WHAT IS A STUDENT VISA?

A student visa is a government-issued authorization to enter and study in a foreign country. Most countries require that you obtain a student visa in order to study in their country. A student visa is ONLY issued by the country's embassy (or at one of their branches, called consulates, located all over the United States).

Ultimately, the process to apply for a student visa is simple, albeit very involved. Information and applications are found on specific consulate websites. Each country, and consulate, has different requirements. Look up the country consulate that is closest to your home (i.e., Boston or New York). Keep in mind that before you can apply for a student visa, you must have at least a written acceptance from the institution abroad, along with a valid, current passport. Therefore, this will be the last item you will need to complete before you leave for your study abroad experience. Sometimes a consulate allows "walk-ins," although, most of the time you will have to schedule an in-person appointment. You will not be able to apply for a student visa by mail. Keep in mind, consulates take your paperwork and original passport for processing and will not return them to you for up to 4 weeks.

Also - be forewarned - consulates are very specific with what you must present before they will issue you a visa to study in their country (detailed student visa requirements are always posted on individual country consulate websites). Some of you may have programs that take care of obtaining a student visa for you (you will be informed in your acceptance packet from the program abroad). For those that do not, it is your responsibility to do exactly as your consulate requests. Past experience has shown they will turn you away if their requirements are not specifically met.

IF you need a letter from your home institution (Salve Regina University), stating you are a student in good standing, please complete the details below.

Name of Student _____
First Middle Initial Last

I intend to study abroad during the ___ Fall / ___ Spring semester of the _____ academic year.

Country _____ College Abroad _____

Date of Birth _____ Major (or Double Major) _____

Graduation Date from Salve Regina (i.e., May 2010) _____

Date you leave the USA (this is from your airline itinerary) _____

Program Abroad Orientation Date (date it starts - found in the program catalog or website) _____

Program Abroad Start Date (first official day of class) _____

Program Abroad End Date (last day of class) _____

Once you complete the above and return this form to the Gatehouse, we will be able to type your letter and return it to you. Please allow 5 business days for processing. You may come to the Gatehouse to pick up your letter -OR- you are welcome to provide us an address where we can mail your letter (this means a home address, not the consulate address):

Street _____

City, State, Zip _____