Course 2: While You’re There

Practical Information
# Table of Contents

## About This Manual

### I: Module 1: While You’re Abroad

A. Decide what You Want to Accomplish

B. Understand the Importance of Journaling

C. Reevaluate Your Reasons for Studying Abroad

D. Reflect on Your Experience So Far

E. Discuss Frequently Asked Questions with Your Family

### II: Module 2: Logistical Issues Abroad

A. Keep Your Documents Safe

B. Manage Your Money while Abroad

C. Projected Spending

D. Communication While Abroad

E. Find Out about Academic Credit for Study Abroad

### II: Module 3: Cultural Adjustment Tools and Issues

A. Culture – The Hidden Dimension

B. Learn about Stages of Adjustment

C. Culture Shock

D. Understand Gender as Part of Cultural Adaptation

### IV: Module 4: Diversity Abroad

A. How to Deal with Special Challenges Overseas

B. Learn the Difference between Generalizations & Stereotypes

C. Prepare for the Challenges of Diversity

### V: Module 5: Language Learning

A. Discover Reasons to Learn a Language

B. Language Use and Study Tips

C. Language Strategies Checklist

D. Learn what to Do about Language Fatigue

### VI: Module 6: Health And Safety

A. Review Your Program’s Health and Safety Practices

B. Do Your Part to Stay Healthy and Safe

C. Your Plan to Stay Healthy while Abroad

D. Review the Top Ten Tips

E. Share with Your Parents, Guardians, and Significant Others

F. Consider Your Mental Health and Medications

G. Learn about Insurance

H. Know the Risk Involved in Your Activities Abroad

I. Learn the Value of Acting like a Local

J. Know Your Resources for Road Safety

K. Safe Housing While Abroad

L. Learn about Avoiding Crime Abroad

M. Top Ten Ways to Not Become a Victim of Crime around the World

N. Avoiding Legal Trouble Abroad

O. Drug Issues in Your Host Country

P. Be Prepared for Crisis Abroad

Q. Crisis Management

R. Research the Crisis Questions

S. Complete Emergency Card & Personal Emergency Action Plan

### VII: Module 7: Planning for the Return Home

A. Capture the Memories and Keep in Touch

B. Find Out why Saying Goodbye is Important

C. Learn about Duties and Customs Regulations

D. Get Re-Entry Tips

E. Reflecting on Going Home

F. Welcome Home Tips

G. Evaluate Your Experience

H. Congratulations on Completing Course 2

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*Exercise page*
Congratulations! Through participating in study abroad, you have embarked on an experience that will enrich your life well beyond the length of your program. Taking these courses will help you make the most of your experience abroad! The intention of the Global Scholar Online Courses, developed by The Center for Global Education, is to introduce students to the opportunities and challenges inherent in participating in study abroad programs. You will benefit from the course by finding out how to cope with challenges that may arise while you’re abroad, how to make the most of your study abroad experience while you’re there, tips for dealing with issues that may arise after your return home and advice on where you can go from here personally and in your career preparation. The courses provide you the opportunity for cross-cultural learning, making better sense of your experiences abroad, and further refining your skills in cross-cultural observation, adaptation, and communication.

Directions: This course includes information from students who have studied abroad, the staff who work with them in the U.S. and abroad, faculty who teach students abroad, and researchers in the field who have developed materials to help students through the process. Many of the topics dealt with are practical in nature, but theoretical and conceptual issues will also be explored. Course 2: While You’re There is for students who are already on their study abroad program. The course is structured for you to take individually or as part of your program through your host institution or home institution during your time abroad. You will be asked throughout the course to complete exercises and answer questions directly in this packet that will help you learn and make the most of your experience. You may be required to submit your exercises for credit, depending on your program.

We encourage you to keep a journal while you are abroad to record your thoughts, observations, and learnings. Keep any letters or postcards you receive, and ask your family and friends to keep copies of letters they receive from you. In later modules, you will be asked to review some of these materials to get a sense of how you have changed and what things you have learned.

Once you return home, you should complete Course 3: Once You Return to help you with your re-entry process.

Along with content developed by the Center, we have shared some of the best material in the field, including resources from What's Up With Culture? School of International Studies, University of the Pacific, Bruce La Brack, ed. (2003), funded by FIPSE, U.S. Department of Education; and Maximizing Study Abroad: A Students' Guide to Strategies for Language and Culture Learning and Use by Paige, R. M., Cohen, A. D., Lassegard, J., Chi, J. C., & Kappler, B. (2002) with permission from the Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition (CARLA) at the University of Minnesota. We hope that you delve deeper into these and other materials as you go through the courses and continue your journey towards becoming a Global Scholar.

Course 2:

There are 7 modules for this course which respond to different needs you may have depending on where you are in your program. Typically, the first six modules are completed in the first few weeks of being abroad and the last module is completed in the final weeks before returning home.

Module 1: While You’re Abroad
This first module is your introduction to the course and helps you reevaluate your goals for studying abroad.

Module 2: Logistical Issues While Abroad
This module discusses logistical issues you may have encountered while abroad thus far. While you may have already taken care of some of them prior to your departure, if you have not, the module will discuss what you can do to take care of things now. Topics include communication from abroad and managing your budget while abroad.

Module 3: Module 3: Cultural Adjustment Tools and Issues
This module analyzes culture, discusses intercultural competence, and examines differences and similarities in cultures, values, communication, and identities.

Module 4: Diversity Abroad
Resources for diversity are provided, discrimination and stereotypes are discussed, and special logistical challenges are addressed.

Module 5: Language Learning
This module addresses linguistic issues in general, including tips for learning another language.

Module 6: Health and Safety
This module prepares you for health and safety challenges you may encounter abroad. At the completion of the module, you will have made your own crisis management plan to follow while abroad.

Module 7: Planning for the Return Home
This module begins to prepare you for your return to the U.S., including information on immigration and customs, coping with reverse culture shock, and maximizing the academic, professional, and personal benefits of the study abroad experience. Your experience abroad has provided you with valuable knowledge and skills which you can use to educate others and make a difference in your larger community. In this module, you will learn about how to be a mentor to students thinking about studying abroad and your community at large.
Module 1: While You're Abroad

A. Decide what You Want to Accomplish

What do you want to accomplish while you are here? Think about your own ethnicity and heritage and what special reasons you may have to study abroad. Write below at least two paragraphs outlining how you want your study abroad experience to personally affect you in terms of personal growth, global awareness, and diversity.

My Goal:

Think about what actions you can take to achieve your goal. List five to ten actions you want to take while still abroad. Be realistic. Depending on how much time you have, you may not get to all of them!

Actions to Achieve My Goals:

1. 
2. 
3. 
4. 
5. 
6. 
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10.

B. Understand the Importance of Journaling

It's important to keep a record of your experience. While you can't record everything in your journal, you should make an effort to write in it at least a few times per week to capture your impressions and feelings about things as they happen. Your journal will be a valuable resource for you not only in your mentorship, but also in your reflecting on your experience once you return home.

One of the things many travelers regret most upon their return is that they neglected to keep a journal while they were abroad. Keeping a journal is one of the most valuable and relatively painless activities you can do to enhance your experience. No matter how amazing and unforgettable your experience abroad may seem, it doesn't take long before your memories begin to fade. Who was that guy on the bus in Thailand? What was the name of that quaint town near Paris? Keeping a journal can not only help you remember the details of your experience, but it can help you process and learn the most from it.

Tips to keep journaling fun and easy:

- Number your pages and divide into sections early on.
- Decide which section you probably will be writing in more than others, and then divide the rest of the journal somewhat equally among the others.
• Make it your own: tape memorabilia to the cover or inside, and attach articles, photographs, or other special moments.
• Try to write at least one entry every day.
• Carry about a little notebook to write things down that you want to remember - names, places, quotes, and descriptive words as they come to mind - and transfer them later into your Impressions section.

(Taken from Maximizing Study Abroad: A Students' Guide to Strategies for Language and Culture Learning and Use, p. 119-23.)

C. Reevaluate Your Reasons for Studying Abroad

Review the Top Ten Reasons For Study Abroad below. As you read through the list, reflect on your reasons for going abroad. Has your experience thus far supported those reasons? Now that you have first-hand knowledge about study abroad, are there any reasons for study abroad that you would add or replace? If so, use the space below each point to revise the list.

Top Ten Reasons to Study Abroad

1. Studying abroad is a life-altering experience!
   Studying and living in a different culture will help you see the world from a completely different perspective. It’s an amazing experience that will change your life.
   My reason:

2. Learn about yourself and gain independence.
   Studying abroad is a chance to challenge yourself with situations that will test your abilities to adapt and learn. You may even find yourself questioning some of your most long-held beliefs.
   My reason:

3. Gain perspective on your own country and culture.
   Studying abroad is a chance to step outside of the ordinary and experience a culture completely different from your own. Many students return amazed that while studying abroad they learned just as much about the United States and its culture as they did about life in their host country.
   My reason:

4. Learn a language in the country where it is spoken.
   The only way to truly become fluent in a language is to be immersed in it. If you've studied a language for several years and want to gain fluency, study abroad. If you haven't studied languages at all, don't worry - almost half of all Study Abroad programs don't require any foreign language before you go abroad.
   My reason:

5. Resume builder.
   In today's global economy, study abroad can be a vital element in a college education. Many companies increasingly desire leaders who can live successfully in a variety of countries and work with staff from different cultural backgrounds.
   My reason:

6. Programs work with any academic program.
   Study Abroad programs run on a variety of time frames (year, semester, summer, May term or winter break), meaning a student can fit a study abroad experience into their academic schedule and gain credit toward their major, a minor, language requirements, and to enhance learning.
   My reason:

7. Experience unique academic structures.
   Studying abroad offers you the opportunity to escape the monotony of lectures. Do your biology research in Costa Rica or a business internship for a Japanese railroad company; intern with the British Parliament, or design your own academic fieldwork project in the country of your choice.
   My reason:
8. See the world (or at least a part of it).
Most people travel for a week or two each year if they’re lucky! Study abroad students can spend a longer amount of time away and get to know a place better than the average tourist. This provides the opportunity to delve deeper into cultures, ask in-depth questions, and contemplate the significance of those places.

My reason:

9. Make connections that can last a lifetime.
You’ll network with fellow students, teachers, host families and professionals. Remember, often your best opportunities will come from who you know.

My reason:

10. International travel and study are fun and exciting.
Well, you knew that.

My reason:

More Reasons:

• You’ve studied a foreign language and now want the chance to really put it to use and perfect it in its natural setting.
• You’ve been learning history, economics, literature and current events all from the perspective of the U.S. and want to broaden your horizons by learning how other people look at the world.
• You feel a call to adventure, a need to branch out on your own, to be independent and enjoy all the rewards and responsibilities that go with that.
• You have friends who’ve done it before you and they had a great time, so you want to discover what you’re missing.
• You’re tired of city life and want to try the country, or you’re sick of the country and want to give the city a go. Your parents aren’t planning to move, so go abroad and find the setting you’re after.
• You’re interested in some sport or hobby for which a certain country is famous and you want to be a part of their tradition.
• You studied Ancient Roman History and now want to see the Coliseum in person!
• You’ll have to manage your money, your coursework, your time better than you’ve ever had to before, in a strange and often stressful environment. This can lead to dramatic improvement in these skills when you return home.
• You’ll have to create a whole new social network in the new country - something that requires great communication skills in general, not to mention in a foreign language. Great communication skills are essential in most jobs, so having them makes you that much more employable.
• Managing culture shock demands patience, tolerance, a sense of humor, and the ability to press on despite failure. All of these make for a more mature, more confident post-study abroad individual. These traits will be evident in your dealings with other people, especially potential employers.
• Relations between the U.S. and all other countries of the world rely on knowledgeable people who can speak from the perspective of having lived abroad. Prejudice and ignorance are some of the biggest problems standing in the way of a better understanding between two countries’ peoples, and you will be a force for breaking down this barrier.

Finally, Brad Olsen, author of World Stompers, lists several of the negative traits you can expect to overcome in traveling abroad as well:

• Neurotic tendencies and hang-ups
• Inability to be assertive or confrontational
• Shyness
• Western society’s short-sighted goals on an individual’s future
• Reliance on other people
• Despair
• Prejudice
• Attitude problems
• Poor money management skills
• Fear of the unknown

(Adapted from University of Wisconsin-Madison International Academic Programs: Top Ten Reasons to Study Abroad.)
D. Reflect on Your Experience So Far

Reflect on your overseas experience so far. Read through your journal or correspondence you've had with those back home - are there any things you write about that stand out for you as particularly positive or challenging?

Write two to three paragraphs below about your experience in general, and any positive or challenging situations you've experienced in particular.

My Experience So Far:

E. Discuss Frequently Asked Questions with Your Family

Your parents/guardians, other family members, and friends have an important role to play, and, as such, must be involved in your planning and preparation as much as possible!

First read the following Recommendations to Parents/Guardians/Families below about the role they will play in helping you make plans for study abroad. Give your family and friends copies. Email the recommendations to your parents if appropriate.

Recommendations to Parents/Guardians/Families:

In study abroad, as in other settings, parents, guardians, and families can play an important role in the health and safety of participants by helping them make decisions and by influencing their behavior overseas.

Parents/guardians/families should:

- Be informed about and involved in the decision of the participant to enroll in a particular program.
- Obtain and carefully evaluate participant program materials, as well as related health, safety, and security information.
- Discuss with the participant any of his/her travel plans and activities that may be independent of the study abroad program.
- Engage the participant in a thorough discussion of safety and behavior issues, insurance needs, and emergency procedures related to living abroad.
- Be responsive to requests from the program sponsor for information regarding the participant.
- Keep in touch with the participant.
- Be aware that the participant, rather than the program, may most appropriately provide some information.

To find out more about study abroad questions and concerns of students and their parents, please visit http://www.allabroad.us/. The site has questions for parents en Español as well!

(Taken from Responsible Study Abroad: Good Practices for Health & Safety by the Interorganizational Task Force on Safety and Responsibility in Study Abroad, NAFSA: Association of International Educators.)
A. Keep Your Documents Safe

Read the information below about keeping your travel documents safe while abroad. If you have not done so already, make copies of all important documents and keep them in a safe place, separate from your original travel documents. This will help you to replace them more easily, should they be lost, stolen, or destroyed.

Here's a short list of items that you should make copies of. Each document you make a copy of, check the box until all boxes are checked (except for the International Driver's License if you do not get one):

- Passport
- Plane Tickets
- International Student ID Card
- International Driver's License
- Insurance Card
- Emergency Card Information
- ATM Cards, Credit Cards (make sure you have the proper phone numbers to call from overseas if your cards are lost or stolen, as these are sometimes different from the numbers you would use domestically), and Traveler's Checks (keep track of the amounts and what you need to know in the event they are lost)

Keeping your Travel Documents Safe

1. **Passport**: The most important thing to remember is to always keep your passport in a safe place!
   a. Never leave your passport in your baggage, backpack, purse, car, or anywhere else! When you must carry your passport, keep it in a money belt or an inside coat pocket.
   b. Never lay your passport down anywhere. Form the habit of immediately putting your passport away after using it.
   c. Sometimes despite your best efforts, your passport can be lost or stolen. If this happens, report the loss to local police; get written confirmation of the police report, and contact the nearest U.S. Consulate [http://www.usembassy.gov/](http://www.usembassy.gov/) to apply for a new passport.
   d. Most importantly, keep a photocopy of your passport in a safe place separate from the original document in case the original is lost or stolen. This will help expedite the process to receive a new passport.

2. **Your Tickets**: Make a photocopy of your plane ticket or list its number and all flights along with the name and address of the agency that issued it. Keep this information separate from your ticket.

3. **International Student ID card**: If you haven't already, you should consider purchasing an International Student ID Card (such as ISIC [http://isic.org/home.aspx](http://isic.org/home.aspx)). They can provide discounts, help verify your travel purposes, and sometimes include a limited amount of insurance and 24-hour assistance. You can purchase them abroad as well. Once you purchase the card, make a copy to keep in a safe place.

B. Manage Your Money while Abroad

First read the article below on money-management principles:

**What are Some Good General Money-Management Principles?**

These things should all be started well in advance of your planned trip abroad.
• Be conscious of your spending. Ask yourself in every case if you really need what you are about to purchase, or whether you would rather have the cash for your trip.

• Learn some shorthand tricks to converting the foreign currency into U.S. dollar equivalents so you aren't fooled into believing you are spending less than in fact you are.

• Set yourself a weekly budget and stick to it (making sure that it will last you for all the weeks you will be abroad, of course).

• Find out how and where the locals shop for food and other essentials. You will usually save a small fortune compared to buying at the tourist trap shops and restaurants. It will also build upon your experience of the host country's culture. If the locals bargain when making their purchases, be sure you do too.

• Keep an eye out for student discounts and try wherever you can to use your student ID card for reduced prices (especially effective for airfare, museums, and some accommodation). Research beforehand if the ISIC card is useful in the country you will be going to or if you need local student IDs to get student discounts.

• Limit the amount you bring to clubs and pubs. You may have less luxurious nights out, but you will have more of them. If you bring 50 Euros to a pub, you will find a way to spend it, whereas if you bring 15 euro (or another non-U.S. currency), you will only spend 15.

• If you need to purchase books for a university, try to get them second hand. As you gain experience with this cost-saving method, try to apply it to more of your purchases.

• Save your souvenir buying until the end of your stay; you'll have a better idea of what a good memento is then and will know how much you can get away with spending and still make it home.

• And, finally, ask the locals: where to eat, where to shop, where to go out to, etc. They can save you the hassle and expense of figuring out for yourself where the cheapest places are.

Second check out to the resource Costs: from the Study Abroad Handbook by Bill Hoffa, http://www.studyabroad.com/guides/parentsguide/questions.html. It covers financial aid, budgets, currency exchange, credit cards, etc. and will give you additional information on money.

Money Management Questions

Do some research and use the space below to answer each question:

1. What is the best way to access money in your host country? Do you have to pay a transaction fee for converting money or withdrawing from an ATM? Are your credit cards widely accepted in your new home?

2. Are student discounts widely available? What sort of proof do you need to receive them?

3. What is the current exchange rate with the U.S. dollar? How stable is the exchange rate?

4. What is the average cost of living in your host country? (e.g. How much does an average lunch cost?) What is/should your weekly budget be?

5. Where do locals shop, eat out, and find entertainment?

Third read the article below on spending money:

Spending Money

What are the best ways to carry money abroad (and what are the relative strengths of each)? There are basically 4 options: in cash, in an ATM card, in credit cards, and as traveler's checks. Each has its advantages and disadvantages and in fact may be most effective used together for the expenses most appropriate to each. List on the next page the Pro's and Con's you have found by using these different methods.
### Spending Money

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pro's</th>
<th>Con's</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cash</td>
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<tr>
<td>ATM (Debit) Card</td>
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<tr>
<td>Traveler's Checks</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Credit Cards</td>
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</table>

Fourth, go to the “Money Management While Abroad,” [http://www4.uwm.edu/cie/students/134/](http://www4.uwm.edu/cie/students/134/), article from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee for more information.

Fifth, read the article below on currency exchange:

**How does Currency Exchange Work?**

Practically every country has its own, unique currency. The value of this is determined usually by market demand in much the same way as the prices of stocks are determined. Usually students obtain local currency in a host country in one of three ways: exchanging traveler's checks, exchanging cash, or making an ATM withdrawal. The first two methods offer varying rates and shopping around for the bank or currency exchange store (*bureau de change*) with the most favorable one is a wise move. Many of these places display their rates in the window, and you can almost always find ones that do not charge a commission when you trade money, which is a good thing!

### C. Projected Spending

Now that you have learned about ways manage your money and pay for goods, now you can establish your own budget. Take some time to plan how much you can spend while abroad and make sure you have the funds to support it. Use the chart below to help your budget planning:

#### Budget for Study Abroad

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<tr>
<th>$Project$ Projected Spending $</th>
<th>$ U.S. Dollars</th>
<th>Foreign Currency</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Books &amp; Supplies:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Rent:</strong> (if not in campus housing)</td>
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<td><strong>Utilities:</strong> (if not in campus housing)</td>
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<td><strong>Food:</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Clothes:</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Entertainment:</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Travel:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Phone/Internet:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Other:</strong></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
D. Communication While Abroad

First read about some of your options for communication from abroad below.

1. If you don’t already have this information, ask if your program has a 24-hour communication contact person both abroad and in the U.S. Make sure you know who this person is and how to reach them!

2. Make sure you know how to dial properly! Do you know how to dial the U.S. to reach those at home? What about dialing important telephone numbers in case of an emergency?

3. Verify the number abroad where you can be reached and instruct your family and friends on how to dial the number properly. You must know the telephone country and city code for your host country and city as well as the proper way to dial (for example, in some countries, dialing cell phone numbers require a different format from abroad than from in-country). To look up country and city codes online go here http://www.usa.att.com/traveler/services/codes/index.jsp. You should get the country and city codes for any places you may travel to as well.

Communication Options from Abroad

• Telephone: It’s important to know the telephone numbers for the program administration abroad and in the U.S. both during business hours and in case of an emergency. It is also important to know if a regular telephone number will be provided to you while abroad, and if that number will be assigned to you before leaving the U.S. The sample Emergency Card (below) includes phone numbers you should have available at all times. Make sure you know how to dial the U.S. from abroad!

![Student Emergency Information Card](image)

• International Calling Cards: The most reasonable way to communicate between your host country and the U.S. may be through the use of an international calling card, available through companies like AT&T, Sprint, etc. You can also purchase calling cards abroad. The ISIC card, http://www.isiconnect.ekit.com/ekit/home/ also has a calling card option for emergency situations. Check the rates and plans for the calling card that best suits your needs.

• Cellular Phone: Cellular phones have become more common and less expensive around the world but can still be very pricey if you’re trying to make an international call. Some multi-band phones that can be used in the U.S. can also be used abroad. Find out if your program presents you with a cell phone for emergencies as some, especially those in developing countries, now do. You can also check with your U.S. cellular provider to see if your phone will work abroad. Often this involves replacing your SIM card with that of a service provider in your destination country. Most countries will have companies that you can rent or purchase a phone from as well. If your friend can receive text messages on their phone, sending a text may be the best and least expensive way to keep in touch from abroad. A simple call me text and having them call you can save you a fortune.

• Fax: The program offices in the U.S. and abroad may have a fax machine available for communication incase phoning is not possible.
• Satellite Phone: Although still a very expensive alternative to regular or cell phones, satellite phones may be an effective method of communication in parts of the world where communication is difficult, or in the case of emergencies. This option works best in extremely remote areas.

• Wireless/PDA Device: Personal Data Assistants or PDAs, Palm, Visor, Blackberry, and other wireless communication devices may be another way to communicate while abroad. You will need to ensure that the device you purchase in the U.S. will work while you are abroad - check with your current service provider to see what your options are.

• E-Mail: Probably the least expensive and easiest method of communication for people in different time zones is e-mail. It is a good idea for students to get an internationally accessible and free e-mail account address. Prior to departure, give family and friends your e-mail address so that they know how to contact you.

• Internet Calling: This is a relatively new option for calling internationally via the internet. You will need a computer with an internet connection, a speaker, and a microphone for Skype. Skype also offers the option of purchasing hardware to improve the connection quality and using a regular phone handset. Vonage requires you to purchase their hardware which you use with a regular phone handset connected to the internet.

• Video Conferencing, Chatting, and Instant Messaging: These free options are quickly gaining popularity among students. You will need a computer with a fast internet connection and a camera (for video conferencing), or a speaker and microphone (for chatting), or you can stick with just instant messaging if you only have the internet connection. Some popular sites include: Skype, AOL Instant Messenger, MSN Messenger, Yahoo Messenger, Google Talk.

• Mail: Regular or Express: Postcards and letters are still an important and inexpensive method of communication. For those documents that need to get there faster, there are many companies that provide fast international mail delivery (U.S. Post Office, FedEx, DHL, etc.). It is important to find out the mailing address for both the program administrative offices in the U.S. and abroad, as well as the mailing address for students (housing and administrative office when available) before you go abroad. The national mail system of other countries may not be as fast as the U.S. mail service, so allow for extra time when mailing internationally.

• Voting: You may want to register to vote in U.S. elections while you are abroad. You can obtain absentee ballots abroad through your consulate or embassy. You can also contact your local board of elections officials.

However you choose to communicate, do remember that you are abroad and should be spending time exploring your surroundings and getting to know new people, not just keeping in touch with those back home!

E. Find Out about Academic Credit for Study Abroad

The last thing you want to find out when you return from your time abroad is that the courses you took do not count towards your graduation credits! Read the following to make sure this doesn’t happen to you.

It’s essential to get approval in advance - and in writing. This may be done routinely on your campus or you may need to take an active role in getting approval for your study abroad program. Most colleges and universities only accept credit from programs they authorize in advance. In fact, if you’re receiving financial aid of any kind, pre-approval is required. Find out if your campus has a procedure (or a requirement) for arranging pre-approval of the academic work you intend to take abroad. A study abroad advisor is the best source of help in this process. If your school doesn’t have one, check with your registrar, faculty advisor, dean or admissions officer.

These are the questions to ask:

What can I earn credit for?

This varies from institution to institution and obviously depends on the level and quality of your overseas courses. Once pre-approval is given, this should make it clear if your overseas course work counts toward your academic major, or minor; or toward curricular electives; or simply as general degree credit. Be sure to find out before you leave where your credits fit in your domestic requirements for graduation.

Ask if your school requires that you take a minimum course load in order to qualify for credit - it usually does. If courses at your host institution use a different credit system, be certain that your course load meets the minimum credit requirements at your home institution. Be careful to check if the courses you take abroad will be accepted by a department at your home university/college or even if a similar department exists at your home institution. For example, you may wish to take a 'religious studies' course at the host institution. If your home institution does not have a 'religious studies' department then you may not be able to receive credit for the course. Be sure to check on course approval especially if you change your course selection after you arrive abroad and haven't been able to seek pre-approval for the course.

What kind of documentation do I need to have a course approved?

If you enrolled in a program offered by your home university, the description in the course catalog will probably be all your advisor (or registrar or dean) needs to approve it. If, however, you are on a program offered by another U.S. university, you may need more in order to earn transfer credit - credit transferred from another school to your home university.

Your study abroad advisor may request all or some of the following before you are pre-approved for transferable credit.

• The number of contact hours of the program: hours spent in lectures, labs, field work, etc.
• The course format.
• Course outline and reading list.
• Information on the level of the course.
• The academic credentials of the teaching faculty.
• Method of course assessment (exams, essays, projects, etc.).
• The grading system (ABCDF, numerical scale etc.) and the lowest passing grade.
A. Culture – The Hidden Dimension

One of first things you’ll encounter when you go abroad is something you can’t really see, but which, if you don’t understand what it is and how it works, can seriously affect how you adjust to and enjoy your time overseas. That thing is CULTURE. The kind of culture we will address here is not at all the kind of thing one refers to when talking about being a cultured person or possessing a taste for modern art, champagne, and opera.

Culture is a neutral term, neither good nor bad. It refers to the broadest conception about the learned knowledge that humans use to fulfill their needs and wants. It refers to the collective historical patterns, values, societal arrangements, manners, ideas, and ways of living that people have used to order their society. It is comprised of all those things we learn as part of growing up, including language, religion, beliefs about economic and social relations, political organization and legitimacy, and the thousands of Do's and Don't’s which society deems important we must know to become a functioning member of that group. It’s a system which, like all systems is constantly changing and adapting.

When you go abroad you immediately meet individuals, perhaps a bewildering variety of them, but you also enter another culture. The behaviors and attitudes you can externally observe in others are molded and motivated by their prior cultural learning just as you have been molded by yours. You can’t see a person’s culture directly because feelings, judgments, and mental constructs are not always on display, although they may become evident through what people say or do.

Culture has been defined in literally hundreds of ways for different reasons. For study abroad purposes, culture can be most broadly defined as the shared sets of values, attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors which are widely held by members of the host culture. As a study abroad student, you will not only need to be aware of these cultural patterns, but will have to respond to them appropriately.
**B. Learn about Stages of Adjustment**

First, review the stages of adjustment below.

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**Stage 1: Cultural Euphoria**

At the start of your study abroad, there is an initial excitement about being in a new culture. This is often called the “honeymoon stage.” Everything is new and wonderful, and you are eager to explore it all. This phase seems pleasant enough, but there are some drawbacks involved. You tend to see the culture through rose-colored glasses, and your interpretations aren’t necessarily realistic. You also focus more on all the visible aspects of the culture (e.g. food, scenery, and clothing) and ignore the more complex and less obvious cultural aspects. In addition, you tend to focus on similarities rather than differences in the early stage of the visit. Most tourists who travel for a short period of time remain in this stage for their entire journey.

**Stage 2: Cultural Confrontation**

In the next stage, the initial excitement you felt when you arrived diminishes and the process of cultural adjustment begins. This stage is characterized by confusion and frustration and, as such, is the most difficult stage. Your feelings can shift from very positive to extremely negative. You may view both the home culture and the host culture in very unrealistic terms; one is superior while the other is lacking. This is because everything that you used to do with relative ease in your home country appears much more difficult due to the culture and/or the language. Homesickness may also contribute to your feelings of discomfort. You feel discouraged and begin to doubt whether you can learn the language or adjust to the culture. Despite these feelings, you are making critical progress in expanding your cross-cultural awareness and, whether or not you are aware of it, you are developing your own strategies for coping with cultural differences.

**Stage 3: Cultural Adjustment**

This stage represents the transition out of culture shock into significant cultural adjustment. You feel increasingly comfortable and competent in the culture, and these feelings prevail over the times you have felt frustrated or out of place. Homesickness may still be an issue for you, but you are interacting more effectively with people from your host country, leading to an increase in self-confidence. You start to look forward to further communication opportunities in the host country and what you can learn throughout the remainder of your experience.

**Stage 4: Cultural Adaptation**

In this stage, you have reached a point where you have a great deal of confidence in your ability to communicate and interact effectively. You have a deeper understanding of the influence culture has in peoples’ lives. You have acquired considerable cultural knowledge, but you also recognize that there is much you still don’t know or understand. You have integrated many of the values, customs, and behaviors from the new culture into your daily life. You now possess the ability to examine and comprehend a wide range of cultural norms, values, and beliefs.

(Taken from Statements of Adjustment Activity (p. 84-89) in Maximizing Study Abroad: A Students’ Guide to Strategies for Language and Culture Learning and Use.)
Now that you understand the 4 stages of cultural adjustment, describe where you feel like you fit on the graph as of now and write a paragraph below explaining the stages you have gone through and the stage you are currently in. Circle the number on the chart above if you are in stage 1, 2, 3, or 4.

**My Stage of Adjustment:**

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**C. Culture Shock**

First, read the UC Irvine Center for International Education's Cultural Adjustment article for suggestions and advice on dealing with culture shock: [http://www.cie.uci.edu/prepare/shock.shtml](http://www.cie.uci.edu/prepare/shock.shtml).

Second, read R. Kohls' “Culture Shock: Occupational Hazard of Overseas Living” article:

*Culture Shock: Occupational Hazard of Overseas Living*

Sometimes, despite their preparation, people find themselves in their host country feeling homesick, bored or withdrawn. They might spend all their time with Americans, avoiding the host nationals. They may drink, eat or sleep too much. They might feel hostile or critical of the host culture. They are experiencing what many people refer to as culture shock.

Culture shock is used to describe some of these more pronounced reactions to spending an extended period of time in a culture very different from your own. Not everyone will experience culture shock. But for those of you who do, it is helpful to be able to recognize culture shock when it occurs, so you can take appropriate action.

Adjustment to a new culture tends to occur in stages. Initially, there is a honeymoon phase. You are in a new country, and everything is exhilarating and exciting. Perhaps you're involved in a flurry of orientation and getting settled, getting hosted around the town or city. The sights, sounds and tastes are all a new adventure. And, at first, you may even see more of the similarities between your host country and the U.S. than the differences.

However, after some time, you realize that things aren't the same. Maybe you are tired of the food or struggling with the language. Maybe the university seems incomprehensible and bureaucratic. Maybe you are tired of long commutes whenever you need to go somewhere. Maybe everything is much more expensive than you anticipated. Or perhaps things are less expensive, but not of the quality or variety you appreciate at home. Your initial enthusiasm has drifted away and you have entered the stage of irritability and hostility. Worse, you may just feel like you don't really belong.

Be patient. Almost always, these symptoms disappear with time and you will experience a stage of gradual adjustment. Your sense of humor will reappear. Things which seemed strange or just inconvenient will gradually become familiar.

Lastly, there is the stage of adaptation or biculturalism. You have finally arrived. You have managed to retain your own cultural identity but recognize the right of other cultures to retain theirs. You have a better understanding of yourself and others, and you can communicate easily and convey warmth and understanding across the cultural barriers.

There is no one way to experience culture shock. It may be acute or barely noticeable. You may find it returns once after you thought you had already passed through all the stages. If you are experiencing the irritability and hostility associated with culture shock, there are positive steps you can take and the sooner you take them, the better.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Culture Shock Do's</th>
<th>Culture Shock Don'ts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do be aware that culture shock exists, one way or another, won't last forever.</td>
<td>Don't be offended by characteristics of the culture which it are not polite or appropriate in the U.S.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do plan fun things to do!</td>
<td>Don’t sit around being critical and negative.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do set goals for yourself.</td>
<td>Don’t focus on bad things.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do look for the best in your situation.</td>
<td>Don't think of yourself as strange and abnormal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do enjoy the diversity of people and cultures around you. Your family/friends to tell them how miserable you are.</td>
<td>Don’t immediately call/write/e-mail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do keep a journal.</td>
<td>Don't be judgmental.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do try and keep busy. U.S.</td>
<td>Don’t constantly compare to the</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Remember that culture shock can be a very valuable experience, which can leave you with broader perspectives, deeper insight into yourself and a wider tolerance for other people.

(Taken from Kohls, R. (1979) Survival Kit for Overseas Living, chapter 18 Culture Shock: Occupational Hazard of Overseas Living. Intercultural Press, Yarmouth, MN. p. 91-100.)

D. Understand Gender as Part of Cultural Adaptation

Read the following information highlighting possible issues related to gender that you may encounter in your host country.

Gender Issues and Study Abroad

The following are important gender issues of which you should be aware:

- Standards of conduct for men and women in the host country
- Avoiding unwanted attention
- The importance of your style of dress
- Your behavior relative to the locals

Many countries still differentiate strongly between the rights and responsibilities granted the different sexes. In some countries U.S. American women's "liberation" may be equated with "promiscuity" and so the native men are likely to view simply friendly behavior as flirtation and act accordingly.

Smiling and extended eye contact are frequently misconstrued and flattering outfits are taken as an open invitation. The most sensible approach to protecting yourself from unwanted advances is to model your own behavior after that of the local women. Always err on the conservative side of dress and conversation.

Take care in your wanderings in a foreign city to travel in a group whenever possible. Act confidently and decisively even if you get lost. You will be less of a target than an uncertain or panicky tourist. Be cautious when you ask for advice or directions; since this marks you as vulnerable. Try to approach people who are unlikely to take advantage of you, like women with small children. In all cases, make people aware of your travel plans and when you will return.

U.S. Women Abroad

Acceptable treatment of women in your host country may be very different from the kind of treatment acceptable in the United States. Also, the way women interact with men in the United States may not be as socially acceptable in other countries. What is considered being friendly in the United States can be considered flirting or a sexual invitation in other countries. Even reacting (positively or negatively) to un-wanted attention can serve to egg-on the other person. Personal space and boundaries may also be different in other countries, so make sure to clearly establish behavior that shows you're not interested.

In television and movies, the media tends to portray U.S. women as promiscuous. Simply smiling or saying hello to the opposite sex may be all that is needed to confirm this unflattering stereotype in their minds. To avoid trouble and unwanted attention, ask local women and your program’s administrators about appropriate behavior and dress for women. Dressing conservatively and traveling in groups are always safe bets. Although it is important to learn to adapt to a foreign culture, that doesn't mean you should have to compromise your own sense of security and dignity. If you feel you can't adapt to your host country’s cultural views on sexuality, you may have to be more selective about the location of your program.

IV: Module 4: Diversity Abroad

A. How to Deal with Special Challenges Overseas

First visit http://allabroad.us for advice from mentors on racism and gender.

Second visit these websites. They are full of information for people with disabilities who'd like to study or work abroad:

- Mobility International USA - http://www.miusa.org/ - Since 1995, Mobility International USA (MIUSA) has served as the National Clearinghouse on Disability and Exchange (NCDE), a project sponsored by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the United States Department of State and managed by MIUSA. In particular, check out their Success Stories page and information about their Survival Strategies for Going Abroad: Strategies for People with Disabilities book.
- Access Abroad (University of Minnesota) - http://www.umabroad.umn.edu/access/ - The University of Minnesota's Access Abroad website is devoted to enhancing study abroad for students with disabilities to help students, advisors, disability service professionals, and overseas staff create an interactive global community.

Third visit these sites for information regarding issues of sexual orientation abroad:

- NAFSA: Rainbow SIG - http://www.indiana.edu/~overseas/lesbigay/ - The NAFSA Rainbow SIG members' goals are to counsel and support international students and study abroad students who are gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender and to combat homophobia, heterosexism and transphobia within NAFSA.
- International Gay and Lesbian Association - http://www.ilga.org/ - The International Lesbian and Gay Association is a world-wide network of national and local groups dedicated to achieving equal rights for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender (GLBT) people everywhere.
- Student Welfare (University of California Education Abroad Program) - http://eap.ucop.edu/studycenter/DirectorsManual/web/ - The UC EAP's Student Welfare site includes information and resources regarding ways to prepare for studying abroad for GLBT students.
B. Learn the Difference between Generalizations and Stereotypes

Read the following article about the difference between generalizations and stereotypes:

Differentiating between Generalizations and Stereotypes

Did you ever hear anyone say?

• The French are rude.  • Spaniards love their siestas.   • Americans are friendly.  • Asian students are good in science & math.
• Mexicans are lazy.   • Brits have a wonderful, dry sense of humor.   • Americans are self-centered.

Are these statements always true? Of course not; they're stereotypes – the automatic application of information we have about a country or culture group, both positive and negative, to every individual in it. This information is often based on limited experience with the culture, so it's incomplete at best and downright wrong at worst. If you consider stereotypes when learning about a culture, you limit your understanding of the host culture and can make serious mistakes.

What's the alternative? A generalization. This means using initial ideas about a group to form hypotheses. Generalizing recognizes that there may be a tendency for people within a culture group to share certain values, beliefs, and behaviors. Generalizations can also be based on incomplete or false information, but you are less likely to get into trouble with a generalization because you are using that information with caution. You never assume that every person will act in the same way.

For example, you've been watching British television and note the dry sense of humor that forms the basis for several sitcoms. Then you meet several Brits who also have a dry sense of humor. You begin to form a hypothesis about British humor.

(Taken from Differentiating between Generalizations and Stereotypes (p. 53-54), Maximizing Study Abroad: A Students' Guide to Strategies for Language and Culture Learning and Use.)

Write a paragraph below about how your host country views someone with your characteristics/preferences. Write another paragraph on how you can best prepare yourself (or defend yourself) against a misunderstanding or a mistreatment. Be sure to list the resources you used.

Host Country View about My Characteristics:

Preparing Myself:

To find out about other students' concerns regarding discrimination and stereotypes while they were abroad and hear their stories, visit http://www.allabroad.us/ or http://glimpse.org/.

C. Prepare for Challenges of Diversity

Many countries in the world have significant racial and ethnic diversity among their populations. To look up the composition of your host country, visit the CIA World Fact Book, https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/index.html and select your country, then the category 'people' if you did not do so already in the first course.

Special Issues

There may be special issues or needs that you will have that create some special logistical challenges. Some of these may include:

1. Where to get your hair done if your hair care requires something different than the "norm" of your host country.
2. Where to buy toiletries if different than the "norm" of your host country.
3. Where to get special foods, for example, kosher/halal foods, foods for certain holidays, or foods for dietary restrictions in general.
4. Where to find your style/type/size of dress if different.
5. Where to find places to worship if your religion is not shared by many others in your host country.
6. How to get around town if you have special transportation/mobility needs.

How can you handle these issues? Check off the approaches you have tried to resolve the logistical challenges:

☐ Speak with your home university's study abroad staff or faculty members before you leave, or contact them via e-mail or phone after arrival.

☐ Speak with other students who studied abroad in your host country through.

☐ Your on-site program director will be knowledgeable about your host country and may be able to assist you with some concerns.

☐ There may be a multicultural support office at your host university or program that has experience helping students with such issues.

☐ Professors teaching on your program may be able to help, as well as program staff.

☐ Friends you make in your host country can be a valuable resource; even if they cannot help you first-hand, they may be able to introduce you to others who can.

☐ Also, your host family (if you have one) can help identify resources in your host community.

Research and write your answer below to a special issue you have been struggling with or one of the ones listed above.

V: Module 5: Language Learning

A. Discover Reasons to Learn a Language

First read the following article on reasons to learn a language.

Why Learn a Language?

There are many different reasons to learn a foreign language, some of which are listed below. A clear idea of why you're learning a language will help to motivate you in your studies.

- **Studying abroad**
  
  If you plan to study at a foreign university, college or school, you'll need a good knowledge of the local language (unless the course you want to study is taught through the medium of your language.) Your institution will probably provide preparatory courses to improve your language skills and continuing support throughout your main course.

- **Travel**
  
  If you're planning to travel, knowledge of the language(s) you're likely to encounter will be useful. A basic ability in a foreign language will help you to "get by", i.e. to order food and drink, find your way around, buy tickets, etc. If you have a more advanced knowledge of the language, you can have real conversations with the people you meet, which can be very interesting and will add a new dimension to your experience abroad.

- **Study or research**
  
  You may find that information about subjects you're interested in is published mainly in a foreign language. Learning that language will give you access to the material and enable you to communicate with fellow students and researchers in the field.
• Culture
  Maybe you're interested in the literature, poetry, films, TV programs, music or some other aspect of the culture of people who
  speak a particular language and want to learn their language in order to gain a better understanding of their culture.

• Getting in touch with your roots
  If your family spoke a particular language in the past you might want to learn it.

• Required course
  You may be required to study a particular language at school, college or university.

• To understand your own language and culture better (contributed by Evona York)
  Sometimes learning a foreign language helps you understand your own language and culture better through comparison, or
  through the relationship between the foreign language and your mother tongue. For instance, studying Latin in high school taught
  me an incredible amount of English, because English has so many words that come from the Latin. Same with Greek.

• To become someone else (contributed by Janet Gil)
  As a teen, I wished I were someone else. Learning Spanish let me be part of my best friend’s family and have friends in college from
  South America whom I may not have met had I not had such an interest in learning Spanish. I liked myself with these other people
  more than I liked my American self (if that makes sense). I have known of people who learned another language at age 19 and older
  who now speak their second language almost without an accent but speak their first language with an accent!

• To better understand our thought processes (contributed by Judah Kay)
  All of our thought processes are conducted in language, so really our entire existence or essence or soul, however we phrase it, is
  inextricably bound up to and with the languages we speak. Try to think without language for instance. However, we see that the
  language is in essence superficial, since many languages exist. To understand the true roots of our thought processes, the real
  nature of the human soul, knowledge of several languages may be necessary.

• Family and friends
  If your family or friends speak a different language, learning that language will help you to communicate with them. It will also give
  you a better understanding of their culture and way of thinking.

• Work
  If your work involves regular contact with speakers of foreign languages, being able to talk to them in their own languages will help
  you to communicate with them. It may also help you to make sales and to negotiate and secure contracts. Knowledge of foreign
  languages may also increase your chances of finding a new job, getting a promotion or a transfer overseas, or of going on foreign
  business trips.

• Cuisine
  Perhaps you enjoy the food and/or drink of a particular country or region and make regular trips there, or the recipe books you want
  to use are only available in a foreign language.

• Linguistic interest
  Maybe you're interested in linguistic aspects of a particular language and decide to learn it in order to understand them better.

• Challenging yourself
  Maybe you enjoy the challenge of learning foreign languages or of learning a particularly difficult language.

• Sounds/looks good to me
  Perhaps you just like the sound of a particular language when it’s spoken or sung. Or you find the written form of a language
  attractive.

• Individual reasons
  You might have other reasons for learning a foreign language. Here are reasons contributed by students and professionals in the
  field of international education.

• To keep your mind healthy (contributed by Harvey Schmidt)
  Learning a second language has been proven to delay the onset of dementia.

• To find your future husband/wife (contributed by Rico Suave)
  Learning a new language and culture increases the size of your selection pool.

• To better understand the rest of humankind (contributed by Philip Lightfoot)
  Language is an aspect of humanity, and learning what a fellow human speaks teaches you more about humankind as a whole. The
  more languages you know, the more you understand our species, and that is beneficial no matter what the situation is.

(Taken from “Why Learn Another Language?” Omniglot.com-A Guide to Written Language.)
Fill out the chart below with your reasons for wanting to learn a foreign language.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason 1</th>
<th>Reason 2</th>
<th>Reason 3</th>
<th>Reason 4</th>
<th>Reason 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

_B. Language Use and Study Tips_

Read the following article to for tips on studying a foreign language:

**Tips on Studying a Foreign Language**

Learning another language isn't easy, but most people can learn a second language IF they're willing to put in the necessary time. Here are some practical suggestions for learning the grammar and skills necessary for success in foreign language classes and in a study abroad context.

1. **STUDY EVERY DAY!** Language learning is cumulative: you cannot put it off until the weekend. Study 1 or 2 hours for every class hour if you want to master the language.

2. **DISTRIBUTE YOUR STUDY TIME** in 15- to 30-minute periods throughout the day. Focus on a different task each time: vocabulary, grammar, etc. Get an overview during the first half hour: spend 10 minutes reviewing dialogue, 10 minutes learning vocabulary, 10 minutes learning grammar...so you'll at least have an overview. Approximately 80% of your study time should be spent in recitation or practice, including practice in the language lab.

3. **PARTICIPATE IN EVERY CLASS** - even if you are not well prepared. Class time is your best opportunity to practice. Learn the grammar and vocabulary outside of class in order to make the most of class time. Spend a few minutes warming up before each class by speaking or reading the language.

4. **MAKE YOURSELF COMFORTABLE IN THE CLASSROOM.** Get to know your classmates, so you will feel you are among friends. Visit your instructor during office hours to get acquainted; explain your goals and concerns to your instructor.

5. **LEARN GRAMMAR.** Even if you are abroad and using the language every day, learning the grammar will help you remember what you've learned later. Review a simplified English grammar text. Compare new grammatical structures in your foreign language to their English equivalents.

6. **PRACTICE FOR TESTS.** Ask for practice questions; make up your own test questions. Invent variations on patterns and forms. Over-learn: Study beyond the point of recognition to mastery.

7. **DEVELOP A GOOD ATTITUDE.** Have a clear reason for taking the class. Set personal goals for what you want to learn. Leave perfectionism at the door; give yourself permission to make mistakes and learn from them.

8. **GET HELP IF YOU NEED IT.** Talk with your teacher. Form study groups among class members. Use tutoring services. Don't wait!

**Reading Skills Tips**

1. First, read the vocabulary list for the assignment. Next, read the questions about the reading. Then read all the way through a new passage two or three times, guessing at meaning from context. Avoid word-by-word translation. It's a waste of time!

2. Isolate new vocabulary and study it separately. DON'T write between the lines! Make flash cards. Carry them with you and recite them during the day. Learn them until they are automatic. Put up new vocabulary words in your room so that you see them every day.

3. Isolate new grammatical forms and study them separately. Write the pattern on a flash card and memorize it. Write out and label a model sentence. When you encounter the form while reading, pause and recite the pattern to recognize the form.
Writing Skills Tips

1. Pay attention to detail: notice accents, order of letters, etc. Compare letter-by-letter different forms (singular, plural, gender, etc.). Write out conjugations of verbs, declensions of pronouns, etc., and check your endings. Memorize irregular verbs.

2. Have a friend dictate ten words to you. Write them out and immediately have your friend spell them correctly aloud while you look carefully and point at each letter. Repeat until you get all the words right.

3. Write (in your own simple foreign vocabulary words) a story you have just read.

Listening and Speaking are performance skills. Students in foreign language classes often have difficulty hearing and speaking because they're anxious about making mistakes. It's OK to make mistakes! Have fun trying to speak! Being abroad is a great opportunity to practice!! Don't be shy!

Listening Skills Tips

1. Frequent the language lab if there is one available. Read the exercises in your book first, then listen and read together, then listen without looking at the print. Say aloud/write what you hear.

2. Participate silently in class when others are called on to speak. Focus on the task; don't worry about how you'll do.

3. If you feel nervous, relax yourself physically by taking a couple of slow, deep breaths. When called on, pause, relax, and give yourself time to respond.

4. Listen while a friend dictates to you and write what you hear. Check for accuracy.

5. Practice: Join clubs to meet native speakers, watch your host country's TV shows, listen to your host country's radio stations, don't wear a watch for a day and ask the natives the time to strike up a conversation, become a regular at a local establishment where only the locals gather, and try to choose housing with native speakers.

Speaking Skills Tips

1. Study out loud! Mimic the sounds of the language. Don't mumble. Although most people feel embarrassed making strange sounds, the language will soon feel more familiar to you.

2. When called on in class, say something, even if it's wrong; you'll learn from it. If you need a moment to think, repeat the question. If you don't know the answer, say in your foreign language, I don't know or Help!

3. Practice with a native speaker who wants your help to learn English, or with another class member.

(Taken from Cope Powell, Jo Ann. "Tips on Studying a Foreign Language." The University of Texas at Austin Learning Center.)

Ideas for Interacting

Obviously you'll learn more about your host country's culture and language if you interact with host nationals rather than constantly associating with Americans. It's normal to have anxiety about how well you'll be received. Anxiety does not have to be a barrier to being involved. If you plan ahead you can start making connections upon arrival. The following are some suggestions from fellow travelers about increasing contact with local hosts.

• What are you interested in? Soccer? Classical music? Juggling? Find a local group, club, or society comprised of locals who have similar interests.

• Make a meal for some fellow students or your hosts. One student made tacos in Malaysia. It was tricky finding the ingredients but well worth the effort. Another made chocolate chip cookies with a friend in Taiwan and sold them at a local market!

• Join school clubs. There usually is an international student organization on campus.

• Give presentations to local schools, community organizations, and businesses. Often the university or school where you belong will have opportunities, whether volunteer or paid, for foreign students to give short presentations about their home countries. Here's your chance to deepen the locals' cultural knowledge of the U.S. and to de-bunk stereotypes in the process!

• Attend religious/spiritual activities. You may or may not find a place to worship of the same denomination to which you belong, but you can be adventurous and explore the spiritual and religious beliefs of the locals.

• Adjust your expectations about what you can get done. As one student explained, “In the U.S. I am constantly on the go, and I can get a lot done in a day. However, I remember taking a two-hour train trip to Halkis from Athens, conducting a 45-minute interview in Greek (which I was not fluent in), and then returning home on the train. It was only 2 p.m., but that was it for the day. The language, the traveling, the heat of summer... I was wiped out, physically and mentally.”

• Don't wear a watch. This will force you to ask people on the bus or on the street what time it was. As a result, you will build up your confidence in the language and meet people in the process.

• Try to develop a routine that integrates you into the culture. With repetition, like frequenting a certain restaurant or café, locals will become comfortable seeing you and you might make new acquaintances.
### Learning Strategy Use

#### Strategies to increase my exposure to the target language:
1. Attend out-of-class events where the new language is spoken.  
2. Listen to talk shows on the radio, watch TV shows, or see movies in the target language.  
3. Listen to the language in a restaurant or store where the staff speak the target language.  
4. Listen in on people who are having conversations in the target language to try to catch the gist of what they are saying.

#### Strategies to become more familiar with the sounds in the target language:
5. Practice sounds in the target language that are very different from sounds in my own language to become comfortable with them.  
6. Look for associations between the sound of a word or phrase in the new language with the sound of a familiar word.  
7. Imitate the way native speakers talk.  
8. Ask a native speaker about unfamiliar sounds that I hear.

#### Strategies to prepare to listen to conversations in the target language:
9. Pay special attention to specific aspects of the language; for example, the way the speaker pronounces certain sounds.  
10. Try to predict what the other person is going to say based on what has been said so far.  
11. Prepare for talks and performances I will hear in the target language by reading some background materials beforehand.

#### Strategies to listen to conversation in the target language:
12. Listen for key words that seem to carry the bulk of the meaning.  
13. Listen for word and sentence stress to see what native speakers emphasize when they speak.  
14. Pay attention to when and how long people tend to pause.  
15. Pay attention to the rise and fall of speech by native speakers—the "music" of it.  
16. Practice "skim listening" by paying attention to some parts and ignoring others.  
17. Try to understand what I hear without translating it.  
18. Listen for specific details to see whether I can understand them.  
19. Focus on the context of what people are saying.

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<th>I use this strategy and like it</th>
<th>I have tried this strategy and would use it again</th>
<th>I’ve never used this strategy but am interested in it</th>
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**Vocabulary Strategy Use**

**Strategies to learn new words:**

20. Pay attention to the structure of a word.

21. Break the word into parts that I can identify.

22. Group words according to part of speech (e.g., nouns, verbs).

23. Associate the sound of the new word with the sound of a word that is familiar to me.

24. Use rhyming to remember new words.

25. Make a mental image of new words.

26. List new words with other words that are related to it.

27. Write out new words in meaningful sentences.

28. Practice new action verbs by acting them out.

29. Use flash cards in a systematic way to learn new words.

**Strategies to review vocabulary:**

30. Go over new words often when I first learn them to help me remember them.

31. Review words periodically so I don't forget them.

**Strategies to recall vocabulary:**

32. Look at meaningful parts of the word (e.g. the prefix of suffice) to remind me of the meaning of the word.

33. Make an effort to remember the situation where I first heard or saw the word or remember the page or sign where I saw it written.

34. Visualize the spelling of new words in my mind.

**Strategies to make use of new vocabulary:**

35. Try using new words in a variety of ways.

36. Practice using familiar words in different ways.

37. Make an effort to use idiomatic expressions in the new language.

**Speaking Strategy Use**

**Strategies to practice speaking:**

38. Practice saying new expressions to myself.

39. Practice new grammatical structures in different situations to build my confidence level in using them.

40. Think about how a native speaker might say something and practice saying it that way.
**Strategies to engage in conversation:**

41. Regularly seek out opportunities to talk with native speakers.
42. Initiate conversations in the target language as often as possible.
43. Direct the conversation to familiar topics.
44. Plan out in advance what I want to say.
45. Ask questions as a way to be involved in the conversation.
46. Try topics even when they aren't familiar to me.
47. Encourage others to correct errors in my speaking.
48. Try to figure out and model native speakers' language patterns when requesting, apologizing, or complaining.

**Strategies for when I can't think of a word or expression:**

49. Look for a different way to express the idea, like using a synonym.
50. Use words from my own language, but say them in a way that sounds like words in the target language.
51. Use gestures as a way to try to get my message across.
52. Make up new words or guess if I don't know the right ones to use.
53. Switch back to my own language momentarily if I know that the person I'm talking to can understand what is being said.

**Reading Strategy Use**

**Strategies to improve my reading ability:**

54. Read as much as possible in the target language.
55. Try to find things to read for pleasure in the target language.
56. Find reading material that is at or near my level.
57. Plan out in advance how I'm going to read the text, monitor to see how I'm doing, and then check to see how much I understand.
58. Skim an academic text first to get the main idea and then go back and read it more carefully.
59. Read a story or dialogue several times until I understand it.
60. Pay attention to the organization of the text especially headings and subheadings.
61. Make ongoing summaries of the reading either in my mind or in the margins of the text.
62. Make predictions as to what will happen next.
Strategies for when words and grammatical structures are not understood:
63. Guess the approximate meaning by using clues from the context of the reading material.
64. Use a bilingual dictionary to get a sense of what the equivalent word in my native language would be.
65. Use a target language dictionary to see how words are defined by means of other target language words.

**Writing Strategies Use**

Strategies for basic writing:
66. Practice writing the alphabet and/or new words in the target language.
67. Plan out in advance how to write academic papers, monitor how my writing is going, and check to see how well my writing reflects what I want to say.
68. Try writing different kinds of texts in the target language. (e.g. personal notes, messages, letters, course papers)
69. Take class notes in the target language as much as I can.

Strategies for writing an essay or academic paper:
70. Find a different way to express the idea when I don't know the correct expression. (e.g. use a synonym or describe the idea)
71. Review what I have already written before continuing to write more.
72. Use reference materials such as a dictionary or thesaurus to help find or verify words in the target language.
73. Wait to edit my writing until all my ideas are down on paper.
74. Review my writing once or twice to improve the language.
75. Try to get feedback from others, especially native speakers of the language.

**D. Learn what to Do about Language Fatigue**

Sometimes you will experience feelings of frustration or exhaustion from speaking in a language that is not your own. This is normal and there are things you can do to help yourself.

**Language Fatigue**

You may be experiencing any of the following:
- Getting angry when you can't find a word you know that you know.
- Sleeping or wanting to sleep a great deal more than you did back home.
- Putting on headsets and cranking American tunes.
- Not putting on headsets and cranking American tunes.
- Wishing you were in a country where most people spoke English.
- Not caring if you behave inappropriately according to the host culture.
- Coming home at the end of a day and feeling mad that your host family is home and you have to talk to them.
- Feeling as if you are spending hours trying to understand one page of text.
If so, you have language fatigue. And you are not alone. Individuals who immerse themselves day in and day out in another language are bound to get tired physically and emotionally. Language fatigue is very prominent when you are immersed in a culture for the first time. It’s almost a sensory overload at times, with reception, comprehension, and reproduction of the language.

Here is what others suggest you do about language fatigue:

- Understand what it is. You may be finding that language learning abroad is much different than it was when you studied in your home country. Often study abroad students find that they must do much more independent work than they had to in their own universities. In the host country, you may experience a great amount of stress related to the fact that you do not understand the target language and culture. Sometimes your expectations may be set too high, and you do not recognize the mini-steps you take on a daily basis in your language learning. You might even be surprised to find that learning a language can be as arduous and draining as it is.
- Keep a journal so you realize how far you have come. Ask a trusted friend how you are doing. Seek out support from family and friends.
- Give yourself time away from the learning and use of the language. Read something in your native language, call a friend back home, or take a nap. You may also need time to digest the enormous amount of input you have received during the day.
- Lower your expectations for your language proficiency. Give yourself time to learn at a comfortable pace.
- Praise yourself for the mini-accomplishments you achieve. You are learning much more than you realize.
- And as one student says, relax, and maximize the whole learning experience.

Remember, language shock and culture shock are closely related because of how they both affect your cross-cultural adjustment process.

(Taken from “Language Fatigue” (p. 177-178), in Maximizing Study Abroad: A Students' Guide to Strategies for Language and Culture Learning and Use.)

Write one to two paragraphs below on what your plan of action is for the next time you experience language fatigue based on what you learned.
Program sponsors should:

The use of letters is provided for ease of reference only and does not imply priority.

procedures for implementing good practices.

To the provision of information and the preparation of participants are intended for parties that advise, refer, nominate, admit, enroll, or place students. Statements of good practice that suggest operating procedures on site apply to entities that are directly involved in the operation of the overseas program.

Because the role of an organization in a study abroad program may vary considerably from case to case, it is not possible to specify a division of efforts that will be applicable to all cases. Each entity should apply these statements in ways consistent with its respective role.

In general, practices that relate to obtaining health, safety, and security information apply to all parties consistent with their role and involvement in the study abroad program. Much of the basic information is readily available and can be conveyed to participants by distributing it and/or by referring them to—or using materials from—recognized central sources. Statements of good practice that refer to the provision of information and the preparation of participants are intended for parties that advise, refer, nominate, admit, enroll, or place students. Statements of good practice that suggest operating procedures on site apply to entities that are directly involved in the operation of the overseas program.

It is understood that program sponsors that rely heavily on the collaboration of overseas institutions may exercise less direct control over specific program components. In such cases, sponsors are urged to work with their overseas partners to develop plans and procedures for implementing good practices.

The use of letters is provided for ease of reference only and does not imply priority.

Program sponsors should:

1. Conduct periodic assessments of health and safety conditions for their programs, and develop and maintain emergency preparedness processes and a crisis response plan.
2. Provide health and safety information for prospective participants so that they and their parents/guardians/families can make informed decisions concerning preparation, participation, and behavior while on the program.
3. Provide information concerning aspects of home campus services and conditions that cannot be replicated at overseas locations.
4. Provide orientation to participants prior to the program and as needed on site, which includes information on safety, health, legal, environmental, political, cultural, and religious conditions in the host country. In addition to dealing with health and safety issues, the orientation should address potential health and safety risks, and appropriate emergency response measures.
5. Consider health and safety issues in evaluating the appropriateness of an individual's participation in a study abroad program.
6. Determine criteria for an individual's removal from an overseas program, taking into account participant behavior, health, and safety factors.
7. Require that participants be insured. Either provide health and travel accident (emergency evacuation, repatriation) insurance to participants or provide information about how to obtain such coverage.
8. Conduct inquiries regarding the potential health, safety, and security risks of the local environment of the program, including program-sponsored accommodation, events, excursions, and other activities, prior to the program. Monitor possible changes in country conditions. Provide information about changes, and advise participants and their parents/guardians/families as needed.
9. Hire vendors and contractors (e.g., travel and tour agents) that have provided reputable services in the country in which the program takes place. Advise such vendors and contractors of the program sponsor's expectations with respect to their role in the health and safety of participants.
10. Conduct appropriate inquiry regarding available medical and professional services. Provide information about these services for participants and their parents/guardians/families, and help participants obtain the services they may need.
11. Develop and provide health and safety training for program directors and staff, including guidelines with respect to intervention and referral that take into account the nature and location of the study abroad program.
12. Develop codes of conduct for their programs; communicate codes of conduct and the consequences of noncompliance to participants. Take appropriate action when aware that participants are in violation.
13. In cases of serious health problems, injury, or other significant health and safety circumstances, maintain good communication among all program sponsors and others who need to know.
14. In the participant screening process, consider factors such as disciplinary history that may impact on the safety of the individual or the group.
15. Provide information for participants and their parents/guardians/families regarding when and where the sponsor's responsibility ends and the range of aspects of participants' overseas experiences that are beyond the sponsor's control.
In particular, program sponsors generally cannot:

A. Guarantee or assure the safety and/or security of participants or eliminate all risks from the study abroad environments.
B. Monitor or control all of the daily personal decisions, choices, and activities of participants.
C. Prevent participants from engaging in illegal, dangerous, or unwise activities.
D. Assure that U.S. standards of due process apply in overseas legal proceedings, or provide or pay for legal representation for participants.
E. Assume responsibility for actions or for events that are not part of the program, nor for those that are beyond the control of the sponsor and its subcontractors, or for situations that may arise due to the failure of a participant to disclose pertinent information.
F. Assure that home-country cultural values and norms will apply in the host country.

(Taken from Responsible Study Abroad: Good Practices for Health & Safety, Interorganizational Task Force on Safety and Responsibility in Study Abroad, NAFSA: Association of International Educators.)

B. Do Your Part to Stay Healthy and Safe

First, read the recommendations below concerning your own responsibility for health and safety while abroad.

Second, think about whether you've followed these recommendations up to this point. Is there anything that you've missed?

Responsibilities of Participants (this statement comes from a group of study abroad program administrators: The Interorganizational Task Force on Safety and Responsibility in Study Abroad)

In study abroad, as in other settings, participants can have a major impact on their own health and safety through the decisions they make before and during their program and through their day-to-day choices and behaviors. Participants should:

A. Assume responsibility for all the elements necessary for their personal preparation for the program and participate fully in orientations.
B. Read and carefully consider all materials issued by the sponsor that relate to safety, health, legal, environmental, political, cultural, and religious conditions in the host country(ies).
C. Conduct their own research on the country(ies) they plan to visit with particular emphasis on health and safety concerns, as well as the social, cultural, and political situations.
D. Consider their physical and mental health, and other personal circumstances when applying for or accepting a place in a program, and make available to the sponsor accurate and complete physical and mental health information and any other personal data that is necessary in planning for a safe and healthy study abroad experience.
E. Obtain and maintain appropriate insurance coverage and abide by any conditions imposed by the carriers.
F. Inform parents/guardians/families and any others who may need to know about their participation in the study abroad program, provide them with emergency contact information, and keep them informed of their whereabouts and activities.
G. Understand and comply with the terms of participation, codes of conduct, and emergency procedures of the program.
H. Be aware of local conditions and customs that may present health or safety risks when making daily choices and decisions. Promptly express any health or safety concerns to the program staff or other appropriate individuals before and/or during the program.
I. Accept responsibility for their own decisions and actions.
J. Obey host-country laws.
K. Behave in a manner that is respectful of the rights and well-being of others, and encourage others to behave in a similar manner.
L. Avoid illegal drugs and excessive or irresponsible consumption of alcohol.
M. Follow the program policies for keeping program staff informed of their whereabouts and well-being.
N. Become familiar with the procedures for obtaining emergency health and legal system services in the host county.

(Taken from Responsible Study Abroad: Good Practices for Health & Safety, Interorganizational Task Force on Safety and Responsibility in Study Abroad, NAFSA: Association of International Educators.)

To find out more about students' experiences with health and safety while abroad please visit http://www.allabroad.us/.

Third, make a “to-do” list and complete the tasks to ensure that you’ve done all you can before you go and once abroad for your own health and safety.
C. Your Plan to Stay Healthy while Abroad

How Do I Stay Healthy and Safe?

There is an encyclopedia’s worth of information on all of the health and safety issues you might face traveling and living overseas. Many of the sources can be found in the health section of the Resources page http://www.studentsabroad.com/resources.html#Health.

Health Checklist: Check off the list all the activities you have pursued in order to stay healthy while overseas.

- Obtained all the necessary vaccines
- Obtained insurance for study abroad
- Give copies of all important health related documents to someone at home you can trust in case of emergency
- When you travel by air, drink a lot of non-alcoholic fluid, eat light, and stretch often to avoid jet lag. Allow time to acclimate to your new environment
- Maintain good personal hygiene
- Ease yourself into your new diet
- Be cautious of the water
- Be wary of the food. Eating hot food will help limit your exposure to dangerous bacteria
- Stay fit. A healthy body will help you to fight off illness and recover faster
- Don’t forget to sleep, and be sure to schedule some down time to relax and reflect on all that you are experiencing
- Be patient with yourself, particularly allowing yourself ample time to adapt to the culture, language, and physical environment

Health Questions

1. What recommendations does the Department of State make for traveling to the country(ies) and region(s) you are studying in? Review their International Travel Safety for Students page http://travel.state.gov/travel/living/studying/studying_1238.html and the Consular Information Sheet http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1765.html.

2. What health recommendations does the CDC make for the country(ies) and region(s) you are studying in? Review the CDC’s Country Health Advisory- http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/list.aspx.

3. What aspects of the host country culture are different from U.S. American culture? How can you cope with these?

4. What sorts of food do people in the host country typically eat? How is it prepared, stored, served? Is the water in your host country generally safe to drink?
D. Review the Top Ten Tips

First, read the Center for Global Education’s Top Ten Tips for staying healthy and safe.

Second, visit the Study Abroad Student Handbook, http://www.studentsabroad.com/contents.html#healthandsafety, for more Health and Safety information. There is both general and country-specific information that will help you plan for your own time abroad.

Top Ten Health and Safety Tips

1. Be Informed about Safety Issues in the Country and City


2. Avoid High-Risk Activities

   We suggest you avoid certain activities like bungee jumping, whitewater rafting, mountain climbing, and other "high-risk" adventures. If you choose to participate, make sure that you have adequate support and lots of insurance.

3. Be Prepared to Respond to Emergencies

   Where will you go if you need to leave the country? What will you do if you are a victim of a crime or are injured? What if someone else needs help?

4. Avoid Crime and Violence, Including Sexual Harassment and Assault

   Be aware of the safe and unsafe areas where you are living and traveling. Use your safety skills from the U.S. while abroad: Don't travel or go out alone (buddy system); don't go into neighborhoods with a high incidence of crime or violence, be more careful at night, etc. Be aware of stereotypes of U.S. men and women, and understand local verbal and non-verbal communication.

5. Make Sure your Mode of Transportation is Safe

   Whether you are arranging your own transportation or you’re being led by your program provider, look closely at what the safest type of transportation is for where you’re going, what routes you’re taking, and at what time you’re traveling (we suggest you avoid traveling at night if possible).

6. The Effects of Alcohol and Drugs can Hurt You

   Although alcohol may be legal at a younger age abroad, its use and abuse is many times tied to being a victim of crime, violence, accident, and injury. Drug use abroad can result in severe consequences - plan on being treated as guilty (in jail) until proven innocent outside the U.S., with the possibility of severe punishment.

7. Be Able to Communicate at All Times

   Some methods of communication may include cellular phones, regular phones, e-mail, fax, and satellite phones (in remote locations).

8. Take Care of your Physical, Dental, and Mental Health

   Prior to going abroad, get a physical, complete any foreseeable dental work, and consider your psychological stability. Be prepared for physical and mental challenges abroad. When you get abroad, find suitable care/support facilities.

9. Have Adequate Insurance and 24-Hour Emergency Assistance

   Types of insurance to consider purchasing include major medical (in the U.S. and abroad), 24-hour emergency assistance, repatriation of remains, travel insurance, and coverage for kidnapping and ransom.

10. Choose a Quality Program Provider

   There are no minimum standards in the study abroad field. You need to carefully pick a quality study abroad provider in terms of both academics and student services. Along with costs and courses, find out about the safety resources and procedures in place and the safety problems faced by students in the past.

(Taken from the Center for Global Education’s Top Ten Health and Safety Tips, Study Abroad Student Handbook.)

E. Share with Your Parents, Guardians, and Significant Others

Your parents/guardians/significant others, other family members, and friends should be involved in your planning and preparation as much as possible.

Read the following recommendations to Parents/Guardians/Families below and give or email your family and friends copies.

Share with your parents (via email or print out) William Hoffa’s “Advice for Parents: Frequently Asked Questions,” http://www.globaled.us/safeti/v2n1_hoffa.html if you have not done so already.

Recommendations to Parents/Guardians/Families

In study abroad parents, guardians, and families play an important role in the health and safety of participants. Parents/guardians/families should:

A. Be informed about and involved in the decision of the participant to enroll in a particular program.
B. Obtain and carefully evaluate participant program materials, as well as related health, safety, and security information.
C. Discuss travel plans and activities that may be independent of the study abroad program.
D. Discuss safety and behavior issues, insurance needs, and emergency procedures related to living abroad.
E. Be responsive to requests from the program sponsor for information regarding the participant.
F. Keep in touch with the participant.
G. Be aware that the participant rather than the program may most appropriately provide some information.

(Taken from Responsible Study Abroad: Good Practices for Health & Safety, Interorganizational Task Force on Safety and Responsibility in Study Abroad, NAFSA: Association of International Educators.)

F. Consider Your Mental Health and Medications

Read the following article on Mental Health Issues Overseas. Then consider making an appointment with a mental health professional to discuss your study abroad plans.

Mental Health Issues Overseas

Study Abroad is Not a Vacation

Time abroad will not be a vacation from your mental health issues; in fact, it can add more stress and exacerbate pre-existing issues. Potential stress inducing aspects of studying abroad include:

- Feelings of loneliness from being separated from friends and family
- Moving to a new home
- Adjusting to an unfamiliar culture, a different academic environment, and a new system of support services
- Learning a new language
- Feelings of misunderstanding
- Culture shock
- Travel stress
- Long distance relationships
- New relationships

These issues can give rise to a wide array of unexpected and overwhelming reactions. The intensity of the study abroad experience may amplify any mental health issues that you were already dealing with back home. It is important for you to discuss your plans to study abroad with a mental health professional:

- to determine if the program is appropriate,
- to develop a plan of action when issues come up overseas,
- to identify a mental health professional in the host country that speaks your language
- to ensure that you can bring enough of your prescriptions/medications and find out whether they are obtainable overseas.

You should also advise your study abroad program administrators of any pre-existing mental health conditions or disabilities before you leave the U.S. You should also advise of any special needs or support needed, including information about medication needs in case of an emergency and so that accommodations can be planned for ahead of time.

Change in Medication

Unfortunately some students decide to stop taking their medications while abroad. Some believe that they have been “cured” because things went so well during their arrival phase (the “honeymoon stage”). Others run out of their medication or decide to experiment in the absence of someone monitoring them. The effects of this can lead to mental imbalance, illness, hospitalization, and even being sent home from the program. It’s important that you don’t stop taking your medications unless instructed to do so by a doctor.
Maintaining Good Mental Health Checklist: Check off items which you do to stay healthy. Make it a goal to work on anything you are not able to check off now.

- Make exercise a daily activity.
- Pay attention to nutrition, especially during times of high stress.
- Balance time spent working with time playing: Don't forget to make time for fun.
- Get adequate sleep each night.
- Take time out: Schedule several brief breaks during the day to breathe, relax, and maintain perspective.
- Look for ways to make your work and studies fun and playful. Inject humor and laughter where you can.
- Stay connected with family, friends, and community: Discuss your problems and help others with theirs.

Managing Healthy Transitions

All changes come with both loss and opportunity. Typically, students focus on the opportunities instead of acknowledging the losses associated with study abroad. Moving to a different country for an academic term can mean the loss of a support network, a routine, and a familiar environment. Your secure sense of identity can be lost. It's important during such transition times for you to acknowledge the impact of these losses. Similar transitional challenges will also occur when you are getting ready to return home.

Web-Based Mental Health Resources

For additional resources, visit Mobility International USA (MIUSA) [http://www.miusa.org/] which strives to “empower people with disabilities around the world to achieve their human rights through international exchange and international development.” Other resources that provide additional information include:

- Ulifeline.com offers an online assessment and an archive of answers to common health questions. [http://www.ulifeline.com/]
- Outsidetheclassroom.com Offers prevention-based health education and focuses on high-risk drinking on college campuses. [http://www.outsidetheclassroom.com/]
- National Mental Health Association Includes mental health, alcohol, and drug abuse information geared towards college students. [http://www.nmha.org/]
- myStudentBody.com Provides students with personalized and confidential health information. [http://www.mystudentbody.com/]
- Active Minds on Campus Provides information related to addressing the stigma surrounding mental illness among college students. [http://www.activeminds.org/]
- Facts on Tap Provides information on topics such as drugs, alcohol, sex, and dealing with friends and family members who have a drinking problem. [http://www.factsontap.org/]

(Adapted from Lindeman, Barbara A. Ed. Best Practices in Addressing Mental Health Issues Affecting Education Abroad Participants. A publication of NAFSA: Association of International Educators, 2006.)

G. Learn about Insurance

Review the following general information about Insurance:

- What Insurance Covers: Know exactly what is and isn't covered by your insurance plan. For example, high-risk sports injuries, dental care, and optical care are sometimes not covered by basic medical insurance. Also, if certain pre-existing conditions are excluded, check on the exact definition of pre-existing.

- Insurance Provided by Program Sponsor: Some programs include insurance as part of their program fee and have pre-planned insurance arrangements for their participants. Purchasing their insurance may make it easier for the program staff to assist you while abroad. However, you should still look closely at the limitations in its coverage. If the program does not offer insurance, and/or you think the program insurance is not sufficient you should consider purchasing additional travel/study abroad insurance.

- Other Aspects to Consider: Other aspects to consider include the financial limits of coverage, whether your insurance applies during independent travel or vacation, what countries it includes, whether evacuation and repatriation is included, the policy's...
Types of Insurance

- **Major Medical:** This type of insurance ensures that all or part of your medical expenses for illness and injury will be paid. Costs vary from country to country. It's important to have sufficient coverage for any healthcare needs you may have while abroad.

- **Emergency Evacuation:** This type of insurance provides support for transportation from the scene of an accident to the closest appropriate medical care facility. This could be by ambulance, helicopter, air rescue, or other form of special transportation. The insurance provider, in conjunction with an emergency assistance company, should work with a local doctor in deciding where the appropriate medical care can be provided. It may not cover your return to the United States if the company does not believe it is necessary.

- **Legal Assistance/Liability Insurance:** If you encounter legal difficulties abroad, you may need the assistance of a local attorney. If you are found responsible for damages, liability insurance may cover those costs. The U.S. Department of State may assist you in finding an attorney, but they can neither pay attorney costs nor damages.

- **Lost Baggage/Property Insurance:** Insurance can be purchased to cover lost baggage and loss or theft of your baggage abroad.

- **Motor Vehicle Coverage:** Whether you rent a car, motorcycle, moped, or accompany someone in a personal vehicle, you should insure that you, the vehicle, and any passengers will be covered in case of accident or injury. You may need to pay for damage to someone else's vehicle or the injury of others if you are found responsible in the case of an accident.

- **Kidnapping and Terrorism Insurance:** Insurance is available to provide support if you are a victim of kidnapping or terrorism.

- **Accidental Death and Dismemberment/Life Insurance:** In the case of loss of limbs or death, this coverage provides funding to compensate you or your beneficiary. Students with a spouse or dependents may want to consider purchasing a comprehensive life insurance policy.

- **Repatriation of Remains:** In the event of your death, this type of insurance will provide means for the return of your remains to the United States.

**Insurance Policy Components**

- **Pre-Existing Conditions:** Some insurance will specifically limit coverage for medical conditions existing prior to the beginning of coverage.

- **High Risk Activities:** Some insurance will specifically exclude coverage for high risk activities like contact sports, skiing, mountain climbing, etc.

- **Continuing Coverage in the United States:** Many international insurance plans do not cover continued care in the U.S., or if they do, the amount of coverage is limited. You may want to continue your Major Medical coverage in the U.S. while abroad in case you need to come home for medical care.

- **Special Areas:** Some insurance will limit coverage for accidents involving alcohol and drug related activities.

- **Advance Payment vs. Reimbursement:** It's important to know whether your insurance company will pay when services are provided. Many travel insurance policies require you to obtain approval before treatment, then pay in advance, and then submit a claim for later reimbursement of medical expenses.

- **24-hour Emergency Assistance/Help Line:** This type of service can be limited to a simple phone response system, or provide you with comprehensive emergency assistance for evacuation, legal aid, translation services, and other support around the world.

- **Family Emergencies:** Some policies may offer coverage for family emergencies, illness or death. The costs of emergency bereavement flights back home may be covered, as well as a refund in the event you cannot complete your program.

- **Airline/Program Bankruptcy:** Find out if your policy covers the possibility of airline or program bankruptcy, and if you are entitled to a refund if such an event occurs.

Now that you are abroad, it's important to confirm whether your insurance will support your health and safety needs while abroad and the process you need to follow to get help.

- **Emergency 24 Hour Assistance:** Find out whether you have emergency assistance coverage. If you have study abroad insurance, many times, you will be given information with a 24 hour number you can call to get help. If you purchased an ISIC student ID card [http://www.isic.org/], one of the benefits is an Emergency Help Line [http://www.isic.org/student-discounts/services.aspx]. Some credit cards also have an emergency assistance support benefit. Find out what support you have and have information available on how to get help while you are in the country and city where you are studying as well as when you are traveling outside of that area while abroad.

- **Health Insurance:** Review your materials about your health care coverage while abroad. Do you have an insurance card with information on how to get approval for medical care? Will you have to pay in advance or get reimbursed? Find out the steps to get coverage.

Both these topics should have been covered in your study abroad program orientation. If they weren't or you didn't find out everything you needed to, make sure to ask your program faculty or staff about how your emergency 24 hour assistance and major medical care insurance coverage work.

It is really important that you are prepared to get help for yourself while abroad and if you understand the coverage, if one of the other students or faculty or staff on your program are ill or injured, then you will be able to help.
H. Know the Risk Involved in Your Activities Abroad

First, read the following article about risks. Second, answer the Risk Questions following the article. Research them using the Resources page http://www.studentsabroad.com/resources.html.

What Activities are Definitely Unsafe?

Naturally the answer to this question depends on the country to which you will be traveling. Before departing on your program you should certainly consult the specific health and immunization information provided by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) http://www.cdc.gov/travel/, the Department of State's Consular Information sheets: http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1765.html, for general demographic and political information, and the student travel safety tips also provided by the Department of State at International Travel Safety Information for Students http://travel.state.gov/travel/living/studying/studying_1238.html, and Safety Issues http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/safety/safety_1180.html, as well as all literature provided by your program's administrators. Above all, it is fundamentally important for you to understand that going abroad does not grant you any sort of immunity from disease, harm or any legal repercussions as a result of your actions. Every country poses challenges to foreign students and they all have crime and sickness, just like the U.S. Many students get caught in the trap of thinking that a trip abroad is like a trip to Disneyland and fail to take necessary precautions. Don't let this happen to you. The information you gather from the resources listed above is real, useful, and practical so be prepared to apply it consistently and conscientiously. Ultimately, you are the one most responsible for your own health and safety while abroad and you are the one most able to ensure your success.

What about partaking in risk-limited vs. high-risk activities?

The types of activities in a study abroad program should be limited. You should be aware of guidelines and repercussions to your status of engaging in dangerous activities (the definition of which is highly subjective). Because of the vagaries of medical and insurance services in a foreign country and general unfamiliarity with the risks you may face there (at least for the first several months) it's a good idea to avoid obviously risky undertakings. What this means depends on where you are. In some countries it may be that a ride in a taxi is just as dangerous as skydiving is in another.

It is up to you to find out what risks are associated with the things you want to do while abroad. As a minimum, medical insurance should be obtained and understood before you take off for your program. The people managing your study abroad experience may not always be aware of the risks associated with activities they encourage you to partake in. You must take responsibility for finding out all you can about these and decide whether you can deal with any dangers they might present to you. No one will want to impede your enjoyment of your time overseas, but accidents and injuries can and do happen. The important thing is to be informed, prepared, and able to say no to activities you feel are too dangerous.

(Taken from the Center for Global Education's Risk Factors And Strategies To Reduce Risk, Study Abroad Student Handbook.)

Risk Questions

1. Are you covered by your insurance for the activities you wish you partake in while abroad? Are there any restrictions on your activities in the program's guidelines?

2. Do your program administrators have anything planned for you that you are personally uncomfortable with? Are any of these considered mandatory?

3. What kinds of activity might you participate in that may be considered high-risk activities? (e.g. contact sports, skiing, etc.)

4. Could sex be a high-risk activity in your host country? What is the prevalence of HIV and other STDs in the host country? Are condoms readily available?

I. Learn the Value of Acting like a Local

Stereotypes and your Safety

As you learned earlier in the course, people's view overseas of students from the U.S. may not be accurate. Their views may be influenced by television shows like the OC or Sex in the City which show Americans as sexually promiscuous and rich. Also you learned that smiling or looking someone in the eye, which is so common in the U.S., may be viewed differently by people in other cultures. These misinterpretations by others may result in unwanted attention and may compromise your safety while abroad.
Given this, being your typical, “friendly” self in the local bar, dressed in a revealing outfit may be unsafe. Add alcohol to the mix and/or being alone and not speaking the language, and you may become the target of much more than a little unwanted attention. Your intentions to make some local friends may easily be misinterpreted.

Even if you are not targeted for sexual advances, drunken foreigners are also targets for theft.

J. Know Your Resources for Road Safety

While road accidents DO happen, you can do your part to avoid putting yourself in situations that have a higher risk of resulting in one.

Visit the links below for more information about what you can do to stay safe on the road:

1. **Road Safety Overseas**: This part of the State Department’s website contains valuable information and links about road conditions in your study abroad location, international driving permits, tips for students, and other valuable links. [http://www.travel.state.gov/travel/tips/safety/safety_1179.html#students](http://www.travel.state.gov/travel/tips/safety/safety_1179.html#students)

2. **Consular Info Sheets**: These info sheets are available for every country and include a brief country description as well as health and safety information and travel warnings in the country, if any. Just click on the country you are interested in for more information. [http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1765.html](http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1765.html)

3. **Association for Safe International Road Travel (ASIRT)**: Study Abroad: ASIRT has compiled brochures for students to download with valuable tips and information on road safety abroad. Current brochures include Global Road Safety for U.S. Students Abroad and Pedestrian and Passenger Safety Checklists. Download these documents, read them carefully, and keep copies with you while abroad. You can also purchase country-specific road safety information. [http://www.asirt.org/StudyAbroad/Brochures/tabid/86/Default.aspx](http://www.asirt.org/StudyAbroad/Brochures/tabid/86/Default.aspx)

K. Safe Housing While Abroad

Ensuring that your place of residence while abroad is safe is extremely important as other countries have different requirements and expectations of their housing. Use the following checklist to go over safety issues where you will be living.

Did staff members explain housing emergency response at length in mandatory orientation sessions?

As soon as you arrive in your new housing abroad, do an inventory of the location of doors and windows and mentally map out a set of escape routes in case of fire.

- **Make sure that you have a copy of all the necessary keys.**
- **If there is a security alarm, be sure that you know how to use it.**
- **Ask for an emergency contact whom you can call or visit in case a problem arises.**
- **Have you been given a 24-hour telephone number to be answered by study abroad staff or your university at home?**
- **Check for a fire or premises evacuation plan.**
- **Where are the fire extinguishers and safety equipment?**
- **Do all doors and windows close and lock properly?**
- **Have you gotten into the habit of locking your front door as soon as you close it behind you whether you are coming or going?**
- **Don’t admit strangers to your home. Repairmen should be asked for identification.**
- **If you experience a pattern of harassing calls, report them to the authorities just as you would in the U.S.**
- **Assure that your housing does not have uninvited visitors or guests. Take an active role to make sure strangers are reported to authorities or staff.**
- **Do not keep doors propped open.**
First, read the chart on avoiding unsafe activities below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prevention Tactics for:</th>
<th>Avoiding Unsafe Encounters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Avoiding Sexual Advances** | 1. Drink moderately.  
2. Don’t go out alone or let your friends leave you at a bar with the new person/people you just met.  
3. Be aware of your surroundings.  
4. Learn the language.  
5. Try to dress and act like the locals and blend in—you may want to practice “the look” that locals use to halt unwanted sexual advances.  
6. One of the best compliments you can get overseas is “I thought you were a local!” |
| **Avoiding Crime** | 1. Photocopy your important documents twice. Leave one copy with someone at home whom you can reach and keep the other copy, separate from the originals, with your belongings. Having a copy of your passport, your visa, and your travelers’ checks will expedite their replacement.  
2. Don’t allow people to handle your bags, even if they seem friendly and helpful.  
3. Distribute your vital possessions (passports, tickets, money) among your various bags as much as possible. This way losing one item will not mean losing everything essential.  
4. Carry your money in a money belt under a shirt that is tucked in so the straps can’t be cut from underneath.  
5. Be particularly cautious in crowded places— a favorite venue for pickpockets.  
6. Know the approximate value of some goods and services, to avoid being scammed. |
| **Avoiding Violence** | 1. Assimilate your style of dress to that of the local people.  
2. Pay attention to any warnings issued by the embassy or consulate. You can register online with the U.S. Department of State prior to your arrival in the host country to receive this type of information. Native acquaintances will also likely know a great deal about unsafe activities and places.  
3. Don’t let yourself fall into the tourist trap of believing that the foreign country is an amusement park in which crime can’t occur. It can, and you can help to avoid it by keeping a realistic outlook and by taking sensible precautions wherever you go. |

In some countries, religious codes of conduct or other cultural nuances may make one or another minority groups a particular target of crime. For example, in some Muslim countries, women are often expected to dress and behave in what, by American standards, are very conservative ways. Failure to act appropriately can cause unwanted attention and possibly worse. Know the culture of your country and understand what kind of behavior will be expected of you.

Second, answer the Crime Questions after the article. Research them using the Crime http://studentsabroad.com/resources.html#Crime section in the Resources page. Post your written answers below.

**Crime Questions:**

1. Are there any current public announcements that will affect travel in your host country or region?

2. Are there currently any travel advisories or warnings for your host country? http://travel.state.gov/

3. Has there been any terrorist activity in your host country?

4. Is there anything conspicuous about your style of dress that identifies you as a U.S. American? How do the locals dress?

5. What is a reasonable price to pay in the host country for a taxi, a hotel room, a meal?
6. What is the emergency phone number (911) for the police in your host country?

7. What parts of your host city are considered unsafe? Where should you avoid going?

8. What types of crime incidents are common?

9. Where is the police department located—nearest your housing and nearest your host institution?

(Adapted from the Center for Global Education’s Personal Safety and Awareness Workbook, SAFETI Adaptation of Peace Corps Resources.)

**M. Top Ten Ways to Not Become a Victim of Crime around the World**

Read the Top Ten Ways to Not Become a Victim of Crime Around the World article from the Center for Global Education’s SAFETI On-Line Newsletter. [http://www.globaled.us/safeti/toptennotvic.html](http://www.globaled.us/safeti/toptennotvic.html)

(Malcolm Nance and Lisa Hughes, Top Ten Ways to Not Become a Victim of Crime Around the World, Center for Global Education’s SAFETI On-Line Newsletter.)

**N. Avoiding Legal Trouble Abroad**

First read the following Legal article below.

**What Responsibilities Do I Assume by Going Abroad?**

- Students going abroad are liable to the laws of the country they will visit. There are no exceptions made for foreigners, and ignorance will not be considered an excuse. It is your responsibility to know about the legal system of your host country and to abide by it. Your home country's embassy or consulate or the host country's embassy or consulate in Washington D.C. can provide you with information about laws you will be subject to while abroad. In general, common sense should get you by, but some countries may have laws that Americans will find unusual or unexpected. The State Department's Consular Sheets [http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1765.html](http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1765.html) can give you more information about this topic.

- Study abroad participants are also accountable to the rules and regulations of the program sponsors and the institution where they will be enrolled. You should be given this information as a part of the application/orientation process, but if you have any questions you should contact the sponsors or host institution.

- In general, you are expected to act in a considerate and respectful way as a representative of your home country. Behavior considered inappropriate at home is almost certainly considered inappropriate abroad, so count on acting more conservatively than you are accustomed to doing.

**How do I Avoid Legal Trouble?**

Many Americans going abroad assume that as foreigners, they will be given a great deal of leeway in legal matters. This is not the case. Just as in the U.S., all people, whether visitors or not, are subject to laws of the land and will be punished for breaking them. Most Americans do not aim to break laws in a foreign country any more than they would at home, so it’s likely that most trouble will arise from those laws you are unaware of or that are applied more strictly than they are at home. It’s imperative that you research the legal system of the country you will be living in, read the State Department consular sheets, ask the local embassy or consulate, other students who have studied abroad or lived in the same country, as well as the locals you come to know.

One particular area of concern for students abroad are laws pertaining to drug and alcohol use. Certain countries have a reputation for enforcing such laws loosely, and students traveling to these places have assumed that they will not get into trouble. Even in the Netherlands, however, where marijuana has been decriminalized, it is still illegal to use it and countless backpacking students have been arrested at the border trying to transport it, which is a serious crime. It’s safe to assume that in most foreign countries, the penalties for drug use are severe. Most other countries do not share the American view of innocent until proven guilty. Alcohol consumption may be a part of the culture of your host country, but drunkenness may be held in even lower esteem. In some countries, drinking any alcohol may be illegal. Learn your host country’s stance on alcohol consumption before you depart to avoid problems while you are there.

**Legal Questions**

1. Does the legal system in your host country presume innocent until proven guilty or guilty until proven innocent?

2. Does the U.S. Constitution apply to you in your host country?

3. Is consumption of alcohol legal in your host country?

4. If so, what is the legal age for alcohol consumption?

5. What are the most common occasions for students studying on your program to get into trouble?

6. Which laws should you be aware of? Which ones do you find confusing?

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**O. Drug Issues in Your Host Country**

First, read the following article about Drugs abroad.

*What's the Deal With Drugs?*

According to U.S. State Department statistics, one-third of the thousands of Americans arrested overseas each year are imprisoned on drug charges. Many of these people were carrying as little as one marijuana cigarette. Once imprisoned, there is nothing the consulate can do to get you out. Though they can sometimes arrange an attorney for you and protest inhumane treatment, this does not mean that you will receive a fair trial or be treated with dignity. Countries all over the world are instituting harsh drug sentences, ranging from mandatory 7-year sentences, possibly with no jury trial (or even without you present at your own trial) to the death penalty (in Saudi Arabia, Malaysia, Pakistan, Turkey, and Thailand). Many of these countries will not differentiate between personal use and full-scale trafficking.

- Think about the reality that you could be literally throwing your life away (or only part of it if you are lucky) for something as insignificant as a cigarette.
- Do not accept packages from others to be transported between countries, no matter what! The police at the airports and border crossings will use dogs that can smell through packaging and if you are caught with drugs, you will be arrested and may even be executed.
- Understand that your family's wealth, your status as an American, your ignorance of the local drug laws and punishments, or the relatively small amount of the drug you intended to carry will not save you from prosecution. Save yourself the concern and don't get involved with drugs.

**A Special Note on Prescription Drugs**

Prescription drugs require careful treatment when traveling overseas. In some countries, what is a legal prescription in the U.S. may be a controlled substance - illegal to possess. It's imperative that you carry all written prescriptions with you. In rare instances, standard U.S. prescriptions may not be recognized as legal permission to carry the drug you are using so you will have to have a special notarized prescription with you. Find out about this requirement from the U.S. embassy or consulate in the country in which you will be living.
Second, answer the Drug Questions after the article. Research them using the Drugs section in the Resources page http://studentsabroad.com/resources.html#Drugs. Post your written answers below.

**Drug Questions**

1. What are the penalties for use and/or possession of illegal drugs in your host country? What about for other countries you plan to visit while abroad?

2. If the medications you need will not be available in your host country, will it be possible to bring an adequate supply with you? Will it be possible to have additional drugs shipped to you? (This may require interaction with customs officials.)

3. If your prescription drug requires self-injection, will safe, sterile needles be available in your host country?

4. Customs officials may confiscate your drugs for analysis. Do you need to carry other types of documentation with you, besides a prescription (translated to the language of the country you will be in), as proof that your prescription drugs are legal (in the U.S.)? Do they need to be translated to the host country language?

5. What is the generic name for your medication? You should carry copies of your prescriptions by generic names.

6. Will you need to refill prescriptions while abroad? How much of each medication will you need for the duration of your trip?

7. Will your prescription drugs be legally available in your host country? Keep in mind that regionally manufactured drugs may be substandard.

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**P. Be Prepared for Crisis Abroad**

**Emergencies Overseas Checklist**

Make sure that you follow these steps in order to be prepared if a crisis should occur and check off what you have already completed. Anything you have not completed, be sure you do right away:

- Have your program sponsor’s contact information with you at all times.
- Have your faculty and staff director’s contact information with you at all times.
- Make sure you know the proper emergency procedures to follow.
- Make sure you have adequate insurance and proof of insurance.
- Make sure you have access to an emergency source of money.
- Register with your local embassy or consulate.
How Do I Cope if I get into Trouble Overseas?

This will depend on the sort of trouble you are in. If you find yourself in legal trouble (for example, you've been arrested), the U.S. Embassy or Consulate in your host country can do certain things for you, including:

- Visit you in jail after your arrest.
- Give you a list of local attorneys.
- Notify your family and friends and relay requests for money and other aid.
- Intercede with local authorities to help ensure your proper treatment under the law and in accordance with internationally recognized standards.
- Protest mistreatment.

But this is the limit of what consular officials are able to do on your behalf. You will be responsible for bearing the financial burden of your legal representation as well as the outcome of a trial. There is no special treatment allowed for U.S. citizens and you may cease to be protected by U.S. law and Constitutional rights once you leave the country. So be well informed of legal issues before you depart and avoid those things that might land you in trouble.

What Happens in a Serious Emergency?

Natural disasters, political upheavals, and terrorism are some of the events the State Department considers to be serious emergencies or crises. When they occur, a task force is set up in Washington, D.C. to deal with the situation and provide assistance to Americans abroad.

- Injury: In the case of injury, the U.S. Bureau of Consular Affairs http://travel.state.gov/ can assist your family in sending you the necessary funds to pay for your medical care. In some instances they can arrange for your transport and accompaniment back home, though the financial obligation on you’re and your family.
- Evacuation: If political crisis disturbs regular commercial transport out of your host country and it is unsafe for Americans to remain abroad, the U.S. State Department may arrange for special charter travel out of the country.
- Death: In the event of your death abroad, the Bureau of Consular Affairs will locate and inform your next of kin and relay any funds and special instructions for the disposition or burial of your remains. A representative from the Bureau can also help to settle your estate abroad on behalf of your relatives by preparing an official Foreign Service Report of Death that can be used in U.S. courts.

Remember that to facilitate these services on your behalf, you should register online with the U.S. Department of State prior to your arrival in the host country. Information on locating and registering with consulates can be found in the State Department’s Consular Information Sheets http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1765.html. Along with the U.S. government resources, find out how your program will assist you and have your 24-hour emergency assistance information with you at all times.

What are the Emergency Numbers/Contacts for my Host Country?

American students going abroad should keep in mind that foreign countries may have emergency services (police, fire department, paramedics) that cannot be reached by the 911 number they are accustomed to in the U.S. Some countries, such as France, Germany, and the U.K. have a similar 3-digit emergency phone number http://www.911dispatch.com/911/911_world.html, but other countries may require something more complicated.

One important step is to register online with the U.S. Department of State. This will allow you to be kept up to date on important events that may pose a risk to you while you are in the country, and to be evacuated in case of a crisis. The embassy or consulate should be able to provide you with the emergency services numbers for the host country.

(Taken from the Center for Global Education's Crisis Management Workbook, SAFETI Adaptation of Peace Corps Resources.)

Q. Crisis Management

Many students returning from study abroad say that it was one of the most valuable parts of their college or university experience. While most students experience a safe and healthy time abroad, some are forced to deal with minor crises such as pickpockets, petty theft, or a minor illness or injury (similar to those faced by students in the U.S.). In an unfamiliar environment with communication and cultural barriers, a minor crisis may be more difficult to handle. In addition, similar to the realities on a U.S. campus, there may be a few students who encounter a major emergency while abroad, such as a serious illness or injury, traffic accident, natural disaster, or violent crime.

Minor and Major Emergencies

The majority of students can protect themselves from minor emergencies in much the same ways they protect themselves from similar situations at home. However, what students consider a minor emergency at home can turn into a more difficult situation abroad. Small emergencies abroad can seem like larger ones due to language and communication barriers, and a lack of familiarity with foreign surroundings.

In addition to minor emergencies, some students may also face larger emergencies abroad. Frequently, these major emergencies tend to be events out of a student's control. Some unpredictable, major emergencies that could occur abroad include: natural disasters such as earthquakes and hurricanes, acts of terrorism, and serious medical problems.
Before a Crisis Occurs

The first step in crisis management is being prepared before a crisis occurs. Adopt a personal Emergency Action Plan (EAP) for yourself. Essentially, this document describes what actions to take in the event of an emergency. Your EAP could be as simple as a list of people to call in case you are hurt, along with copies of your insurance papers, passport, and names of any medications to which you are allergic.

During and after a Crisis

- Understanding Your Emotions: In response to a crisis, you may experience the following range of emotions. These feelings are normal responses to a difficult situation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disbelief</th>
<th>Fear</th>
<th>Anger</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anxiety/Panic</td>
<td>Difficulty concentrating</td>
<td>Denial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worry/Concern</td>
<td>Stress</td>
<td>Excitement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depression</td>
<td>Shock</td>
<td>Other</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Making Yourself Feel Safer: There are some things you can do to calm your emotions and make yourself feel safer in an emergency/crisis situation. The following list gives some tips on how to maintain your physical safety and mental health during a crisis:
  - Realize your feelings are normal.
  - Find/make a safe environment.
  - Maintain a basic self-care regimen (shower, shave, get dressed, exercise, etc.).
  - Avoid confrontation, both physical and verbal.
  - Take one step at a time.
  - Assess what you can and cannot control.
  - Ask for help.
  - Create a support network.

For more information on the Phases of Crisis, please see the SAFETI Adaptation of Peace Corps Resources on Crisis Management
http://globaled.us/peacecorps/crisis_h.html.

Finally, sometimes students need to withdraw from their program, possibly because of an emergency back home. While there is little you can do to prevent this, you should know your program's withdrawal deadlines, penalties, and policies, just in case.

(Taken from the Center for Global Education's Crisis Management, Study Abroad Student Handbook.)

R. Research the Crisis Questions

Research the Crisis Questions below by doing your own in country investigating (your study abroad program office or the Crisis section in the Resources page http://studentsabroad.com/resources.html#Crisis may be helpful), and post your written below.

Crisis Questions

1. Are there any major events occurring in your host country that might be dangerous for Americans in general? For you in particular?

2. Are there different types of police in your host country, and what are they called? (e.g. national, regional, etc.)

3. Should you register with the U.S. Embassy?

4. What number do you dial for paramedics? How do you say 'paramedics' or 'ambulance' in the language of your host country?

5. What number would you dial for the fire department? How do you say 'fire' in the language of your host country?

6. What number would you dial for the police in your host country? How do you say 'police' in the language of your host country?
7. Where is the hospital (are the hospitals) located in your host city?

8. How do you say 'hospital' in the language of your host country?

9. Who are the 24-hour contacts for your program, both at your host institution and at your home institution?

10. Who are the emergency contacts that your family should contact in case of an emergency, if they cannot get in touch with you?

11. Who should you call for non-emergency assistance?

12. How do you contact the U.S. Embassy/Consulate?

13. Where is the nearest U.S. Embassy/Consulate?

14. What number do you dial to get in touch with the U.S. Embassy and/or Consulate? How do you say 'embassy' and 'consulate' in the language of your host country?

15. What types of emergency services are provided by U.S. consular officers abroad?

16. Do you have 24-hour emergency assistance? What is the contact information to obtain assistance while abroad? (Ex. - ISIC 24-hour emergency help line).

17. Are you covered by U.S. law in your host country? What is considered legal treatment of a person who has been arrested in the host country?

18. What are your program's withdrawal deadlines, penalties, and policies?

(Taken from the Center for Global Education's Crisis Management Workbook, SAFETI Adaptation of Peace Corps Resources.)

**S. Complete Your Emergency Card and Personal Emergency Action Plan**

Most students returning from study abroad say that it was one of the most valuable parts of their college experience. While most students experience a safe and healthy time abroad, some are forced to deal with minor crises like pickpockets, petty theft, or a minor illness or injury (similar to those faced by students in the U.S.). In an unfamiliar environment with communication and cultural barriers, a minor crisis may be more difficult to handle. In addition, similar to the realities on a U.S. campus, there may be a few students who encounter a major emergency while abroad, such as a serious illness or injury, traffic accident, natural disaster, or violent crime (see the Crisis Management [http://www.studentsabroad.com/crisismanage.html] section for more information).

Many study abroad programs have developed comprehensive support strategies for dealing with minor and major emergencies. The first place to start getting information about your program's support strategies is in your study abroad advisor's office in the U.S. and your program director's office abroad.

The following resources are available to assist you before going abroad:
First, click on the Emergency Card [http://studentsabroad.com/emergencycard.html](http://studentsabroad.com/emergencycard.html) and print your own Emergency Card or use the one below. It’s a condensed resource, which includes your most important contact numbers and personal information you should have available at all times. Fill it out and leave copies with your program administrator and loved ones at home. It’s a good idea to laminate the card so that it doesn’t get destroyed or damaged. Keep it on your person at all times so that others can help you if you’re unable to help yourself! Make sure you know how to dial the U.S. from abroad!

![Student Emergency Information Card](image)

Second fill out the Personal Emergency Action Plan (EAP) below to help you create a plan before you leave. It’s different from the Emergency Card above. Your EAP is equivalent to a strategy-planning device in case of an emergency, whereas the Emergency Card is a wallet-sized summary of your personal information and emergency contacts. You can print out another copy from here: [http://studentsabroad.com/creatingpeap.html](http://studentsabroad.com/creatingpeap.html).

Explore the link for Helpful Communication Sheets, Icons, and Other Useful Information. Don’t be caught unprepared when you have the tools you need at your disposal! Fill out the translation list below as best you can and keep with you if you need help from a local.

**Know Where to Go**

Where should you go first in an emergency, and what method of transportation will you use to get there?

Be aware of all your emergency transportation options. Know the numbers for the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Airport</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bus Station</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Train Station</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metro Station</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rent-a-Car</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boat/Ferry/Port Authority</td>
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Know Your Emergency Contact Information

In addition to your personal emergency contacts, we also recommend you look up/ask for the numbers for the following individuals and agencies nearest to your study abroad and/or travel location(s):

City or country's 911 equivalent: ____________________________  Local Government/Visa office: ____________________________
Consulate/Embassy: ____________________________  Police: ____________________________
Fire: ____________________________  Hospital: ____________________________
Post Office: ____________________________  Translator Service: ____________________________
Lawyer: ____________________________  Red Cross: ____________________________
24-Hour Assist/Insurance Hotline: ____________________________  Other: ____________________________

Who will you call first, second, third, etc. in an emergency?
1. ____________________________  2. ____________________________  3. ____________________________

Do your emergency contacts have each others' phone numbers so they can communicate and relay information about you to each other?

What are some alternate ways of communicating with your emergency contacts?

The following are some communication options you may have available:

- Telephone
- Cell Phone/Text Message
- Satellite Phone
- Fax
- E-mail/Internet
- PDA/Palm Pilot
- Post Office/Express Mail Service
- Wire Service

Who would you like those assisting you to contact in the event of your illness, injury, incarceration, kidnapping, etc...?

Do all of your emergency contacts know what your wishes are in the event of your serious injury or death?

Where does your nearest emergency contact live, and how fast can you get to him/her?

Back-up Plan/Special Conditions

If the situation does not permit you to follow the original emergency plan, what is the back-up plan (Plan B)?

Are there any other special conditions to consider which are unique to your situation (i.e. weather conditions/hazards in your region of study/travel, a personal physical handicap, poor public transportation or phone service in your area...)?

Emergency Kit/Money

Which items do you still need to add to your emergency first aid kit before it is fully stocked and ready?

Do you have emergency cash reserves, travelers' checks, credit cards, etc. on-hand, in case you can't count on banks/ATMs, or get to a bank/ATM?

Using the emergency supplies and reserve money you have set aside, for how many days would you be able to sustain yourself and what would you use each day?
Also print out the Emergency Action Plan (EAP) Steps. Keep a copy with you at all times. We've included a list of suggested documents and items to help you respond effectively during an emergency.

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<th>Documents that should be attached to your EAP:</th>
<th>Items that you should have with you at all times:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Copy of Passport and Visa (where applicable)</td>
<td>1. Communication Device(s)</td>
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<td>2. Copy of Emergency Assistance Hotline Information</td>
<td>Cell phone, PDA, Phone, Calling Card (a program</td>
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<td>3. Copy of Insurance Card/Information</td>
<td>Satellite phone may help in remote locations)</td>
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<td>4. Copy of Area Maps/Safe Routes</td>
<td>2. Funds</td>
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<td>5. Copy of Emergency Card</td>
<td>Local $s, US$, Travelers Checks, ATM/Credit Card</td>
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<td>6. Copy of Communication Sheets</td>
<td>3. Sample Emergency/First Aid Kit</td>
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<td>7. Copy of Traveler’s Check Receipts</td>
<td>Flashlight, water (or purification tablets), whistle,</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. Information Release and Approval for Medical Emergency</td>
<td>pocket knife (not on plane), adhesive bandages, elastic bandage (ace-type), antibiotic ointment, gauze pads, first aid tape, scissors, sun block, lip ointment, burn cream, passport, aspirin/pain reliever, am/fm radio, map, batteries, insect repellent, rain poncho, prescription/medication, thermal blanket, toilet paper, glasses, contact solution.</td>
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<td>9. Special Medical Needs Treatment Information</td>
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<td>10. Power of Attorney</td>
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<td>11. Copy of Home &amp; International Drivers Licenses</td>
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Steps to help you stay calm and use your EAP more effectively in an emergency:

**STEP ONE**  
**Remain calm.** Take a deep breath. You will need a clear head in order to focus on your next move.

**STEP TWO**  
**Assess the situation/Get Advice from Program Staff.** Identify in what kind of emergency situation you find yourself. Contact program staff for advice. An emergency/crisis can be:

1. Personal: Accident/Injury, Death, Illness, Family Problem, Sexual Assault, Kidnapping, Arrest, etc.
2. Regional: Natural/Environmental Disaster, Civil Unrest, Political Uprising, Terrorist Attack, War Outbreak, etc.

**STEP THREE**  
**Take Action.** Exercise good judgment. Follow your evacuation plan/written instructions/maps you have developed as part of your EAP to help remove you from the emergency and get you to a safer location where you can get help. Remember the alternate transportation options you have available.

**STEP FOUR**  
**Get in touch.** Now that you are in a safer and more stable location, update others about your situation. Using a method of communication at your disposal, get in touch with your emergency contacts so they can help you. Have them assist you in finding what you need (medical care, transport, a lawyer, etc.)

1. Take care of yourself. While you are waiting for your contacts to assist you, or in case you cannot reach anyone to assist you, use your emergency kit. Take out the supplies you need to keep yourself healthy (bandages, food, jacket, radio, etc). You may need additional/continuing medical care and/or personal/psychological counseling.
2. Keep Trying. If you cannot get a hold of anyone to help you (because phone lines are down, you are trapped, etc don't give up. Try alternate methods of communication and transportation until you are able to reach someone. If you need to move to another location, let others know and leave a written description of where you are going.

**STEP FIVE**  
**Move to a more permanent location.** After you have removed yourself from any immediate threat, regrouped at a safer location, and gotten in touch with your emergency contacts, you may need to move to a more permanent location for treatment/assistance. Consider your transportation options and get yourself to the appropriate location (hospital, police station, embassy/consulate, contact's home, counseling center, etc.)

**STEP SIX**  
**Stay in touch.** Maintain contact and update your emergency contacts on your condition. It would be useful to have a "communication tree" whereby your emergency contacts can collaborate to help you through the emergency situation (you may need to have privacy release forms in place for this to happen).

**STEP SEVEN**  
**Evaluate and revise your EAP.** After the emergency is over, and once your condition has stabilized, evaluate your EAP and use what you've learned to revise it in case of future emergencies (Please provide feedback to the LMU Center for Global Education about how other students might learn from your experience).
Explore the link for Helpful Communication Sheets, Icons, and Other Useful Information. Don't be caught unprepared when you have the tools you need at your disposal! [http://www.studentsabroad.com/infosheet.html](http://www.studentsabroad.com/infosheet.html)

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**Phrases**

Each student should develop his or her own personal list of essential words and phrases to know. You may encounter many other helpful and important phrases you would like to include on your own list. For instance, you may want to look up specific phrases pertaining to your host country. Use our list as a guide, or starting point; then add your own additional country-specific phrases. In addition, you should also know how to dial a country’s 24-hour emergency phone number (equivalent to a 9-1-1 system).

**Arrests**

- I am a United States citizen.
- I have a right to call the United States Embassy/Consulate.
- Please call the United States Embassy/Consulate immediately.

**Food & Water**

- Where is the market?
- Where can I get something to eat?
- Is this safe drinking water?

**Where is the closest internet café?**

**Help**

- This is an emergency.
- I need help.
- Where is the police station?
- Where can I get help?
- Please help me!
- Stop! Thief!

**How much does this cost?**

**Transportation**

- How long is the trip?
- How much is the ticket?
- Can you take me to a (bus, taxi, train, metro)?
- Please take me to the airport.
- Does this bus/metro stop at...?
I can't/don't eat meat/pork, etc.

I am allergic to...

General Info
My name is...

Please speak slowly.

Where is the nearest (bathroom, telephone)?

Where can I find information about ...

Can you show me on this map?

Can you contact this person for me?

I don't understand.

What (time, date, day) is it?

Can you give me directions to ...

Can you write this down for me?

I'm lost.

Medical
My blood type is...

Please take me to the hospital/doctor.

I'm allergic to penicillin/aspirin/etc.

I'm not feeling well.

How do I get to the (doctor, hospital)?

I am diabetic, etc.

Money
Do you take travelers' checks?

Do you take credit cards?

Where can I exchange money?

Where is the closest ATM?

I need a cash advance from my credit card.

What is the exchange rate for (dollars) to (local currency)?

Are there student rates?

Where can I get a (bus, taxi, train, metro)?

Where can I rent a car?

What is the fare?

Icons
You may find it helpful to print and cut out our Service Icons Card that you can carry with you. The card contains a series of simple images that represent services you may require—services like a telephone, post-office, taxi, and hospital. If you don't remember, or don't know, how to say a certain word in the language of the country where you are studying, you can point to the picture on the card that represents that word. For example, if you need to find a telephone, you can show someone the picture of a telephone on the card and they can assist you. It is better to already be able to comfortably communicate in the language of the country in which you will be studying. However, you should keep this card with you just in case you forget how to say a certain word, or, in the case of injury, you become physically unable to verbally communicate.
A. Capture the Memories and Keep in Touch

As your overseas journey draws to a close, there are a number of simple things you can do to bring proper closure to your adventure. These range from taking last minute photos and getting addresses of overseas friends and program classmates, to being sure to say your good-byes in a culturally appropriate manner.

Recording Memories

Once abroad it's easy to get so involved in classes and daily activities, including planning trips to every other country on the continent that we often forget to look deeply into the local culture and record it. Building memories is one of the joys of overseas study, but before long your daily routine becomes just that, routine! You should record as much of your everyday life as you can, especially those ordinary places, people, and things you want to remember. This can include everything from collecting photographs (film, digital, VCR), to buying popular music, local handicrafts, postcards of your favorite places, and even learning to cook a dish you like.

Pictures of the Eiffel Tower, Big Ben, the Vatican or other major monuments are nice, especially with you and your friends standing in front of them. But everyone sees pictures of these places all the time. No one has seen the places that are part of your everyday life. Those photographs will not only be more interesting to the folks at home, but more meaningful to you in the future. If you're an artist, even a budding one, try capturing everyday life in small paintings, sketches or drawings. This rarely goes unnoticed and people will often glance at what you are doing and, if it looks interesting, could be asking YOU questions.

It's surprising how quickly one can get used to living in the new place and take things that once seemed so new or odd and overlook them completely. Suddenly, you are not noticing ordinary features of daily life any more. They're no longer strange. This generally indicates that you have become somewhat adapted to the culture.

Keeping a journal is, of course, an excellent way of keeping track of your experience.

The main point is to think about how you're going to take your memories home because they will fade over time.

Keeping in Touch

Keeping in touch by e-mail is so common that it's hardly worth mentioning; however, warning is necessary here. Sometimes people spend so much time online, that they hardly experience the new culture at all. If you’re at the Internet Café much of your free time while abroad, you may want to think about the possibility of being in some kind of transition shock. That said, it does help to keep track of:

• Changes in your family (illnesses, loss, new arrivals, moves, relationship changes, etc.)
• Changes in the lives of your friends.
• Changes on campus: what major events have occurred or alterations made in how things are done.
• Changes in your home community.
• Changes in public life at home: elections, shifts in political directions and the like.

This need not be an exhaustive or exhausting process but simply, and as briefly as possible, one of keeping up to date on major events so that you are not clueless when you return home.

Another suggestion is to keep a blog that can be accessed by your family and friends. This way, they’ll have more to talk about with you when you return home.

(Taken from Module 2.1-Preparing to Come Home What’s Up With Culture?, School of International Studies, University of the Pacific, Bruce La Brack, ed. (2003), funding by FIPSE, U.S. Department of Education.)

B. Find Out why Saying Goodbye is Important

Learn how to bring proper closure to your experience by saying a culturally appropriate goodbye to those you have come to know during your stay. Research what traditions exist for leave-taking in your host country culture, and think about what you will do when it comes time for you to depart.

The Importance of Saying Goodbye

One of the most neglected aspects of an overseas sojourn is the way students depart. Nobody likes to say goodbye and many study abroad students put it off until it is either too late or they rush through the process. This is a big mistake.

If you made any friends or acquaintances while abroad, had a favorite teacher, lived with a homestay family, got to know a local shop keeper, or established any regular relationship, then it is very important that you show respect and acknowledge the bond properly. It may be that there is a particular custom in your host country for leave-taking that you may not be aware of. You may wish to ask a friend or mentor about this (e.g. in Germany it is customary to give your own bon voyage party to which you invite your friends or fellow students!). In some cultures, distributing small gifts to those you are leaving is appropriate. In others, the opposite may be true - the returnee is often given a small token; however, if they leave abruptly or without adequate notice, this may not be possible and may be
considered very poor manners. A gift of a photograph that you have taken may be a wonderful way to leave a memory of yourself behind. Understand that every culture has its own rules on the appropriate way to bring closure. Doing the culturally sensitive thing is likely to be greatly appreciated and remembered by those left behind.

When the time comes to depart and return home, it is very important to say goodbye to all those places as well as the people who have become part of your life. A last visit, and taking the photos that you have forgotten until now, brings closure to your stay. Of course besides mementos, pictures, and memories, you are likely to bring back some intercultural skills, behaviors, and attitudes that you picked up by studying overseas. These are sometimes referred to as covert competencies because one often remains unaware of such adaptations until others comment upon the behavior. The next course will give you a chance to assess and contemplate what kinds of culture learning occurred while you were abroad and how these skills might serve you well in future employment.

I plan to come back, so I don’t really need to say goodbye...

Many people do return to the countries in which they studied abroad. But life’s unexpected twists and turns leads others, no matter the intentions, to either remain in the U.S. or to explore new destinations. We don't say this to discourage you; we say this because we don't want you to leave the country with a fantasy that you will return and do the things you did not get a chance to do this time. If it’s important, do it this time. If that’s not realistic due to lack of time or money, still make sure you say your goodbyes in a way you can live with…possibly for the rest of your life.

(Taken from “I plan to come back, so I don’t really need to say goodbye”(p. 140), In Maximizing Study Abroad: A Students’ Guide to Strategies for Language and Culture Learning and Use; and from Module 2.1-Preparing to Come Home in What’s Up With Culture?, School of International Studies, University of the Pacific, Bruce La Brack, ed. (2003), funding by FIPSE, U.S. Department of Education.)

C. Learn about Duties and Customs Regulations

Read this section on duties and customs to find information on how to check for new updates and stricter requirements now enforced by airports and airlines. There are some basic restrictions regarding what you can and cannot bring back into the U.S.

Duties and Customs

- Clearing Customs: Follow the directions given to you by flight attendants and your program for the process of clearing customs.
- Declaration Forms: In most cases, you will be given a card to fill out that will require your passport information, items you have purchased overseas and are bringing back into the country, and the cost of these items.
- Receipt of Purchase: Retain all receipts, or make an itemized list of purchases, prior to customs inspection.
- Taxes: If the total cost of your purchases exceeds a certain amount, you will be asked to pay a tax on all items over the allotted amount. Also, be aware that some countries charge an international departure tax that it not included in the ticket price and must be paid separately upon leaving the country. Often only cash payment in accepted and the amount can increase with short notice. Check with your host institution's International Programs Office or your study abroad program for the latest regulations.

Items You Cannot Bring Into the U.S.: The following is a general list of items that cannot be brought into the U.S.:

- Plants, animals (especially those on endangered species lists), and all live birds, unless you have a valid certificate or license from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [http://www.cdc.gov/].
- Drugs – even if a type of drug was legal overseas, it may not be legal to bring it back to the U.S. If you are carrying prescription drugs, it's important to have your prescription with you for proof.
- Firearms, knives, explosives, and gas canisters.

Items You Can Bring Into the U.S.: There are limits on bringing in substances that are not illegal, such as alcohol or tobacco. Check with customs for updates on these legal quantities. Even if a minor can purchase alcohol and tobacco abroad, he or she cannot bring these substances back into the U.S.

- Smuggling: What may be legal in other countries may not be legal in the U.S., and vice versa. Smuggling can be a federal offense leading to fines or imprisonment.
- Accepting Things from Others: Under no circumstances, should you ever take anything from, or hold anything for, anyone who asks you to do so. If anyone does ask you, simply say no and walk away. Don't be afraid to say no to family and friends. You need to think about the potential consequences before you hold anything for anyone.
- Watching Your Bags: Once you have picked up your bags from baggage claim, and are on your way to customs, be sure to keep a close eye on all of your luggage so that no one but you has access to it.
- Random Baggage Searches: If you are stopped and asked to open your luggage, cooperate with the customs officials. Customs officials often conduct random baggage searches; just because your luggage gets searched, it doesn't mean you have done something wrong.
- Carry-On Luggage: Check with your airline to find out its regulations for what you can and cannot pack in your carry-on bags.
- Checked Luggage: Check with your airline for up-to-date information on weight restrictions and bag limitations to avoid incurring fees.

It is helpful to check the U.S. Customs' website [http://www.cbp.gov/xp/cgov/travel/] for updated information.
D. Get Re-Entry Tips

For some students, the biggest challenge may be the return home. You may not be thinking about going home, but it is important to know how to prepare for your return.

What can I Do before I Come Home to Help Myself?

What can you do to prepare to return home? Being aware of the re-entry process and following some advice from those who have already returned can facilitate your re-entry. The following list is compiled from many sources, but all of the tips come from returnees who have offered these ideas in the hope of making your initial re-entry easier for you and for those at home. They are offered to you as things to consider as you prepare to return from study abroad. First, say goodbye (this will be discussed in a different section), then:

1. Mentally prepare for the adjustment process

The more you consider your alternatives, think about what is to come, and know about why returning home is both similar to and different from going abroad, the easier the transition will be. Anticipating is useful. As one psychologist put it, "Worrying helps." However, obsessing does not, so be prepared - not paranoid!

2. Allow yourself time

Returning home is a process that will take time, just as adjusting to a new foreign culture required a period of acculturation. Give yourself time to relax and reflect upon what is going on around you, how you are reacting to it, and what you might like to change. Give yourself permission to ease into the transition.

3. Understand that the familiar will seem different

You will have changed, home has changed, and you will be seeing familiar people, places, and behaviors from new perspectives. Some things will seem strange, perhaps even unsettling. Expect to have some new emotional and psychological responses to being home. Everyone does.

4. Catch up with what is happening back home

Some linguistic, social, political, economic, entertainment, and current event topics may be unfamiliar to you. New academic programs or regulations, slang expressions, popular culture references, recent events, and even major social changes may have emerged since you left. You may have some learning to do about your own culture! The longer you have been gone, the more you may have to discover, and the more noticeable it will be to others that you are not culturally fully up-to-speed. Approach this challenge in the same way you approached culture learning overseas, with a sense of humor and an open mind.

5. Reserve judgments

Just as you had to keep an open mind when first encountering the culture of a new foreign country, try to resist the natural impulse to make snap decisions and judgments about people and behaviors once back home. Mood swings are common at first, and your most valuable and valid analysis of events is likely to take place after allowing some time for thorough reflection. Most returnees report gaining major insights into themselves and their home countries during re-entry, but only after allowing a sufficient period of time for reflection and self-analysis.

6. Respond thoughtfully and slowly

Quick answers and impulsive reactions often characterize returnees. Frustration, disorientation, and boredom in the returnee can lead to behavior that is incomprehensible to family and friends. Take some time to rehearse what you want to say and how you will respond to predictable questions and situations; prepare to greet those that are less predictable with a calm, thoughtful approach. If you find yourself being overly defensive or aggressive in responding to those around you, it is probably time to take a deep breath and relax. It is tempting when asked for the twentieth time, "How was London?" to sarcastically reply, "Very British!" The momentary satisfaction will do little to open a real communication channel. As always, thinking before answering is a good strategy.

7. Cultivate sensitivity

Showing an interest in what others have been doing while you have been on your adventure overseas is a sure way to re-establish rapport. Much annoyance with returnees results from the perception that returnees are so anxious to tell their stories and share their experiences that they are not interested in what happened to those who stayed at home. This is ironic because one of the most common frustrations reported by returnees is that those at home only ask superficial questions (e.g., So how was it?) and want short answers. Returnees see this as a lack of opportunity to express their feelings fully. In such circumstances, being as good a listener as a talker is a key ingredient in mutual sharing and you may need to practice those skills upon return.

8. Be wary of comparisons

Making comparisons between cultures and nations are natural, particularly after residence abroad. However, a person must be careful not to be seen as too critical of home or too lavish in praise of things foreign. A balance of good and bad features is probably more accurate and certainly less threatening to others. The tendency to become an instant expert is to be avoided at all costs.

9. Remain flexible

Keeping as many options open as possible is an essential aspect of a successful return home. Attempting to re-socialize totally into old patterns and networks can be difficult, but remaining aloof is isolating and counterproductive. What you want to achieve is a balance between resuming and maintaining earlier patterns and enhancing your social and intellectual life with new friends and interests.

10. Seek support networks
There are lots of people back home who have gone through their own re-entry process and both understand and empathize with a returnee's concerns. Returnees may find it useful to seek out people with international living experience such as fellow returnees, academic faculty, exchange students, Peace Corps volunteers, international development staff, diplomatic or military personnel, church mission officials, and those doing business internationally. University study abroad and international student offices may also be places where returnees can find support and empathy as they go through the re-entry process.

(Taken from Module 2.3.3-Ten Top Tips, What's Up With Culture?, School of International Studies, University of the Pacific, Bruce La Brack, ed. (2003), funding by FIPSE, U.S. Department of Education.)

Re-Entry Tips- Before You Go

1. Ask your family and friends to save your e-mails, letters, and postcards so that you can have these all when you return home.
2. Come back a few days before returning to school and/or work. It's overwhelming to move, to get things from storage, to register for classes, go back to work, to see friends and family, and to catch up on jet lag in a few hours or even days.
3. Look for courses related to your study abroad. For example, one student found that by using her study abroad credits toward electives in communication, she was able to double major in economics and communications.
4. Be conscious of deadlines while you're gone. Your university has special procedures on how you can legally give rights to someone on campus to register you for courses, sign up for housing, etc.
5. It's also important to keep in mind that things will change back home while you are abroad - there may be new landscaping and construction on your block or home campus, and in your family and group of friends there may be illnesses, changes in social relationships, and even death.

Second, research the answers to the Taking Care of Business Questions below and write your answers.

Taking Care of Business Questions

1. Can you register for next semester's courses from abroad, or can you have an advisor register for you?
2. Have you taken care of all your financial aid and scholarship forms so that you continue to have financial support at your U.S. home campus when you return? Will you need to follow-up on any scholarship requirements?

E. Reflecting on Going Home

Answer the following questions below for later reflection:

Going Home Questions

1. In what ways have I changed?
2. In what ways might my friends and family have changed?
3. How would I like my family and friends to treat me when I return home?
4. What am I looking forward to the most? The least?
5. What are the lessons I have learned that I never want to forget?
6. What are some skills I have learned?

(Taken from Maximizing Study Abroad: A Students' Guide to Strategies for Language and Culture Learning and Use, p. 145.)
F. Welcome Home Tips

Give Your Family and Friends Tips to Help You. Read the following tips for family and friends to welcome you home.

Send your family and friends a copy of this list before you arrive home so they have some realistic expectations about your return!

How to Welcome Home your Study Abroad Student

1. Understand that reverse culture shock is a real possibility and learn to recognize its symptoms so you can offer appropriate support to the returnees.

2. Realize that returning home is often not a predictable process and can be more stressful than either the returnee or you anticipate. Be prepared to offer support long-distance as s/he anticipates coming home and especially after his or her return.

3. Understand that most returnees are, in some ways, different than they were before they left home. They may initially seem to be strangers. It is hard to know what their experiences have meant to them and how they have changed. It may be necessary to renegotiate your relationship with returnees but your history together will provide a basis for this process.

4. Be aware of your own expectations of the returnees. You may wish that they would just fit back in but it is more helpful if you avoid forcing the returnees into old roles and relationships. Allow them space and time to readjust and reconnect.

5. Be conscious of all those things that have changed at home. Help returnees to understand what has taken place both in the society and among friends and family. Even if they have heard about these events, the impact at home may not have been obvious. You have much to tell them and they can tell you how events at home looked from their overseas location.

6. Avoid criticism, sarcasm, or mockery for seemingly odd patterns of behavior, speech, or new attitudes.

7. Create opportunities for the returnees to express their opinions, tell their stories, and show their pictures. Listen carefully and try to understand the significance of their overseas experiences. Seek to know what is important to them.

8. Acknowledge that all returnees experience some sense of loss. Strange as it may seem to others, returnees often grieve for what they have left behind. They may be missing overseas friends, a stimulating environment, the feeling of being special, experiencing greater freedoms or responsibilities, or special privileges.

9. Encourage the returnees to maintain personal and professional contacts with friends and institutions in the former host country(s). They will regret it if they do not.

10. Offer to mark and celebrate the return of your friend, sibling, or child. Discuss his or her preference for how and when to do so. Be careful of surprise parties.

11. Expect some critical comparisons of American culture and lifestyle. Keep your responses neutral. It can increase your chances to learn something important about the returnees and how their worldview has changed. Don’t take their comments personally.

12. Make contact with people who have successfully gone through the experience of returning home and refer the returnee to them - it may help both you and the returnee through a difficult period of readaptation.

(Taken from Module 2.5.1-Twelve Tips for Welcoming Returnees Home What’s Up With Culture?, School of International Studies, University of the Pacific, Bruce La Brack, ed. (2003), funding by FIPSE, U.S. Department of Education.)
Reflect on your academic experiences abroad, the pre-departure orientation at your home institution, your on-site orientation and subsequent programming throughout the program. Complete the evaluation form below. Based on the following criteria, list the actual figures and realities that you have encountered while abroad. After, rank your satisfaction with the information of your abroad program on a scale from one to five (one as extremely disappointed, five as exceeding your expectations).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Criteria</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Actual Figures</th>
<th>Ranking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cost</td>
<td>The total amount of basic fees for the program.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spending</td>
<td>Cost of living overseas-more, less, or the same as home.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Size</td>
<td>Number of students in the abroad program.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Size</td>
<td>Number of Students in class.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Dynamics</td>
<td>The configuration of the class-all U.S. students, mixed with locals, mostly locals.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goals</td>
<td>If achieved top three personal objectives of study abroad.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Then summarize your answers in one to two paragraphs below.

My Study Abroad Evaluation
Part I - Learning Goals and Expectations

1. What were your three primary goals for study abroad? Were you able to accomplish these?

2. Which experiences, cultural attitudes or behaviors were most challenging for you, and why?

3. Did you receive a Pre-Departure Orientation on cross-cultural adaptation? If so, did it help you adjust to the host society? If you were to be a mentor for prospective study abroad students, how would you explain the importance of a Pre-Departure orientation? If not, what information would have helped you adjust to cross-cultural differences abroad?

4. Did you receive an On-Site Orientation on cross-cultural adaptation? If so, did it help you adjust to the host society? If not, what information would have helped you adjust in-country? If you were to be a mentor for prospective study abroad students, how would you explain the importance of an On-Site Orientation?

5. Did you do an independent study project or internship on your study away, and if so, did you face difficulties in fitting it to your original learning goals? Were you satisfied with the results of it?

Part II - Outcomes

1. Overall, in which of the following areas did you learn the most, and why? Cross-cultural competence (the ability to respond effectively across cultures in a way that acknowledges and respects the culture of the individual or group), language, non-language academic components, or field research skills?

2. Has the study abroad experience influenced or modified your future career or educational plans? If yes, how?

3. In what ways were your own goals and objectives for the study abroad experience fulfilled or not fulfilled?

4. How can you still continue your learning after returning home?
To find out more about how other students readjusted to home and evaluated their experience abroad please visit http://www.allabroad.us.

H. Congratulations on Completing Course 2

Congratulations, you have completed the Global Scholar Course 2 – While You're Abroad! There is a lot to learn about moving to a new culture to study and we have tried to include as much information as we can into this course. We hope that you have benefited from this course and helped maximize your experience while abroad. When you return home, please complete Course 3 – Once You Return at http://globalscholar.us/ to reflect on your study abroad experience, understand the process of cultural re-adaptation, and help you deal effectively with your re-entry to your home culture.

Your learning doesn't end here. Apply your new skills and world view to your interactions with others!