, it will help prevent misunderstandings and miscommunication between you and your teachers.

Students should show a high level of respect toward their teachers. This respect may be shown in ways that are somewhat different than in the United States. It is expected that students will go to class on time, turn their cell phones off, be well-prepared, and let the teachers know if they are sick or will otherwise miss class. Keep in mind that some behavior that is acceptable in the United States may convey a message of disrespect in Egypt. The School in the Middle East maintains a strict "no eating in class" policy.

When you miss a class due to illness, it is not unusual for your teacher to show concern by visiting you or calling you up. This does not mean the teacher doesn't believe you are sick or is being overly nosy; instead the teacher is demonstrating care for your well-being.

Within the classroom, an instructor may call on students whom they feel are not speaking up enough for answers. Students should not feel that they are "being picked on."

LEARNING OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM

Middlebury College encourages all undergraduate students to take full advantage of their experience abroad by participating in learning experiences outside the classroom. Volunteer work and cultural activities provide students with opportunities to deepen their social immersion in Egyptian culture, enhance their language skills, and gain a better understanding of present-day Egypt.

VOLUNTEER WORK

Students wishing to contribute their time and service to the community may choose to work as volunteers with organizations in the non-profit sector. The director or Resident Coordinator in Egypt will help students find volunteer opportunities.

CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

Other options that facilitate student immersion include sports, cultural, and outdoor activities. The Resident Coordinator is available to advise students on the wide range of possibilities the city has to offer. The RC will give students a monthly guide to recommended activities, while students can also consult [Alex Agenda](#), a Facebook Group listing, lectures, concerts, theatre performances, etc.

Living in Egypt

HOUSING

It is our policy that students must live in an Arabic-speaking environment; they may not live alone nor solely with other English speakers. Our housing placements are made by prioritizing cultural immersion and concern for students' safety.

As students are only billed for tuition, they are expected to pay their rent directly to their landlord/host at the beginning of each month. The first payment will be due upon arrival and students may be asked for a deposit.

Students will complete a housing form to convey their housing preferences to the director and coordinator, who will place them accordingly. Students should understand that while every effort will be made to accommodate their request, it is not always possible to grant everyone's first choice. We encourage students to keep an open mind in terms of their housing, as with all other aspects of the experience.

Students who have contacts in Egypt and wish to arrange their own housing (of any type) must adhere to the policy above. The director in Egypt has the final word on approving students' housing to ensure their safety and maximum cultural immersion.

Homestays:

A very limited number of homestay opportunities will be available each semester. Almost all of these will be options for women only – given the nature of Egyptian attitudes toward segregation of genders. We hope to be able to offer some homestay options for men as well, though these will be rare.

There is no doubt that living in an Egyptian home can be a rewarding experience for a study abroad student who is willing to adapt to a different culture and lifestyle; and within the context of someone else's home. The use of Colloquial Arabic in the home, and contact with Egyptians in their daily routine are among the advantages of this experience. Nevertheless, students must be aware that their integration into the Egyptian home is gradual and that many things taken for granted in our own homes are often viewed from a different perspective in an Egyptian household. If the student wishes to feel like part of the household and have a more active participation in the Egyptian way of life, s/he should seriously consider having dinner with them on a regular basis. Dinner then, becomes the time to enjoy a relaxed atmosphere and to better familiarize oneself with the Egyptian way of life and improve Colloquial Arabic language skills.

Although living with an Egyptian host may sound ideal, you should also be aware that:

- privacy will be relatively limited; Egyptians do not have the same concept of privacy as we do, and “alone-time” translates, culturally, to “dejected and rejected time”. Egyptians, in general, view solitude in a negative way;
- while a homestay may involve cultural exchange, it is also a **business agreement** in which each party has particular rules by which to abide;
- it is very possible that a host family will not have internet access;
- students, especially girls, will likely be expected to be in the house for the night (perhaps as early as 9 or 10pm)
- kitchen privileges may or may not be granted;
- homestay families may live anywhere from 20-60 minutes from campus.

Dormitories:

Most first or single semester students will live in the dormitories for foreign students at Alexandria University. The women's dorm is a five to ten minute walk from campus and the men's dorm is a 20 minute taxi ride from campus (~\$1). The women are housed in double rooms on a floor for students in our program only. Women may or may not have an Egyptian roommate, but will definitely have Egyptian hallmates. The men are housed in single rooms with Egyptian hallmates on a corridor for students in our program (to keep the Language Pledge.)

Both the men's and women's dorms have high-speed, wireless internet access, and include meals as well.

The dorms are a great way to get to know Egyptian students, and thereby, Egyptian culture. (This is perhaps, especially true in the women's dorm where American students have the chance to get to know Egyptian women without their veils (figuratively and literally.) Students in the dorms tend to be from rural areas (as opposed to the students from Alexandria who almost exclusively live at home.) The Egyptian roommates and hall mates often accompany School in the Middle East students on excursions, and the Egyptians from the men's dorm often join in during weekly co-ed soccer games, and act as liaisons to other students at the university.

The dorms, like the homestays, present their own challenges:

- Living with roommates is always a challenge...doubly so when they are from a vastly different culture;
- The meals served at the dorms often lack the variety to which students in the U.S. are accustomed.
- The dorms have curfews (midnight on weeknights, and 1AM on weekends)...though with advanced notice or permission from the Resident Coordinator, this can be extended. (The Egyptian students have a much earlier curfew.)
- There are university staff on each floor of the dorms. Students sometimes feel that these staff are "nosey", though in some instances, this is a cultural matter. (Egyptian parents who send their students to live in the dorms *expect* that the dorm staff is supervising them to some extent.)

Apartments:

During their second semester, students may choose to find and rent flats on their own in the city. The rent for a flat (especially when sharing) is less expensive than the dormitories, though students will have to prepare their own meals, arrange for internet service, etc. The Language Pledge remains in effect for students who rent flats.

It is very important to always keep the School in the Middle East staff informed about your current housing situation and telephone number so that they can contact you in case of emergency.

For safety reasons, we **strongly** encourage students to consult the Resident Coordinator before finalizing any housing arrangements. Some neighborhoods are better than others, and some buildings in the better neighborhoods are better or safer than others. Your RC will have a better idea of what to look for and what to be wary of, and can assist you before you make any final decisions. However, if you choose to live in a flat, the process of finding and narrowing down your options is your responsibility.

Take your time in looking at various options and several different places before deciding where to live. It is the student's responsibility to READ ALL CONTRACTS CAREFULLY AND

UNDERSTAND WHAT THEY SAY. Students should not hesitate to ask for assistance if the wording in a contract is unclear.

MEETING EGYPTIANS

One of the questions we are asked most frequently is how to go about meeting local students. Those of your predecessors who have been successful in this respect would say that the best approach is to find a group activity that includes local people: choral singing, sports, volunteer work, local soccer games, etc. You will need some courage and a good deal of initiative. Results may not live up to your expectations, especially right away, but be patient. Keep in mind the strategies you would use at home to meet people you are interested in knowing: you try to be where they are, you try to share an interest or an activity that will bring you into contact with them, and you get to know people who know them. It goes without saying, if you have one or two Arabic-speaking acquaintances to start, it can only make things easier. Conversely, if you insist on speaking English, it will make interacting with locals more difficult.

Egyptians are very friendly people and generally love to engage anyone in conversation. These conversations, whether they take place in a taxi cab, a *qahwa*, or while shopping can provide you with excellent opportunities to practice and refine your Colloquial Arabic. Don't be surprised if you are asked about your religious or political sentiments. This is not a trap, but rather a common question for foreigners, though it often takes Americans by surprise at first. As a student of Arabic you know that it is nearly impossible to have even the briefest exchange in Arabic without mentioning God. It should not be surprising therefore that Egyptians will be curious about your beliefs.

HERITAGE LEARNERS

If you are of Arab descent, studying in Egypt may be the realization of a long held desire to learn more about your own heritage and roots. It is a wonderful opportunity to experience first-hand the country or culture that you've heard and read so much about and, of course, to improve your language skills. It may also be an important phase in developing your understanding of yourself. At the same time, some former students felt they were psychologically unprepared for the challenges to their self-identity that they met in Egypt. There is often a feeling of being "caught between two worlds."

You may be surprised by the assumption made by classmates, locals and even some teachers, that, since you are an Arab, you should speak the language well; when off campus with your classmates, some locals may mistake you as their guide. Or they may tell you how poor your language skills are while your non-Arab peers are complimented for their fluency! While being of Arabic descent will help you blend in and avoid the stares that your other classmates may regularly encounter, at other times you may be envious of the "novelty" treatment your fellow classmates receive—everything from photo requests to spontaneous invitations home for a meal. The vast majority of the time, however, people will simply be curious about your upbringing and keen to hear about your experiences in the U.S. as an Arab. Many Egyptians are patriotic and proud of their Arab heritage, and will be pleased to learn that you have "returned" to study the language and culture.

HARASSMENT

Regrettably, for women studying in the Middle East, sexual harassment is a part of daily life. For the most part, this comes in the form of unsolicited comments, including not infrequent marriage proposals from strangers. If this happened just once or twice a semester it would, perhaps, be tolerable, though slightly annoying. However, this is likely to be a daily occurrence, instead of a rarity. While this would be considered completely inappropriate behavior in the United States, it is common throughout the Middle East, and not only for western women, though non-Arab women tend to draw more attention to themselves whether they intend to or not. (It should be noted, however, that this behavior, and the attitudes

that one can associate with it should not be universally attributed to all men in the Middle East or Egypt. Many men abhor these impolite actions and will berate the perpetrators when they are made aware of it.) The on-site staff are more than willing to discuss particular incidents, should the need arise, and this topic will be discussed during the on-site orientation in Egypt. There is little that we can do to affect Egyptian culture, and so a woman's best defense from harassment in Egypt is awareness, and perhaps some reflection on what types of reactions feel most natural to you. Below are some responses and suggestions to this matter from recent returnees from the School in the Middle East.

- Women should walk in groups as much as possible. Learn arabic [sic] swears from Heba the 'amiyya teacher as soon as possible. Other than that, just try to tune out the hisses as much as possible, and try to walk out of arms reach on the streets.
- Honestly, it is a character building experience. There is generally little you can do, so I would just advise students to follow their own instincts, not be afraid to cry/show anger/go home and sulk/do whatever they need to do to care for their mental health. However, in the end I found that I had grown through the experience. Everyone deals with these things differently, and the point is to find something that works for you. However, it never really goes away, it is draining & tiring, and it is a problem.
- I think I can honestly say that I was in a few uncomfortable situations that taught me at least how to navigate Egyptian culture if not how to accept it. Of course, my experience in Egypt has made me recognize how comfortable it is for me to live in the United States. It has also shown me that I have to be careful in passing judgment on "Egyptian culture" too quickly because many of the same things that made me uncomfortable in Egypt (i.e. male attention on the streets) also exist in the U.S. but I have developed strategies for dealing with it here.
- Being a girl in Egypt is difficult at times (in terms of harassment, being limited in how late we stay out, who we socialize with, etc). The culture is not as liberal as the culture to which I am accustomed in the states. On the other hand, however, people in Egypt are generally very welcoming and are genuinely interested in who we are, why we are studying here, etc. It's a much closer culture: sometimes that can feel suffocating (that is, everyone is very much in everyone else's business), but it is also warming in many ways.
- Especially for women, be forewarned that no matter how conservative you are dressed, you will be prone to sexual harassment, especially in the streets. However, you can avoid greater degrees of it by covering yourself up, but you don't have to wear the hijab. In fact, if you do, you may attract more unwanted attention. Don't be afraid of being assertive if you're uncomfortable.

TRAVEL WITHIN EGYPT

While in Egypt, the following tourist guides are recommended:

- *The Rough Guide to Egypt*
- *Lonely Planet Egypt*
- *Let's Go Egypt*
- *Lonely Planet Egyptian Arabic Phrasebook*

Whenever you leave the city of Alexandria, you should contact the Resident Coordinator and let the RC know where you will be going and when you expect to return to Alexandria. For these purposes, a simple text-message will suffice.

Alexandria

While the downtown areas are largely accessible by foot, frequent minibuses run along the Corniche.

Students should never cross over the Corniche, as this is extremely dangerous; there are pedestrian tunnels spaced along the sea.

Trams: Trams run from 5:30 a.m. until midnight, with fares between 25pt and 75pt (pt=*piastres*—see note on currency in the Money and Banking section). The route numbers and destinations are written in Arabic, and you can use the buses' colors to help indicate direction: all trams running east from Ramleh are blue, west are yellow and red. For trams with three carriages, the middle one is reserved for women only, though women are permitted in any of the three cars.

Buses: Faster than the trams, buses run between Sa'ad Zaghloul, Tahrir, and El-Gumhorriya squares, but are very crowded, and pick-pocketing and sexual harassment can be problems on the bus.

Microbuses: The third public transportation option, minibuses offer the chance of a fast, reasonably comfortable ride and cover many of the same routes for a slightly higher fare, though cheaper than taxis. However, students are highly discouraged from taking microbuses between Cairo and Alexandria, due to their high rate of deadly accidents on both the desert and agricultural highways.

Taxis: For taxis, it is good to know the route you will be taking, as well as an estimate of the cost before you begin your trip. You should be aware of a landmark or two near your destination to tell the driver.

TRAVEL OUTSIDE THE HOST COUNTRY

If you plan to travel to other countries, be advised that regulations vary and may change at very short notice. In some cases a visa and inoculations may be required. Consult a travel agent for current procedures.

When leaving the country, even between semesters,, all students are required to email both the Resident Coordinator and the Resident Director about your travel plans. This is simply a matter of safety, and so that we have some idea of where you are if an emergency arises.

Hitchhiking as a mode of transportation anywhere in the Middle East is strongly discouraged as a matter of College policy. The practice is regarded by security officials to be extremely unsafe and is often illegal. Buses and trains provide a low-cost, safe alternative.

Lonely Planet Middle East provides an excellent and comprehensive guide to traveling in the region.

Health and Safety

HEALTH

Whenever you go to any foreign country, you are exposed to germs against which your body has not yet built up a resistance. You may, therefore, be more susceptible to illness than local people are. This is as true for Americans going abroad as it is for those coming to the United States.

The most common areas for health problems are digestive and upper respiratory systems. It is also important to keep these things in mind:

- Bring enough medicines for your entire stay, as they may be difficult to acquire, and customs may prohibit shipping of medicines. Any medication that requires refrigeration should be brought to the attention of Middlebury prior to the departure as special arrangements may be necessary.
- When eating on the street or in restaurants, pay special attention to cleanliness of eating utensils and food.
- Please do not swim in ponds, rivers or streams unless you have been given specific permission by your Resident Director.

The School in the Middle East's staff reserves the right to send any participant home who, in the judgment of the staff, is not mentally or physically fit to continue in the program. Students who must leave Egypt early for documented health reasons may be eligible for a partial tuition refund. Please refer to the information in the Schools Abroad General Handbook on tuition refund insurance and health insurance for further details.

DRUGS

Different countries view use of narcotics in a variety of ways. In the Middle East, there is a strict code of social mores. In most countries, drug use for other than medicinal purposes is illegal, and the local authorities may take official action against anyone found using or possessing any kind of drugs.

Use of recreational drugs while attending the School in the Middle East is strictly prohibited. Furthermore, students using drugs or alcohol within the dorms are subject to immediate expulsion by Alexandria University.

While use of drugs by foreigners in Egypt may result in jail sentences and penalties, the penalties for Egyptian nationals (including your Egyptian roommates) can be much more severe.

WATER

The tap water in Egyptian towns and cities is heavily chlorinated and mostly safe to drink, but it is rough on tender stomachs. In rural areas, there's a fair risk of contaminated water. While most foreigners stick to bottled mineral water, excessive fear of tap water is unjustified. Some people have diarrhea just changing countries; the adaptation period can be minimized by avoiding fruits or vegetables that are unpeeled, uncooked, or grown with irrigation water. These same precautions will also provide some protection from hepatitis, typhoid, and cholera. The Center for Disease Control does not recommend shots for cholera, since the protection they provide is uncertain.

PHYSICAL SAFETY

Middlebury College monitors all programs closely through news channels, regular communication with staff overseas, and special information and notifications from the United

States Department of State and other sources. Descriptive material and current warnings can be found on the [State Department website](#). If for any reason a situation arises that we feel threatens the safety of our students, we will delay and/or cancel the program. Nonetheless, there are general safety measures that students should practice on site.

As in any large city, you should take reasonable precautions against crime. Be sure to lock your room and guard your money and passport against pickpockets, especially on buses, trains, and in *souqs* and other crowded places. When traveling, you should keep your eyes on your luggage, as theft is a reality in any location. We recommend that you use a money pouch or passport bag that can be worn inside your clothing. Students (particularly women) should be careful about jogging or walking alone.

Students are advised to go out in groups, ideally with Egyptian students, at night. In addition, students should avoid places where large groups of tourists congregate. You should bring your passport with you whenever you leave Alexandria. It is recommended that you keep a photocopy of your passport in your wallet or purse at all times. Remember, when it comes to safety, a little bit of common sense goes a long way!

As is mentioned elsewhere in this handbook, it is both inconsiderate of the host culture, and unwise for reasons of personal safety to dress immodestly. Men should not wear shorts except when engaged in athletic activities, and women should not wear sleeveless, low-cut neckline, or tight-fitting blouses, or short skirts. For most casual settings, loose-fitting t-shirts are fine.

The Director will go over safety issues and precautions particular to Egypt in detail during orientation. Specifically, students should be aware that theft of western students' belongings, particularly in the form of pick-pocketing, has occurred somewhat more often in recent years.

To prevent loss of property:

- Wallets and documents should always be carried in closed compartments inside bags (ideally an inner, zippered pocket) and not in coat pockets, outside pockets of backpacks, or other areas that are easily accessible to would-be thieves.
- Keep your valuables packed and out of sight in your rooms, and avoid bringing expensive jewelry, audio, video, camera, or computer equipment with you.
- Bring a lock for each suitcase. Large sums of money and other valuables should always be kept in a LOCKED bag, even in one's bedroom/flat/dorm-room, in the event of random break-ins or robberies.
- Separate large sums of money, write down credit card and traveler's check numbers, and keep records stashed in several different places.
- When traveling on trains, dress modestly. Avoid displaying expensive belongings or large sums of money.
- Keep a photocopy of your passport and registered visa in a safe place, separate from the originals.

The School in the Middle East does not carry insurance for stolen property, and students who are particularly concerned should look into taking out such a policy before leaving the U.S. The School in the Middle East cannot offer to store money or valuables for students.

To help protect yourself from violent crime:

- Do not appear drunk in public;
- Try not to dress in expensive-looking foreign clothes or carry American-style bags or luggage;
- Identify the dangerous areas of the cities you visit or live in, and stay out of those areas;
- At night, be careful when walking around alone (especially women);

In other words, use common sense. As a foreign student, you should take the same precautions you would in any large city, anywhere in the world. During orientation, the issue of security will be discussed in greater depth.

Local officials may conduct searches at customs entry and exit points for drugs and other contraband. Anyone found with contraband is subject to punishment as specified by the laws of the host country. Neither Middlebury College nor your country's embassy can be responsible for the consequences of such an arrest.

MEDICAL CARE

Travel and study in a foreign country can be very strenuous. It is important that you take action immediately when an illness or injury occurs.

When you are sick in Egypt, you need to be patient at a time when you may feel least able to be so; hospital visits can sometimes take hours. Such experiences can test your cultural sensitivity.

In the event of an illness, use your common sense about whether or not to seek outside help. Degrees of helpfulness vary as greatly from institution to institution as they do from individual to individual. You should speak with one of the staff members in all cases of serious illness and before agreeing to hospitalization.

HOSPITALS

Adequate medical and hospital services are available in Egypt. Alexandria medical services include but are not limited to:

- **Alexandria University Students' Hospital:** provides quality treatment and is reputed to have some of the best physicians in the city. It is partially subsidized by the University so care is inexpensive by US standards;
- **German Hospital:** is a private hospital which provides quality treatment, and most physicians here speak English;
- **El Shououk Hospital:** is another good private hospital;
- **El Salam Hospital:** is a private hospital that has high quality services.

PSYCHOLOGICAL HEALTH & COUNSELING

Students should be very realistic about their abilities to function in a high-stress environment. Egypt can be a difficult place in which to live, and, rather than disappearing in the new surroundings, conditions like depression and eating disorders are often exacerbated by a stay in Egypt. Extremely limited psychological counseling services are available in Egypt, and they are not provided by the School in the Middle East. Students with particular concerns in this area are encouraged to consult with staff at Middlebury prior to departure.

On~Site Money Matters

CURRENCY EXCHANGE

The currency in Egypt is the Egyptian pound (\$1 U.S. equals approximately 5.5 Egyptian pounds as of the spring of 2009). The *piastre* is the equivalent of the U.S. cent, so there are 100 *piastres* in one Egyptian pound.

The best exchange rates for cash can be found at Forex bureaus (private money changers found in large towns and tourist resorts), though they don't always take traveler's cheques, and will offer worse rates than banks if they do. The private money changers tend to have longer hours and transactions are faster than in Egyptian banks—Bank of Alexandria, Banque Misr, Banque du Caire and National Bank of Egypt. Opening hours are generally Sunday to Thursday 8:30 am to 2:00 pm, or 9:30 am to 1:30 pm during Ramadan. Branches in five-star hotels may have longer hours.

MONEY AND BANKING

Accessing Money

We suggest that you travel with several sources of money (ATM/debit card, credit card, traveler's checks, and cash). This will ensure that if one of your means for accessing money fails, you will not be stranded without money. ATM/debit cards can be used to obtain cash if they have a major credit card logo (Visa, MasterCard, Cirrus Network, or Plus Network) on them, but they should not be relied upon exclusively, since they are subject to breakdowns, fraud, and other scams. If you do plan to use debit or ATM cards while overseas, be sure to check with your bank regarding applicable fees, which can sometimes be quite steep, but this is the most convenient way to access your funds. Also, be sure to notify your bank and credit card companies that you will be traveling so they do not freeze your account, and to insure that your PIN will work while you are abroad. If you choose to bring cash with you, please examine your money carefully before departure to make sure it is in good condition.

Traveler's Cheques

Traveler's cheques are accepted in Egypt, though you should be aware of the high commission charges.

Bank Cards

CIRRUS, PLUS, Visa and MasterCard are accepted in Egypt, and you will see signs for them at automatic tellers all over the country (in cities). Check with your bank to make sure your card is activated for overseas use and that your PIN will work overseas. By using ATMs you can get trade exchange rates, some of which may be better than those charged by banks for changing cash. Note that there is also a daily limit on ATM cash withdrawals, usually around \$200. It is recommended that you consult with your bank about the variations and rules or charges for Egyptian branches and carry the phone number of your local bank in case you lose your ATM card.

Credit Cards

Credit cards are accepted at major hotels, top-flight restaurants, some shops and airline offices. The rest of monetary transactions are carried out in cash. Where credit cards are widely used, the best known are Visa, MasterCard, and American Express. They are accepted more and more, although not to the same extent as in the U.S.

Emergency Cash

BEFORE you leave, you should discuss with your family a plan for getting more money during the program. The best way to be sent money is to have an American Express money order mailed through a reputable express mail carrier such as Federal Express, Courier, etc. Western Union is also available.

Communication with Home and Friends

COMMUNICATION AND IMMERSION

Students who seek maximum immersion should note that regular communication with home can significantly hinder their language progress and their adjustment to the new culture. If your goal is maximum immersion, you should prepare family and friends for the reality that you may be difficult to contact and that, even when possible, regular calling or e-mailing may interfere with your language acquisition. If something has gone wrong, your family will learn about it immediately. Otherwise, you can remind them that no news is good news.

MAIL

Students should have all mail sent to them at their place of residence. Packages should not be sent to arrive before the students have arrived in-country. As a general rule, about fifteen percent of all mail never arrives.

Airmail takes two to three weeks from North America and between a week and ten days from Europe. If you are sending mail from Egypt, service will be expedited if you write the country in Arabic.

Receiving letters *poste restante* (general delivery) is a bit of a gamble. When having mail sent to you via general delivery, it should be addressed (highlight your name) to *poste restante* at the central post office. To pick up mail, you'll need your passport.

The best option is to send letters from major hotels or the American Express office in Alexandria, though service for the latter is only for Amex traveler's cheque or cardholders. Airmail or "بريد جوي" stamps can be purchased at post offices, hotel shops, and postcard stands. Post office hours are generally daily, except Friday, from 8am-6pm.

E~MAIL

Computer facilities at the university are very limited; you should expect to do your work and your email on a laptop that you then take to an internet café for printing or connecting to the internet. If you do not take a laptop with you, you will need to type your papers at an internet café. You should be able to access your home school account via a browser-based email service, and this is a good way to ensure you receive important information from your home campus.

CELL PHONES

Students generally purchase cell phones for use in Egypt. Students should consider the following when making a decision:

- Cell phones are inexpensive in Egypt.
- Owners buy pre-paid minutes.
- The two most popular phone companies are Mobinil and Vodafone.
- Cell phones may be used to call the U.S.
- From within Egypt, it is more expensive to call a cell phone than a land line.

TELEPHONE

The telephone at the Middlebury office in Alexandria is for the use of the staff only. Students may not receive telephone calls through these offices, except in cases of emergency.

VOIP – VOICE OVER INTERNET PROTOCOL

Students are now frequently using the Internet to speak to people around the world at low or no cost. Former study abroad students have recommended using [Skype](#), an Internet phone software service.

FAX/XEROX

The School in The Middle East's fax and photocopier are for office use only. Please note that any photocopying required for coursework is considered the responsibility of the student, and the school photocopier cannot be used for such purpose. Faxes can be sent through any of the many public fax services.

Local Information

EGYPT

U.S. Embassy

8 Kamal El Din Salah St.
Garden City, Cairo Egypt
Tel: [20] [2] 797-3300

Emergency Numbers

Students should memorize the following emergency numbers and carry on their person at all times the card they will receive after arrival containing emergency phone numbers.

- Police: 122
- Fire: 125 or 493-4206
- Ambulances: 123
- Tourist Police: 126

Important Telephone Numbers

- Directory information: 140 or 141
- International Operator: 120

Hospitals

Alexandria International Hospital, Smouha
The German Hospital, Saba Pasha
Ibrahim Eibeid, Saba Pasha

Drug Stores

Medication is very easy to get from pharmacies which are located all over the city. Many pharmacies are available very close to campus.

Calling Card Access Numbers

- AT&T: 02/510-0200
- SPRINT: 02/796-4777

Credit Card Cancellation

- American Express: 02/570-3411
- Mastercard: 02/797-1179
- Visa: 02/796-2877

American Express Office in Alexandria

- 34 Sharia el-Moskar el Romani, Roushdi
- Tel: 03/541-0177

Travel agencies

- Misr Travel 02/750-0010 (Cairo office)

Bookstores

- Manshi't il Maarif, Saad Zaghoul Street
- Abou IL Houli, Sphinx, EL Horreya rd

- Daar il Maarifa

Shopping

Stores and other businesses in the downtown area generally stay open from 10:00am until 9:00pm. In some neighborhoods you may find that they close for two or three hours for lunch.

Dry Cleaners

- Al Alameya 67, El Horreya rd. (203)3913427
- EL Guizawi 19, Amin Fekry St. (203)4864823
- Express Dry Clean 475, El Horreya av. (203)5469500
- Kinda 40, Khalil Al Khayat St. (203)5462181

For information about the city:

<http://alexandriaegypt.com/city/index.htm>

SCHOOL IN THE MIDDLE EAST

CALENDAR 2009-10

FALL SEMESTER

Sunday, September 6, 2009	Fall Students Arrive in Egypt
Monday, September 7, 2009	Fall Orientation Begins
Monday, September 21 – Thursday, September 24	Fall Break (Eid al-Fitr – Ramadan Ends)
Tuesday, October 06, 2009	Armed Forces Day
Saturday, October 24, 2009	Suez Victory Day
Friday, November 6 – Sunday, November 15	Mid-Term Break
Friday, November 27, 2009	Eid al-Adha (Festival of the Sacrifice) [through Sunday, November 30, 2008]
Friday, December 18, 2009	Muharrem (Islamic New Year)
Thursday, December 17, 2009	Fall Semester ends (flights can be scheduled anytime after this date)
Wednesday, January 07, 2010	Coptic Christmas

SPRING SEMESTER

Monday, January 11, 2010	Spring Students Depart the U.S. for Egypt
Tuesday, January 12, 2010	Spring Students Arrive in Alexandria
Wednesday, January 13, 2010	Spring Orientation Begins
Thursday, February 4 – Saturday, February 6	Group Excursion to Siwa (tentative)
Thursday, February 25– Saturday, March 6	Spring Break (Group Excursion)
Friday, February 26, 2010	Milaad al-Naabi (Muhammed's Birthday)
Friday, April 2, - Saturday, April 10	Break for Egyptian Holidays
Sunday, April 4, 2010	Coptic Easter
Monday, April 5, 2010	Sham el-Nassim
Sunday, April 25, 2010	Sinai Liberation Day
Thursday, May 13, 2010	Spring Semester Ends (flights can be scheduled anytime after this date)

N.B. This calendar is subject to change