Telemark University College
Faculty of Arts and Sciences

PRE-ARRIVAL GUIDE

for International Degree Students and Exchange Students

The Faculty of Arts and Sciences at Telemark University College in Bø welcomes students from all over the world. The mixture of people with different nationalities creates a positive, thriving and multi-cultural student community.



BØ, NORWAY

The following sections are intended to give practical information to help you with your preparations before you arrive and to give you an idea of what life as a student at the Faculty of Arts and Sciences in Bø will be like.

If you have any further questions that you don't find the answer to in this guide, please contact the International Office (see contact information below).

We hope that you will find our guide helpful.

Yours sincerely,
Lisa Hjelmeland and Anette Norheim Fredly
International coordinators

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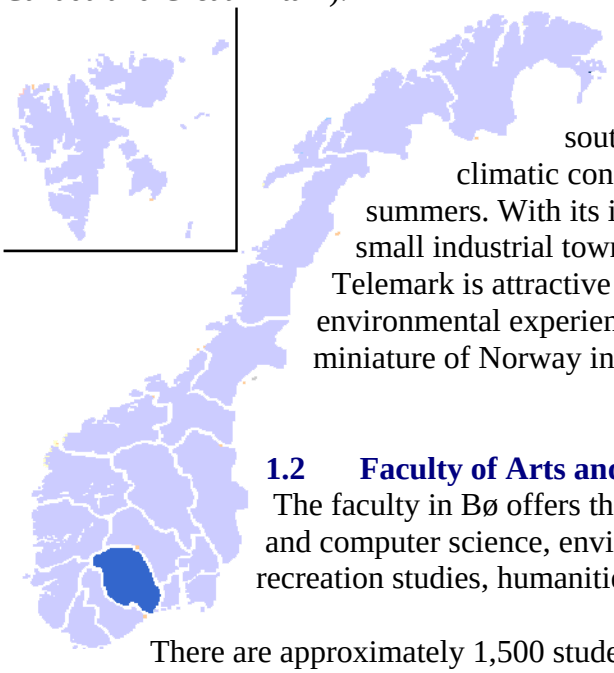
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1. GENERAL INFORMATION

1.1 Telemark University College

Telemark University College (or "Høgskolen i Telemark" in Norwegian) is a fully-accredited state college in Norway, with more than 4,500 full-time students and 500 faculty and staff. It offers a wide variety of study programs and degrees: one-semester courses, academic and professional degree programs, Bachelor and Master Degrees and Doctorate Programs.

Telemark University College participates in several European and international exchange agreements. The college is actively involved in programs such as Erasmus (European exchange), Nordplus (Nordic exchange) as well as several bi-lateral agreements (the USA, Canada and Great Britain).



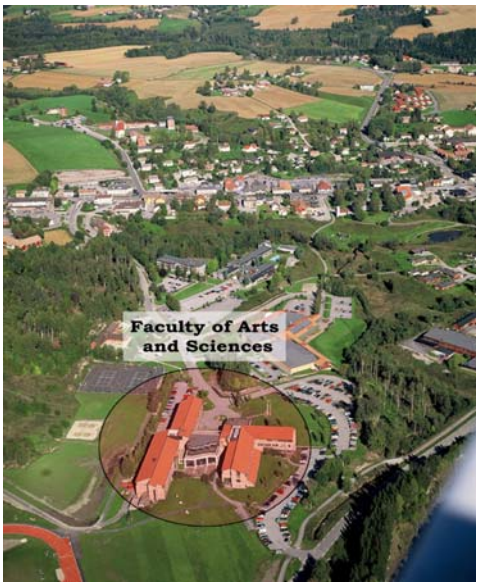
The college received its name from the area. Telemark is one of nineteen counties in Norway. It has a well-appointed location in southern Norway with varying seasons and climatic conditions offering snowy winters and sunny summers. With its idyllic coastline, beautiful rivers and canals, small industrial towns, gentle countryside and wild mountains, Telemark is attractive to international students seeking diversity in environmental experience. Local people often advertise Telemark as a miniature of Norway in terms of nature.

1.2 Faculty of Arts and Sciences in Bø

The faculty in Bø offers the following studies: business administration and computer science, environmental health, sports, outdoor-life and recreation studies, humanities and cultural studies.

There are approximately 1,500 students and 5,300 residents in the community.

The environment in Bø is unique in that it is a small student town, where many students from different parts of Norway come together. Because of the diversity present in Bø, you are guaranteed contact with Norwegian and international students in a variety of activities such as student associations, local film clubs, music clubs and a wide range of summer and winter sports.



The Bø campus of Telemark University College was originally founded in 1970 as Telemark District College. In 1994 the Bø campus and three other area colleges (Porsgrunn, Notodden and Rauland) were combined to form one university college.

1.3 International Office

The international office is responsible for the administration and coordination of international affairs at our college university. Our main area of work is mainly assisting international degree students and exchange students with the formalities concerning application, residence permit and study programs, and contact and cooperation between sending school and our faculty.

The international coordinators work closely with the student counsellor of the Telemark Student Association and the student pastor. Together we provide student support services, including practical information, organization of orientation week and coordination of the social programme.

The contacts for international degree students and exchange students are:

Lisa Hjelmeland (international coordinator for bilateral and degree seeking students)
E-mail: lisa.hjelmeland@hit.no
Work phone: +47 35 95 27 47
Fax: +47 35 95 26 01

Anette Norheim Fredly (international coordinator for Erasmus students)
E-mail: anette.n.fredly@hit.no
Work phone: +47 35 95 27 48
Fax: +47 36 95 26 01

The International Office is situated on the 3rd floor of the faculty building.
Address: International Office
Telemark University College
Faculty of Arts and Sciences
Halvard Eikas plass
3800 Bø
Norway

Office hours for students: Monday – Friday: 12.30-15.30

We try to help you as quick as possible, but please remember that the International Office is responsible for many students, so plan ahead if you have matters with deadlines.

1.4 Formal expectations and responsibilities of host institution

Telemark University College will:

- Provide relevant information of its current academic offerings
- Admit qualified students to relevant courses of study
- Approve the enrolment proposal
- Provide an orientation program
- Grant credit for work successfully completed
- Expeditiously provide to the home institution reports and statements of results, stamped and signed by the Academic Dean/International Coordinator. The final Transcript of Grades shows courses completed, credits earned and grades obtained.

Further:
Students who have received an enrolment proposal from the host institution must document approval of the proposal from their home institution.

Students must obtain agreement from their home faculty, that upon successful completion of the subjects at the host institution, full credit will be granted towards the degree at their home institution. The home institution will have responsibility for all matters concerning credit for courses taken. A student may undertake a clinical or practical assignment as part of an exchange program.

Each international student will be provided with the same academic resources and support service that are available to all students at the host institution.

Exchange students will be subject to rules and procedures as specified by the host institution for the academic period in which the student enrols. Students will be subject to similar prerequisites and performance in classes, rules and regulations of the host institution. Any breach of these rules will be dealt with in accordance with disciplinary policy of the host university.

Telemark University College shall satisfy itself that a candidate for exchange has the ability to meet all of her or his financial responsibilities as detailed above. For students who have not cleared personal debts, grades may be withheld.

2. BEFORE YOU ARRIVE

2.1 Important information



1. All Erasmus applicants must send an application form, academic transcript and a learning agreement prior to arrival.

2. Incoming exchange students must fill out a form to request student housing (prior to arrival).

3. Please e-mail arrival times (including flight number and airport: Gardermoen or Torp) to the International Office as soon as they are available.

4. The bus and train schedules often change in January. The International Office will post more travel information in December as new schedules are not available yet.

5. The International Office is closed due to Christmas holiday from December 23rd through January 1st. Most of Norway has summer holiday in the month of July and many offices are closed or have reduced opening hours. The International Office will have limited hours during this month.

2.2 Academic calendar and deadlines

	Fall semester 2007	Spring semester 2008
Deadline for Application	**Erasmus students: May 1st Other students: March 1st**	**Erasmus students: November 1st Other students: September 1st**
Arrival weekend	**Mid August**	**Early January**
Required orientation week	**Mid August**	**Early January**
Beginning of the semester	**Mid August**	**Early January**
End of semester	**Last exam mid December**	***Late May/early June***
Possible departure day	**Mid December**	***Late May/early June***

Detailed information about dates and deadlines will be sent out by e-mail prior to the application deadline.

2.3 Formalities

Residence permit (student visa):
The rules vary depending on where you come from and what kind of student you are. The International Office will send you detailed information regarding residence permit according to what kind of international student you are. The following information is therefore general, and you have to check closely the information that you will be sent by the international office.

Who needs a permit and what documents are required with the application?

EU/EEA citizens: An EU citizen can enter Norway with his or her ID document (passport). For a stay up to 3 months no legalization of stay will be necessary. For a stay exceeding 3 months the EU citizen will have to obtain a temporary residence permit. We do not offer any studies with duration shorter than 3 months. You are therefore required to apply for a residence permit, and you will do this upon arrival at Telemark University College. You have to bring two passport photographs, your passport and your European Union Insurance Card (former E111).

Non-EU/EEA citizens: A citizen of a non-EU country has to obtain the visa and residence permit from the consulate of Norway in his or her country of residence. Because of the long processing time, you are advised to apply for a visa **3-4 months before arrival in Norway**. Follow the instruction that you will get from the consulate.

Processing time for non-EU/EEA citizens

The residence permit can take 2-3 months to process. The student residence permits can come through right before departure. It is not uncommon to receive the papers from the consulate the same week you will be travelling to Norway. The immigration authorities have to process lots of requests during the summer. It is a busy time of the year for them.

How long is a residence permit issued for and how to apply for an extension?

The residence permit is issued for one semester or one year depending on your study program. If you have enrolled at a degree program of several years, you have to renew your permit every year. Please note that the police will assure that your study progress is acceptable before they grant you a new visa.

You may get an application form for seeking extension of your residence permit at the local Police Station.

Work permit:
Your permission to work is determined by the kind of residence permit you have entered Norway on. Please check this and see whether you are entitled to apply for a work permit. However, it's important to inform you that it will not be easy to get a part-time job in Bø, especially if you do not master the Norwegian language fluently. Bø is a small town, and there are not many jobs available. We also find it important to inform you that the studies will take a lot of your time, and it is not always advisable to get a part-time job as this may slow your study progress and hence give you trouble renewing your residence permit.

Civil registration number:
Students who are enrolled at minimum a one-year study will get a civil registration number upon arrival, after having registered at the police station. The International Office will organize the registration at the Police Station and the National Registry Office.

Taxation:
As an international degree student or exchange student working in Norway, you are generally not liable to tax on any student grants for study periods abroad. However, if you take a part time job while studying in Norway, tax is deducted if your income exceeds a certain amount per year. Please contact the local tax authorities in Norway for more information.

Moving back:
Before you move back to your home country, you must report this to the National Registry Office in your municipality. The office must receive your notification before you leave the country. You can acquire the relevant form from the National Registry Office in your municipality or from the International Office at Telemark University College. On the form you have to fill in your current address and the address you are moving to and the date you move.

3. ACCOMMODATION

3.1 Student dorms



The Student Association (SiTel) will provide students with housing in single rooms at one of the several co-educational student dorms. Students share facilities with other Norwegian students and international students near campus. Students cook their own food.

The same regulations will pertain to international students as to Norwegian students. All rooms have internet connections. Please note that there is limited telephone access from the dormitories. Most students bring along their own cellular/mobile phones, or purchase one after arrival.

All students have to apply for a room prior to their arrival. This is your responsibility and you apply electronically on the following website: http://www.boligtorget.no/sitel/english. Questions concerning housing and the application procedure should be directed to SiTel. Their e-mail address is sitel.bo@sitel.no; phone number 0047 35026200. When your application has been processed, you will get a housing contract in the mail before you arrive.

3.2 Costs



Estimated expenses:

- Semester registration fee: 400 - 700,- NOK (approx.)
- Housing per month: 2,600,- NOK (approx.)
- Food and leisure per month: 3,700,- NOK *
- Books and supplies: 2,500,- NOK (approx.)

* This may vary depending on personal spending habits.

Courses with mandatory field trips have additional expenses connected to travel and lodging. These vary from course to course. Please consult the study programs for more information.

In addition, please expect to pay for the following:

- Travel to and from the host institution
- Travel documentation, visa, etc.
- Personal travels and personal expenses (including travel insurance)
- Food
- Personal copying fees
- Membership in campus organizations
- Membership at local gyms or health studios
- Participation in community activities, classes or clubs
- Some mandatory day trips
- Optional trips

3.3 Methods of payment

Unfortunately, neither the University College nor the Student Association (SiTel) is able to accept Visa or Master Card. Rent and other expenses can be paid in cash or through the bank.

3.4 Kitchen equipment

The dorms are not equipped with kitchen utensils. Consequently **all students** must bring basic kitchen equipment with them or buy them after arrival.

3.5 Bedding and towels

Bedding (pillow, pillow cover, duvet, duvet cover and bottom sheet) can be purchased for a

small fee from SiTel (approx. 350,- NOK). You must bring your own towels or buy them after arrival.

4. INSURANCE

4.1 Health insurance coverage on planned transportation

The student is responsible for travel insurance coverage for travel to and from Norway and for optional trips within Norway or Europe. Mandatory study trips are covered by the Norwegian National Health Scheme or the European Health Insurance Card. This plan does not cover theft or lost items however. It can be wise to check whether student travel offices offer student discount on insurance.

4.2 Special needs for health and safety

All registered Telemark University College students may seek consultation from psychological, social and religious services provided by the college. Medical and dental services are available in the local health centre in Bø; students are covered for hospitalization according to the Norwegian National Health Scheme (a small patient's fee must be paid).

5. HOW TO GET TO BØ





5.1 Airplane

Norway has **two airports** in proximity to Bø which operate on an international scale:

1. Oslo Lufthavn (Oslo Airport), Gardermoen, Oslo

This airport is situated 1 hour by bus north of Oslo. This is the biggest airport in Norway, and has a great variety of arrival and departure opportunities. For more information in English, please visit their English website shown in the link below:
http://www.osl.no/index.asp?languagecode=9

2. Sandefjord Lufthavn (Sandefjord Airport), Torp, Sandefjord

This airport is situated in Southern Norway. It is a smaller airport and the access to and from the airport is more limited than if you travel by Oslo Lufthavn. But Sandefjord Lufthavn is closer to Bø and will give you a shorter travel time by bus. If you choose to travel by Sandefjord Lufthavn, you have to make sure that your flight corresponds with transportation to and from the airport. For more information in English, please visit their English website shown in the link below:
http://www.torp.no/?GUID={3xj8xwl2EtteNuKZrUpYe9ur}&ID=24&lang=en

It is very important that you don't put valuables such as ID-documents, school transcripts, your laptop or camera in your check-in luggage. Also make sure that you put name tags on every piece of check-in luggage. Please check

your airplane ticket with care. Some of the low-cost airplane companies charge a lot for the luggage.

5.2 From Airport to Bø

1. From Oslo Lufthavn (Oslo Airport), Gardermoen, Oslo (Code OSL)

Allow about 4 hours travel time.

By train:

You can take the airport train to "Oslo Sentralstasjon" (the central railway station). From here take the "Sørlandsbanen" to Bø railway station. Please check the following website for more travel information: www.nsb.no

By bus:

Take the SAS airport bus to "Oslo Bussterminal" (the central bus station). From there, there are two buses that can both get you to Bø.

1: The "Nor-Way Bus Express - Haukeliekspressen" bus.
For more travel information, please visit www.nor-way.no

2: The "Timekspressen" bus. For more travel information, please visit www.timekspressen.no. If you travel with the "Timekspressen" you have to change buses in Notodden. Your bus driver will help you.

2. From Torp Airport, Sandefjord (Code TRF)

If you take a plane to Torp Airport ***it is crucial that you know that this airport closes at 23.00 (Mondays-Fridays and Sundays) and at 22.30 (Saturdays), and does not open again until 06.30 in the morning.*** There are no hotels nearby. Torp is about 2,5 hours bus drive south of Bø.

If you fly into Torp you can take the "Nor-Way Bus Express - Telemarksekspressen" bus to Bø. For more travel information, please visit:
http://web2000.reiseinfo.no/Nor-way/Nor-way/Telemarkekspressen/

Please note that the "Timekspressen" bus is your only option if you plan to arrive Bø late on a Saturday. You must have an international student identification card if you want to get a discount on bus or train fairs within Norway prior to receiving your TUC identification card.

Travel information can also be found on http://www.rutebok.no

5.3 When I arrive in Bø

As mentioned above, it is vital that you arrive in Bø at the appointed arrival dates and times. During this period, an international coordinator or another representative from the college will meet you when you arrive in Bø.



It is essential that you e-mail your travel plans to the one of the international coordinators so we know when and how you will be arriving. They will take you to your

student dorm.

All paperwork and registration will be organized the very first days. Students will also receive a user name password as well as an introduction to the student computer network.

Please understand that by arriving late you miss out on valuable information and put our staff in a difficult position.

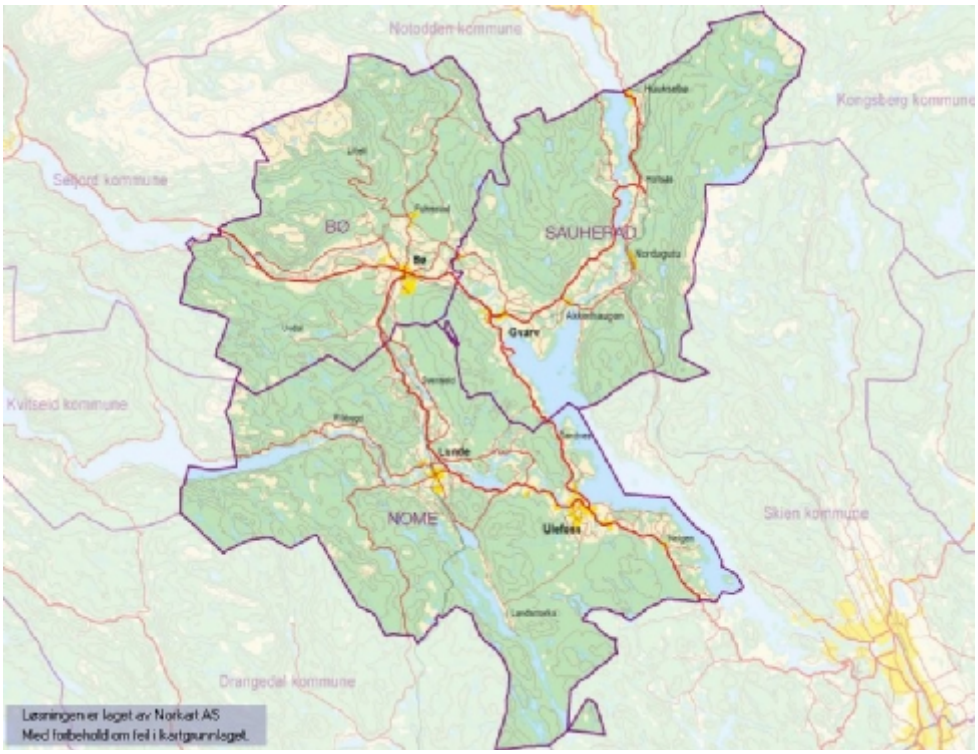
6. LIVING IN TELEMARK – NORWAY



Bø is situated in what the Norwegians call "Midt-Telemark" (in the middle of Telemark) which consists of three municipalities: Bø, Sauherad and Nome.



This is a very green and fertile part of Norway, and has a beautiful scenery with great variations and a diversity of flora and fauna that will offer you memorable experiences.



"Midt-Telemark" offers high mountains, great lakes, beautiful waterways, woods and farmland. You will find apple farms, cherry farms and vast fields where they cultivate grain and keep cows, pigs and sheep.



6.1 Climate

Bø has four seasons and each has its own distinctive stamp and charm.



Spring

March – April – May

Temperatures range from minus 5 C to plus 15 C, occasionally it may even snow in May



Summer

June – July – August

The weather varies from cold and rainy to warm and sunny, temperatures range from 10 - 25 C



Autumn

September – October – November

Temperatures range from plus 15 to minus 10 C



Winter

December – January – February

Temperatures range from minus 5 to minus 20, and there may be a lot of snow and ice

Late autumn and winter can be freezing in Norway. Remember to bring high quality outdoor clothing. There are shops in Bø offering a good selection of warm winter clothes, but prices are usually high.

For students staying with us for from August to December:

You will be journeying with us from the light and warm part of the year to the dark and cold part of the year. Fall in Telemark may often be a rainy season, but at the same time this is a very colourful time of the year; especially late August, September and the beginning of November. Trees and heather are coloured in sparkling red, orange and yellow.






The fall is also a time to enjoy what nature offers you of berries and fruit. The forests are abounding with bilberries, cowberries and mushrooms, and if you are lucky you may discover a patch of cloudberries while exploring the mountains.



November may seem a very long month to you. It is dark, cold, and snow has not yet lightened up the landscape. This is a good time to invite friends and neighbours to your place for coffee or tea and cake by candlelight. It is also a good time to get out and experience the weather. The trick to getting through the dark months is to great them wholeheartedly. Walk in the rain, and warm up with a hot shower and a cup of cocoa afterwards, enjoy the stars that come out at 17.00 in the afternoon. Discover how much a full moon can brighten up the fields you see from your window!

For students staying with us from January to June:

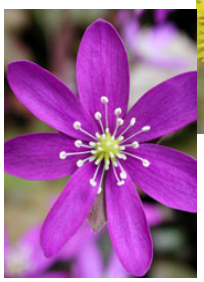


You will be journeying with us from the dark part of the year to the light part of the year. If you are lucky, the ground will be covered in sparkling snow for a good part of the time, at least until late March or early April. It can be bitterly cold, but if you go outside you will discover that snow is not white, but really a myriad of colours. If you go for a walk in the evening it may even look like you are walking through a field of diamonds. You can look forward to gaining a great sense of balance. The roads can be slippery, but you will soon learn how to “walk like a Norwegian”!



Winter is a time when everyone can play – snowball fights, sledding, skating, skiing and more. The trick to getting through the cold part of the year is to get outside and play, and then get inside and treat yourself to something warm. You will be surprised to wake up one morning and find everything intensely green, and you will wonder why you never get tired, even though it is passed midnight. The sun is an amazing thing! April and May are warmer and sunnier months. If you cast your eyes down you may discover that under the old, dead leaves the ground are covered in blue or yellow flowers (shown in the pictures) which are certain signs telling you that spring is here, and that summer awaits you just around the corner.





6.2 The locals



Foreigners tend to find the Norwegian as shy and reserved people. Like everywhere else, the locals are not a consistent group but different individuals with different backgrounds, vocations and interests.

But what they have in common is that they are very fond of nature, and during the weekends you will meet many Norwegians hiking in the mountains, taking walks in the woods, going to the beach in summer. Norwegians have a tradition to greet each other even though they don’t know each other in this context. They usually bring a thermos of coffee, build a small fire and grill sausages or eat their brought-along lunch-pack. This is a nice way of getting to know the local people. There is also a possibility to join local hiking groups.

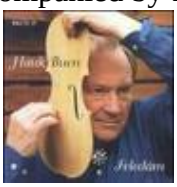


The best way to get to know Norwegians is to join group activities. There are all kinds of clubs to join at the college, from sports groups to choirs. It is also possible to get involved in the town through the Volunteer Office (Frivillighetssentralen). Many of our international students have volunteered here, and the response we get is that it has been a great experience and that they have had the opportunity to practice the Norwegian language and got to know the locals more closely.

If you are active, open-minded and interested in learning the Norwegian approach to life, you will find that Norwegians aren't so hard to get to know after all!



Bø is well-known both nationally and internationally for its folk music: fiddle, harmonica, accordion and traditional songs. This music can be accompanied by folk dance where the dancers wear traditional national costumes. In early August there is a great international festival in Bø which attracts famous folk musicians from all over the world.





However, if you are inclined to favour more modern music like jazz, pop and rock, you will find that Bø has a lot to offer here as well. Bø is famous for concerts given at Kroa (mentioned in more detail below).

6.3 Picture gallery











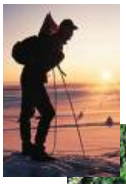



























6.4 Eating habits

Breakfast



Most Norwegians eat breakfast at home around seven o'clock, before going to work or school. In general they eat cereals with milk or yoghurt or slices of bread with butter and cheese, jam, ham, sausages among other things. They drink a glass of milk or juice and a cup of coffee or tea.

Lunch



Lunch is most often prepared at home in the morning. Lunch hour is around noon. Normally Norwegians pack some slices of wholegrain bread with butter and the aforementioned cheese, ham, etc., in a box or wrapped in special lunch paper. The cantina at the faculty is open and offer both cold and warm lunch.

Dinner



Locals prepare and eat dinner at home around four or five o'clock. Traditional Norwegian dinner consists of meat, potatoes, vegetables and sauce. However, global trends have influenced our small town, and Norwegians are fond of eating pizza, pasta, taco and wok and other dinners offered around the world. The local stores offer what you need to prepare most meals. The student cantina is open until four o'clock Monday through Thursday and two thirty on Fridays.

Evening meal



As you will see, we Norwegians are very fond of bread, so again this meal also very often consists of slices of bread with butter and various toppings. Or, as with breakfast traditions, we eat a bowl of cereals or yoghurt.

In Norway, the water is very fresh and clean, so we drink water from the tap. It's good, healthy and free!



6.5 Medical matters



You might feel more comfortable bringing medicines you recognize with you, rather than trying something new. Medicine and vitamins are expensive, and some things you may be used to buying in a grocery store are prescription drugs here. You can count on catching a cold while you are here. Bring along the cold medicine you prefer: nose spray, aspirin and maybe something for a cough. A change in diet can also be a shock to your system, so bring along some vitamins.

As mentioned above, students are covered by the Norwegian National Health Scheme while studying in Norway. European students must remember to bring your EU Health Insurance identity card with them. Medical services are available in the local health centre in Bø; students are covered for hospitalization according to the Norwegian National Health Scheme (a small patient's fee must be paid).



The health clinic in Bø

The health scheme does not cover visits to optometrists or dentists.

6.6 Electricity



Be sure to bring converter plugs that will fit Norwegian outlets. Norwegian appliances run on a 220 volt system.

6.7 Telephones and Internet



Each student dorm area has a pay telephone, but not individual telephones in the rooms. The pay phones normally require a special phone card which can be hard to get. Almost all Norwegians use mobile/cellular telephones. Be aware that not all foreign mobile/cellular phones will work here. Most students choose to buy their own Norwegian phone after arrival.



All computer labs at school have access to the internet. You will be given a student e-mail account after arrival. **Please note that after you are registered as a student here, all college information will be sent to your student e-mail account and not your private e-mails.** If you have your own computer, you will be able to access internet from your dorm room as well.

6.8 Costs of living in Norway

New international students often complain about the high prices of goods and services in Norway. Norway is an expensive country and it takes a while before one gets used to the high cost of living. The Norwegian Education Loan Fund specifies a minimum of approx. **NOK 8,200,-** per month in order to cover basic expenses. For students planning on getting a degree in Norway, you must be prepared to use a substantial amount of money for setting up your household and for buying suitable clothing for the Norwegian climate.

Some factors will however help to reduce you budget: international students are guaranteed student accommodation, a single room, through the Telemark Students' Association *(SiTel)*, the student welfare organization. Students under the age of 30 with a valid semester card are also entitled to reduced fares on public transport, including the airport train. Your student card also entitles you to certain discounts on opera, theatre and museum tickets.

You are advised to bring some Norwegian currency with you when you arrive in Norway or change money at the airport. **We recommend that you have at least NOK 800 in cash.** You will need to have money to pay for the bus or train to Bø. It will also make it easier for you during your first few days, especially if you happen to arrive during the weekend when banks and post offices are closed. It is also advisable to bring along money in the form of traveller's cheques, or to have an international credit card.

To give you an idea of the living expenses for a student in Norway, we have put together a modest budget for a semester: (figures are approximate)



- Housing NOK 8,000 – 14,000
- Food, toiletries and household supplies NOK 12,000
- Books & Supplies NOK 5,000
- Transportation NOK 2,000
- Other expenses NOK 8,000
- **Total for 5 months NOK 35,000 - 45,000**

Please note that personal expenses like clothes, medicines, dental care, leisure activities, etc, are not included in the budget.

7. CAMPUS LIFE







The Faculty of Arts and Sciences is located on Hallvard Eikas Plass. It is only 200 metres from Gullbring Civic Center, and just a short walk from the bus and train station. The faculty is in a modern building, with some lecture halls and all sports facilities located in Gullbring.

There is a student cafeteria on the first floor where you can buy warm and cold meals and drinks. The cafeteria is not open during the weekends. There is internet access in the cafeteria, so students often sit here and work.

SiTel, the Telemark Students' Association is also located here. Student life is more than subjects, lectures and examinations. Living conditions, finances, health and social companionship are important factors in making you fit in and enjoy. Your well-being at the College as well as off-campus contributes to a good and satisfactory learning environment. The Telemark Students' Association - SiTel - is the welfare organization for students at Telemark University College.

SiTel organizes student housing, nursery school and other social services for students. There is a student minister on campus, as well as a social worker. Sessions with the minister or social worker are free and confidential.



Students studying in the cafeteria



"Kroa", the student pub and activity centre



The municipal civic centre, Gullbring



Gullbring's swimming pool

8. PRACTICAL INFORMATION / FAQ

Frequently Asked Questions about studying in Telemark

8.1 Travel related questions



Which airport should I fly into?
Both Sandefjord Torp airport and Gardermoen (Oslo) airport are convenient. There are bus and train connections to Bø from these airports. Check this website for travel information: www.rutebok.no

Is it difficult to travel by train or bus?
Most Norwegians speak English very well. Do not hesitate to ask for help, especially at the various customer service centers. There are signs at the airport and train station in English to guide you in the right direction as well.

Will someone meet me at the train station in Bø?
Yes. An international coordinator or another representative from the college will meet you when you arrive in Bø. It is essential that you e-mail your travel plans to the program coordinator so we know when and how you will be arriving. They will take you to your student dorm.

What is Bø like?
There are about 5,300 inhabitants in Bø and about 1,500 students at the Faculty of Arts and Sciences. There are some popular cafes like Roxy and Meierismuget. There are also several restaurants. There is a health clinic, some dentists, clothing stores and food stores, and an Asian food store as well. Some shops carry organic foods and some foods for special dietary needs. This may be more expensive and limited than what you are used to.

8.2 Questions about student housing



Do most students live in student housing?
Over half of the students live in single room student housing but you may meet students that have apartments or that commute from other nearby towns.

How do the Norwegian dorms vary from dorms in other countries?
Each student room has a daybed, bookshelf, chair and desk. Most rooms have a private bathroom and shower. Usually groups of 4-6 share the kitchen area where students prepare their own meals. The dorms are located throughout the community, not on a campus. The dorms are co-educational.

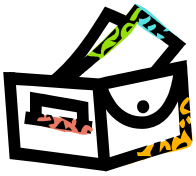
Are kitchen utensils provided?
The kitchens do not have utensils. Norwegian students usually bring the essentials from home as well as borrow from each other. You should bring some basics, like a little camping set,

just to get started. There are also several discount stores where you can buy some extra utensils if necessary.

Where can I wash clothes?
All the dorms have washers and dryers. Washing and drying is included in the program fee. Some students bring laundry bags and dryer sheets.

How can my family reach me?
Most students prefer to correspond with family and friends by e-mail. E-mail or Skype is free and efficient. We recommend bringing your own cellular phone. Make sure your phone will work when you are in Norway.

8.3 Questions about costs



Is Norway as expensive as I've heard?
Most foreign students find Norway to be quite expensive. Eating out at restaurants is costly. Items like alcohol and tobacco are highly taxed. Other products, like clothing, CDs and small appliances are reasonable when on sale.

What can I do to save money?
Students save money by buying and making their own food. Buy products like rice and spaghetti. They are inexpensive and last a long time. Make meals with your roommates and split the costs. Always ask for a student discount when travelling or visiting museums. Some clothing stores and hair salons even offer a student discount. Extra film, batteries and over-the-counter medication should be brought along. They are normally cheaper outside of Norway and do not take up a lot of space either. However, over-the-counter medication must not be sent by mail to Norway. It will be stopped at Customs and returned to place of origin.

Should I open a bank account in Bø?
Foreign students staying only for one semester will not be approved for opening a Norwegian bank account. Our current group of students chose to use their credit and ATM/debit cards from home. Check with your bank to see what they charge for using your ATM/debit or credit card abroad, and that you can use your card in Norway.

Can I work in Norway?
Finding work is usually difficult, especially if you are not fluent in Norwegian. The college does not have a work-study program. The International Office is not able to assist students in finding a job.

8.4 Insurance, Health and Safety



Should I have travel insurance?
Yes. Students should have a travel insurance that covers their trip to and from Norway as well as private trips taken within Norway/Europe. Student travel agencies may offer reduced prices. Check with your local insurance or travel agent.
Please note that you are personally responsible for your own things and valuables while in Norway. Your SiTel housing contract does not come with

insurance as far as private belongings are concerned. We recommend that you check out different insurance options in your home country before you leave. Maybe ask for advice from your home institution.

Are there any special precautions I should take while living in Bø?
Bø is a small and safe rural community. Students should take the same basic safety precautions as they would at home (locking doors and windows, not leaving valuables unattended, wearing seatbelts in cars and buses).

8.5 Clothing

Telemark is located in the south-eastern part of Norway and can offer some of the best climatic conditions in Norway. Each of the four seasons is distinctive in temperature, scenery and sunlight conditions. The need for preparation is likewise appropriate.

Summer may be warm and sunny, sometimes rainy, and the nights are light.
Fall may tend to be rainy, breezy, gray with less sun, but that varies from year to year. Autumn equinox is September 23rd. Winter is most often cold, snowy, windy and icy. Winter equinox: December 22nd. Spring may be both rainy and sunny, and again the nights are lighter.



Norwegians often say: *"Det finnes ikke dårlig vær, men bare dårlige klær!"* Freely translated: There is no such thing as bad weather, just bad clothing! Pictured are students from Mongolia, Sri Lanka, Ethiopia and The Philippines and China.

Bø is a very informal place! Students and staff tend to dress for comfort and to suit the season, rather than for fashion. You will almost never see anyone in a suit and tie.

If you are not able to bring along warm clothes from your home country, it is important to have enough money with you to buy suitable clothing for the different seasons.

What should I pack?

- Waterproof/windproof jacket: Gore-tex or similar fibres are recommended. Choose something sensible rather than fashionable. The jacket should be long enough to cover your hips. It should have a hood. Also try to be strategic, pack clothes that can be combined or layered.

- Woollens: sweater, scarves, gloves, hats, warm long underwear (wool)/tights. Fleece is also an option. We do NOT recommend polyester or nylon fabrics. These may make you sweat, but they do not keep you warm if you get wet.

- Good walking or hiking boots are a must, preferably waterproof warm boots with sturdy, broad soles and treads are very useful. If you are buying new shoes, it is a good idea to break them in prior to arrival. Avoid taking lots of specialty shoes. Try to find some types of shoes that are versatile (keep in mind that you may be walking more than usual).





- Walking sandals: Many students change from boots to "Birkenstock" style of sandal when they get to school. They often wear these with wool socks. Flip flops or soft clogs are also used. **Norwegians wear either socks, slippers or sandals when inside. Do not use your outdoor shoes inside houses!** There are lockers available at school where you can store boots, books, jacket, etc, while you are at class. Once again: fashion is not important, warmth and comfort is.

- As mentioned above, there are few formal occasions in Bø. It is usually enough for men to bring one nice pair of pants, button down shirt and a tie, and for women to bring one nice dress or skirt, possibly dress pants. However, Norwegians are fond of using their national costumes (weddings, religious occasions, graduation, etc). If you have a national costume you are most welcome to bring it and use it on the same occasions Norwegians wear their "bunad".

- A backpack that can be used for school and hiking trips is also a good idea. A sleeping bag (about 5 C) and sleeping pad may also come in handy. Rain gear or windbreakers are important. Rubber boots can be purchased here for a reasonable amount. Norwegian students wear very casual and sporty clothing. You may want to bring one nice outfit along.

Some other things to bring:

- Favourite recipes and measuring cups (especially recipes made from scratch because familiar brand name products may not always be found here)
- Information or pictures about your country hometown, state or area, also some information about your college or university
- If you use products for headaches, allergy or colds, it would be a good idea to bring them with you. Norwegian pharmacies have a very limited selection
- Motion sickness pills. The roads are curvy and sometimes it can be easy to get car/bus sick even if you don't normally get sick at home
- Cord for a digital camera/extra film for your camera or batteries
- Pens, pencils and other small school supplies
- Adapters for shavers, CD players, portable speakers, etc.
- A towel
- Small or foldable things (pictures, posters) to decorate dorm room.

8.6 Academic and Social Life

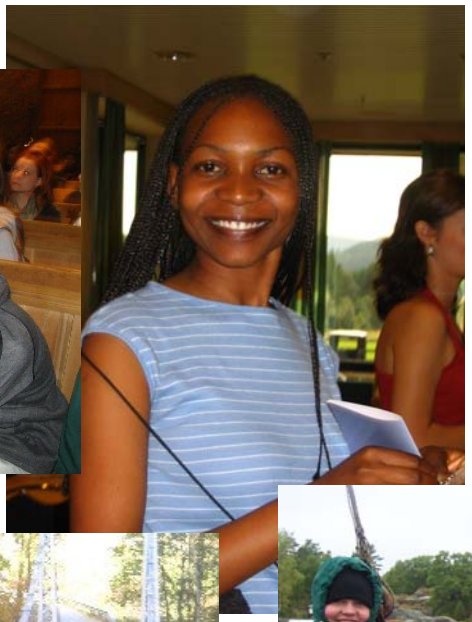
What will my week be like?

Your class schedule will depend on what kind of program you are following. No classes are scheduled between 12.30 and 15.30 on Wednesdays, as this is set aside for student club meetings. No classes are scheduled on Saturdays or Sundays, with the exception of trips for certain programs.

Exchange students will most likely find many of their classes scheduled throughout the week. It is common in Norwegian colleges and universities to have all lectures for one class on one

or two days, rather than spread over 5 days. Do not be surprised if you have a three hour lecture for one subject on Mondays, another three hour session for another subject on Tuesdays, possibly free on Wednesdays, then the rest of your subjects on Thursdays and Fridays. There is little chance you will have evening lectures.









What will my social life be like?

Well, this is entirely up to you! There are many opportunities both on and off campus to join group activities such as sports, choirs, hiking groups among other things. Bø is known for its student pub “Kroa”. There are dances here every Thursday, and top name artists give concerts on a regular basis. Kroa is student run. Volunteering at Kroa is a great way to make friends and experience Norwegian student life first hand.

If your social life has centred on going out with friends, visiting cafés, going to the movies and such you will find that Norway is expensive. Norwegians like to do things together – this can be renting a film and making pizza together, making a picnic for a hike together, or just meeting at each others rooms to “hang out”. If you are invited to dinner you can ask if you can “bring something along”. If your host or hostess says yes, then they mean yes. Perhaps they will suggest that you provide a salad or dessert. If they say no, then they mean no, but perhaps you can invite them to your place some other time for cake and coffee.

The key to find friends is to be patient, practice the language, and to join in common activities.

What kind of religion is there in Norway?
Norway has a state church; the Lutheran Church, which is represented in all communities. In Bø we have the Lutheran Church and the Pentacostal Church. Other denominations are represented in bigger cities but not in our small community.
Do Bø offer any sport facilities?
Gullbring Civic Center, which is located close to the campus, has a wonderful swimming pool, sports hall, climbing wall and movie theatre. The centre is administered and owned by Bø municipality. Students may use the facilities at Gullbring for a fee. Contact the reception to get discount for students. There are other sport facilities in Bø as well, and many well-organized clubs to join both on and off campus.

8.7 Gifts



All cultures have traditions for giving and receiving gifts. It is common in Norway to give gifts to family members at Christmas time and on birthdays and confirmations. People may give a plant or some small token, like candles, the first time they visit someone. But this is not a general rule. Each year new students coming to the international office bring gifts to the employees. This is a very kind gesture. However, **public employees are not allowed to receive gifts.** Save these for the new friends you will be making during the year.

9. LINKS

Official link to Norway:
http://norway.com

Travelling in Telemark:
http://portal.telemarkreiser.no/eng/vinter.asp

http://www.visittelemark.no/

http://www.telemarkskanalen.no/

http://travelguide.osl.no/

Information about Telemark:
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/telemark

