

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **HOW DO I APPLY FOR A PASSPORT?**

An application for passport may be obtained at many branches of the U.S. Post Office. Two local post offices and the hours they accept passport applications are: Vestavia Post Office, 745 Montgomery Highway (Hwy. 31), Birmingham, AL 35216, Hours: Monday-Friday 10:00–12:00 and 1:00–3:00, Phone: (205) 979-2195. Birmingham Main Post, 351 24<sup>th</sup> Street North, Birmingham, AL, Hours: Monday-Friday 10:00 – 3:00, Phone: (205) 521-0822. The official Department of State website has complete information about applying for a passport at [www.travel.state.gov](http://www.travel.state.gov). All first time applicants will need to present themselves in person at the Post Office. You should apply IN PERSON if: (1) you are applying for a U.S. passport for the first time, (2) your previous passport was lost, stolen or damaged, (3) your previous U.S. passport has expired and was issued more than 15 years ago, (4) your previous passport has expired and was issued when you were under 16, or (5) your name is changed since your passport was issued and you do not have a legal document formally changing your name.

**WHERE DO I GET PASSPORT PHOTOS MADE?** Many businesses offer this service. Businesses local to Samford University that provide this service are: Wal-Mart, Walgreens Drugstore, Target, CVS Pharmacy, Wolf Camera, Cameras Brookwood and FedEx/Kinko copy centers.

### **I HAVE A PASSPORT, WHAT ELSE DO I NEED TO DO?**

We will need a copy of your passport. Make sure you have signed your passport first. The photocopy should include your photo/signature page only. Simply open up your passport to your photo, lay the opened passport on the copier, and make a copy. Make sure it is legible and clear. Make yourself several photocopies while you are at it: one for safekeeping in the bottom of your suitcase, and one to keep at home where family members can assist you if something should happen to your passport while you are traveling. Please do not send faxed passport copies to the International Studies Office. They are designed to not transmit well electronically.

### **WHY DOES THE INTERNATIONAL STUDIES OFFICE NEED MY PASSPORT COPY?**

US Embassies and Foreign Consulate offices abroad would require your passport information to facilitate immediate replacement. We keep a photocopy with your records in our office and recommend you take a photocopy. Keep this copy separate from your passport, tickets and other travel documents.

### **WHAT IS A CERTIFIED BIRTH CERTIFICATE?**

A certified birth certificate is issued by the City, County or State of birth and has a registrar's raised, embossed or multicolor seal, registrar's signature and the date the certificate was filed with the registrar's office, which must have been within one year of your birth. A certified copy may be obtained from the registrar's office of the City, County or State where you were born.

### **HOW DO I OBTAIN A CERTIFIED COPY OF MY BIRTH CERTIFICATE?**

If you do not know where to write or call in the city, county or states of your birth, go to the National Center for Health Statistics' website: <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/howto/w2w/w2welcom.htm> Locate the state where you were born and click on it and then you will be directed to information on how to apply for a certified original copy of your birth certificate in that state.

### **WILL I NEED TO TAKE MY BIRTH CERTIFICATE WITH ME WHEN I STUDY ABROAD?**

Yes! If your passport is lost or stolen while you are abroad, a birth certificate will prove your U.S. citizenship. It is strongly advised that every study abroad participant take an original birth certificate or an officially issued certified copy

### **WHILE TRAVELING WHERE SHOULD I KEEP THE PHOTOCOPY OF MY PASSPORT AND BIRTH CERTIFICATE?**

These important documents should be kept separate from your original passport and travel documents. It is recommended you pack them in a separate bag from the original documents while you are traveling. Once you settle into your accommodations at a study centre or with your host family, establish a safe place for your important travel documents in your room and do not carry them around with you.