

Posted April 23, 2013

### **Schengen Visa Information:**

Brit was in contact with the Norwegian Consulate in Houston on April 19. She states that obtaining a Schengen visa may be more problematic for some foreign students than originally anticipated, noting the following:

- Participants needing a Schengen visa must first look at their US visa situation; **if your US visa is not valid for at least 3 months after returning (i.e. until November 30), you need to apply for a new US visa first, then a Schengen visa second.** This is further explained below.
- Schengen visas are issued on the basis of the dates of our flights to and from the US. They can only be issued if the applicant has a valid US visa (usually F1 and I-20) for the time that they are returning to US. **In the case where students only have a valid student visa and a US visa for the school year of 2012/2013, they will have to apply for a new US visa for the school year of 2013/2014 before they can apply for Schengen visa.** If they have to exit USA to apply for a US visa, then **they will need to apply for a Schengen visa at the Norwegian Embassy/Consulate in the country they apply for the US visa** (e.g. they cannot apply for a Schengen visa at the Norwegian Consulate in Houston if they are from China).
- Applicants for a Schengen visa also need an I-20 card (provided by UT) that is valid through the time of return to US.
- The Schengen visa application is done online. All Schengen visas require an interview at an Embassy/Consulate. Scheduling of this interview is part of the online application process.
- Students will need proof of travel (ticket information) and accommodation (there will be no need for accommodation in Schengen) in order to apply for Schengen visa. As soon as we have the tickets ready, they will have the information they need for a Schengen visa. Once ticket information is available, **participants should book an interview at an Embassy/Consulate as soon as possible to complete the visa process on time.** It will take 2-3 weeks for a Schengen visa after the interview, during which time the applicant's passport will be with the Embassy; this is also important to consider.